



*Foster Creek at Bushy Park Landing.
(Photo/Berkeley County Economic Development)*



One Berkeley
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Our Community, Our Future



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ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 25, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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One Berkeley
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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BERKELEY
COUNTY SC

RICH HISTORY.
BRIGHT FUTURE.
One Berkeley

Johnny Cribb
County Supervisor

County Council and I are proud to present this carefully coordinated document to our citizens. It was thoroughly crafted with our notable *One Berkeley* mission in mind. It is a direct reflection of years of dedicated research and valuable guidance and input by our County leaders and staff, and the community, with assistance from the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments.

Determining our County's vision was only half the objective of this extensive undertaking; securing input from our communities was equally key. Throughout each step of the process, a series of public meetings were held, and our municipal partners and leaders were frequently engaged in constructive conversations about our County's future.

All participating entities united around the vision of a thriving Berkeley County where residents, industries, small businesses, and visitors alike could continue to find unique, quality-of-life opportunities in the areas of housing, employment, recreation and parks, transportation, economic development, and more—all while seeking to highlight and preserve our County's distinct cultural and historical resources.

We know Berkeley County is ever evolving. Over the last decade, we have been familiar with rapid growth and understand the importance of wisely getting ahead of it. The *One Berkeley* Comprehensive Plan is that essential blueprint to properly guide protecting our County's past and present while planning for future growth.

That's why this process was imperative. As we evaluated our County's current methods of meeting the needs of our booming population, it helped us formulate strategies for shared future success in achieving our vision and goals.

While it simply provides a guide for decision-making, the *One Berkeley* Comprehensive Plan is indispensable as a suitable compilation of standards for best influencing the direction of our County's future policymaking. County Council and I are confident this document will positively steer our County's success and sustainability in the years to come.

Johnny Cribb
Berkeley County Supervisor



*Rice field along the Cooper River.
(Photo/Berkeley County Economic Development)*





PART I

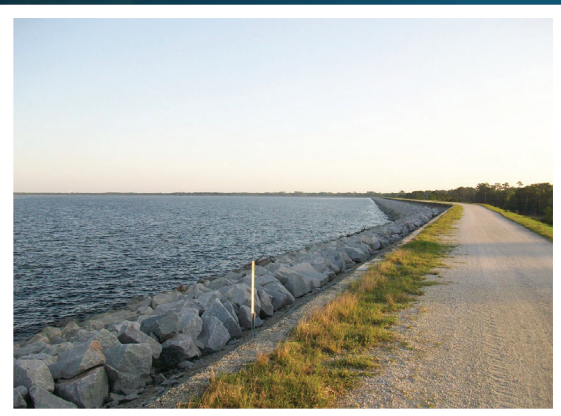
A Vision for *One Berkeley*

In Berkeley County, some of our greatest assets are intrinsically tied to the beautiful natural environment and the quiet, country lifestyle that much of the county offers. We value the open expanses of fields, woods, and farmland and recognize the importance of preserving these precious resources as natural habitats for wildlife protection and for the enjoyment of our future generations. We value the choice of living in a developed community with nearby neighbors and relative easy access to basic amenities or the choice to be in a rural area surrounded only by the sounds and sights of nature, and the affordability of both.

We also recognize that our proximity to Charleston, the economic hub of the port, and the wealth of job opportunities in the region make Berkeley County a highly desirable place to live and do business. Beyond just economic value, the region's history, culture, climate, waterways and beachfront all coalesce to create a uniquely rich environment for people to prosper.

Above all else, the one thing we collectively value most is establishing and maintaining a high quality of life for residents – meaning, adequate transportation infrastructure, public services and facilities, access to basic amenities, job opportunities and a variety of recreational outlets.

We know that being a great place to live does not happen by luck or happenstance, but rather, by careful planning. Our shared vision for the future is to remain a county comprised of many communities with unique identities, from the peaceful woods and rural farmlands to the bustling, interconnected neighborhoods, and for county residents everywhere to enjoy the high quality of life that brought or has kept them here.



Introduction

Berkeley County has engaged in a decennial comprehensive planning process, beginning with its first Comprehensive Plan in 1999 until its latest 5-year review which was completed in 2018. Over the past two decades, the county has experienced significant change in many different realms – traffic, housing, schools, labor force demands, and a loss of agricultural and forested lands and natural habitats. Indeed, Berkeley County has been growing considerably on a consistent basis, but in 1999 it did not fully anticipate demands that growth and prosperity in the region would have on the County (good and not-so-good), on its character, its valued assets, and its people.

What's Different about the *One Berkeley Comprehensive Plan*?

In a word, **EVERYTHING**. A disconnect between growth and public infrastructure to serve it has put the County in position of playing “catch up”, guiding leaders to consider a different approach to this current planning process. Thus *One Berkeley*, the County's newest 10-year Comprehensive Plan update was established as a multi-year process that began with an in-depth assessment of the county's existing infrastructure, public facilities and services' capacity – looking at projected demands as well as existing conditions. This approach was a paradigmatic shift in the county's process to planning for its future asking: **What is the County's capacity to support existing development and projected growth? What impact will the anticipated growth have if the County continues to grow in the same way as the past? What are the various scenarios and tools that the County can employ to inform a future where the projected growth has minimal impacts on its assets and adequate services? In short, what is the best path forward?**

A Time of Opportunity

One Berkeley was developed during a unique period in history, in some ways at a time of opportunity. With the international pandemic of COVID-19, fundamental aspects of personal and community life choices pivoted, changing how residents live, work, go to school, and play. The pandemic also highlighted where communities and infrastructure are resilient and where they are challenged. Simply put, the pandemic exposed our collective community's, *One Berkeley's*, strengths and challenges. Not surprisingly, communities do well when they are prepared and have the flexibility to respond quickly to the changing nature of our environment; social, economic, and physical. Those who lay the groundwork and policies for strategic investments can weather many types of foreseen, but sometimes unforeseen, disruptions. Plans, comprehensive or a collection of special plans, serve their greatest purpose in these instances. These plans ensure the County's future is a chosen one.

One Berkeley begins with recognizing those assets that make the County unique: our people, places, history and culture. These

are the foundation for the quality of life that residents desire. The *One Berkeley* Plan builds on the premise that those aspects of daily life that enable residents and businesses to enjoy Berkeley County rely on the nexus between planning, economic resiliency, and sustainable resources, including supportive infrastructure. It is the desire to plan for sustained growth and economic prosperity that framed the discussions that have resulted in *One Berkeley*.

One Berkeley lays out goals to achieve a vision that addresses both opportunities and challenges voiced by the public at the onset of the planning process. Its strategies seek to protect the character and quality of life provided by those unique assets that define *One Berkeley*. These strategies start with ensuring ongoing, open communication and dialogue about what is possible to ensure adequate infrastructure will support growth and changes in the future. They identify tools that can be employed by the County to protect its assets with development patterns that mitigate impacts on them.

The Future Land Use Plan provides a blueprint to achieve the goal of sustainable

growth. Guided by the Future Land Use Plan, the County is better positioned to preserve its existing communities and yet create new “places” in strategic locations where residents, businesses, and employers have attainable housing options and access to services, facilities, transportation modes and open spaces.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a holistic, aspirational vision to guide future growth decisions.

One of the most fundamental things to know and understand about a comprehensive plan is that it is *a plan*; it is **not** legislation. That means it can only be effective and successful to the extent that the County and other responsible parties take action to implement the Plan’s recommendations. Specifically, the comprehensive plan is adopted by a jurisdiction, like Berkeley County, as a guide to inform related legislative decisions. It is the responsibility of the Planning Commission, County Council, and staff to ensure that the Plan’s recommendations and implementation strategies are followed so residents are assured these individuals, committees, and departments have the community’s best interest at the forefront of their decisions.

Following SC Code (§15-29-340), the Planning Commission has a duty to “engage in a continuous planning program for the physical, social and economic growth, development and redevelopment of the area within its authority.” Ten elements are outlined in the Code to be evaluated and addressed



Public meeting at Berkeley County Administration building.

within the Plan to “promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare as well as the efficiency and economy of its area of concern.” Detailed evaluation of the ten elements considered in the development of the *One Berkeley* plan are provided in Appendix B, including assessments of; population trends;

housing options and attainability; cultural and natural resources, and environmental resiliency; community facilities, transportation; economic sustainability; and land uses. These assessments, along with the technical infrastructure evaluation done at the onset of the planning process (Appendices C and D), steered development of *One Berkeley*.

One Berkeley sets the overall guidance for informed decisions. It documents and depicts an agreed upon form for future development within the County. Implementation tools to carry out the Plan’s goals and strategies identified within the SC Code of Laws include the:

- Zoning Ordinance
- Land Development Ordinance
- Historic and/or cultural resource guidelines; and
- Capital Improvement Plans

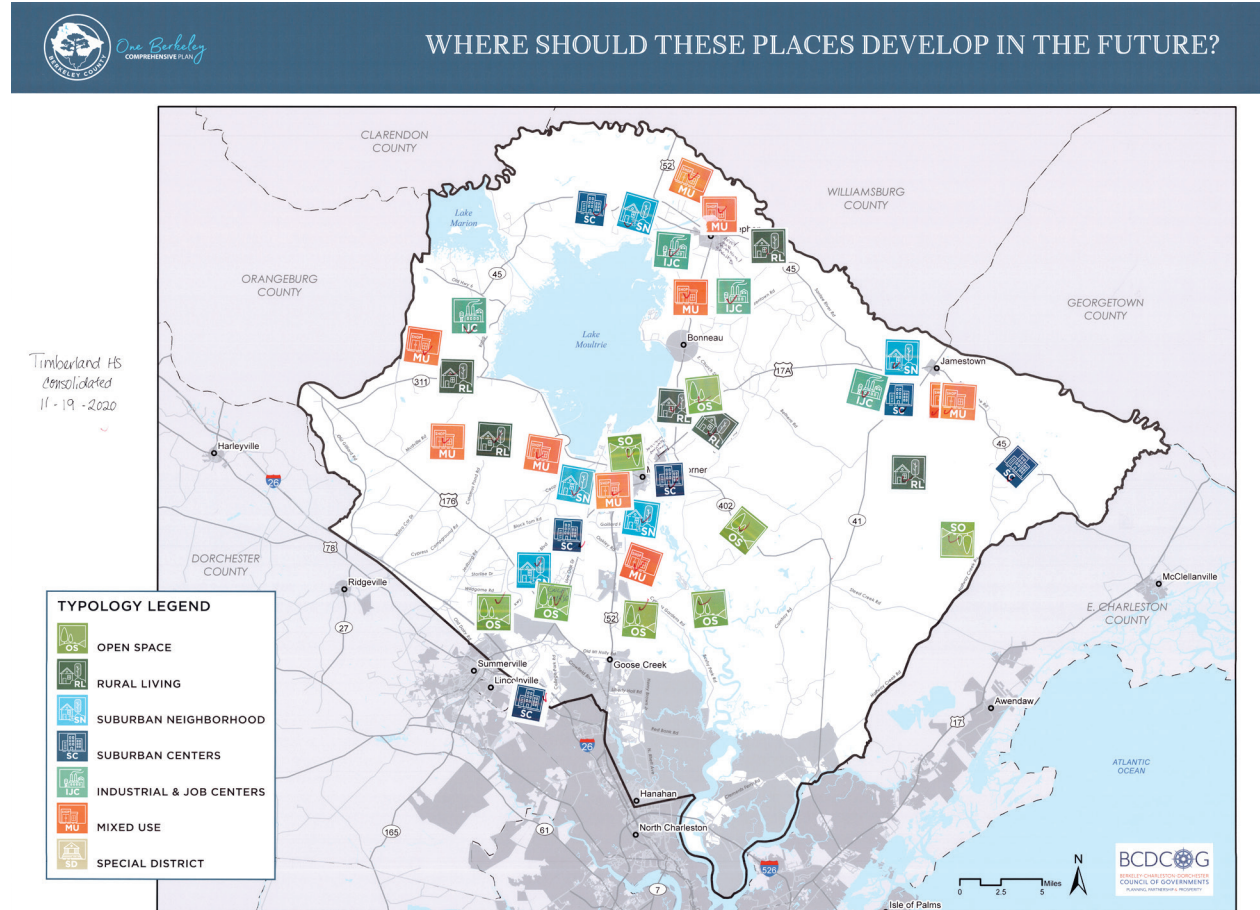
One Berkeley recommends best practices for the County to apply when employing these tools.

There are many ways to use *One Berkeley*.

County officials, community partners, County staff and advisory commissions, and the community at-large can all use this plan to guide decision making, policy and regulatory changes, community partnerships, and advocacy. It serves to inform budgeting and Capital Improvement Plans, regulatory documents and legislative actions. The Vision and Goals, along with the Future Land Use Map, serve to provide a framework for efficient and harmonious development.

A Community Based Plan

While the *One Berkeley* comprehensive plan was initiated by conducting a highly technical analysis of public service, facilities and infrastructure capacities and is data-driven, it was impossible to identify strategies best-suited to meet specific community needs without input from the community itself.



Example of public input from fall 2020 workshops.

One Berkeley is based on ideas voiced by the Berkeley County community. Development of *One Berkeley* involved a community visioning process with two series of public meetings, surveys and open-ended opportunity for input on the *One Berkeley* website (Appendix A).

Despite the pandemic, the community visioning process started with a series of ten (10) in-person and virtual public meetings, as

well as a web-based community input survey. This initial outreach, as well as the second series of public meetings, was multi-faceted to engage a broad base of the community’s population. In-person meetings were held at strategic locations within five (5) distinct areas of the county. Virtual meetings were held at various times of day for residents and business owners who could not attend the typical weekday evening meetings. The

website was open 24/7, providing the same informational materials presented and asking the same questions asked of attendees at the public meetings. The Planning team met with all individuals as requested.

The team also met with eight groups of stakeholders representing interests in the environment and conservation, economic development, housing development, infrastructure and management and provision of public services. One stakeholder meeting was dedicated to meeting with representatives from each of the incorporated municipalities within the County.

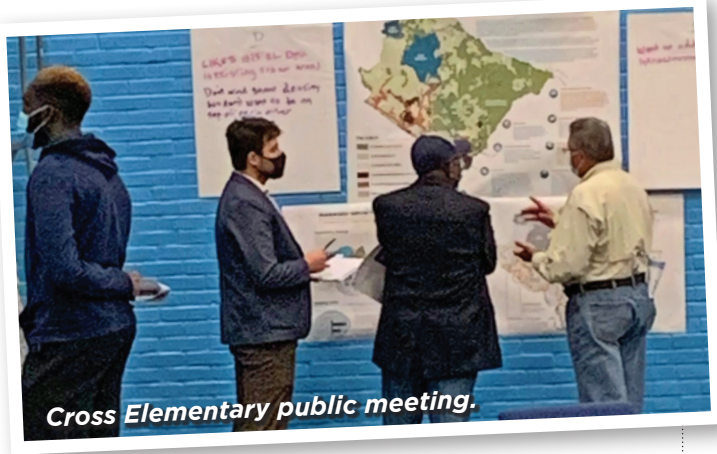
From the initial input, the County's Planning Commission and Council agreed upon the Vision Statement found at the beginning of this plan and a set of Guiding Principles around which to build the plan.

Building upon these principles, and the initial public meeting question asking WHERE should different TYPES of development occur in the future, the Planning Commission and team evaluated the County's physical development - how it exists today and will look like with the build out of already approved or vested developments for the future (Scenario A), then considered how will the county look if it continues to grow with similar patterns of development in areas where land is available and infrastructure is either available or will need to be expanded (Scenario B), and what will that look at if the County grows in the same manner as Scenario B, but with accelerated growth pressures (Scenario C).

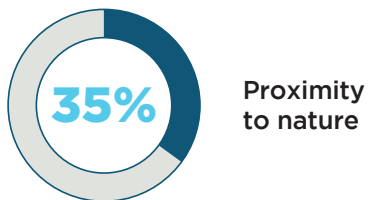
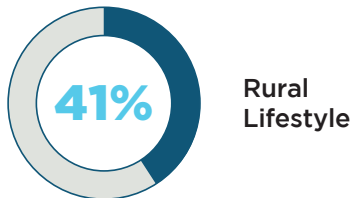
PUBLIC INPUT

Our Greatest Assets

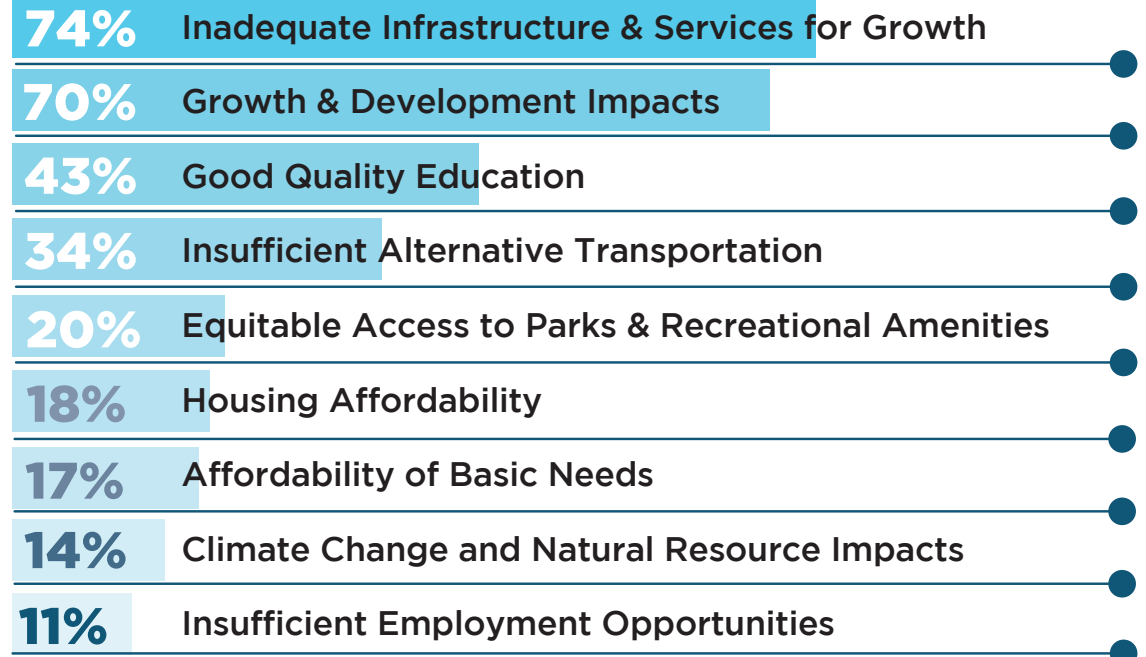




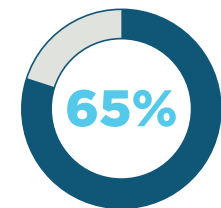
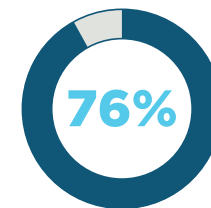
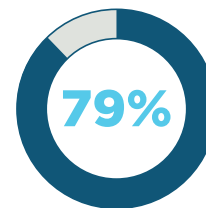
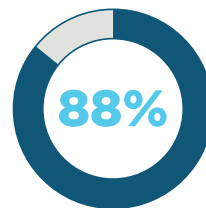
What We Love About Berkeley County



Our Biggest Concerns



Our Top Priorities



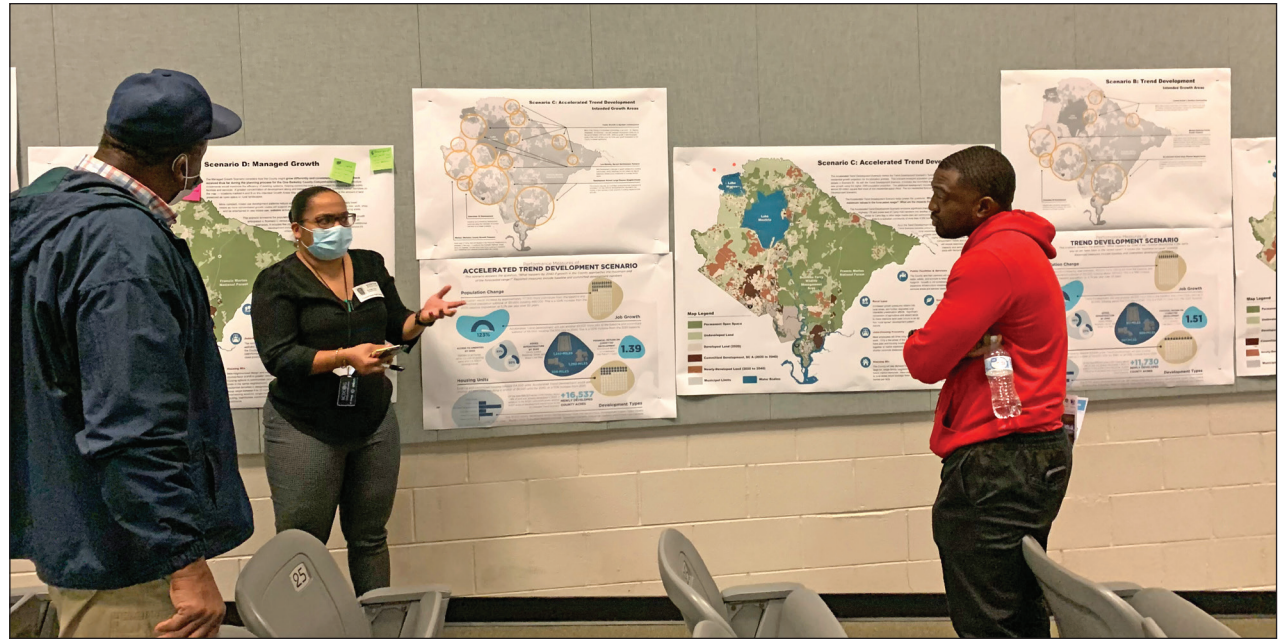
By applying public preferences for development locations gleaned from the first series of public workshops and applying the guiding principles, the Planning Commission developed a draft scenario that depicted a more managed growth scenario (Scenario D), then tested each scenario against some basic performance measures and estimated costs to the County through 2040.

In early 2022, the public was again engaged a second time for a **Growth Choices Workshop** to provide feedback on the four scenarios. This workshop was held simultaneously in 4 locations: Moncks Corner, Cainhoy, Macedonia, and Cross where attendees could attend in person or a virtual presentation from the County Administration building. Attendees were given an in-depth explanation of how these scenarios evolved and provided an open slate for feedback on what they preferred in terms of each scenario. This same presentation and materials displayed were again posted on the *One Berkeley* website along with a set of questions (survey) of the public to answer the main question One Berkeley seeks to answer:

What is the County's best path forward for meeting future growth demands and needs, while protecting residents' highly valued quality of life?

In a nutshell, what attendees and respondents shared was:

- Most participants were not content with the status quo and there were low levels of support for the county to continue growing as usual



Public meeting at Timberland.

- Most participants supported the idea of strategically placing more intense development in return for the protection of open spaces and rural land preservation
- Similarly, participants supported strategically placing more intense development as means for cost-efficient provision of public infrastructure and reduced traffic congestion
- Most participants supported the concept of higher intensity mixed-use zoned areas that would provide greater variety of housing types, improved pedestrian access and connectivity within individual communities.
- Participants asked that development in

rural areas also be encouraged (around existing towns and communities) to ensure equitable distribution of economic development, services and housing.

- Lastly, most participants were not opposed to new zoning regulations to preserve rural land and protect the environment, nor were they opposed to the idea that regulations and fees would be implemented to assure adequate infrastructure and services accompanied new growth.

These inputs are the building blocks of *One Berkeley* and the Action plan to achieve the *One Berkeley* Vision.

One Berkeley

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Engage in Strategic Growth Management Practices – fostering communication and collaborative decision-making based on transparent review processes that ensure the availability and/or concurrent investments in public infrastructure and mitigate impacts on the County’s assets

Prioritize Highly-Valued Resources – such as the County’s diverse and distinct communities, rural countryside, open space, trees, water resources, natural and wildlife habitats, culturally and historic significant areas, while expanding public recreation amenities and access thereto

Create Great Places for People – that are contextually compatible and strategically located in areas served by multiple modes of transportation, including non-motorist infrastructure to encourage family-friendly, mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of housing options and amenities that are attainable to all residents

Action Plan

Implementation strategies to achieve the community’s vision



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PART II

One Berkeley Today *Past trends and Challenges*

Berkeley County is the third largest county in the state of South Carolina, with a land area of approximately 1,100 square miles, or the size of the state of Rhode Island.

Up until recent decades, this land mass was predominantly rural and agricultural. The 1960s development of suburban neighborhoods was confined mostly to Hanahan and Goose Creek. In the 1980s, new neighborhoods started developing between, or as extensions of, Goose Creek and Summerville. When the Mark Clark Expressway (I-526) opened, the Cainhoy peninsula opened to industrial development along Clements Ferry and residential growth on Daniel Island.

With the County's first comprehensive plan in 1999, it was projected that Berkeley County would absorb a large proportion of future development in the region – and that it has.

One Berkeley People and Places

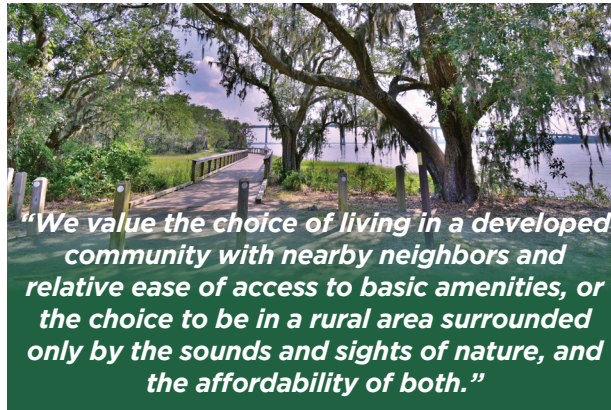
Almost 100,000 additional residents call Berkeley County “home” than did in 2000. One quarter of today’s residents are minorities and the county’s Latinx population has grown to almost 7%.

The median age of residents has increased slightly to 36.5 years of age, indicating that some of these newcomers are retirees. Married and non-family households account for the majority of new households, yet there has been a 46% increase in the number of female-led households with children and 10% increase in households with seniors since 2010.

The median household income in Berkeley County in 2020 had risen 29% since 2010 to \$65,443. The median income of married households now exceeds \$90k annually.

To accommodate new residents, the number of housing units has steadily increased at an average rate of 3% per year. The county’s mix of housing types has not changed and single family detached dwellings continue to constitute 65% of the housing units. However, the footprint of residential development compared to 2000 is much larger. The majority of growth has been accommodated within annexations of Hanahan, Goose Creek, Summerville, Moncks Corner and the City of Charleston. Additional growth in between these communities has also evolved beyond the incorporated municipalities, particularly within larger developments along US176.

Growth in these areas has principally occurred as conventional suburban subdivisions/neighborhoods with single family



detached dwelling units. These developments have attracted new residents with housing that is relatively less expensive than found in other areas in the region.

Meanwhile residents in remaining rural areas have chosen life among the open spaces and rural character they have either grown up in or purposely chose to move to. Life-long residents can easily be found living in the rural communities of Jamestown, St. Stephen or “settlement areas” such as Macedonia, Bethera, Cainho, Huger, Cross, and Pineville.

One Berkeley seeks to continue providing these life-style choices to existing and future residents. More specifically it seeks to ensure new developments throughout the County are strategically located to make efficient use of existing or planned infrastructure, in design patterns that are contextually compatible with the surrounding environment.

Within the rural areas, growth is encouraged around existing towns where infrastructure can efficiently be extended or within existing settlement areas or nodes designated as “hamlets” on the future land

use map where contextual compatibility and mitigation of impacts by new development is strongly encouraged.

Within the suburban growth areas, new developments are envisioned to be more livable, mixed-use neighborhoods that are connected to one another with trails and bike-paths and provide easy access to daily needs for goods and services.

Mixed-use places of greater intensity, with a variety of housing options along with non-residential or employment opportunities, are encouraged to be developed within the designated activity centers on the future land use map. These centers position the county to support expansion of alternative transportation options such as premium transit within the region that can serve the County’s future population. More importantly focused development in these centers make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure and offer the greatest opportunities for housing that is cost-attainable to a variety of residents.

Whether within the rural or suburban areas or mixed activity centers, *One Berkeley* seeks new development that respects the surrounding environment, clustering lots such that sensitive natural resources are protected by buffers and create open spaces. Strategies to achieve this goal include protecting the existing character of corridors in the rural areas through retention of vegetative buffers and conservation subdivisions, providing flexibility and incentives for development of a variety of housing options, and ensuring transportation improvements are multi-modal.

Housing Affordability in Berkeley County

Berkeley is one of three counties in the Charleston Metropolitan region (MSA) that is experiencing growth that has a direct impact on the affordability of its housing. First people ask “*what is affordable housing*”?

Housing affordability is directly related to a household’s income, and in fast growing regions finding affordable housing can be a challenge for households at many different income levels. At its core, attaining housing affordability is about ensuring all households can access and keep quality housing that they can afford. Berkeley County has traditionally offered more affordable housing options within the region. While many options are still relatively more affordable than in Charleston County, prices have increased dramatically in the past decade. In fact, the median sales price in Berkeley (and Dorchester) County has more than doubled in the past decade to \$367,000 in Berkeley County (MLS data, YTD April 2022).

In fast-growing markets such as our region, population growth is driven by in-migration as opposed to natural growth from births. Where are all of these new residents coming from? People continue to move to the county from all over the country, but the majority of new residents are moving from higher cost of living areas, such as New York, Pennsylvania, California, and even Oregon where households

are used to and can afford paying higher rents, or who may be bringing with them significant equity, wealth, or retirement income to purchase a home.

The region’s affordable housing problem is no secret. It has long been a pressing issue in the City of Charleston, that has extended to Mount Pleasant and areas west of the Ashley River and now is affecting North Charleston, even Summerville. Charleston County has created a comprehensive housing plan to guide its approach to the issue – “**Housing Our Future**”. Berkeley County has the opportunity to address this issue head on by doing the same - defining the need and charting a sustainable course to ensure all residents have opportunities to live within Berkeley County without spending greater than 30% of their income on housing or 45% of their income on housing and transportation costs combined.

A comprehensive housing plan can provide a strategy that looks at the full range of housing needs, including affordable housing, moderate-income housing for the “missing middle”, and upscale housing.

Such a plan for Berkeley County would look at factors driving growth, and how job and wage growth impact what households can afford. It can assess the availability of existing naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), opportunities to develop

housing affordable at various price points, and document the need for future housing. It can establish clear goals and a framework for understanding a full range of housing strategies, building capacity for creating and supporting housing that is affordable by preserving existing housing, building new units, supporting renters, and promoting homeownership. It can identify potential solutions to ensure new development contributes to the needed supply of affordable housing, through zoning that supports Transit Oriented Development (TOD), accelerating the permitting processes for housing developments committed to providing a portion of units as affordable, or tax abatements for housing development projects providing housing affordable to households with incomes within a specified range of the area median income.



The One Berkeley Life

Berkeley residents may choose to live in a variety of places within the County, but there is consensus on what aspects of Berkeley County’s character are most valued. Since the initial comprehensive plan was adopted in 1999 to the *One Berkeley* planning discussions,

- Open Spaces;
- Quiet country, rural spaces;
- Public parks, trails and waterways; and
- The natural environment

are terms consistently used to describe residents’ vision of Berkeley County in the future.

Along with numerous cultural and historic places in Berkeley County, these valued spaces are most associated with the county’s rural areas. However, the *One Berkeley* plan asserts these can, and should, be found throughout the county regardless of the area’s contextual character. In other words, open



spaces should be found in higher intensity developed activity centers just as much as in suburban neighborhoods or rural hamlets.

Likewise, public parks and trails should be geographically dispersed across the county whether within municipalities or in the unincorporated areas.

These spaces and amenities are dependent upon proactive planning, the conservation of open spaces, and dedicated funding. *One Berkeley* tasks county leaders to provide adequate and equitably distributed recreation facilities. The *One Berkeley* Action Plan calls for development of a County-wide recreation plan that quantifies and identifies locations for needed recreation facilities to benefit current and future residents. Such a plan will provide the basis for the County to program and secure funding for construction and operation of diverse facilities.

Conservation and Recreation

In November 2022, Berkeley County residents voted to set aside \$58.7 million of its Transportation Sales and Use Tax (the Penny Tax) to fund a “greenbelt” program that will support preservation of open space for public use, including parks. An example of how these funds will be used is the purchase of approximately 115 acres on Daniel Island’s northwestern side from the SC State Ports Authority. Rather than being developed with homes, the ecological features of this land along the Cooper River will be conserved for generations tract to come as a waterfront park. The County has initiated development of a Greenbelt Preservation Plan to work with an established Advisory Commission to further identify lands and resources to benefit from this funding source.

An important consideration for the location of recreation facilities is the nexus to the county's natural assets. Strategically placing park facilities with connections to the abundant natural resources enables the county to sync active and passive recreation opportunities with one another. The *One Berkeley* Action Plan calls for development of a master trail system as part of the recreation plan, that not only links abutting communities, but will also link communities to the county's cultural and natural resources. Working with developers to implement these plans in new communities will expand access to recreation amenities and resources.

A major component of achieving the *One Berkeley* vision is a commitment to protect and conserve the county's cultural and natural resources. Berkeley County's history has borne abundant plantations and other individual historic structures. While many are located within the Cooper River Historic District, listing on the National Register of Historic Places does not guarantee protection of these sites. The last historic survey of the county was conducted in 1989. The survey is long overdue for an update to document which structures/sites remain intact, which have been placed within conservation easements for perpetual protection, and which are vulnerable.

Likewise, the county's great open spaces are subject to development without proactive measures. Whether by institution of performance measures for development along corridors traversing the rural areas or

Conservation Subdivisions

The term "conservation subdivision" describes a cluster-type development that enables land to be developed while simultaneously conserving land surrounding and/or within the development as open space to preserve community character, reduce environmental impacts, protect the rights of property owners, and enable a high-quality project. This design identifies primary and secondary conservation areas where wetlands, floodplains, sensitive habitats and otherwise buildable land are set aside within conservation areas (not cleared, graded and developed) to function as green infrastructure. The development rights (number of units and/or buildings otherwise permitted by-right in the designated zoning district, called the "Yield Plan") are arranged around these conservation areas to fit on the remaining (unconstrained) land, generally by allowing smaller lot sizes than would otherwise be required. Berkeley County's Green Infrastructure Plan (referenced in Appendix B) and the BCD Regional Green Infrastructure Plan (<https://scgiplan-gjicinc.hub.arcgis.com/pages/plan#links>), developed by the state, identify areas where developments are encouraged to design development around sensitive resources.

designation of scenic byways through SDOT's program, these roadways can continue to provide connections within the county to significant scenic, cultural, historic, natural, and recreational, destinations while retaining their rural character.

Berkeley County is fortunate to have national recognition and protection of the Francis Marion National Forest, but the forest's land area is matched by environmentally sensitive lands along the rivers and lakes within and bordering the county. Organizations and the County are committed to conserving these lands and increasing their protection through dedicated funding from the Transportation Sales Tax program. The Action Plan calls for the county to engage in a public planning process to establish a comprehensive Conservation Plan that identifies priorities and a program for use of this funding to protect those environmentally sensitive lands.

Environmentally sensitive natural resources and open lands not only contribute to retaining the County's character that attracts new residents, but they also play a strategic role in mitigating flooding and managing stormwater. *One Berkeley* seeks protection of natural resources on a deeper level calling for the County to foster conservation subdivisions as new communities are proposed within and abutting highly sensitive natural resources or historic properties. Conservation subdivision provisions encourage the concentration of developable lots while allowing for set-asides of undevelopable open spaces.

One Berkeley Economic Sustainability and Resiliency

Berkeley County has been extremely successful with its economic development efforts for the past two decades as seen by industrial development in the Cainhoy area along Clements Ferry Road and the Camp Hall tract along Interstate 26, as well as the Jedburg Road interchange.

Yet, *One Berkeley's* diverse and unique communities, whether incorporated or not, can each contribute to the county's economy. *One Berkeley* calls for the county to not only ensure protection of these communities, but also to ensure smaller communities and rural settlements benefit from the County's economic prosperity.

One Berkeley's Action Plan continues to encourage establishment of employment uses and associated development in the county's rural communities where supportive infrastructure already exists. The existence of this infrastructure helps the cost efficiency to redevelop former industrial and commercial areas as a means of creating economic stability within these communities. Similarly, many of the designated "hamlets" on the Future Land Use Map have access to public water that can support smaller lots and neighborhood-scaled commercial development that can be served by on-site wastewater systems for contextually compatible development.

Initiatives are already in place to address two challenges that have suppressed economic investments in these areas:



The construction of the EV90 electric vehicle at Volvo's Camp Hall plant is projected to create 1,300 new jobs. (Photo/Volvo)

adequate broadband service and labor force availability.

The global pandemic exposed a number of the region's vulnerabilities, not the least of which was access to adequate broadband service. Whether working or being educated remotely, rural residents nationally were challenged by limited high-speed internet connectivity. Federal, as well as state, initiatives are in place along with funding directly to broadband providers that will invest in the expansion and enhancement of broadband connectivity for many of those areas within Berkeley County. While broadband availability is expanded to remote areas, other organizations are coordinating through the One Region initiative to identify means for ensuring equitable access to these services. Increased access for residents at public spaces such as libraries and community centers will address some of that need, but for those with limited transportation or working during hours these public spaces are open, the ability to be educated or trained remotely will still be a challenge.

Aside from periods of the Great Recession and the Global Pandemic, Berkeley County's unemployment rate has been consistently lower than national averages. Yet as labor force participation rates fluctuate with baby-boomers leaving the workforce, it is imperative that the county ensure the available labor force can be employed and has transportation access to employment.

Berkeley County's economic development partners are working to address these challenges by coordinating with other agencies and employers to expand options for the County's labor force to access higher education, training and jobs with transportation options such as public transit, vanpools and carpooling programs.

Another means of ensuring that Berkeley County's available labor force is readily accessible to employers is to align the development of new employment centers with new residential development. Mixed-use activity centers, along with zoning that allows for residential development within the proximity of large employment areas, are opportunities to establish these connections.

One Berkeley Collaboration

Berkeley County leaders and residents are well aware and vocal about the need for development and infrastructure to serve future development to be provided concurrently. *One Berkeley* recognizes and emphasizes the need for decision-making to be based upon collaborative processes amongst departments and agencies

responsible for providing infrastructure, facilities and services.

While some processes are in place, the County seeks to expand its existing coordinated review system to include other key entities to ensure large development proposals are evaluated not only for consistency with One Berkeley and the Future Land Use Map, but also for demands these developments could place on existing infrastructure, facilities and services. The *One Berkeley* Action Plan calls for the County to define and regulate “developments of regional significance” where this expanded coordinated review system is employed.

The Action Plan in Part IV of *One Berkeley* includes strategies for (1) requiring adequate infrastructure be in place or planned prior to approval of significant development proposals and (2) employing a system for evaluating what the impacts of a development will be using the infrastructure assessment model developed in conjunction with the *One Berkeley* initiative.

With the model established to assess impacts of development in each of the growth scenarios, County staff has the ability to evaluate development impacts on case-by case basis. Coupled with traffic impact analysis, the County is equipped to ascertain likely demands on its systems and to ensure adequate facilities are in place to serve future development.

It is suggested the County consider development and adoption of a Capital Improvements Program (or CIP). A CIP

Ensuring Adequate Public Facilities

A top concern of participants in the development of the One Berkeley Comprehensive Plan was for there to be adequate infrastructure, facilities and services in place or planner prior to approval of new developments. To support that goal, the County assessed current infrastructure capacity and forecasted needs. The tool used to conduct the assessment (Appendix C) is dynamic and will be used by County staff to evaluate impacts of new developments on infrastructure capacities as they are proposed.

The Action Plan suggests county leaders consider development and adoption of an **Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APO)** – a growth management process that will enable the County to provide adequate infrastructure, facilities and services in a timely manner coincident with growth. An APO tests for the adequacy of public water, sewer, roads, schools and emergency services to support proposals of developments meeting a certain threshold in size.

A **Capital Improvements Program (CIP)** is a systematic evaluation of existing and short-term needs of improvements to be publicly funded. *One Berkeley* encourages the County to develop a CIP that identifies and prioritizes the many projects and programs requiring the use of public funds as a fiscal management tool to coordinate the location, timing and financing of capital improvements over a multi-year period. This programming of capital improvements is updated every 5 years and revisited annually to inform annual budget decisions and support requests for grant funding in the future.

identifies and quantifies the needs for all infrastructure, facilities, and equipment to serve residents and businesses in the future. The CIP coordinates those needs identified in the County’s transportation plan, master water and wastewater plans, public safety plans, and could be expanded to include those needs identified for other community facilities, such as a master recreation plan. A CIP then programs the funding to support accomplishment of the projects identified, but it also identifies sources of funding for these projects beyond current revenue resources.

Throughout development of *One Berkeley*, residents as well as members of the development community supported the “pay to play” concept of requiring developers to provide and/or contribute to the goal of ensuring infrastructure concurrency. A CIP positions the County to adopt both an Adequate Facilities Ordinance or equivalent mandating that concurrent infrastructure and facilities be in place or included in plans prior to approval of developments of county-wide and/or regional significance. It also positions the County to reconsider assessment of Development Impact Fees.

PART III

Achieving the *One Berkeley* Vision *A Strategic Planning Process*

The first question in planning to get from here to there is to ask “where are we now”?

Over the past two decades Berkeley County has experienced rapid “suburbanization”, primarily around the three incorporated municipalities of Hanahan, Goose Creek, and Moncks Corner. With the first comprehensive plan in 1999, the County set a “principal growth area” that included those areas expected to be suburbanized over the next twenty years. The area was established based on where public water and sewer existed or planned for expansion. The majority of development/development approvals since 2000 have occurred within that designated area.

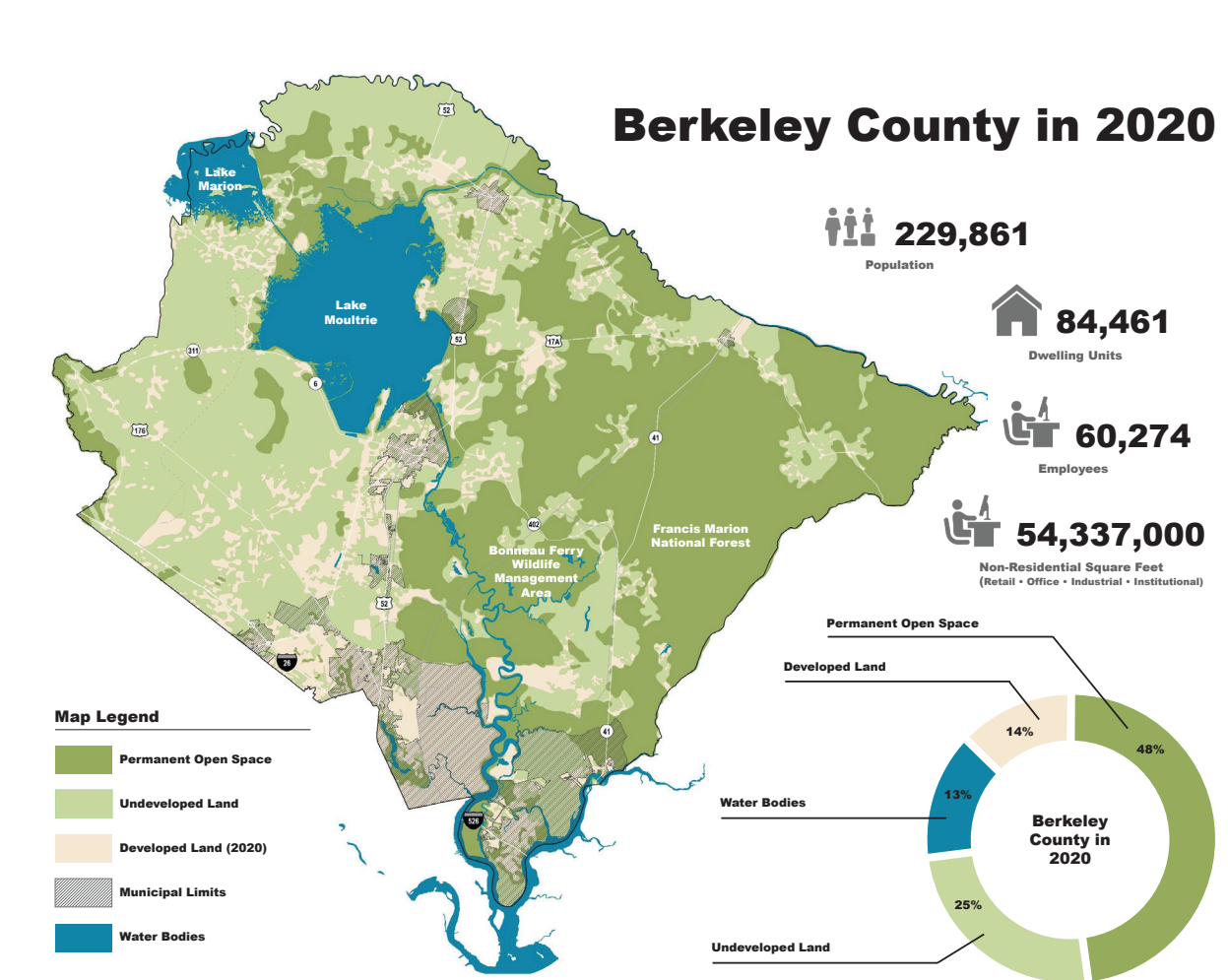


*Cypress Gardens.
(Photo/Berkeley County
Economic Development)*

The patterns of development within the principal growth area identified in 1999 has been fairly typical conventional suburban subdivisions: single family lots of a standard size, winding entrance roads with cul-de sacs and limited access to/from adjacent subdivisions, and/or non-residential uses at the front of the subdivision along the principal public road. Where these developments have been annexed into a municipality, the municipalities often have somewhat undefined boundaries and it is not always clear which parcels are within the municipality or unincorporated Berkeley. Where these developments are within the unincorporated areas, residents expect the same levels of service that would be provided if they were within a municipality.

New developments, including those approved but not-yet-built, can range from small (less than 10 dwellings) neighborhoods to those that proposing thousands of residential lots. The magnitude and impacts of these larger committed developments can be remarkable – some being larger than incorporated municipalities themselves. When approved, it is assumed that water, sewer, and schools will exist to serve these “entitled” developments at the time needed, yet the County continues to experience demands to plan and invest in other public facilities, services, and infrastructure (mainly roads) that were not considered during the approval process.

Driven largely by the relative affordability of housing in Berkeley County compared to other areas of the region, a major challenge



of this development pattern for the County as a whole is the demand growth places on the transportation network. Almost 46% of the County’s existing labor force commutes >30 minutes to places of employment. With

a transportation system used primarily by single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs), investments in and construction to widen Interstate 26 and other principal arterials in the network cannot be made fast enough.

During the Growth Choices Workshop, attendees were asked to consider:

What if all the development that has been currently approved is actually built? What are the impacts of this development?

This is depicted as Scenario A: Committed Development.

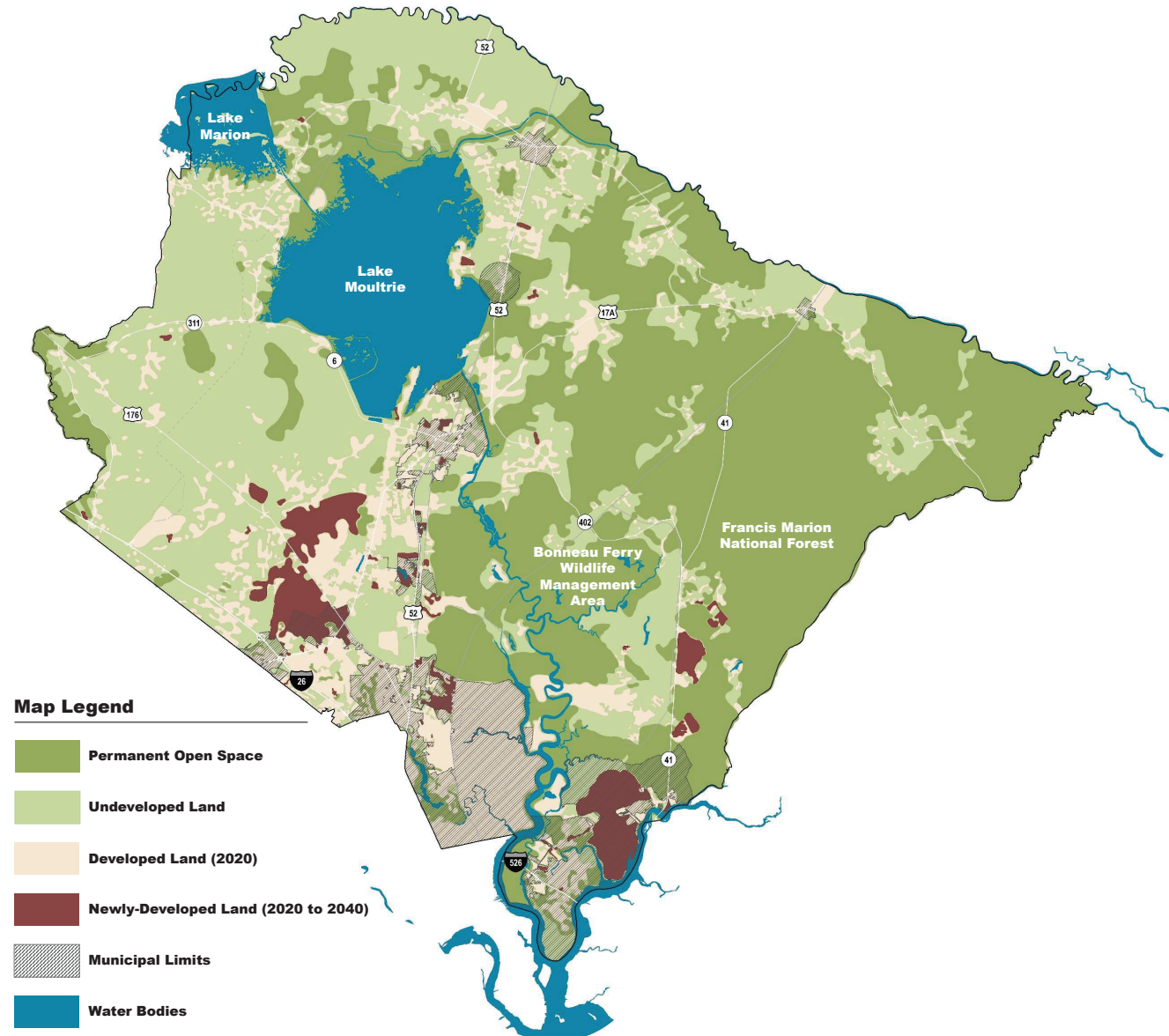
Given the fact that residential development does not generate adequate tax revenue to cover the cost of services to serve single family residences, another consideration prompted by this scenario is:

How will the County pay for the public facilities, services and infrastructure needed to serve the developments that have already been “entitled” or approved including costs to construct as well as maintain and operate facilities? Can the County afford to stop approving new developments without significantly increasing taxes?



Now consider if new development in the future follows this same trend. Development in the past has somewhat been confined within the principal growth area identified in 1999, which was expanded to include Camp Hall in 2005, then confirmed in 2010 and 2018. Participants in the Growth Choices Workshop and online survey were asked that very question:

Scenario A Committed Development

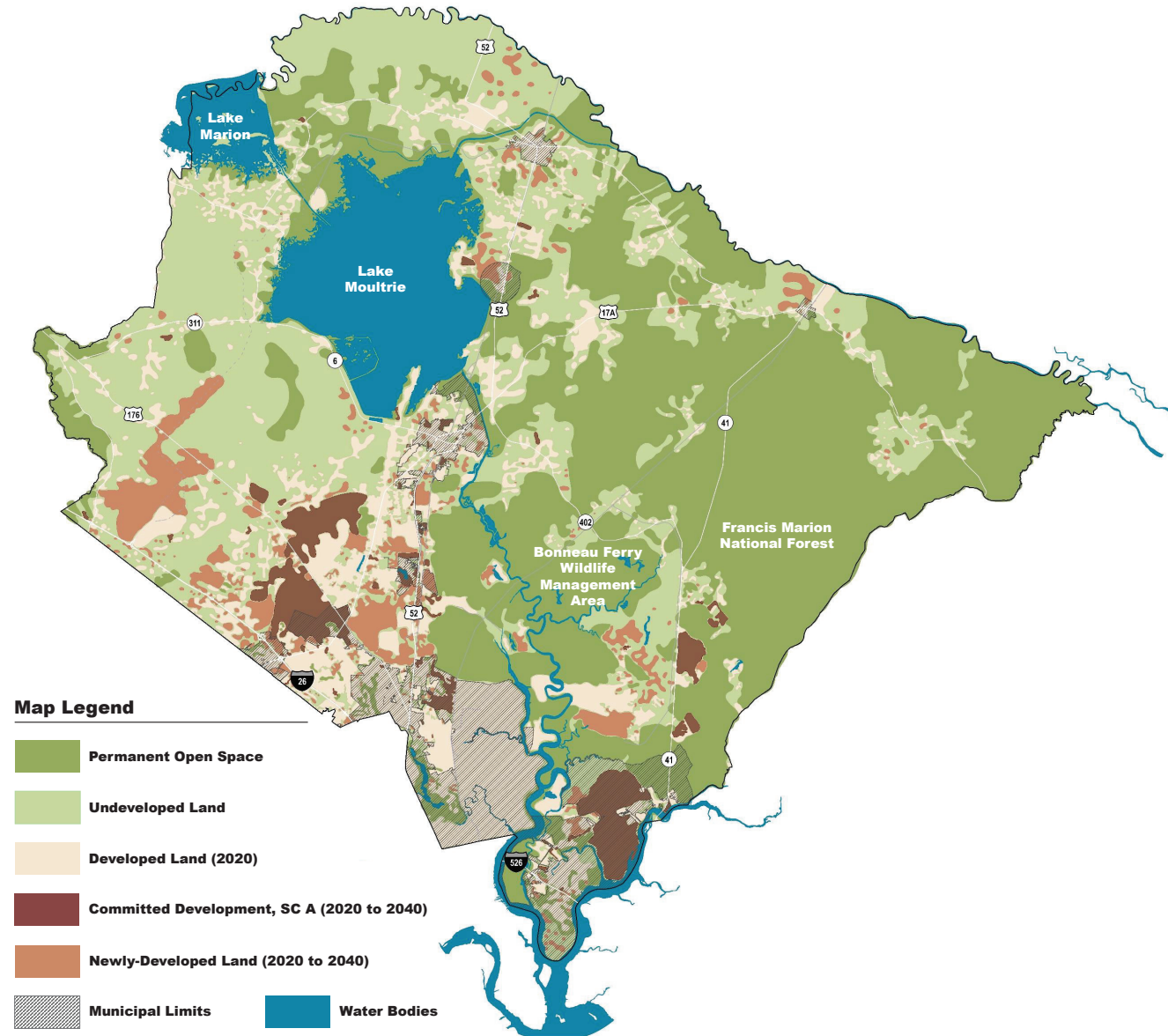


What if we keep developing in the ways that we've grown in the recent past? What are the impacts from that development trend?

Berkeley County's 2020 population was reported to be just under 237,000, 65% higher than the population in 2000, an average growth rate of 3.25% per year. An estimate of the population in 2040 based on a similar growth rate could be as high as 435,000, however a conservative projection of 399,000 (based on building permit averages and the additional 20,000 housing units that have been entitled in major communities of unincorporated Berkeley County) was applied in evaluating the impacts of development as "trending" in Scenario B. This scenario envisions greater development in areas along I-26 in the western half of the County's growth areas, transforming a formerly agricultural area into a mix of industrial/non-residential and low-density development that is rural in nature, but with a mix of large and small residential lots in master planned communities.

This "business-as-usual" growth pattern will again be highly dependent upon cars for transportation and will require the extension of new infrastructure (namely public water and sewer) to serve the expanding development footprint. Most of the County's labor force will continue to drive long-distances for work and the rest of the County will continue to see single-use low density development exemplified by suburban neighborhoods, highway commercial strip development and large industrial buildings.

Scenario B Trend Development



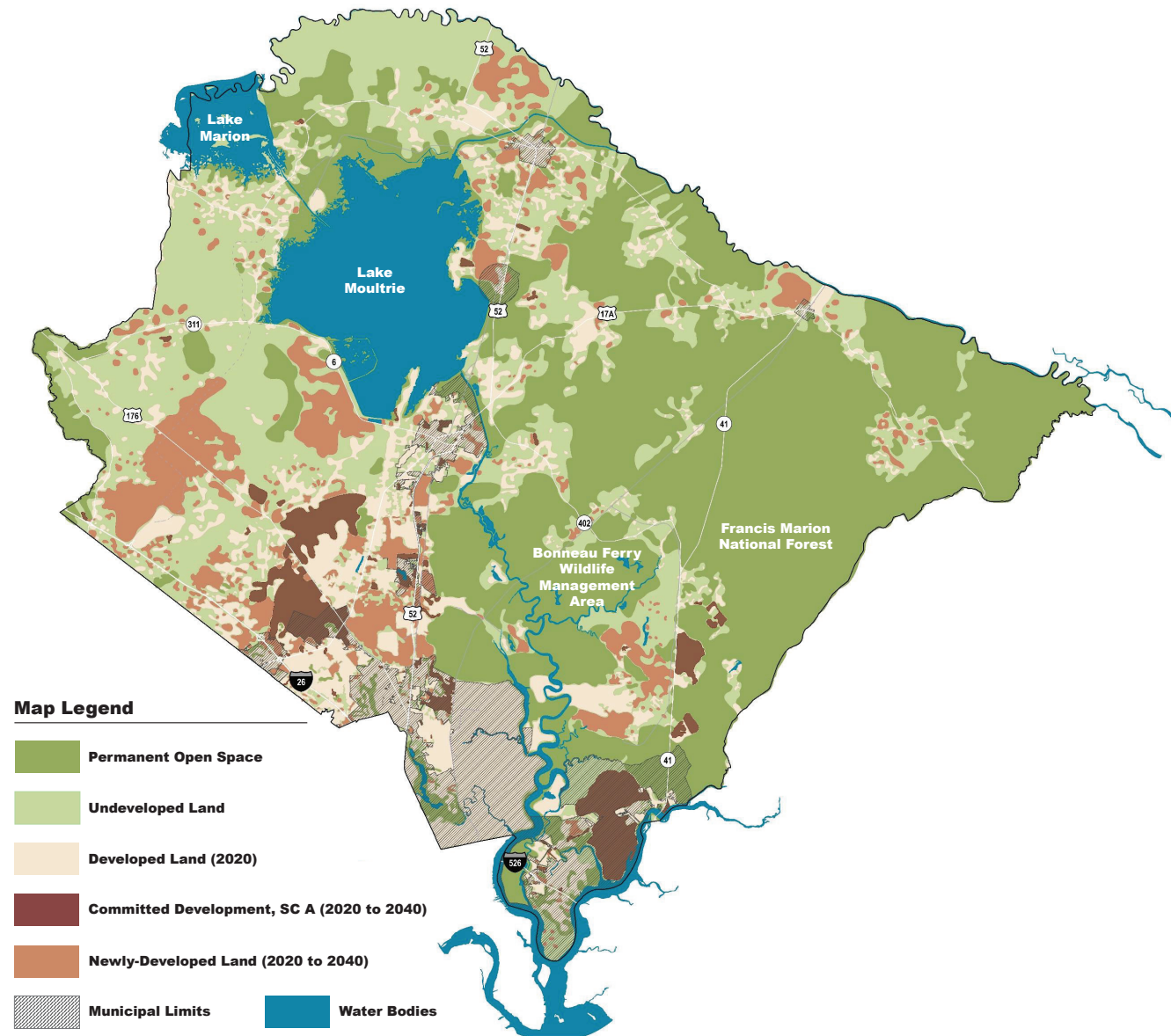
The challenges that Scenario B presents are intensified in the third scenario evaluated where an additional 50,000 units - forecasted based on land availability - are distributed more within rural areas of the County. Evaluated as Scenario C: Accelerated Trend Development, considers:

What if the County grows closer to the maximum level forecasted by the region’s travel-demand model?

With an increased rate of growth, more aligned with what the region has experienced since the pandemic, significant changes occur in western areas of the County along Highway 176 and areas to the east of Camp Hall transform into another unincorporated community of 8,000 homes similar to Cane Bay or other large master planned communities. In the eastern half of the County, the area around Huger transforms into a suburban community of more than 4,000 homes. Again, this new growth is primarily low-density residential in rural areas with a mix of large and small lot residential in master planned communities. To accommodate this growth, the County will see significant conversion of agricultural and vacant rural lands to more intensive land uses, particularly new neighborhoods in rural areas in ad-hoc patterns that require extensive new infrastructure to provide capacity needed to serve increased demands.

What these two scenarios, both continuing the existing growth pattern, ignores is rural land preservation which was noted as a priority by residents, as well as development

Scenario C Accelerated Trend Development



of “places” - communities that are mixed-use, walkable activity centers. Should residential development out-pace non-residential development and infrastructure lag behind future development, this trend prompted consideration of:

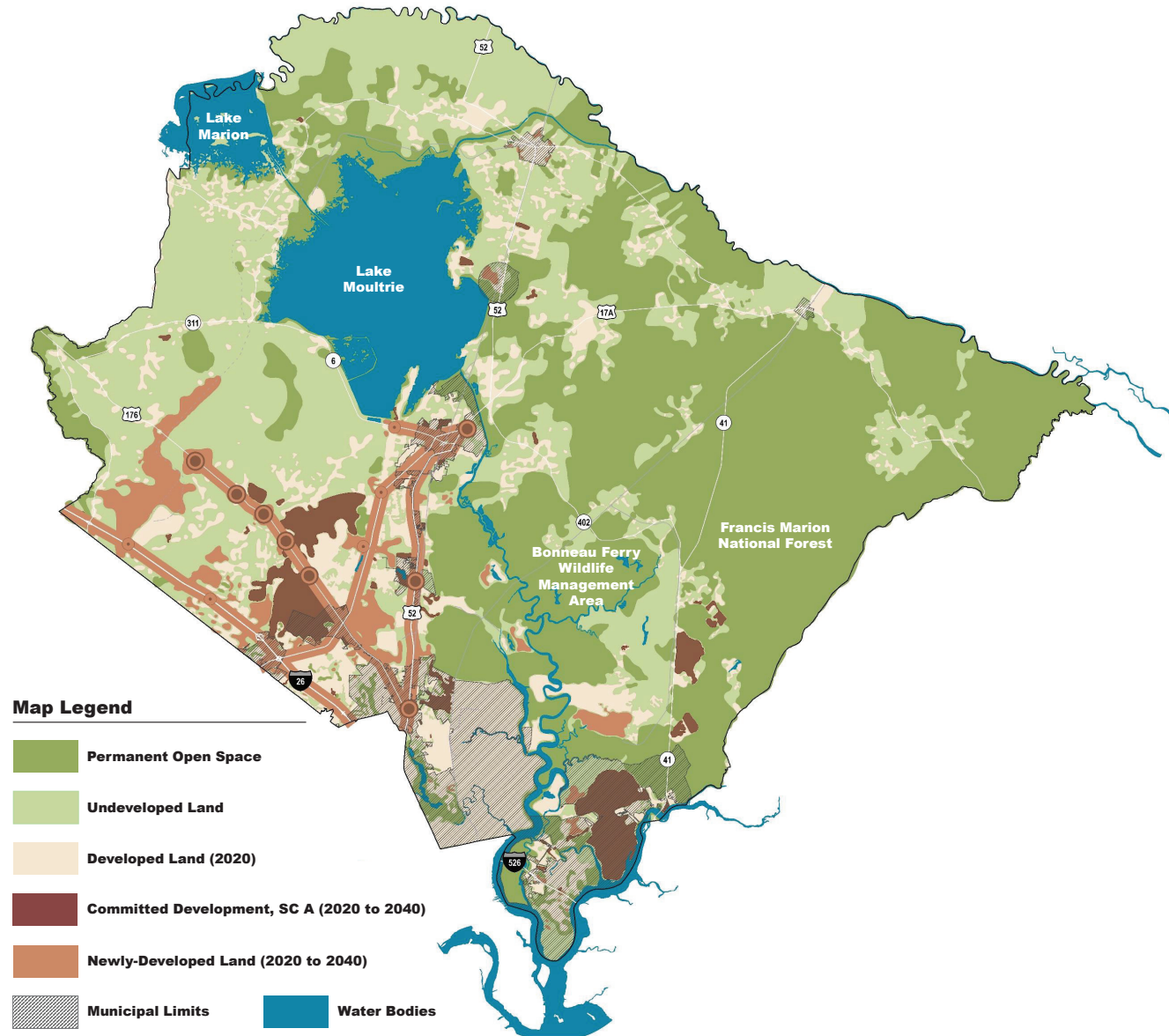
How will the County pay for additional public facilities, services and infrastructure needed to serve the additional developments approved beyond that which have already been “entitled”? With increased costs to develop public facilities, services and infrastructure in new areas, how does new housing and non-residential space remain affordable? How can the County balance additional development with the preservation of rural lands and creation of open spaces within developing areas?

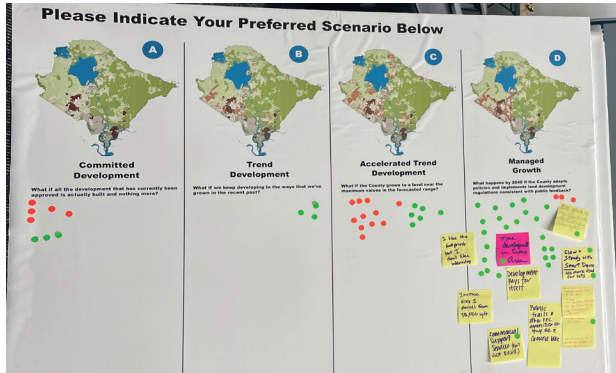
Consider the Alternative.

How can Berkeley County grow differently, consistent with public feedback during the planning process? How can infrastructure investments be maximized for efficiency of the existing systems? What growth patterns can help mitigate the cost to government for providing public facilities and services?

With these objectives in mind, an alternative scenario was presented at the Growth Choices Workshop: Scenario D – Managed Growth. This scenario accommodates the same level of development envisioned in the Accelerated growth trend scenario (Scenario C), but sets a blueprint that more effectively accomplishes the *One Berkeley* vision.

Scenario D Managed Growth

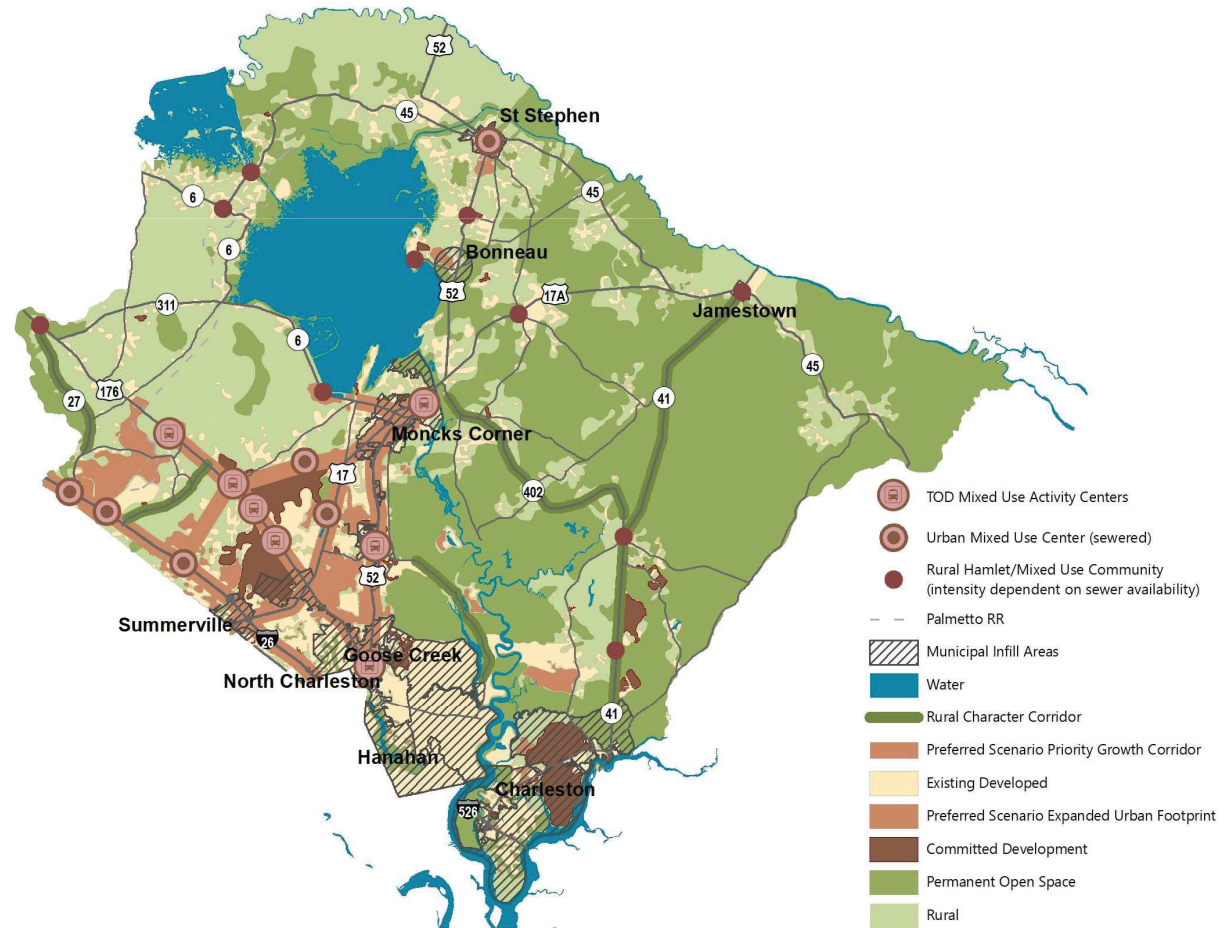




Growth is focused into existing water, sewer and school district service areas to the maximum extent possible, reducing public investments needed to extend infrastructure into new areas. This focused growth minimizes conversion of rural land and enables more rural, open space preservation. More concentrated mixed-use activity centers create walkable communities with greater opportunities for jobs and housing. The Managed Growth Scenario (D) envisions a greater concentration of development along and between priority growth or future premium transit corridors. Concentrated mixed-activity nodes developed along these corridors would support premium transit as an alternative transportation mode for residents and employees to travel between community centers and jobs, education, services and basic needs. More compact, mixed-use development patterns reduce residents' need for individual cars to satisfy daily travel needs.

The Preferred Scenario was built upon the Managed Growth alternative after it received the greatest favorable response by the public. Listening to the feedback of the public, the

Scenario E Preferred Scenario



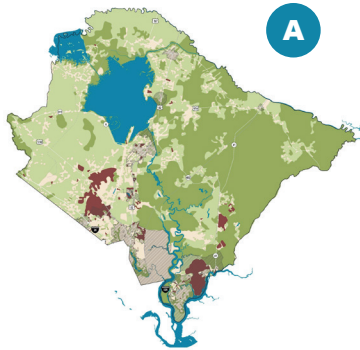
Planning Commission refined the Managed Growth alternative by:

- Adding rural hamlets (communities) at major rural crossroads where services can be centralized and support non-residential uses;
- Identifying rural character corridors along which buffers can keep new

development from changing the rural context of the corridor; and

- Identifying existing towns as mixed-use community centers to encourage maximizing the use of existing infrastructure investment to create jobs in rural areas of the County.

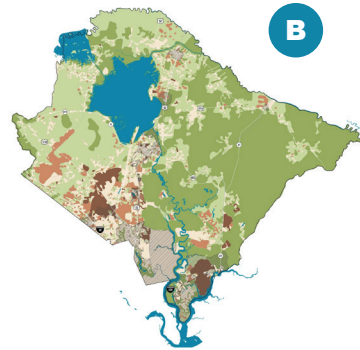
Side-by-Side Scenario Comparison



A
Committed Development

What if all the development that has currently been approved is actually built? What are the impacts from this development?

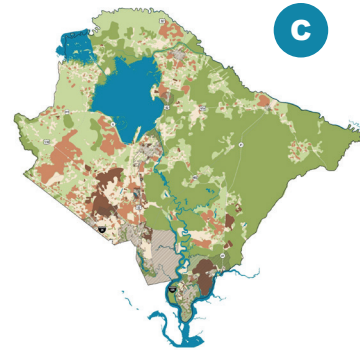
Population (2020)	229,861
Employment (2019)	60,274
Total Housing Units (2020)	84,461
Population (2040)	351,000
Employment (2040)	65,000
Total Housing Units (2040)	134,000
New Development Footprint Context (2040)	
Rural Living	11%
Suburban Neighborhoods	83%
Suburban Centers	4%
Industrial Centers	1%
Mixed-Use Centers	1%
New Home Construction Choices (2040)	
Single-Family Detached	79%
Townhome, Duplex or Triplex	7%
Apartment or Condominium	14%
Commitment to Open Space	No Change
Increase in Development Footprint (2040)	+8,505 acres
Access to Amenities (2040)	
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Parks	64%
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Transit Service	36%
Increased Infrastructure Needs (2040)	
New Road Centerline Miles	527
New Water Line Miles	556
New Sewer Line Miles	562
Financial Return-on-Investment Index (County Revenue / Expenditures, Annual Estimate)	1.23



B
Trend Development

What if we keep developing in the ways that we've grown in the recent past? What are the impacts from this development?

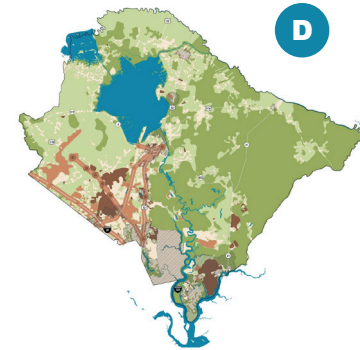
Population (2020)	229,861
Employment (2019)	60,274
Total Housing Units (2020)	84,461
Population (2040)	399,000
Employment (2040)	134,500
Total Housing Units (2040)	154,000
New Development Footprint Context (2040)	
Rural Living	8%
Suburban Neighborhoods	43%
Suburban Centers	16%
Industrial Centers	32%
Mixed-Use Centers	1%
New Home Construction Choices (2040)	
Single-Family Detached	83%
Townhome, Duplex or Triplex	6%
Apartment or Condominium	11%
Commitment to Open Space	No Change
Increase in Development Footprint (2040)	+11,730 acres
Access to Amenities (2040)	
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Parks	46%
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Transit Service	27%
Increased Infrastructure Needs (2040)	
New Road Centerline Miles	911
New Water Line Miles	960
New Sewer Line Miles	897
Financial Return-on-Investment Index (County Revenue / Expenditures, Annual Estimate)	1.34



C
Accelerated Trend Development

What if the County grows to a level near the maximum values in the forecasted range? What are the impacts from this level of increased development?

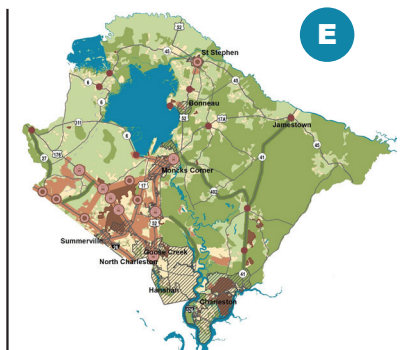
Population (2020)	229,861
Employment (2019)	60,274
Total Housing Units (2020)	84,461
Population (2040)	468,000
Employment (2040)	134,500
Total Housing Units (2040)	181,500
New Development Footprint Context (2040)	
Rural Living	14%
Suburban Neighborhoods	44%
Suburban Centers	14%
Industrial Centers	27%
Mixed-Use Centers	1%
New Home Construction Choices (2040)	
Single-Family Detached	83%
Townhome, Duplex or Triplex	6%
Apartment or Condominium	11%
Commitment to Open Space	No Change
Increase in Development Footprint (2040)	+16,537 acres
Access to Amenities (2040)	
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Parks	52%
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Transit Service	30%
Increased Infrastructure Needs (2040)	
New Road Centerline Miles	1,243
New Water Line Miles	1,292
New Sewer Line Miles	998
Financial Return-on-Investment Index (County Revenue / Expenditures, Annual Estimate)	1.22



D
Managed Growth

What happens by 2040 if the County implements land development regulations consistent with public feedback?

Population (2020)	229,861
Employment (2019)	60,274
Total Housing Units (2020)	84,461
Population (2040)	468,000
Employment (2040)	134,500
Total Housing Units (2040)	181,500
New Development Footprint Context (2040)	
Rural Living	5%
Suburban Neighborhoods	52%
Suburban Centers	5%
Industrial Centers	34%
Mixed-Use Centers	4%
New Home Construction Choices (2040)	
Single-Family Detached	60%
Townhome, Duplex or Triplex	20%
Apartment or Condominium	20%
Commitment to Open Space	Big Increase
Increase in Development Footprint (2040)	+11,706 acres
Access to Amenities (2040)	
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Parks	57%
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Transit Service	37%
Increased Infrastructure Needs (2040)	
New Road Centerline Miles	981
New Water Line Miles	1,076
New Sewer Line Miles	1,098
Financial Return-on-Investment Index (County Revenue / Expenditures, Annual Estimate)	1.30



E
Preferred Scenario

Population (2020)	229,861
Employment (2019)	60,274
Total Housing Units (2020)	84,461
Population (2040)	468,000
Employment (2040)	134,500
Total Housing Units (2040)	181,500
New Development Footprint Context (2040)	
Rural Living	6%
Suburban Neighborhoods	59%
Suburban Centers	5%
Industrial Centers	27%
Mixed-Use Centers	3%
New Home Construction Choices (2040)	
Single-Family Detached	60%
Townhome, Duplex or Triplex	20%
Apartment or Condominium	20%
Commitment to Open Space	Big Increase
Increase in Development Footprint (2040)	+10,402 acres
Access to Amenities (2040)	
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Parks	55%
Homes within 1/4-Mile of Existing Transit Service	35%
Increased Infrastructure Needs (2040)	
New Road Centerline Miles	1,001
New Water Line Miles	1,121
New Sewer Line Miles	998
Financial Return-on-Investment Index (County Revenue / Expenditures, Annual Estimate)	1.30





PART IV

Growing Into the Future

The *One Berkeley* Vision recognizes that additional growth of any magnitude is to be expected with the County's location along the southeastern coast, within the Charleston metropolitan region. The County acknowledges that neither a nation-wide recession or global pandemic have changed the trajectory of its future in recent decades. Yet those elements of the County that draw new residents and encouraging generations to stay are the same assets that are envisioned to remain in the future. Residents, property owners and leaders all recognize that being a great place to live does not happen by luck or happenstance, but rather, by careful planning for:

- A county comprised of many communities with unique identities, from the peaceful woods and rural farmlands to the bustling, interconnected cities, and for county residents everywhere to enjoy the high quality of life that brought or has kept them here.
- Beautiful natural environment - open expanses of fields, woods, and farmland preserved as natural habitat for wildlife protection and for the enjoyment of our future generations.
- Choices to live in developed communities of neighborhoods with easy access to basic amenities or the quiet, rural areas surrounded only by the sounds and sights of nature, and the affordability of both.
- Proximity to Charleston and a wealth of job opportunities, coupled with the region's history, culture, climate, and water resources: lakes, rivers, beaches.
- A high quality of life for residents with adequate transportation infrastructure, public services and facilities, access to basic amenities, job opportunities and a variety of recreational outlets.

These objectives are the basis for the guiding principles which in turn frame the goals and implementation strategies in an *Action Plan for One Berkeley*.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

The County will Engage in Strategic Growth Management Practices that:

- Foster communication and cooperation among County leaders, decision-makers, businesses, and new and existing residents alike, to collaboratively address needs and concerns of the community;
 - Implement streamlined, transparent, and fiscally responsible development decision-making;
 - Prioritize investment in public infrastructure, facilities, and services concurrent with new development to maintain operational integrity and quality of life standards; and
 - Establish and apply thresholds for development impact analyses and mitigation of developments on fiscal resources, the environment, infrastructure and public facilities and services.
-

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

The County will Prioritize Preservation of its Highly-Valued Resources, including:

- The character of the county's diverse and distinct communities;
 - The rural countryside, open space, trees, water resources, natural and wildlife habitats;
 - Culturally and historically-significant areas; and
 - Expansion of public recreational amenities and access thereto countywide.
-

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

The County will Create Great Places for People that:

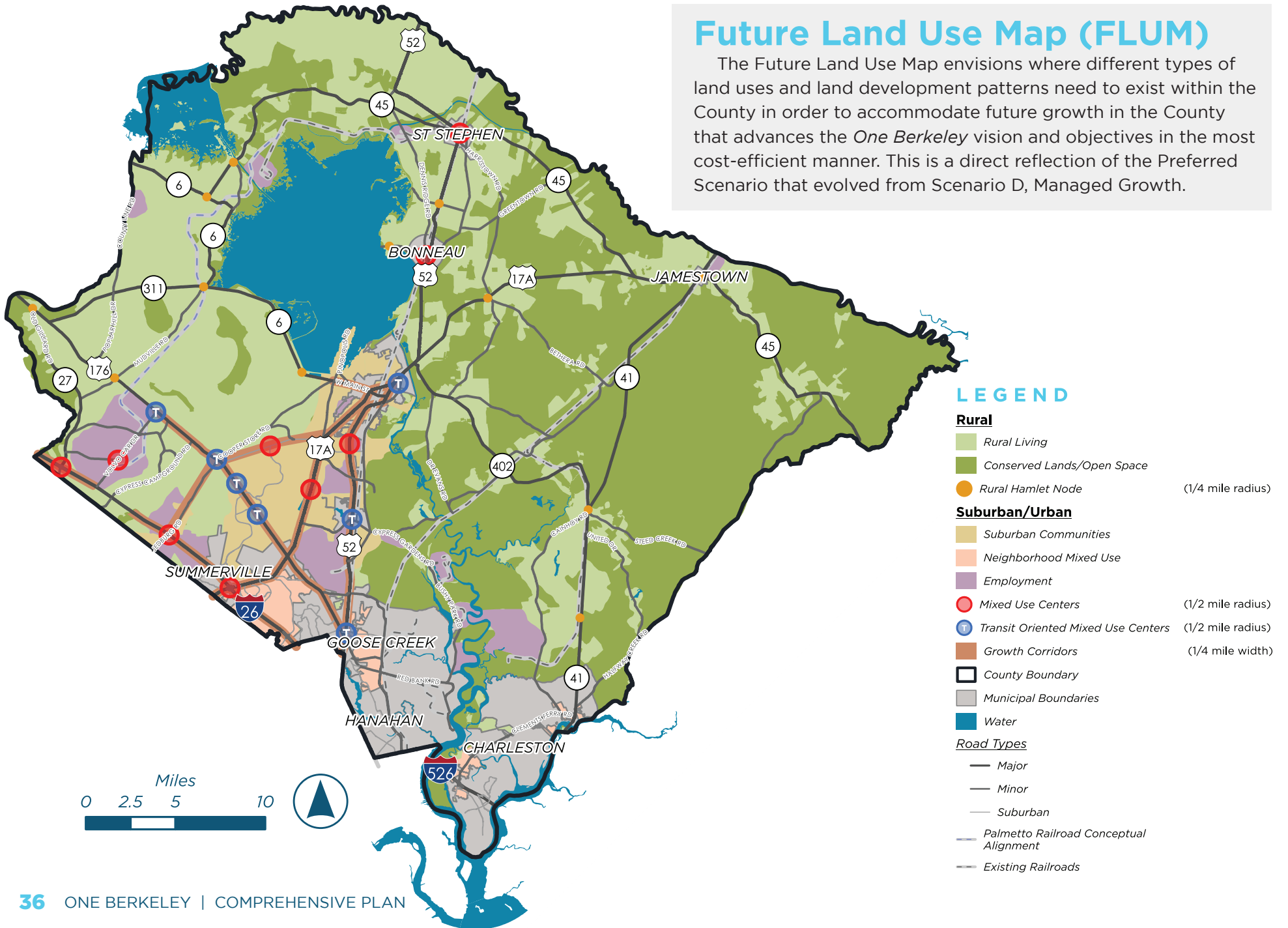
- Cultivate contextually-compatible and strategically located residential and employment growth areas that are served by multiple modes of transportation and align with community objectives in the adopted plan;
- Encourage family-friendly, mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of housing options and amenities where residents can live, play, work, dine, shop, and enjoy a high quality of life in Berkeley County.
- Incorporate non-motorist infrastructure in new developments and promote in existing developments to facilitate safe, efficient, and affordable mobility options;





Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

The Future Land Use Map envisions where different types of land uses and land development patterns need to exist within the County in order to accommodate future growth in the County that advances the *One Berkeley* vision and objectives in the most cost-efficient manner. This is a direct reflection of the Preferred Scenario that evolved from Scenario D, Managed Growth.



Land Use Designations and Place Types

The County seeks to preserve a unique composite of natural and man-made environments. The Future Land Use map identifies the locations of preferred land use designations and place types that distribute conservation, residential, non-residential, mixed-use, employment, and institutional land uses such that growth can be accommodated efficiently. Various zoning and land development regulations may be adopted by the County to realize these fully, but proposed developments should demonstrate consistency with these descriptions upon adoption of the *One Berkeley Plan*.



Conserved Lands/Open Space

Lands designated for conservation and/or open space are in public ownership or conserved by private conservation easements. These land areas are undevelopable or have limited development potential based on individual easement agreements. They are prioritized for greater protection from adjacent development activities to conserve their integrity.



Rural Living

Areas designated for rural living include agricultural lands, which may or may not be developed with working farms, rural homesteads, existing rural or legacy communities, and other complementary uses. This designation includes areas that are not currently served, or programmed to be served, by public utilities as well as existing rural and legacy communities that embody cohesive rural residential character and, in many instances, are served by public water. To be compatible/consistent with surrounding character, *One Berkeley* policies encourage future development of these areas to be context-sensitive in design. Large tracts are encouraged to develop with conservation subdivisions featuring large open space areas and buffers that provide linkages between green infrastructure elements to protect habitat corridors that contribute to the rural



character where practical. Development proposed abutting existing rural or legacy communities are encouraged to continue the existing settlement's lotting pattern where possible or to mitigate impacts on the existing community's character through the use of open space and/or buffers to ensure compatibility.

Rural Hamlet Nodes

Rural Hamlets are designated at crossroads of secondary road intersections in the rural areas, where an unincorporated community exists and is identified by the location of a store, church, school or community center. Zoning should support development within a one-quarter mile radius of these intersections with community, institutional and/or context appropriate commercial uses that are compatible with the character of surrounding rural living areas or communities.



Growth Corridors

Corridors traversing areas of the County where the majority of existing and new suburban or urban development have occurred and are planned are designated as Growth Corridors. Where applicable, zoning for development along these corridors should align with policies within corridor studies, particularly concentrating development at the designated mixed-use activity and transit-oriented (TOD) development nodes, access management, and multi-modal accommodations.



Suburban Communities

Suburban Communities are designated where various subdivisions have developed in recent decades within the principal growth area that was designated by the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. Areas with this designation are predominately developed with residential neighborhoods and communities, with supportive neighborhood playgrounds, open spaces and commercial areas. Residential uses within suburban communities are typically single-family homes on large or small lots, but additional densities to provide diverse housing types in neighborhoods that promote a sense of community will be supported. These areas are designated for such development at densities and locations where they can be served efficiently by infrastructure, facilities and services, and transportation networks. All development activity will be designed to mitigate adverse impacts on any cultural and/or natural resources. Communities should provide for connectivity to one another and be encouraged to align open spaces to preserve habitat corridors identified by the County’s Green Infrastructure Plan.



Neighborhood Mixed Use areas

Neighborhood Mixed Use Center areas are designated where existing development has evolved without a predominant land use. These areas are not primarily residential nor primarily non-residential. These areas may have a mix of neighborhoods and standalone businesses. Plan policies and strategies encourage redevelopment of these areas with walkable mixed use activity areas that connect commercial goods and services with residential neighborhoods that have a mix of housing densities and types. New neighborhoods should provide a system of interconnected trails or sidewalks that will provide access to parks, recreation, and open space areas focused near and in between residential communities.



● Mixed-Use Centers

Mixed-use Centers are nodes where a mix of residential and non-residential uses are concentrated along growth corridors within one-half mile of the intersection with major roads. These include a mix of residential uses along with community shopping areas. Mixed-Use centers may vary in compactness, but include a variety of amenities such as trails and schools in connected patterns that encourage walking/biking. These also may be developed with different characteristics and intensities, including urbanized neighborhoods with mixed-use buildings, mixed-use neighborhoods, and/or town centers.



Ⓣ Transit Oriented Centers/Nodes

Transit-oriented centers are designated at nodes along US52 and US176, two growth corridors where premium transit service is planned according the Regional Transit Framework Plan and can be supported by future development intensities. These mixed-use, walkable centers are encouraged to develop with more intense mixed-use buildings and residential or commercial uses within one-half mile of the identified node and future transit station.





General Commercial/Office

General Commercial/office areas are designated in areas where commercial uses, small shopping centers and or office buildings currently exist independent of neighborhoods in the vicinity. The uses are more destination oriented, service uses that have a regional draw. If abutting neighborhoods, these areas can be further developed with more intensity and connectivity to residential areas.

Employment

Employment areas are designated where existing large industrial and/or employment uses are concentrated or planned for development. These areas are served with supportive infrastructure such as public water and sewer, as well as transportation facilities that accommodate freight movement. They are developed with manufacturing facilities, transportation and warehouse facilities, and mega-industrial sites such as Nucor Steel or Camp Hall. Parcels associated with these uses are large enough to include buffers that ensure that negative impacts on adjacent properties are mitigated. These areas are not conducive to mixed use development, however in some cases, less intensive employment and commercial service establishments may develop as ancillary uses to conveniently serve those employed in the same vicinity.



PRIORITY INVESTMENTS

In developing the *One Berkeley* comprehensive plan, capital improvement initiatives and/or programs were discussed as priorities for the County to initiate in support of the *One Berkeley* vision. In general, improving traffic congestion, expanding parks and recreation facilities, attracting economic development, and encouraging developments that provide affordable housing have been predominant in discussions.

State code was amended in 2007 to require identification of priority investments along with potential funding sources available through federal, state, and local programs. Investment opportunities identified are not exhaustive, but more of an example of potential funding sources.

As discussed in Part II of this Plan, the following were identified as Priorities for the County to pursue and invest in in the future:

- Open Space Preservation/Conservation Plan**
- Comprehensive Recreation Plan and Program**
- Rewrite of Zoning/Land Development Regulations**
- Comprehensive Transportation Plan**
- Affordable Housing Study**
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**
- Economic Development and Marketing**



Rendering of proposed Mega Boat Landing Site on Lake Moultrie.

DETAILED ACTION PLAN

Guiding Principle/Growth Management and Infrastructure Concurrency Goal: The County will engage in Strategic Growth Management Practices					
Goal #	Recommended Policies	Recommended Strategies	Action Area	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
GM-1	<p>Communications: The County will continually enhance communication and cooperation among County leaders, decision-makers, businesses, and new and existing residents alike, to collaboratively address needs and concerns of the community</p>	<p>Establish a forum for Community Concerns and Needs Through collaboration with other applicable County Departments, the Planning Dept will develop an open and collaborative forum for regular discourse and exchange of ideas pertaining to community planning or proposed development projects</p>	Process	Ongoing	Planning Department County Admin PIO
GM-2	<p>Decision Making: The County will identify means for and implement streamlined, transparent, and fiscally responsible development decision-making on land development proposals</p>	<p>(A) Define and consider regulation of “Developments of County Significance” with a heightened review process and requirement for additional community engagement (prior to Commission consideration and entitlement)</p> <hr/> <p>(B) Establish a coordinated review system(s) as needed (either by a system of referrals for comment or expansion of the technical advisory committee) to include all key entities, groups and stakeholders (i.e., school districts, fire districts, adjacent municipalities, etc.) in review of development proposals with potential to impact the provision of public services and facilities</p>	Process	Short Term (1-2 years)	Planning Department County Admin

<p>GM-3</p>	<p>Adequate Public Infrastructure: The County will prioritize ensuring that investments in public infrastructure, facilities, and services for expansion occur concurrently with new development to maintain operational integrity and quality of life standards</p>	<p>(A) Develop a comprehensive Transportation Plan for the County’s network to determine future needs for things such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and safety improvements to address current and projected travel demand • Best practices for Complete Streets and multi-modal accommodations • Accommodation of premium transit corridors identified within the BCDCOG’s Regional Transit Framework Plan to support future transit system expansions • Identification of growth corridors that may warrant a specific corridor study and/or small area plan for access management, redevelopment etc. • Design standards for improvements of rural transportation corridors to preserve their rural character • Travel demand reduction tools/programs such as transit and vanpooling, etc. <p>(B) Compile a comprehensive public infrastructure plan for services and facilities including, but not limited to: schools, water supply and treatment, waste water treatment, and utilities to inform a potential Capital Improvement Program (CIP)</p>	<p>Study/ Ordinance and Plan Amendments</p>	<p>Mid Term (2-5 years)</p>	<p>Engineering, Public Works, Water & Sewer, County Administration/Infrastructure, Planning, BCDCOG</p>		
<p>GM-4</p>	<p>Impact Analyses in Advance of Development Approvals: The County will establish and apply thresholds for conducting development impact analyses and mitigation of developments on fiscal resources, the environment, infrastructure and public facilities and services</p>	<p>(A) Identify and Codify a series of measurable ‘development thresholds’ for assessing and requiring mitigation of the impact of development proposals.</p> <p>(B) Establish a ‘Development Impact Assessment’ Form (or system) to identify the impacts of developments and whether they meet/exceed adopted “development thresholds”</p> <p>(C) Maintain and Employ the County’s CommunityViz Model as a tool to assess whether Land Development Impacts Meet or Exceed ‘Development Thresholds’ and what mitigation actions would be effective.</p>	<p>Land Dev Regs</p>	<p>Process</p>	<p>Process</p>	<p>Short Term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Planning, Engineering, Stormwater, GIS</p>

Guiding Principle/Character Conservation Goal: The County will prioritize the preservation of its highly valued resources, including communities, the natural environment, cultural and historic places, and recreation areas

Goal #	Recommended Policies	Recommended Strategies	Action Area	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
C/P-1	<p>Communities: The County will protect the character of its diverse and distinct communities</p>	<p>Review and amend Land/Site Development Regulations as needed to include distinct rural districts and other requirements that will reduce or minimize development-related community impacts, particularly on existing rural communities and/or settlement areas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employ targeted zoning techniques that seek to protect the special character of unique communities through supplemental or enhanced performance standards or development requirements Work with community members to prepare zoning categories for rural and legacy communities identified in the Cultural Resources element of Appendix B to protect each community’s historic and cultural integrity or character 	ZO Update	Short Term (1-2 years)	<p>Planning Community stakeholders, local historic societies, Center for Heirs Property Preservation, Local land trusts</p>
C/P-2	<p>Natural Environment: The County will conserve its rural countryside, open s, trees, water resources, natural and wildlife habitats</p>	<p>(A) Review and amend zoning and/or land development requirements as needed to incorporate environmental performance standards applicable to all developments Establish explicit requirements for open space set asides and other related environmental performance standards that strike a balance between environmental, public, and economic considerations to apply when land development is proposed within and adjacent to Resource Sensitive areas identified in the Natural Resources element of Appendix B.</p> <p>(B) Employ targeted zoning techniques that seek to protect special character and/or resource areas through supplemental or enhanced performance standards or development requirements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assess tools to assist with directing/redirecting intense development away from special resource protection areas (wetlands, forests, farmlands, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider impacts on ‘wildlife connectivity corridors’ identified on the County’s Green Infrastructure Plan for safe movement of wildlife during and after project development Protect timberlands, agriculture, and aquaculture land uses from encroachment by incompatible development Promote and establish Agri-tourism programs and activities with county partners to build community pride and a “new” revenue-generating cultural resources Consider ‘Ecological Resource Protection Zones’ to protect and preserve natural, ecological resources, such as swamps and similar sensitive areas with requirements/performance standards, such as residential conservation development patterns, vegetative buffers, setbacks, and other strategies to minimize visual and noise disturbances and related impacts in areas designated as resource sensitive identified in the Natural Resources element of Appendix B. Ensure regulations incentivize residential conservation or cluster-style development patterns, particularly on large rural tracts areas and adjacent to rural settlement areas. <p>(C) Establish a Conservation Plan for Berkeley County</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage stakeholders and residents in a planning initiative to identify conservation priorities and define an action plan for implementation Incorporate programs to achieve conservation goals such as: a conservation easement fund, Greenbelt fund, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs, etc. 	ZO Update	Short Term (1-2 years)	<p>Planning, Engineering, Economic Development, and County Tourism Departments Local land trusts</p>
		<p>(C) Establish a Conservation Plan for Berkeley County</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage stakeholders and residents in a planning initiative to identify conservation priorities and define an action plan for implementation Incorporate programs to achieve conservation goals such as: a conservation easement fund, Greenbelt fund, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs, etc. 	Study/Plan Adoption	Short Term (1-2 years)	<p>Planning, County Admin, Finance, PIO and local land trusts</p>

Guiding Principle/Character Conservation Goal: The County will prioritize the preservation of its highly valued resources, including communities, the natural environment, cultural and historic places, and recreation areas					
Goal #	Recommended Policies	Recommended Strategies	Action Area	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
C/P-3	<p>Cultural and Historic Resources: The County will protect and preserve its culturally and historically-significant resources</p>	<p>(A) Consider ‘Rural/Scenic Character Corridor Protection Zones’ to protect and preserve the rural and scenic character of rural transportation corridors with development regulations, including: appropriate performance standards, such as residential conservation development patterns, vegetative buffers, setbacks, and other strategies to minimize visual and noise disturbances and related impacts, particularly adjacent to historic and legacy settlement areas.</p> <p>(B) Institute performance measures to mitigate impacts of new development on special resource areas (i.e., Cooper River Historic District, Cypress Gardens, Beidler Forest, Francis Marion National Forest, etc.) a to be applied during review of land development proposals.</p> <p>(C) Foster residential conservation development patterns and require vegetative buffers, setbacks, and other strategies to minimize visual and noise disturbances and related impacts through bonus densities and performance measures</p> <p>(D) Discourage development with large footprints of land within or near sensitive cultural and/or historic resources that are not directly protected by an overlay or corridor performance standard</p> <p>(E) Consider an initiative to update the County’s historic resource survey last done in the late 1980s</p>	ZO Update	Short Term (1-2 years)	Planning, County Admin, Finance, PIO and local land trusts

<p>C/P-4</p>	<p>Recreation Resources: The County will expand its public recreational amenities and access thereto countywide</p>	<p>(A) Develop a Master Trail Plan of greenways and blueways that builds off BCDCOG’s ‘Walk Bike BCD’ through coordination with municipal partners, agencies, residents and stakeholders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a prioritized network of greenways and blueways, considering connectivity, accessibility, and the needs of various user groups 2. Integrate the master trail plan into a comprehensive county recreation plan 3. Integrate requirement for developments to provide connections that implement the Countywide Master Trail Plan where practicable 	<p>Study/Plan Adoption ZO Update</p>	<p>Mid-Term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Planning, GIS, PIO, Economic Development, BCDCOG, GIS, Municipalities</p>
		<p>(B) Develop a comprehensive County Recreation Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a comprehensive initiative that includes significant public engagement to identify recreation needs and all potential funding sources available to the county, including taxes and fees, grants, low or no-cost loan programs, gifts, etc. 2. Include an assessment to determine what areas of the county are furthest removed and/or most in need of new or improved recreational amenities and prioritize appropriate investments in those areas. 3. Prioritize allocation of resources to continue improving and enhancing public access to water amenities, including: Lake Moultrie and Lake Marion, Cypress Gardens (boat landing or park), Bushy Park (boat landing), Goose Creek Reservoir, public boat launches, the ‘Mega Boat Facility,’ public beach areas, and others to be identified through future public engagement. 	<p>Study/Plan Adoption</p>	<p>Mid Term (3-5 years)</p>	
		<p>(C) Conduct a Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study for establishment of a centrally located, year-round, multi-use County Recreation Facility</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan for and construct an indoor- outdoor facility with multiple fields that can be used year-round for a variety of recreation activities in different ways 2. Collaborate with other agencies and entities, such as the County Emergency Department, early in the process to identify additional opportunities for this new facility to be adaptively designed for “flex space” use (e.g., temporary emergency shelter during hurricanes or other natural disasters, a public “cooling center” during summer months, or an event venue for various clubs or groups). 3. Ensure that the new facility includes adequate bike and pedestrian connectivity from surrounding residential neighborhoods and developments and allows for future connections as the area grows 4. Prioritize public pool(s) 5. Include facility in a Capital Improvement Program 	<p>CIP</p>	<p>Long Term (5-10 years)</p>	<p>Planning, GIS, Public Service providers, Recreation Consultants, Economic Development.</p>
		<p>(D) Establish a County Recreation Department</p> <p>Identify and secure funding for a new County Recreation Department, including support for full time staff, as needed to oversee implementation of a comprehensive recreation plan</p>	<p>CIP</p>	<p>Mid Term (3-5 years)</p>	

Guiding Principle/Great Places Goal: Create and preserve great places within the County					
Goal #	Recommended Policies	Recommended Strategies	Action Area	Timeframe	Responsible Parties
GP-1	<p>Contextual Appropriateness of New Development: The County will cultivate contextually-compatible and strategically located residential and employment growth areas that align with community objectives in the adopted plan</p>	<p>(A) Encourage contextually appropriate growth in Rural Areas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a new ‘Rural Hamlet’ or similar zoning district that accommodates and encourages appropriately scaled residential and supportive non-residential growth for application to ‘rural hamlet nodes’ identified on the Future Land Use Map 	ZO Update	Short Term (1-2 years)	Planning
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Continue to work with partners to improve access to basic services in rural areas of the county while protecting the rural community context. 3. Work with partners to promote use/coordination with transit services and travel demand reduction programs, such as carpooling and vanpooling to provide rural residents with access to jobs and training/ education opportunities 	Process/CIP	Ongoing	Planning, Economic Development, BCDCOG
		<p>(B) Coordinate amongst County departments to ensure alignment and coordination of the County’s Strategic Plans and the One Berkeley Comprehensive Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to focus economic development efforts on recruiting new businesses and land uses that are compatible with identified areas and nodes on the Future Land Use Map 2. Partner/collaborate with the Economic Development Department to launch a community development program targeting appropriately-scaled and compatible business growth and reinvestment within and proximate to incorporated towns and identified rural hamlet nodes 3. Ensure County departments (Economic Development, Grants Administration, Planning) support and collaborate with rural jurisdictions to apply for grant funding (i.e., CDBG) to implement One Berkeley and municipal Comprehensive Plan goals and recommendations 4. Coordinate with major employers to consider integration of housing within or adjacent to new employment development 	Process	Ongoing/ Short Term (1-2 years)	Planning, Economic Development, Grants Administration, BCDCOG
		<p>(C) Amend rural zoning districts as necessary to align standards with rural preservation goals and growth objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate zones that accommodate urban to rural transition areas • Ensure protection of invaluable natural resources • Ensure vegetative buffers are provided by employment uses abutting rural and/or residential areas • Re-evaluate more intensive ‘Special’ and ‘Conditional Uses’ (e.g., mineral extraction) and related standards and conditions 	ZO Update	Short Term (1-2 years)	Planning

<p>GP-2</p>	<p>Fostering Mixed Use Neighborhoods: The County will adopt development policies and practices to encourage family-friendly, mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of housing options and amenities where residents can live, play, work, dine, shop, and enjoy life in Berkeley County</p>	<p>(A) Focus Appropriately-scaled Urban Growth in Strategic Areas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create new mixed use zoning district(s) that encourage appropriately scaled developments in strategic areas and corridors in accord with the Future Land Use Plan to include (a) Transit-Oriented Development Nodes and (b) Mixed-Use Development Activity Centers” 2. Ensure new districts accommodate needs for a variety of housing options, reduce Traffic Congestion and Auto-dependency, and create more ‘livable’ Neighborhoods. 3. Prioritize “livability” and quality of life in the mixed use district regulations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster location of mixed use neighborhoods within or adjacent to already developed areas or mixed use activity centers on the Future Land Use Map • Allow for and incentivize a greater mix of lot sizes, housing types and styles • Allow for or incentivize multi-family housing types near public transportation nodes and employment centers • Require vegetative and/or tree buffer along principal roads and where employment uses abut existing residential areas. • Require application of environmental performance/impact mitigation standards • Incorporate on-site connectivity and ingress/egress off-site 4. Ensure application of performance measures that seek to protect character, such as protective land development buffers, design considerations, use allowances or restrictions, or a more thorough development review process 	<p>ZO Update</p>	<p>Short Term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Planning</p>
		<p>(B) Establish a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Template and adopt a zoning district/framework for application to Transit-Oriented Development Nodes on the FLUM to concentrate growth and infrastructure investments needed, creating a ‘development spine’ and enabling a new, compact development style and pattern, different efficiencies, and economies-of-scale.</p>			

GP-3	<p>Provision of Non-motorized Infrastructure: The County will require incorporation of non-motorist infrastructure in new developments and promote the same in existing developments to facilitate safe, efficient, and affordable mobility options</p>	<p>(A) Update Roadway Design Standards/Codes (LD chapters) to ensure requirements result in the establishment of street connectivity between sites and uses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconsider roadway standards such as access management, ingress/egress and multi-modal accommodations 2. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy for new development proposals where appropriate to complement SCDOT engineering directives that apply to state road improvements 3. Integrate use of traffic calming measures to improve roadway and pedestrian safety where appropriate 	LD	Short to Mid Term (1-5 years)	Engineering, Planning
		<p>(B) Explore incentives and possible funding sources available to retrofit existing roadways to incorporate Complete Streets elements (after adopting a new Complete Streets policy for new developments)</p>	CIP	Mid Term (3-5 years)	



One Berkeley
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN