

City of Walterboro South Carolina



Comprehensive Plan 2010



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City of Walterboro Comprehensive Plan

1.0 Preamble

In early 2008 Walterboro City Council passed the following Vision Statement for the community accompanied by a compendium of more detailed goals that express the changes City leaders would like to see in the foreseeable future.:

“Through strong leadership managing growth, the City of Walterboro continuously strives to be recognized as a very prideful community with a good quality of life for all socio-economic groups through building on its historical background, protecting and enhancing its natural resources and providing and supporting educational, recreational, arts, cultural, tourism commercial and industrial opportunities.”

That vision is reflected in this *City of Walterboro Comprehensive Plan*, and the goals have been incorporated into this Plan where possible. While a number of those objectives lie outside the scope of what a Comprehensive Plan can accomplish, they will serve as a guiding force behind implementing the recommendations contained in this planning document.

1.1 Introduction

The 1994 Planning Enabling Legislation for South Carolina requires that:

“The local planning commission shall review the comprehensive plan or elements of it as often as necessary, but not less than once every five years, to determine whether changes in the amount, kind, or direction of development of the area or other reasons make it desirable to make additions or amendments to the plan. The comprehensive plan, including all elements of it, must be updated at least every ten years.”

The *City of Walterboro Comprehensive Plan* was approved in 1997. Economic and other conditions in the City, the Lowcountry Region and the state at that time were different from the present situation and the Plan was based on 1990 data. The expectations and the goals for Walterboro’s future were based on that foundation and also what were considered “good planning” principles and practices at that time. Although the City has not experienced major population growth during the past ten years, it has annexed land that is significant to the future economic development of the City. As well, attitudes toward such key issues as growth of the community have changed and so has the outlook for the future.

Meanwhile, within the planning profession, smaller communities are receiving considerably more respect and attention than formerly and new approaches have emerged. As a result, this required update provides Walterboro with the opportunity to incorporate all of these shifts into what will function as a new Comprehensive Plan, which will be used as a basis for community development decision-making for the next several years. The Comprehensive Plan will serve as a guide for future growth and development and a point of reference for evaluating proposed developments, rezonings and other decisions that may impact or be impacted by future growth.

Overview of Changes in the City of Walterboro

Since the Plan was completed twelve years ago, a number of changes have occurred in the City, Colleton County, the four-county Lowcountry Region and the state that have transformed the planning environment, compared to that which existed in 1997. Chief among these are:

- **Population Decline and Recovery.** Between 1990 and 2000 the population of Walterboro decreased by more than six percent. Although the 2000 Census results for Walterboro have been questioned for their accuracy, it is clear that even if the decline was not as great as recorded, the City did not experience growth during that decade. What makes this particularly noteworthy is that 1990 to 2000 was a period of major growth for South Carolina, the Lowcountry and Colleton County (which grew by more than 11 percent during the same period). However, beginning in 2002, the population once again began to grow and by 2004 reached the 1990 level and continued to rise.
- **Annexation.** The City undertook a number of annexations taking the municipal boundaries out to the I-95 interchanges, thereby providing strategic locations for economic development along the most important and heaviest traveled—by both trucks hauling freight and passenger vehicles--north-south highway corridor in the United States. The economic potential of these areas, and adjacent parcels, continues to be assessed.
- **ACE Basin.** Colleton County's ACE Basin is a widely recognized ecological treasure that has been covered frequently during the past several years by national travel, news and natural science media. This has brought both attention and visitors to the area and provides further opportunities for related economic development in Walterboro.
- **The Arts.** Walterboro has begun to play a larger role in the arts than formerly, as the result of two key developments. The South Carolina Artisans Center is described on its web site as “the **Official** Folk Art and Craft Center of the State” and “a premier destination for travelers and state residents.” This

resource was added to the City's stock of assets during the present decade. During the same period the Colleton County Arts Council took active possession of the Hampton Street School as a visual and performing arts center and it was also used for the filming of scenes from the feature films *Forrest Gump* and *Radio*. An Arts District has been designated and has the potential to be implemented as an increasing number of individual artists and artisans moves to Walterboro to live and work.

- The Airport. During the past several years the Lowcountry Regional Airport's facilities and services have been expanded and improved. As a result, an increasing number of general aviation flights are being accommodated.
- USC Salkehatchie. The growth of the campus, with its academic and athletic offerings, near the center of Walterboro, is both attracting younger people to the community and permitting local residents to remain in Walterboro while pursuing post-secondary degrees. It also further strengthens the City's role as a regional cultural center.
- Need for Economic Development. Walterboro, in common with many other jurisdictions in the Lowcountry, has continued to recognize the need for diversified economic development in order to provide:
 - Good jobs for residents to ensure that the younger population can stay in Walterboro and that they do not have to make long commutes to Charleston, Summerville, Hilton Head and Beaufort for employment.
 - A balanced tax base, with industrial and commercial development ensuring that present and future residents do not bear a disproportionately large tax burden.
- More Regional Initiatives. The City of Walterboro will be impacted by major region-wide initiatives, including the implementation of the Lowcountry Economic Diversification Strategy and the Regional Multi-Modal Transportation Plan. Both are discussed in detail in the relevant sections of this document.

1.2 A Vision and Planning Goals for the City of Walterboro

The City of Walterboro presently offers its residents a quality of life that should be protected and enhanced. It already has many of the planning and design elements that are currently being included in New Urbanism communities that are being developed throughout the southeastern US. Some of these features include:

- A compact, attractive and economically viable downtown that includes cultural and arts facilities.
- Traditional residential neighborhoods within walking distance of the downtown. In fact, the City's residential neighborhoods, including the compact sections in and near the downtown and the historic districts, and spacious Forest Hills, are a special resource enjoyed by few communities.
- Distinctive natural recreation features (the Great Swamp and related wetlands open space) in the built-up area of the community, located within walking or bicycling distance of the downtown and many residential neighborhoods.

All of the above and other aspects related to the Walterboro quality of life, need to be preserved and enhanced, and their special qualities extended into new development by means of implementation of the updated *Comprehensive Plan*, revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance* and possibly *Design Guidelines* and *Subdivision Regulations*.

To ensure that future growth, both inside current and future municipal boundaries, occurs in a manner which is as favorable for the present residents as it is to the future prosperity of the City, the guiding principles stated by the authors of *The Small Town Planning Handbook* (Third Edition) should be heeded, because they are quite applicable to Walterboro at this time:

“As a community grows and changes, its special character can also change, but good planning can help maintain that certain charms found only in our small towns...The protection and continuation of a town's character, identity, and appearance is a process that goes beyond the tree-lined streets and the storefronts on Main Street...Buildings and public spaces make a community worth caring about.”

“Developers, architects, and builders of new buildings and commercial and residential developments must show respect for older buildings and local character, tastes, and traditions. Buildings from different eras with different styles must blend together into coherent districts, neighborhoods, and streetscapes.”

More specifically, the City of Walterboro should set out to achieve the following:

☞ *Land use and development* patterns should reflect the present street configurations and building scales of both the downtown and the existing residential areas and also the pedestrian scale and walkability of those urbanized areas. To ensure future traffic flows throughout Walterboro, there should be an emphasis on connectivity between existing and new development by means of pedestrian and bicycle systems, as well as roads; new roads should be designed to accommodate future public transit vehicles (that is, small buses), with the City's traditional grid pattern encouraged, instead of suburban cul-de-sacs.

Mixed use developments, with pedestrian-oriented retail and commercial uses will also be encouraged to achieve this goal throughout the City.

In the downtown this means encouraging higher density housing as infill on vacant or underutilized land, utilizing any existing space above stores for apartments and encouraging live-work space for artists and artisans. New housing for older Walterboro citizens should be located in or near the core area so that residents can walk to shopping and services.

At the same time, additional arts, cultural and entertainment facilities should be encouraged to locate in the downtown. Added to the existing arts and educational amenities, they will create a critical mass that will ensure the evolution of an economically significant Arts District.

Outside the core area, but within the existing municipal boundaries, infill development should also be supported; with infrastructure already in place, building costs will be lower than in areas without urban services.

In newly annexed areas, careful infrastructure planning and capital budgeting should balance the City's long range vision with the rights of landowners. New growth should pay for itself without creating undue financial burdens on the City's existing population. Sprawl, or uncoordinated development that spreads out haphazardly from the existing built-up area, is more expensive and less efficient to service with public utilities and transportation, and should be discouraged.

☞ *Natural and historic resources* should continue to be protected, promoted and enhanced. Continuing to conserve and encourage the renovation of the many historic homes in the center of the original City will not only preserve these valuable resources for present and future residents to live or work in or simply to view, but it may result in new economic benefits associated with increased tourism. Appropriately scaled and designed, infill development will be encouraged to maintain the integrity of the community.

Projects such as the Great Swamp Sanctuary provide a very special recreational and educational resource for the community and a potential attraction for visitors. Other parks along creeks and wetlands should be enhanced and, where possible, connected to the Great Swamp. At the same time, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including coordinated signage, should be provided to connect Walterboro's downtown with the Great Swamp.

As the City annexes land along creeks and wetlands in the future, the scenic landscape should also be protected for recreational uses by residents and to attract visitors and high-quality development.

- ☞ The City of Walterboro's *economy* should be encouraged to expand, in concert with Colleton County and the rest of the Lowcountry region, to include a wide range of business and employment opportunities for residents and an increased tax base to help accommodate the City's growth. New businesses should be in those industrial and service sectors which would best compliment regional needs (per the *Regional Economic Diversification Plan*) and would offer job opportunities with higher pay for City residents, lessening the need for residents to travel outside the Walterboro for employment. Sufficient appropriately located (that is, at or near Interstate 95 interchanges) serviced land should be designated for industrial purposes. As a result, the safeguards placed on natural and historic resources should not discourage industry, but attract the highest quality operations to the City of Walterboro and allow the community's beauty and natural character to flourish at the same time.

The increasing economic development importance of the Lowcountry Regional Airport should be protected by establishing an FAA "Noise Compatibility Planning Program" (per *Federal Regulations, Title 14: Aeronautics and Space, Part 150*) and enforcing the provisions through an overlay zoning district. It will prevent encroachment by incompatible development and land uses that would interfere with safe aviation operations and future airport expansion.

- ☞ The City of Walterboro should strive to achieve a successful mix of *housing* types to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population including an adequate supply of affordable housing that is physically safe for occupants and attractive to neighbors. Affordable housing can be achieved through community support, an emphasis on infrastructure support, and the prevention of sprawl will lead to quality affordable housing while minimizing excessive public service demands and costs.
- ☞ *Public and community services* must adequately and efficiently meet the demands of the City's growing population. Capital investments for water and sewer infrastructure, fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks and

recreational facilities should be strategically planned to help implement the City's land use goals and maximize long term value. To allow for a manageable increase in the level and quality of public services and facilities, a coordinated, comprehensive infrastructure investment plan and capital improvements budget needs to be implemented. This should include detailed transportation planning to ensure that the increased volumes of traffic accompanying new development do not lead to congestion.

By requiring traffic impact studies and assessing fees based upon expected impacts, as well as an amendment to the zoning ordinance to require either land or financial contributions for parks and recreation facilities, new development will make a positive financial contribution to the City.

- ☞ *Intergovernmental and interagency coordination* is essential to the successful achievement of all of the above objectives. Colleton County, the Colleton County Economic Alliance, the Colleton County School District, and other organizations should be involved as the City of Walterboro's development process evolves.

Chapter 1: Natural Resources

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Because the City of Walterboro is predominantly urbanized, the natural resources both within and surrounding its current boundaries are affected by the City's development. While growth and the economic benefits of development are generally positive, the City must weigh the negative impacts on the environment. Walterboro has the opportunity to preserve and maintain its natural resources through various conservation practices. This section discusses conservation practices that affect the climate, soils, surface water, and wetlands as well as plant and animal life for the City of Walterboro.

1.2 CLIMATE

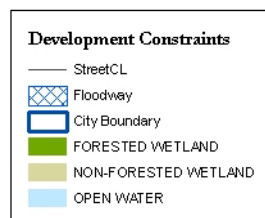
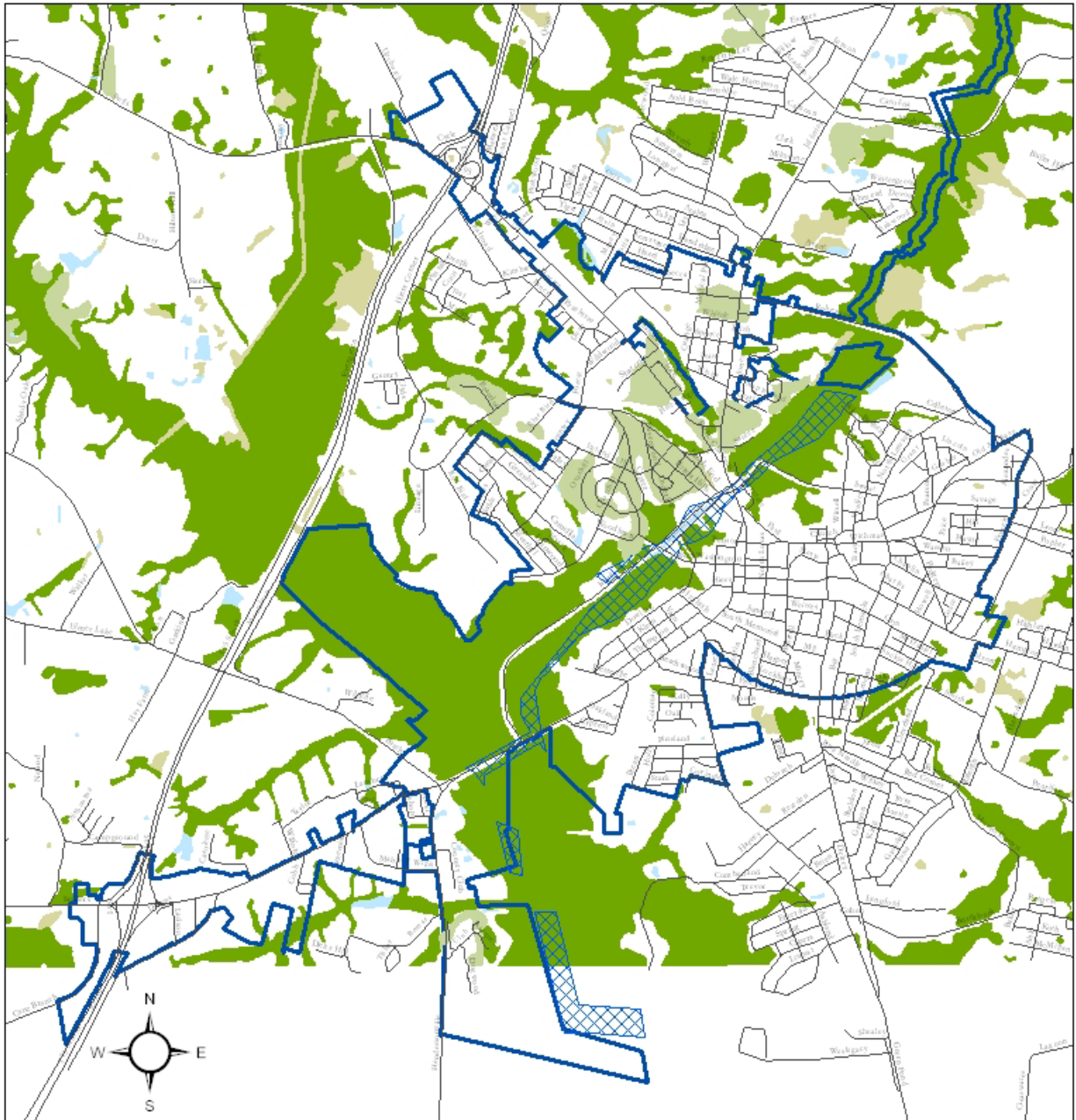
Along with most of the Lowcountry Region, Walterboro has a mild and humid climate. The average annual rainfall is 49 inches per year, and the area has a mean growing season of 238 days. Average elevation in the City is 75 feet above mean sea level (MSL) and ranges from 90 feet above MSL in the east to 40 feet above MSL along the Ireland Creek Canal.

1.3 SOILS AND SLOPES

The Soil Conservation Service has identified 21 types of soils within the City. Knowing the location of the various types of soil is essential to knowing where development should be encouraged and where it should be limited, emphasizing site-specific development appropriateness. Critical areas such as marshes and wetlands should be protected as they are vital to the continued health of the local waterways and also of wetlands further downstream. Map1.1 shows the areas that may have development constraints within the City boundaries.

Slopes can limit development, depending on the degree of gradient. Erosion can cause the soils to be moved, make structures unstable, and lead to excessive sediment in rivers and streams. Developers must be aware of these constraints in order to not increase or create erosion.

City of Walterboro
Development Constraints
Map 1.1




The University's Council of Governments has made all reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of this map. LSCG expressly disclaims all responsibility for any errors, omissions, and/or any damages which may result from the use of this map.
 Date: July 2, 2010
 Data Source: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Columbia County
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1.4 SURFACE WATER

Ireland Creek is the major waterway in the City and is among the headwaters of the Ashepoo River. The City lies within the Ashepoo River sub-basin of the Edisto Combahee River basin, and is an integral part of the ACE basin, which is considered a nationally significant natural resource. Local drainage occurs through either the Great Swamp River or Ireland Creek. The waterways provide and affect natural functions of the community such as water quality, flooding and erosion, and recharging groundwater.

The waterways within the City of Walterboro have their own floodplains, specifically the Ireland Creek floodplain. These floodplains must be carefully examined in order to restrict development and investigate possible relocation of existing structures. There are various restrictions placed on floodplains by the

state agencies, including SCDOT, SCDHEC-OCRM , and COE. Plans for new developments that cover any surface of a wetland parcel must now include a review and approval by OCRM.

1.5 GROUND WATER

The City of Walterboro has abundant, good quality water available. An investigation done in the mid-90s found that the City had a surplus capacity of 5,000,000 gallons per day and that draw-down was not a problem. Therefore, no outside sources will be needed in the foreseeable future. However, since that study was done over ten years ago there is a need for a reevaluation of the current surplus capacity as the City has grown in population and size.

1.6 FLORA AND FAUNA

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains a list of endangered species of Colleton County which include various reptiles, fish, birds, turtles, and plants within the City boundaries, and also includes the following natural resources: forest, forested wetlands, and non-forested wetlands.

The Great Swamp Sanctuary is a catalyst for ecotourism in the City of Walterboro and the Lowcountry Region. One of the greatest natural resource attractions in the City, it is part of the east-coast's largest estuarine preserve which features one of the only known braided creek swamps accessible to the public. It also features an old stagecoach road. There is a network of boardwalk, hiking, biking, and canoe trails that runs throughout the 600 plus acre preserve along with a proposed 10,000 square foot Discovery Center which creates a destination for ecotourism.

1.7 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. STREAMS, RIVERS, AND WATERSHEDS

- ☞ Ensure the City has reliable sources of drinking water.
- ☞ Clean and shape Ireland Creek, as permitted by the Corps of Engineers, to allow the natural areas to be mechanically maintained.
- ☞ Improve watershed quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution through educating the public, enforcing regulations and new land use policies.

2. WETLANDS AND HYDRIC SOILS

- ☞ Update current zoning ordinance and other development regulations to reflect the goal of protection and conservation of wetlands.
- ☞ Develop minimum buffer requirements for wetlands.
- ☞ Ensure that existing floodplains are maintained in a state where their essential natural functions can be performed.
- ☞ Charge an additional mitigation fee for the loss or convention of wetlands to contribute directly to the protection, restoration, and management of other wetlands in the City.

3. CRITICAL ECOSYSTEMS, HABITATS AND ASSOCIATED FLORA AND FAUNA

- ☞ Review endangered species list in order to conserve when determining development requests.
- ☞ Encourage new developers and private land owners to use conservation easements, purchase of development rights, and other conservation related incentives.
- ☞ Restore, maintain, manage, and enhance critical landscapes by encouraging landowner partnerships with Federal and State private lands management agencies.
- ☞ Develop a plan for control and removal of invasive exotic plant species. Protection of trees should remain a priority through proper enforcement and enhancement of the tree protection ordinance.

4. TRADITIONAL LAND MANAGEMENT IN FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

- ☞ Promote forestry and agricultural conservation best management practices for farms, forests, and plantations in areas that are annexed to the City.
- ☞ Establish rural land programs such as voluntary agricultural districts, land conservation districts, and rural residential districts.
- ☞ Charge an impact fee for development of prime farmlands and redistribute the funds to protect natural resources on land that may be annexed to the City in the future.

- ☞ Encourage the use of native vegetation in all site development and landscaping to ensure that development will not have negative effects.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- ☞ Develop a specific management plan for archaeological, historic, and cultural resources.
- ☞ Evaluate, provide, and promote activities, facilities, and educational opportunities to enhance cultural stewardship and tourism opportunities.

6. URBAN GROWTH MANAGEMENT

- ☞ Create an urban greenspace plan to provide urban parks, greenways, and usable natural areas for the public.
- ☞ Protect land permanently through a variety of protective land conservation mechanisms such as easements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, fee simple land acquisitions, and other tools.

7. NATURAL RESOURCE ECONOMICS

- ☞ Continue to promote and conserve The Great Swamp Sanctuary as a form of ecotourism for the region.
- ☞ Expand and diversify wildlife recreation opportunities in the undeveloped areas of Waltherboro to increase tourism, gain larger local interests, and stimulate the economy.

2.1 Historic Background

Paul and Jacob Walter found Hickory Valley while searching for a summer home away from the malaria ridden swamps of the Lowcountry. Each summer more people followed the brothers to this area until some began to live here year round. The area came to be known as Walterborough after the brothers who first settled here.

Walterboro became the county seat in 1817 and was officially incorporated in 1826. This brought more people into the area. Walterboro was the third designated county seat and remains the county seat of Colleton County to present. Noted public landmarks include the County Courthouse. Renowned architect Robert Mills designed the portico, and wings to the original structure were added later. The Old Jail was designed by Charleston architects Jones and Lee. The population continued to grow with the establishment of Anderson Field in 1930's and Walterboro's close proximity to Interstate 95 in the 1970's.

The City of Walterboro is the epitome of a natural southern City with its oak tree-lined streets, historic homes and structures dating back to 1820s, and a walkable downtown that has remained unchanged for 100 years.

2.2 Historic Resources Survey

The City of Walterboro has two National Register Historic Districts, the *Walterboro District*, and the *Hickory Valley District*, both of which were designated in 1980. Walterboro also has several important landmarks listed on the National Register:

Hotel Albert Commercial Block: also known as the Shoppes at the Albert House. It is located on E. Washington Street and is now used as a multi-use commercial. It has historic significance dating back to the 1900-1920s era.

The Old Jail: located on N. Jeffries Boulevard, this site was constructed in 1855, and served as the Colleton County Jail until 1937. It is a neo-Gothic structure resembling a miniature fortified castle. The Old jail currently houses the Colleton County Museum, County Council Chambers and the Chamber of Commerce.

The Colleton County Courthouse: located at the intersection of N. Jeffries Boulevard and Hampton Street, the Courthouse was completed in the fall of 1821. The structure is Greek Revival style. The west wing was added to the structure at the turn of the century, and the east wing was added in the late 1930's. In 2007 the structure underwent a major renovation.

The Little Library: constructed in 1820, this structure is located on Church Street in the original center of the city. The library served the City until 1955, when the local Library Society consolidated with the Colleton County Memorial Library. Today the Little Library serves as the headquarters of the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society.

The Old Walterboro High School/University of SC--Salkehatchie: located on Hampton Street, the Old Walterboro High School opened for its first class in 1925. In 1985, the University of South Carolina purchased the building and established classes in Walterboro.

Hampton Street Elementary: (now the Colleton Center) is in the Walterboro Historic District. It is an Art-Deco style of architecture built in the 1930's. It is not currently on the National Register.

2.3 Historic Preservation Issues

Walterboro is having various problems and degrees of success with preserving its historic properties and maintaining their character. Many historic structures have been altered and inappropriate materials have been used. Limited financial assistance is available in the state or the US for maintenance and renovation of historic properties; innovative approaches are required.

The encouragement of infill within the built-up areas of Walterboro can be an important part of this, if new construction or renovations are compatible—in terms of size, height, architectural details, materials and colors—with existing structures. The Zoning Ordinance provides the tools for implementing this, and includes the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness as provided in the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The City of Walterboro has a great opportunity to capitalize on the historic areas economically. However, in order to do this effectively there must be an increased public awareness of the importance of preservation joined in efforts with the local government agencies. There should be a combined, ongoing effort to rehabilitate, renovate, and reuse these historic resources.

2.4 Historic Preservation Strategies

The actions and decisions made by private property owners, City Council, and Commissions will decide the long-term fate of Walterboro's historic resources. If these

properties are to be protected to maintain Walterboro's identity and attractiveness for residents, visitors and investors, the City will need to work with local, regional, state and federal laws to develop an effective preservation program. Such an effort should include the following elements:

- Status Quo: There is support for local preservation efforts and organizations, encouraging public awareness of preservation issues and opportunities.
- Development Regulations: In 2000, Walterboro City Council passed a preservation ordinance complete with guidelines. The ordinance is presently in the process of being updated.
- Historic Survey: Two historic surveys have been completed: one in the 1970's by Lowcountry Council of Governments and another in the 1980's by the Chamber of Commerce. The survey of the City of Walterboro Historic Resources is presently being updated by the Preservation Commission.
- Public Education: Community support is the key to any preservation effort. In 2008, Walterboro was designated "A Preserve America City." This encourages education and preservation of all assets. Education should be a joint effort between City government and local and state historic preservation organizations. Property owners, prospective builders and developers should be made aware of the zoning incentives and tax advantages related to buildings with historic stature.
- Financial Incentives: Every effort should be made to help property owners, realtors and prospective owners understand that maintaining historic significance increases property values. These property values will remain stable or increase in value.
- Data Base: More details about and photos showing present conditions of each of the listed structures are needed to aid in the enforcement of zoning ordinances and design guidelines for preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures and the construction of adjacent new buildings.

GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The goals and implementation strategies will become increasingly important as development pressures increase in the City of Walterboro. Enforcing a strong preservation ordinance will help maintain the quality of life that present residents enjoy and will insure attracting visitors, investors, and future residents.

GOAL: Protect and enhance historic sites, structures and resources, and foster compatible new development to maintain the City's historic and cultural character.

OBJECTIVE 1: Protect historically significant resources by strengthening and enforcing development standards and regulations to ensure compatible development and redevelopment and to minimize encroachment by incompatible land uses.

1. A historic inventory survey was completed in the 1970's by Lowcountry Council of Governments and by the Chamber of Commerce in the 1980's. The Preservation Commission is presently updating the survey. This will also provide information to SHPO as it reviews projects requiring OCRM permits or those receiving federal funding to ensure that State's historic resources are protected from adverse impacts. Protection of historic sites ultimately is the responsibility of local government.
2. Enforce the preservation ordinance in order to control demolition of historic resources and to limit demolition to only those buildings whose structural integrity has been determined to be in a condition beyond viable repairs.
3. Provide additional incentives through the preservation ordinance to encourage compatible new development and adaptive re-use of existing structures.
4. Create an Overlay District with design regulations in the areas of historic concentration not included in either of the national historic districts. This includes provisions to control demolition, incentives to encourage appropriate new infill development and rehabilitation of and additions to existing buildings. Design Guidelines appropriate for these areas need to be incorporated for historic preservation needs and requirements.

OBJECTIVE 2: Support efforts to involve and educate all members of the community in the process of preserving the City of Walterboro's historic resources.

1. Commit to an ongoing community education and communication program so that the advantages and benefits of preserving Walterboro's historic resources are clearly understood by residents, business owners, builders, developers and visitors.
2. Identify and encourage grants and other funding to expand historic and cultural resources.

Chapter 3: Housing

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A key planning goal for Walterboro is to have a compact, economically viable downtown with traditional residential neighborhoods within walking distance of downtown, all surrounded by natural recreational features. Providing and maintaining attractive, safe, and affordable housing stock is an important part of implementing this goal for the City. Mixed-use development in future growth areas will also help achieve this objective as the City plans for expansion and ensures an adequate supply of housing at all price ranges in order to accommodate the truly diverse population who work and live in the area.

This section will assess changes in housing stock in Walterboro during the recent past, identify housing problems and create an implementation plan to provide affordable housing, improve the quality of the housing stock, encourage infill development and preserve those historic housing districts.

3.2 INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The Statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau of 1990 and 2000, supplemented by more recent building permit data illustrate the changes in housing stock over the years in Walterboro.

☞ **Housing Units.** According to the U.S. Census Bureau of 1990 and 2000, Walterboro, South Carolina had a total of 2,362 housing units in 2000, which is only a slight increase from 1990, which had a total of 2,325. Meanwhile, the population decreased slightly from 5,492 in 1990 [NOTE: Original Census numbers were revised in later Census tables] to 5,449 in 2000. The population in the City of Walterboro decreased which can account for the accompanying decrease in the number of housing units over the 1990 to 2000 year time span. There was a decrease in demand for housing as a result of the decrease in population for the City of Walterboro during those years. As the population increased by more than five percent—from 5,449 to 5,739—between 2000 and 2007, the number of new homes built also increased. In the future, further population growth will lead to a related escalation in demand and then supply. Table 3.1 on the following page shows the slight increase in the number of housing units in the City of Walterboro 1990 and 2000.

Table 3.1
Housing Units in the City of Waltherboro

<u>Housing Units</u>			
	1990	2000	<u>1990-2000 %Δ</u>
	2325	2362	1.59%

Source: US Census

Between 2000 and 2007, a total of 68 building permits were issued for new residential construction, 64 of them for single-family homes. While most of the US was showing a decline in residential building activity after 2005, Waltherboro's busiest years during that period were 2006 and 2007, with 14 and 15 homes respectively started those years, compared to three each in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

☞ **Housing Units by Type and Tenure.** In Table 3.2 the housing units are separated by type for the years 1990 and 2000 and by tenure (renter or owner occupied units). Generally speaking, the greater the number and percent of owner occupied units, the stronger the community is. Ownership tends to bind households more closely to the community than does renting, and owner occupied dwellings are usually better maintained than those occupied by tenants. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of owner occupied units in Waltherboro declined, but their proportion of total housing stock remained the same.

Table 3.2
City of Waltherboro: Housing Units by Tenure and Type

	<u>1990</u>	% of total of tenure	<u>2000</u>	% of total of tenure
<u>Owner Occupied</u>				
Single Family				
Detached	1262	96.56%	1171	95.70%
Attached	21	1.61%	16	1.30%
Multi Family	0	0.00%	9	0.70%
Mobile Home	24	1.84%	20	1.60%
Other	0	0.00%	8	0.70%
		% of total housing units		% of total housing units
Total Owner Occupied	1307	62.6%	1224	62.54%
<u>Renter Occupied</u>				
Single Family				
Detached	402	51.47%	442	60.30%
Attached	7	0.90%	25	3.40%
Multi Family	363	46.48%	256	33.10%
Mobile Home	9	1.15%	10	1.40%
Other	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
		% of total housing units		% of total housing units
Total Renter Occupied	781	37.4%	733	37.46%

Source: US Census (Sample Data)

☞ **Building Permit Statistics.** Building permit data shows only types of housing, but not tenure. However, as Table 3.2 demonstrates, most single family homes are owner occupied. Table 3.3 below shows that between the years of 2000 and 2007, the number of single family homes increased. It is very difficult to compare the housing costs (without land) from year to year with this data, since there are some anomalies. However, it seems that they are becoming less affordable, which may cause more households to rent or consider moving to less expensive locations.

City of Walterboro Building Permits
Table 3.3

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
Single Family (SF) Number	15	14	11	9	6	3	3	3
SF Value	\$2,266,550	\$ 2,120,703	\$ 1,686,395	\$ 692,290	\$ 858,945	\$ 480,000	\$ 560,000	\$ 772,000
Average SF (w/o Land)	\$151,103	\$ 151,479	\$ 153,309	\$ 76,921	\$ 143,158	\$ 160,000	\$ 186,667	\$ 257,333
Mobile Home (MH) Number	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MH Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-Family (MF) Number	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0
MF Value	\$-	\$-	\$91,000	\$-	\$564,210	\$186,000	\$-	\$-

Source: City of Walterboro

☞ **Housing by Age.** Generally, the age of the housing stock influences conditions, costs, and maintenance needs of the unit. All these factors that come with the age of a house are important to consider when looking at the potential of the area for development. Walterboro should focus on renovating the existing housing stock due to its historical value and creating new housing by infill development. It is recommended that a housing conditions survey be conducted in the Historic Districts to determine where and how much renovation and preservation are needed.

Table 3.4 (on the following page) uses data from the 2000 Census to compare the chronology of construction dates of units constructed in the City of Walterboro from 1939 or earlier to March of 2000. The greatest amount of housing was built between 1950 and 1959. The average year that the housing structures were built in the City of Walterboro was 1971.

Table 3.4
City of Waltherboro: Age of Existing Housing Stock

<u>Year Structure Built</u>	<u># of Units</u>
Total:	1957
Owner occupied	1224
1999 to March 2000	0
1995 to 1998	45
1990 to 1994	18
1980 to 1989	62
1970 to 1979	154
1960 to 1969	240
1950 to 1959	297
1940 to 1949	189
1939 or earlier	219
Renter occupied	733
1999 to March 2000	0
1995 to 1998	44
1990 to 1994	33
1980 to 1989	84
1970 to 1979	219
1960 to 1969	123
1950 to 1959	117
1940 to 1949	75
1939 or earlier	38

Source: U.S. Census 2000

☞ ***Housing Affordability.*** Housing is considered affordable when the total cost (including utilities, taxes, insurance, and rent or mortgage payments) is no more than 30 percent of the household's monthly gross income.

Table 3.5
Affordable Housing Definitions
30% of Income Available for Housing

Category of Family Income	Annual Income	Annual Cost	Monthly Cost
<i>Very Low Income</i>			
50% of less MFI	\$19,600 or less	\$5,880 or less	\$490 or less
<i>Low Income</i>			
50% to 80% of MFI	\$19,601 to \$31,360	\$5,881 to \$9,408	\$491 to \$784
<i>Moderate</i>			
80% to 120% of MFI	\$31,361 to \$47,040	\$9,409 to \$14,112	\$785 to \$1,176

Walterboro's median household income increased greatly from \$17,617 in 1989 to \$32,200 in 1999. The median gross rent a household could have afforded was \$448 a month for housing in 1999. In mortgage terms, assuming a 100 percent mortgage for 30 years at 7 percent, the household could have purchased a home for approximately \$67,000. The 2000 Census found, however, that the median house price for owner occupied dwellings was \$74,500, demonstrating a potential affordability problem for at least one-half of Walterboro's households.

There are also affordability problems for renters, as the table below demonstrates.

Table 3.6
City of Walterboro: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income
1989 and 1999
Renter-Occupied

Year	1989	1999	1989	1999
Rent	Number		Percentage	
Less than 20 percent	208	258	27.37%	34.77%
20 to 24 percent	94	173	12.37%	23.32%
25 to 29 percent	109	62	14.34%	8.36%
30 to 34 percent	55	17	7.24%	2.29%
35 percent or more	226	144	29.74%	19.41%
Not Computed	68	88	8.95%	11.86%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

The tables above show that there are large percentages of the households that have a gross rent percent that is 30% or more of their incomes. This percentage decreased from 1989 to 1999 for renter-occupied which shows that renter -occupied housing is becoming more affordable for the City. However, there are still a significant percentage of renters who used 30% or more of their household income towards their gross rent. In the future, the City of Walterboro will be taking steps towards making owner and renter households units more affordable for the income levels in City of Walterboro community.

Since the above data is almost ten years-old, the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) annual report *Out of Reach* was used to give a more up-to-date view of the situation. Every year the NLIHC assembles and analyzes housing affordability data at the county level. In 2008 the organization found that 49 percent of renters in Colleton County in 2008 were unable to afford a two bedroom apartment at fair market rent. Although the information in Table 3.7 on the following page is for the entire county, the numbers are a reliable indicator of current conditions in the City.

Table 3.7
Rental Housing Affordability in Colleton County

	South Carolina	Colleton County
2008 Area Median Income¹		
Annual	\$53,111	\$40,800
Monthly	\$4,426	\$3,400
30% of AMI ²	\$15,933	\$12,240
Maximum Affordable³ Monthly Housing Cost by % of Family AMI		
30%	\$398	\$306
50%	\$664	\$510
80%	\$1,062	\$816
100%	\$1,328	\$1,020
2008 Fair Market Rent (FMR)⁴		
One-Bedroom	\$591	\$439
Two-Bedroom	\$672	\$543
Three-Bedroom	\$854	\$768
Four-Bedroom	\$943	\$788
% Change from 2000 Base Rent to 2008 FMR		
One-Bedroom	31%	43%
Two-Bedroom	31%	43%
Three-Bedroom	31%	43%
Four-Bedroom	31%	42%
Annual Income Needed to Afford FMR		
One-Bedroom	\$23,631	\$17,560
Two-Bedroom	\$26,874	\$21,720
Three-Bedroom	\$34,156	\$30,720
Four-Bedroom	\$37,727	\$31,520
Percent of Family AMI Needed to Afford FMR		
One-Bedroom	44%	43%
Two-Bedroom	51%	53%
Three-Bedroom	64%	75%
Four-Bedroom	71%	77%
2008 Renter Household Income		
Estimated Median ⁵	\$28,551	\$22,278
Percent Needed to Afford 2 BR FMR	94%	97%
Rent Affordable at Median	\$714	\$557
% Renters Unable to Afford 2 BR FMR ⁶	47%	49%

☞ ***Link between Public Facilities and Housing.*** The City of Walterboro has been growing and is now planning for future growth, including changes to the services and infrastructure provided in the area. The City will focus growth where it will be economically feasible to provide sewer and water as well as other community services such as fire protection, law enforcement, emergency services, and public education and recreation.

As mentioned in the Land Use element, section 5.4, using a recommended framework for a “development area” to manage future growth will aid in laying out an organized pattern of growth which will create the most cost-effective placement of these public facilities.

Currently, there is a need for a focus on affordable housing to meet the needs of the existing and expected diverse population. To address this issue, the City of Walterboro will encourage mixed-use new development districts and identify other approaches that utilize public, private, and non-profit housing providers and partnerships among them.

The Priority Investment section of this plan will also address these issues.

3.3 VISION

While adequate and affordable housing for Walterboro’s current and projected population is an important goal of the City, it must be provided within the context of the other development and land use recommendations contained within this plan.

To implement the planning and housing objectives and to guide and encourage developers and builders, the City’s new Zoning Ordinance should include specific guidelines and regulations.

☞ ***Housing Goals***

GOAL: Housing Preservation

OBJECTIVE #1: Continue to encourage the preservation of historic homes in the City of Walterboro through the tools of implementing zoning, building codes, and design guidelines.

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance and Design Guidelines to bring them into conformance with the new Comprehensive Plan.
2. Review, control, and enforce codes and ordinances.

3. Provide zoning incentives to encourage preservation of the existing neighborhoods and downtown districts.

GOAL: Affordable Housing

OBJECTIVE #2: Promote affordable and suitable housing opportunities.

1. Encourage affordable housing in locations throughout the City.
2. Work with a proposed Regional Housing Authority to create new strategies.
3. Develop and expand public/private partnerships to create greater support and incentives for affordable housing.
4. Create incentives in the Zoning Ordinance to encourage builders and developers to provide affordable housing.
6. Encourage Mixed-Use Development in future growth areas.

GOAL: Homeownership

OBJECTIVE #3: Encourage homeownership in Walterboro as with it comes various incentives to the community and the residents as a whole.

1. Educate citizens on the incentives of homeownership such as economic viability and increased quality of living.
2. Obtain grants and other assistance through the HOME Consortium to facilitate increased home ownership.
3. Create ways in which homeownership can be made affordable for the various family income-levels.

GOAL: Good Residential Development

OBJECTIVE #4: Protect the visual standards and physical safety of the community of Walterboro by promoting housing that will enhance the unique character, culture, and natural resources of the area.

1. Ensure that landlords are held accountable for the maintenance of their properties.

2. Update the Zoning Ordinance and create Design Guidelines to encourage creative forms of new development and renovation of existing structures.
3. Encourage collaborative approaches among government, developers, and new homeowners.

GOAL: Conservation

OBJECTIVE #5: Protect the City of Walterboro's environment and decrease the negative environmental effects new housing developments can have on the City.

1. Encourage the use of mixed-use developments with pedestrian-oriented retail to encourage the decreased dependence on motorized vehicles.
2. Use incentives to maintain coordinated development with the current pattern of the City in order to decrease the negative effects of sprawl and rural developments.
3. Create a regional approach to protecting the City of Walterboro's special natural environmental features, such as the wetlands related to the Great Swamp, through collaborations with government, developers, and homeowners.
4. Encourage infill development in the existing built-up environment in order to conserve resources and reduce the effects of sprawl.
5. Promote the concept of connectedness in the community among new development and the existing built-up areas of the community.

Chapter 4: Economy

A balanced and well-functioning local economy is one that is dynamic, diverse, and sustainable. Diversity in the local economy allows for a wider range of employment and career opportunities for employees and entrepreneurs and also ensures the attraction and retention of qualified and educated workers. An economy that is diverse will attract a wider array of business prospects. A community with diversity in business opportunities, a trained and educated work force, and a dynamic economy is one that functions successfully even during economic downturns.

4.1 LOCATION

Walterboro is fortunate in terms of its location. In fact, it has transportation and other advantages that communities throughout the United States would envy. Those advantages should make it attractive to a wide variety of industries, and businesses, especially those related to distribution, logistics and warehousing, as was recommended in the *Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan* in 2005 (see discussion in section 4.4). Walterboro has two interchanges on I 95; it is less than an hour from the Port of Charleston, one of the busier ports on the east coast of the US; it is less than an hour from Charleston International Airport, whose volume of both passenger and freight traffic has also been growing. Within Walterboro is the Lowcountry Regional Airport, which is now able to handle corporate jets and is serving an increasing number of them; many corporations consider this very important when locating new facilities.

Future major developments outside the area are expected to make the location even better. Walterboro's I-95 interchanges will be approximately equidistant from the massive inland port/international logistics center on I-26 near Orangeburg and the new port in Jasper County on the Savannah River. Strategic annexations, land use planning and zoning at the new I-95 interchanges will ensure that Walterboro will be able to benefit from its location.

Walterboro is also one of the key entrances to the ACE Basin, a nature based tourism attraction that brings ecological and outdoor activity visitors to the area. Since these tourists have been shown to spend relatively high amounts of money per day, they represent potential for the development of high-end accommodations and other services, but on a small scale.

4.2 TAX BASE/CONSTRUCTION

A diversified local economy also means a balanced tax base, with sufficient revenues from commercial and industrial uses to prevent an over-reliance on residential taxes to support community services. A balance between residential and commercial tax bases is a goal of this Plan. Commercial building permit data is a way to assess this situation

over time. While Colleton County issued more commercial permits between 2001 and 2007, their value—and their contribution to the tax base—was greater in the City, as shown in Table 4.1 below. Even more important, in terms of balance, the total value of commercial permits in Walterboro between 2001 and 2007 was \$32,154,211, while the residential (single-family and multi-family) total was only \$8,813,803.

Table 4.1: Building Permits for New Commercial Construction in Walterboro and Colleton County, 2001-2007

		2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
City of Walterboro	Commercial Number	11	2	9	11	7	7	8
	Commercial Value	\$7,002,158	\$4,150,000	\$11,312,000	\$3,279,000	\$986,585	\$2,127,600	\$7,562,453
Colleton County	Commercial Number	17	6	15	23	4	16	6
	Commercial Value	\$2,601,591	\$1,175,400	\$3,805,550	\$2,954,774	\$3,710,800	\$7,267,394	\$2,659,998

4.3 JOBS, EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE

Jobs and Employment

Jobs in a diversified economy are not concentrated in one sector and they provide opportunities for people with a variety of skills and qualifications. Ideally, the majority of the jobs should be what are termed “good,” meaning that they are permanent and full-time, pay more than the state average wage and provide benefits. These jobs are most frequently found in such sectors of the economy as manufacturing, distribution and health care. While tourism contributes positively to the Walterboro economy, employment in this sector tends to be at the lower end of the pay scale, is not full-time and does not offer benefits.

Walterboro has lost a significant number of jobs in the manufacturing sector during the past year. The number of positions may have been nearly replaced by new retail and food service jobs at Wal-Mart and surrounding stores and restaurants, but the wages, benefits (or lack thereof) and opportunities for career development have not.

Overall, unemployment in Colleton County [**Note:** Data is available only at the county level and is a reasonable surrogate for the City.] has been increasing during 2008, as Figure 4.1 shows.

Figure 4.2 on the following page demonstrates that the problem is becoming a long-term situation.

Figure 4.1

Lowcountry Unemployment Rates

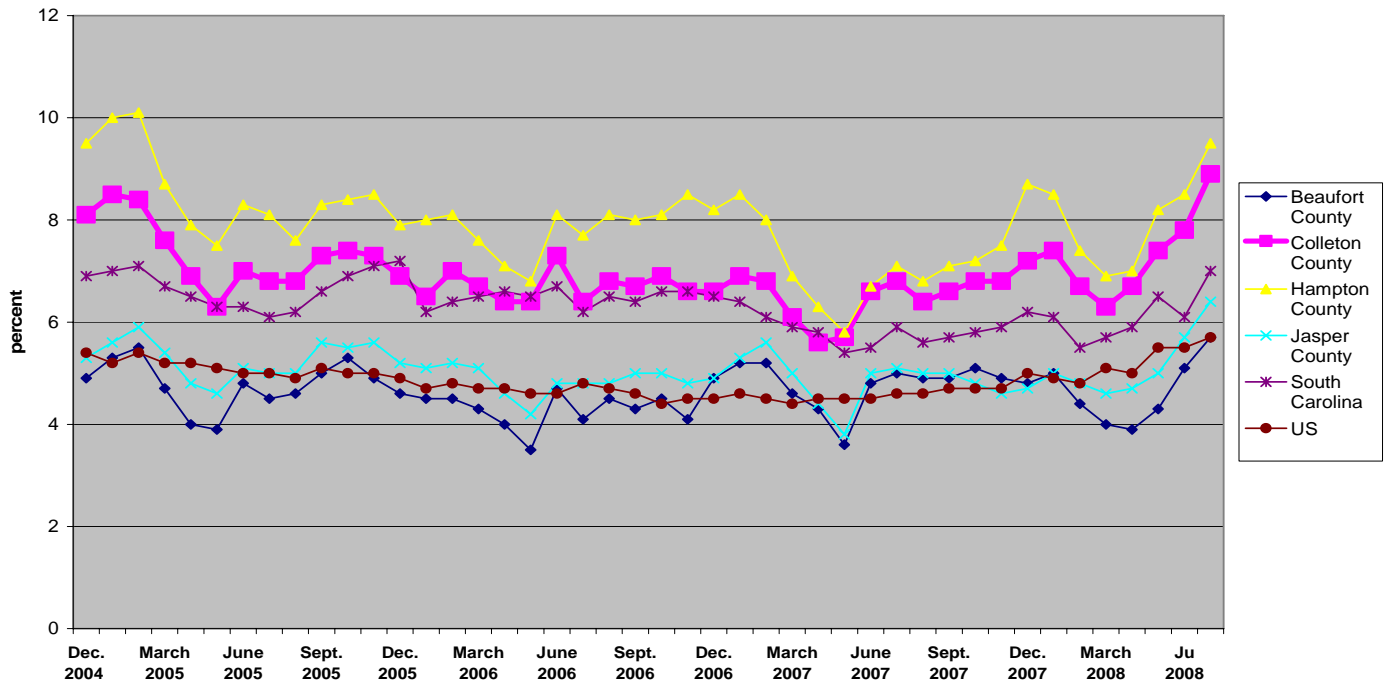
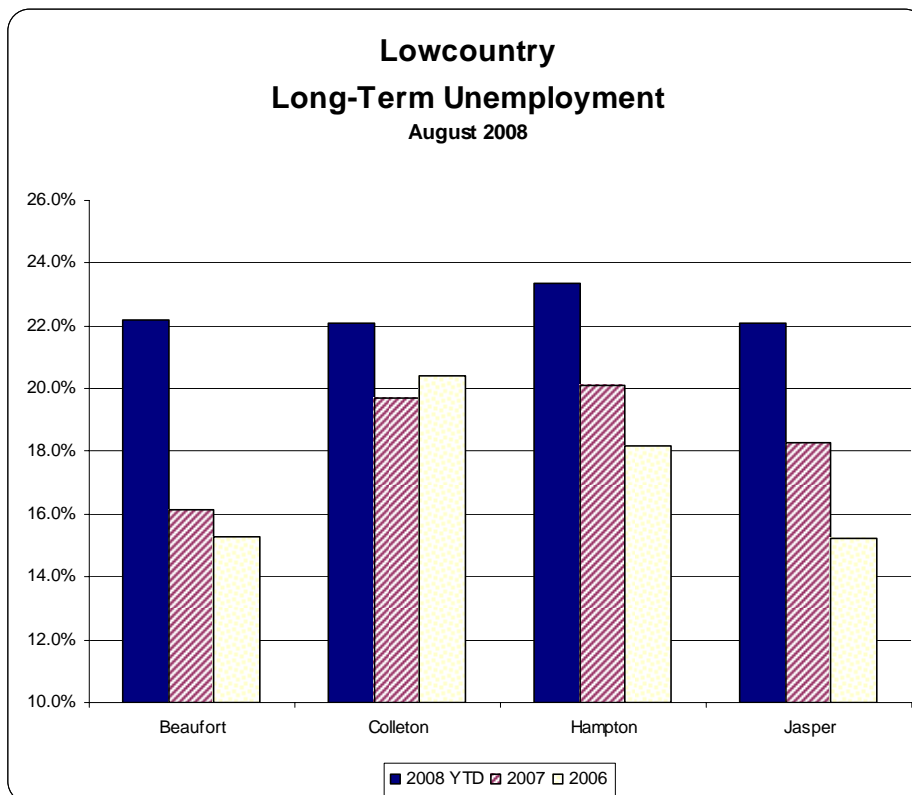


Figure 4.2

Lowcountry Long-Term Unemployment August 2008



Wages

Another indicator of the need for both more jobs and higher paying jobs in Walterboro is Colleton County's [Note: Recent data is only available at the county level; data for the City dates back to 2000 and is not relevant in 2008] average weekly private sector wages.

Table 4.2 (next page) shows that, in recent years, Colleton County's average weekly wages:

- Were the lowest in the Lowcountry.
- Grew the least between 1998 and 2007.
- Decreased (a very small percentage) between 2006 and 2007.

Table 4.2: Average Weekly Private Sector Wages

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Change 1995- 2007	Change 2006- 2007
Beaufort County	\$460	\$480	\$493	\$516	\$505	\$525	\$560	\$564	\$588	\$595	47.28%	1.19%
Colleton County	\$404	\$427	\$445	\$458	\$445	\$457	\$491	\$511	\$534	\$532	46.15%	-0.37%
Hampton County	\$460	\$468	\$497	\$536	\$524	\$531	\$570	\$581	\$604	\$647	64.63%	7.12%
Jasper County	\$361	\$390	\$428	\$447	\$441	\$474	\$531	\$568	\$627	\$643	108.09%	2.55%
South Carolina	\$501	\$523	\$541	\$562	\$567	\$582	\$602	\$623	\$649	\$668	49.11%	2.93%

Labor Force

- ☞ **Commuting Patterns.** In 2000, the most recent year for which commuting data is available, half of Walterboro's employed civilians were able to work in the City, giving them a shorter average commuting time than for Colleton County as a whole. Only 22 percent of those employees worked outside the County, compared to 32 percent of all County residents.

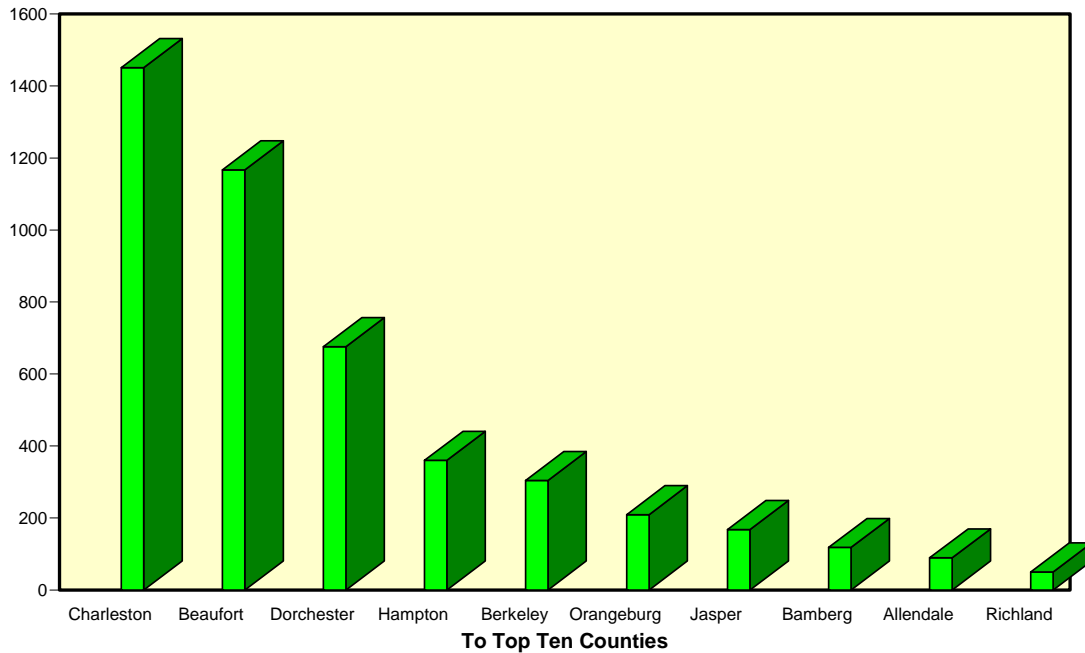
Table 4.3: Walterboro Commuting Patterns

	Employed Civilians	Mean Commuting Time (minutes)	Worked in Place of Residence	Worked Outside Place of Residence	Worked Outside County of Residence	Worked Outside State of Residence
Colleton County (includes city, towns and unorganized areas)	14,874	32.7	n/a	n/a	4,790	327
Walterboro	1,768	25.8	863	862	381	39

Out-commuting data (that is, which counties residents commute to) is only available by counties. (Table 4.3 below).

Figure 4.3

Out-Commuting from Colleton County



Since the present out-commuting includes low-paying service industry (especially hospitality and retail) jobs in southern Beaufort County, economic diversification will provide less commuting and improved wages for Walterboro residents.

☞ **Education and Training.** The labor force most attractive to potential industry is the one which is highly educated and/or highly-trained. Walterboro's—and Colleton County's-- level of educational attainment is low, as the table on the following page

shows. Between 1990 and 2000 there were some improvements, but even by the latter date the educational levels of Walterboro's adult population still lagged behind the state and the Lowcountry averages.

Table 4.4: Educational Attainment Rates

Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years Old										
	Less than 9th Grade		Some High School		High School Grad		Associate Degree		Bachelor Degree	
	Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Walterboro	14.84%	11.8%	24.3%	19.9%	32.38%	27.1%	8.37%	3.3%	6.15%	12.7%
Colleton County	16.25%	10.2%	26.40%	20.2%	39.49%	37.0%	6.4%	5.1%	7.37%	7.4%
Lowcountry Total	11.39%	6.87%	15.83%	13.24%	30.37%	29.22%	5.79%	5.98%	12.90%	15.82%
South Carolina	13.62%	8.31%	18.09%	15.35%	29.50%	29.97%	6.33%	6.68%	11.22%	13.54%

To improve the economic base and performance of Walterboro, improvement of the performance of the schools, especially increasing the percentage of students graduating from high school, is a paramount need.

Both Lowcountry local governments and the State of South Carolina have come to realize that a workforce educated and trained for both existing and prospective jobs will be a major marketing advantage in attracting new businesses and institutions. In the four counties of this region educational attainment levels have increased over the past decade and new initiatives are in place or under way in local secondary and post-secondary educational institutions to ensure that the Lowcountry is able to train, nurture and retain a labor force relevant to economic diversification in the twenty-first century. Therefore, a variety of educational opportunities are already accessible to Walterboro's residents.

- ***Secondary/Career Education.*** Walterboro offers both public and private secondary schooling options, including Thunderbolt Career and Technology Center. The programs offered there prepare students in the county for careers in a variety of areas.
- ***Post Secondary Education.*** The public and private colleges and universities available to Walterboro residents provide a diverse spectrum of programs that provide the student with either certificate, diploma, undergraduate or graduate degrees. USC Salkehatchie, located near Walterboro's downtown, is a very special post-secondary resource readily available to the community.

- **Continuing Education.** The Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL) offers continuing educational programs geared towards those already in the work force or those that have been out of school for some time. Currently the Lowcountry has geared much of its continuing education towards the health sector. Other continuing education courses available in the region are: Building Construction, Computer Training, Culinary Arts, Insurance, Massage Therapy, Occupational Upgrade, Real Estate – Appraisal and Continuing Ed., English/Spanish as a Second Language. TCL will soon have its first dedicated facility in Colleton County.
- **WIA.** The Lowcountry Workforce Investment Area (WIA) department at LCOG is also involved in the training of prospective job seekers and the area’s youth. WIA staff work with the area’s educational institutions to help direct those looking for work force education and training and to determine current and future employment trends. Not only does the WIA provide job specific training for prospective employees but it also provides workshops and programs pertaining to work ethics and appearance in order to increase the likelihood of an employee performing to the level expected by employers.

4.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During the fall of 2004, LCOG and the four counties of the Lowcountry embarked on the development of a strategy for economic diversification. The Department of Defense, through its Advance Planning Grant initiative provided 90 percent of the funding, with each of the four counties providing an equal share of the remaining 10 percent.

The objectives, as stated in the final report were “to assist the four-county region to attract new businesses and target industries to aid in community growth, tax base diversification and quality of life enhancement, and lessen dependency on the three military installations in the region. This plan was formulated taking into consideration the region’s economic development goals and objectives while being sensitive to resident concerns about the impact of these initiatives on the overall quality of life and community culture and identity. “

The core of the process was to determine what industries should be in the area. A cluster analysis identified groups of industries linked by common product markets, labor pools, knowledge base, similar technologies, supplier chains, specialized services, networks, and research and development and/or other economic ties. Clusters were pinpointed with the use of local labor and market information, anecdotal information employer feedback and natural resource analyses. Clustering helps establish industry

networks that lead to the dissemination of best practices, process innovations, and joint market or product initiatives.

Based on the research and analysis by LCOG and the consultants, and combined with previous work on such issues as freight transportation advantages, existing manufacturers and natural resources in the Lowcountry, a preliminary listing of possible linkages was developed. Linkages within each of these clusters were identified in order to identify targeted companies.

The *Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan* (Basile, Baumann and Prost, 2005) focused on the following specific industry clusters:

- Distribution/Warehousing/Logistics
- Health Care/Medical
- Light Manufacturing

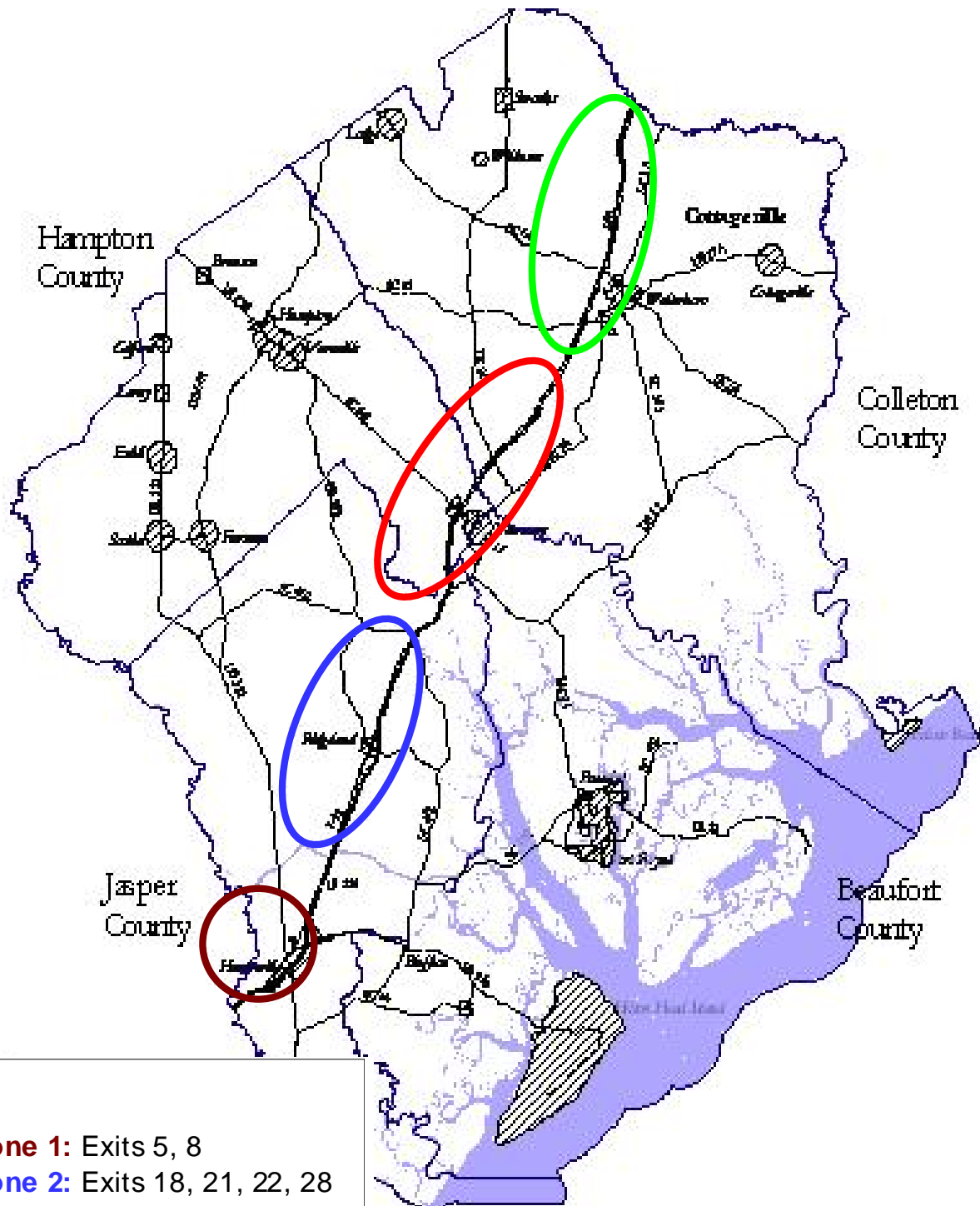
Although it was not discussed in the study, because of the improvements to and the increasing use of the airport, aviation-related and aviation-dependent industries should also be emphasized in future economic development initiatives.

The prospective businesses in these industries can be attracted to the Lowcountry due to a combination of concentrated product markets, supply chains and other demonstrated resources. In addition, these industries present an opportunity to develop jobs with above average incomes in growing industries.

After assessing the region and factoring in the target candidate industries, infrastructure, transportation-logistics, and the region's strengths and opportunities, four economic diversification zones were recommended along I-95. Each zone contains two or more I-95 interchanges. Walterboro is in Zone 4 (see Map 4.1 on following page).

A discussion of Zone 4 and specific recommendations for development of that zone in which Walterboro is located follow the map on the next page.

Map 4.1
Economic Diversification Zones



- Zone 1:** Exits 5, 8
Zone 2: Exits 18, 21, 22, 28
Zone 3: Exits 33, 38, 42
Zone 4: Exits 53, 57, 62, 68

Zone 4: Colleton County --- I-95 Exit 53, Exit 57, Exit 62 and Exit 68

- ◊ A rest area is located between Exits 42 and 53.
- ◊ Exit 53 has access to Green Acres Camping, the Artisan Center, mid-scale and economy hotels, fast food establishments and other restaurants.
- ◊ Exit 57 has become a retail and service center for both visitors and area residents, with a Super Wal-Mart, gas stations, economy hotels and fast food restaurants.
- ◊ The Colleton County Commerce Center is located near Exit 62. It is being developed as a 260-acre Level IV certified Free Trade Zone (FTZ), with all utilities and a 100,000 square foot “spec” building suitable for a distribution/logistics center.
- ◊ Exit 68 is on the edge of Colleton County with access to the Colleton State Park, gas stations and fast food and the Circle C Truck Plaza.

Utilities are mainly present at Exits 53, 57 and 62. There is little or no development directly off of Exits 62 and 68 making these areas prime locations for large wholesale trade, construction, and manufacturing facilities, but utilities would need to be present in order to attract those clusters to the exits.

Zone 4 contains the Lowcountry Regional Airport, which is now able to handle corporate jets and is serving an increasing number of them; many corporations consider this very important when locating new facilities. It is also near Charleston International Airport (CHS) and easily accessible to Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV) Zone 4 also benefits from its proximity to the Charleston and Savannah ports, the future port in Jasper County and the projected massive international logistics center near Orangeburg.

The Colleton County Commerce Center is in its final development stage and should be heavily marketed since it has FTZ benefits and occupies a prominent location along I-95. Distribution centers, construction, wholesale trade facilities, large warehouse facilities, and transportation/logistics companies would be compatible in Zone 4. Target companies importing and exporting perishable goods require direct access to air transportation and may require a FTZ and/or a cold storage warehouse facility making Zone 4 attractive.

Zone 4 should be attractive to the construction, wholesale trade, distribution center, transportation/logistics, manufacturing industry clusters. Access to the FTZ, ports and a local airport, well position this zone for easy transport and storage of materials and products, including the following NAICS industries:

- ◊ 42, 44-45 – Distribution/Logistics
 - Target company distribution/logistics emphasis to include:
 - Machinery
 - Electrical equipment

- Appliances,
 - Transportation equipment
- ◇ 3219 – Wood product manufacturing (wood windows and doors, millwork, etc.)
 - ◇ 3212 – Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing (hardwood veneer, truss manufacturing, OSB, MDF, etc.)
 - ◇ 3323 – Architectural and structural metals manufacturing (metal windows and doors, ornamental and architectural metal work, prefab metal building and components, etc.)
 - ◇ 3362 – Motor vehicle body and trailer manufacturing (utility trailers, motor homes, campers, motor vehicle bodies and cabs, etc.)
 - ◇ 3363 – Motor vehicle parts manufacturing (gasoline engine and engine parts, vehicular lighting equipment, vehicle electrical and electronic equipment, break systems, transmission and power train parts, etc.)
 - ◇ 3261 – Plastics product manufacturing (floor coverings, pipe and fittings, building materials, packaging materials, countertops, plastic bottles, etc.)

GOAL & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE ECONOMY

Both the economic development climate and local and regional attitudes have changed considerably in the past few years, and the strategic advantages of Walterboro's location and the opportunities accruing are now recognized. The *Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan*, which was completed in September of 2005, outlines an economic role and provides directions for future economic development here.

GOAL: Develop a diversified economic base for Walterboro that will provide jobs that pay at least the state average wage.

This can be accomplished by implementing the many relevant recommendations of the "Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan" that deal with both attracting new businesses to Walterboro and also growing the businesses that are already here. Those that can be impacted by planning and land use regulations include, but are not limited to:

1. Support a Regional Economic Development Alliance that is now in the formation stages and of which Walterboro is already a participant.

2. Maintain policies necessary to attract the identified candidate businesses to Walterboro. This includes the designation and servicing of land for distribution centers and other specific industrial purposes at I-95 interchanges (per the “Diversification Zones” map).
3. To attract movie, video and commercial production activities, which generate both direct expenditures and follow-up tourism. Walterboro should promote its visual assets, and its successful track record as a location for making all (*Radio*) or parts (*Forrest Gump*) of featured films. Marketing activities that are successful throughout the US and that have low or no costs associated with them, could include, but not be limited to:
 - ◇ Work with the Walterboro/Colleton Chamber of Commerce and the state Film Office to promote the area. Their work would include obtaining discounts for food, lodging and other services from local businesses;
 - ◇ Making unused public buildings and spaces available to production companies at no charge;
 - ◇ Providing police protection at reduced or no charge.
4. The City should continue to work with Colleton County and also with the other counties and municipalities in the Lowcountry to stress Regional economic development, in which everyone benefits.
5. Walterboro should continue to work with local and regional secondary and post-secondary institutions, as well as its residents, to ensure that high school completion and career training and development are a community priority.
6. Continue to support nature-based tourism, emphasizing facilities, accommodations, and services for the higher end of the market.

Chapter 5: Land Use

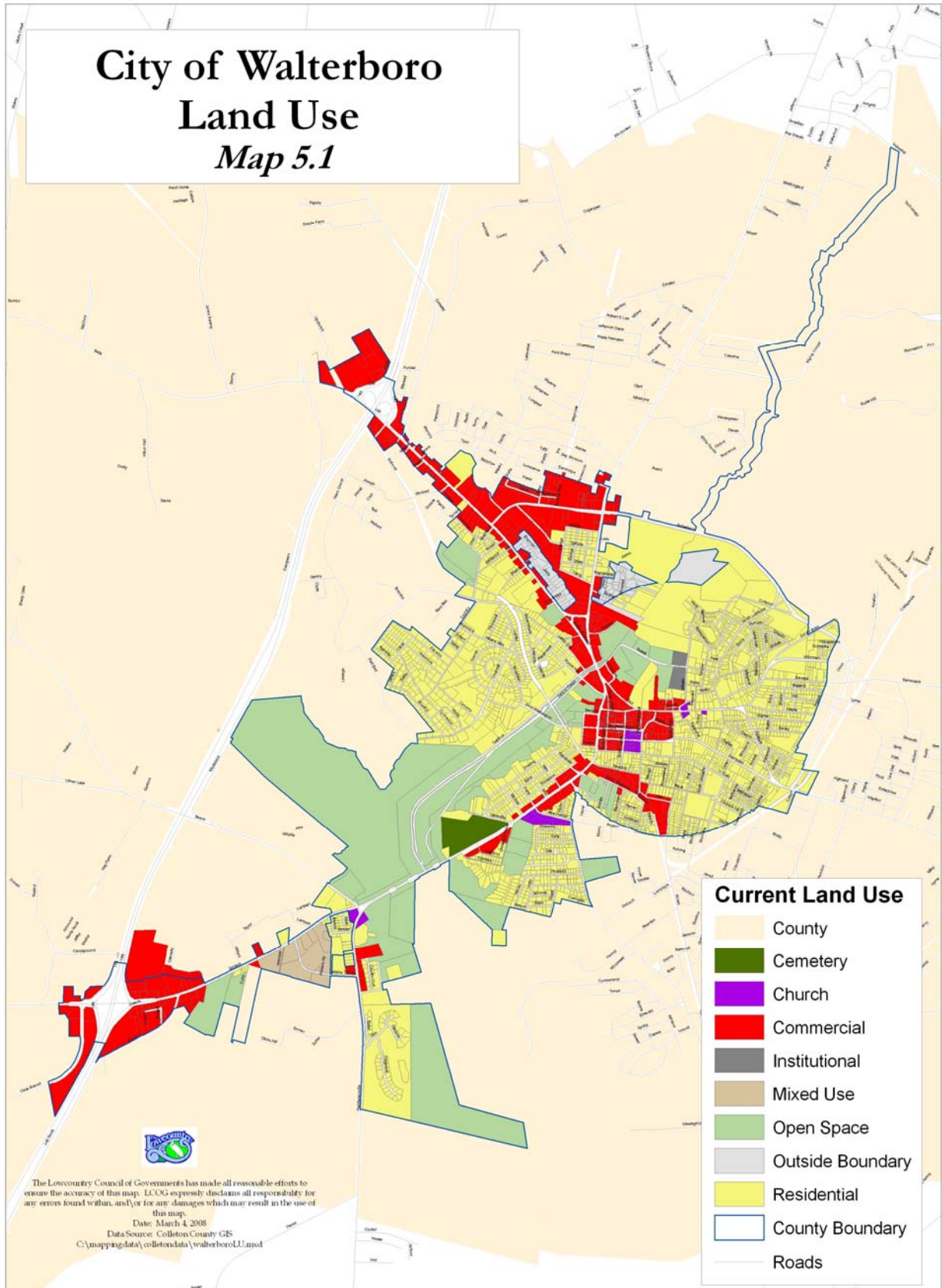
The City of Walterboro is faced with the challenge of attracting and accommodating new growth while preserving the quality of its existing environment and its financial stability. Economic growth has recently slowed throughout the state and the Lowcountry Region, providing Walterboro with the opportunity to make careful decisions about the future. It is very likely that economic recovery will enhance the potential of the City's strategic location on Interstate 95 and US 17A and near the economically diverse Charleston metropolitan region (including Summerville). The expansion of the Port of Charleston and the development of Orangeburg into a massive international logistics and trade center (both approximately 50 miles away) will provide extraordinary economic development potential in the next ten years. The building of the new port in Jasper County, combined with the continued rapid growth of the Port of Savannah, will also have a positive impact on Walterboro's ability to diversify its economy.

Given the impact and importance of sound economic growth, it is a proper time for the City of Walterboro to identify specific development goals to establish a solid foundation for properly planned, long-range growth that will take advantage of opportunities without destroying the lifestyle that current residents enjoy and seek to preserve, and that will attract prospective residents and businesses.

This chapter outlines a basic framework for a balanced and orderly pattern of development for the City of Walterboro. The concepts included in this chapter are designed specifically to guide future development in ways that make more efficient use of existing and planned public facilities and services, while preserving and extending the distinctive character of the City. The framework is not intended to be a detailed blueprint for future development, but rather is intended as a guide for making development decisions, both public and private. The recommendations included in this chapter should be used as the basis for future detailed development strategies and regulations in the City; they will include selective annexation suggestions and proposed uses of the land to be added to Walterboro.

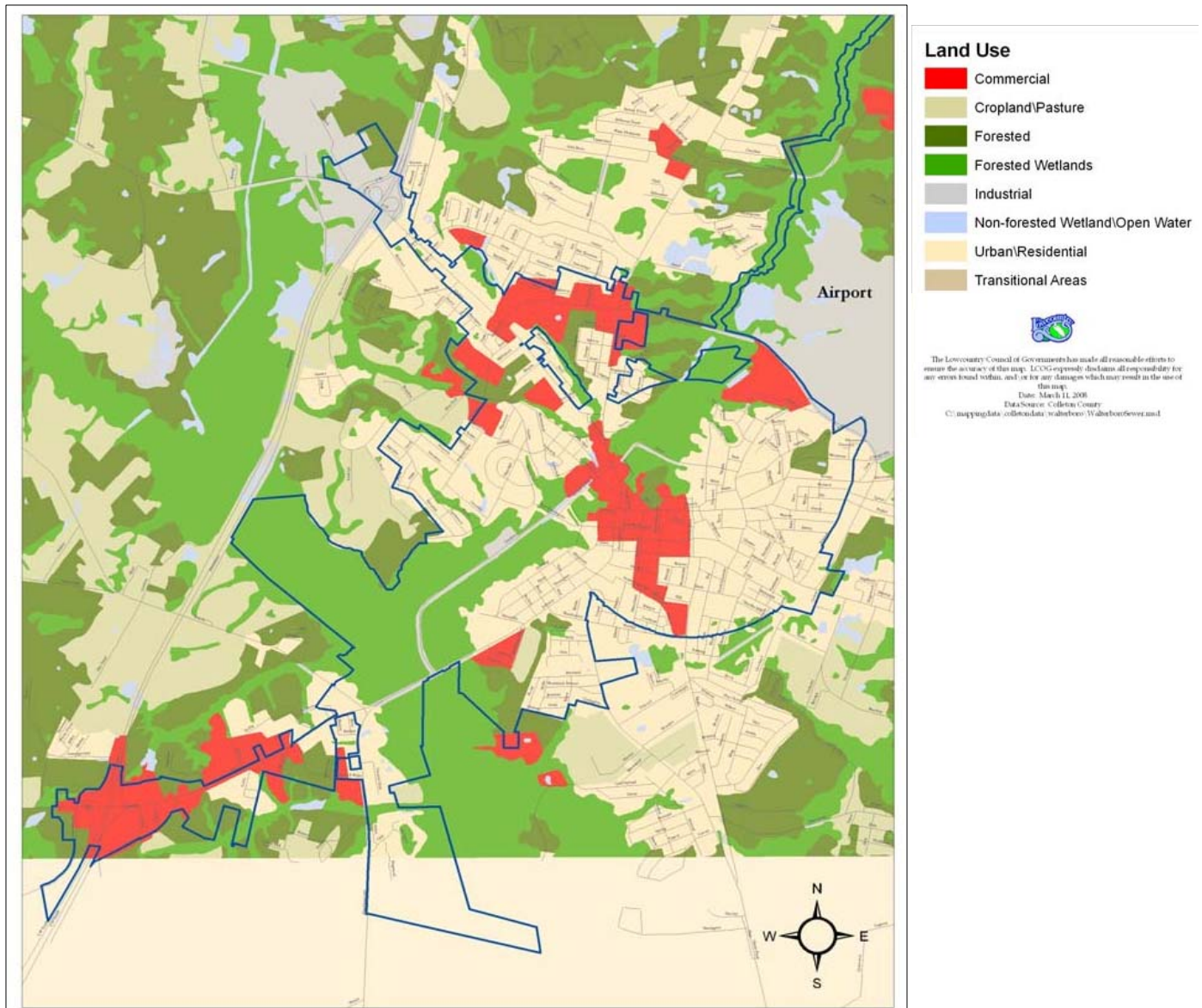
5.1 EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use, transportation and natural resources (including environmentally sensitive areas) patterns will help determine where future growth will likely occur in the City of Walterboro. A general land use map (5.1) of the City is on the following page.



The most densely built-up residential and commercial areas of Walterboro are concentrated around the historic City center. Development generally becomes less dense further away from the core, with the exception of the new Wal-Mart-centered commercial cluster in the northwest quadrant of I-95 exit 57. Industrial land within the City has traditionally been located east of downtown, and now includes an area near the airport. Relatively undeveloped areas surround the municipal boundaries on all sides. Due to the presence of wetlands, shown on map 5.2 below, not all vacant land in and around Walterboro is developable.

City of Walterboro National Wetlands Inventory *Map 5.2*



5.2 DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

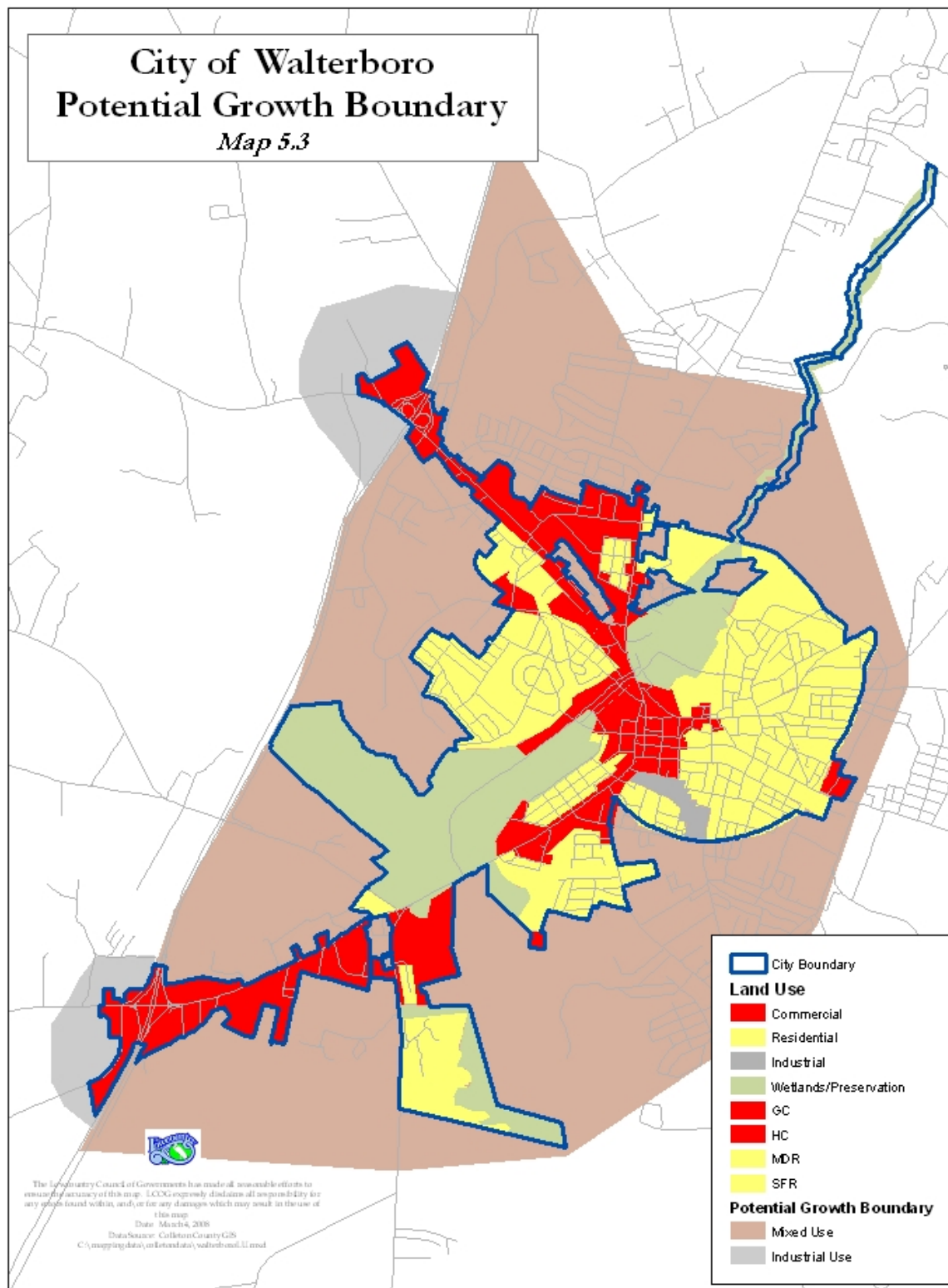
Development trends affecting land use in the City of Waltherboro are related to economic, market and social changes that are expected to impact the community. They include an aging population (in Waltherboro and the rest of the US), a growing appreciation for the features and benefits of traditional communities, an appreciation of the natural environment and new forms of industrial development. On the ground, they will result in infill and redevelopment in and near the existing core and new development of a variety of types. Their location, size and form will determine how beneficial they are to the City and its residents.

Map 5.3 on the following page shows suggested areas of future growth for Waltherboro.

œ ***Future Growth Boundaries.*** Future growth boundaries have been created to show where it is most feasible for growth to take place in Waltherboro over the next 10 to 15 years.

At appropriate times these areas may be annexed into the City at such time as development or redevelopment projects are planned and landowners request annexation. The boundaries on the map are suggested for use in guiding in the future growth of Waltherboro to ensure that the following criteria are met:

- Opportunities for mixed-use or planned developments are provided.
- Undeveloped land at the I-95 interchanges is utilized for the highest and best industrial uses.
- Higher density development is encouraged near the existing built-up areas.
- Development grows outward in an orderly manner from the current built-up area.
- Future development can be provided economically with municipal water and sewer services.



œ *Economic Activity Outside Walterboro.* Developments planned, being constructed or recently completed in the Charleston metropolitan region, in the rest of the Lowcountry Region and in Orangeburg that will have an impact on future land use and population in the City include:

- The expansion of the Port of Charleston
- The new port to be built in Jasper County
- Industrial and related development along I-95 from the Georgia border to I-26
- Large-scale new foreign trade/logistics center on I-26 in Orangeburg
- Increasing number of visitors to the ACE basin
- Continuing and increasing role of tourism in the area's economy
- New community being developed by MeadWestvaco along Edisto River in Charleston County

œ *Future Development Demands in Walterboro.* All of the above will lead to increased residential, commercial, industrial and tourism-related development demands on the City of Walterboro during the next ten years.

Given the present state of the economy, it is not known as to when the expected growth will take place in the future. As a result, the City has the unique opportunity to work to ensure that new development is well planned and meets the goals and objectives set out by Walterboro City Council in early 2007 and also to embody the planning principles stated clearly in the "Introduction" section of this Plan. For instance, new, redeveloped/infilled and existing residential areas can be connected to each other and to the downtown and to other commercial and arts/cultural/educational centers by means of bicycle and pedestrian trails or pathways, thereby minimizing vehicle traffic on major arterials and contributing to energy-saving and residents' fitness efforts. At the same time, it is possible to plan for greenbelts around existing and future development areas, preserving wetlands for recreational and visual purposes.

The Economy Chapter deals with significant opportunities for economic development such as distribution centers and other light industrial development to continue to diversify the City's economic base. Diversification is essential for Walterboro's social and economic health for two key reasons:

- A tax base that is balanced between commercial/industrial and residential uses will ensure reasonable property tax rates into the future;
- Providing *good* jobs (that is, ones that are full-time, pay more than the state average wage and offer benefits) will mean that Walterboro will attract and maintain quality jobs for its people rather than its residents having to commute to better jobs elsewhere.

The types of uses mentioned on the previous page depend primarily upon the availability of sufficiently large parcels of land (that is, a minimum of 100 acres) served by both freight transportation and utilities. Providing serviced land designated for these uses west of I-95 intersections 53 and 57 by annexation of land is of particular importance to achieving economic diversification goals.

Land-Use Issues.

- One of the City of Walterboro's biggest land use challenges during the foreseeable future will be to balance the many competing demands for land throughout and around the City's present and projected future boundaries with the economic, social, housing, historic and natural resource preservation, transportation and community services needs of present and future residents.
- A second important land use and planning challenge for the future is to ensure that new development spreads out in an orderly and economical pattern from the existing built-up community, rather than leapfrogging or sprawling.
- The third land use planning challenge will be to encourage development and redevelopment while maintaining adequate open space to meet the needs of the City as it grows economically and demographically.
- Finally, the City's role in regional ecotourism as the Gateway to the ACE Basin should be strengthened.

5.3 EXISTING REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Walterboro is currently operating under *The City of Walterboro Comprehensive Plan* approved in 1997. Because of the nature of that plan, combined with major changes in and to Walterboro since then, and those larger ones expected in the foreseeable future, the specified update of the existing Comprehensive Plan will not serve the community's needs. As a result, this is basically a completely new Plan for the City of Walterboro.

The City's development regulations contained in the 2003 Zoning Ordinance will need a major revision as well in order to implement the planning and other community development policies contained in this new Comprehensive Plan. That Ordinance should reflect and incorporate the policies and regulations contained in this new Comprehensive Plan if it is to be useful and effective to Walterboro.

5.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

This section provides a basic growth management framework for a balanced and orderly pattern of development for The City of Walterboro. The concepts included within this framework are specifically designed to:

- Provide for adequate amounts of land to accommodate market demands for

new development projected for the City, including residential, commercial and industrial activities.

- Ensure that new development is connected to existing development and to other new development by means of both roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Make more efficient use of existing and planned public facilities and services.
- Ensure that growth pays for itself by establishing development impact analysis and compensation policies and procedures.
- Preserve the unique character of the City and extend the traditional street patterns and the scale, quality and design of the existing community into new development within present and future municipal planning boundaries that result from future annexations.
- Preserve natural resources and reserve land for greenbelts and other passive and active open space and recreational purposes. To provide the maximum aesthetic and recreational benefits for present and future Walterboro residents and visitors, to the extent feasible open spaces should be linked. In new developments, the integration of open spaces with sidewalks, walking and bicycle trails, natural waterways and wetlands and other open space will be rewarded by means of zoning incentives such as density and set-back enhancements.

In other words, as the authors of *The Small City Planning Handbook* (Third Edition) state:

“As a community grows and changes, its special character can also change, but good planning can help maintain that certain charm found only in our small towns...The protection and continuation of a town’s character, identity, and appearance is a process that goes beyond the tree-lined streets and the storefronts on Main Street...Buildings and public spaces make a community worth caring about. Developers, architects, and builders of new buildings and commercial and residential developments must show respect for older buildings and local character, tastes, and traditions. Buildings from different eras with different styles must blend together into coherent districts, neighborhoods, and streetscapes.”

Growth management ensures that all projected growth can take place, but in a way that meets these criteria.

☞ **Development Areas.** Rather than allowing unplanned sprawl to spread out from the City in a haphazard manner, the recommended framework uses a “development area” concept to manage future growth by encouraging and

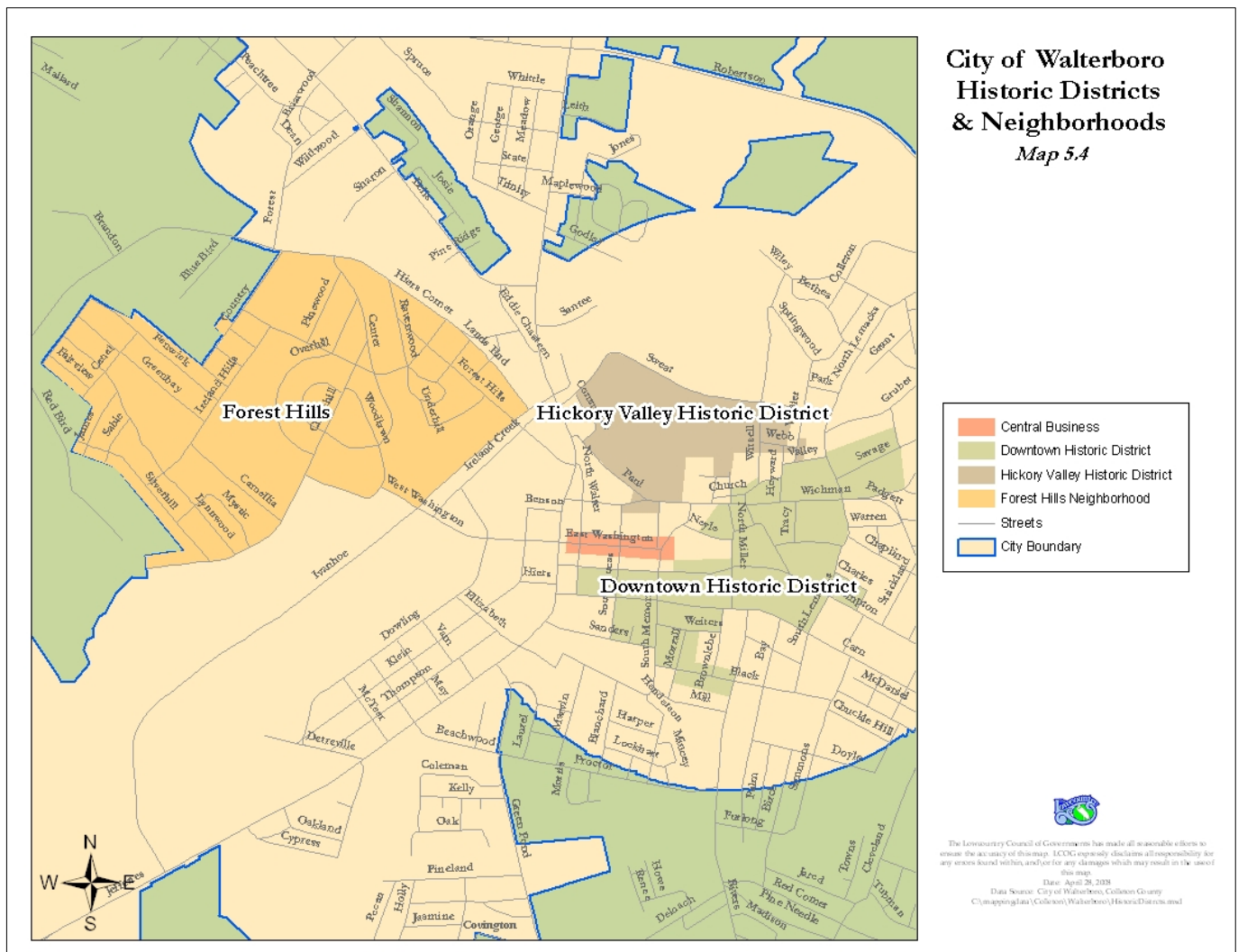
enhancing the growth patterns that have naturally occurred within the City. The general purpose for designating development areas is to provide a logical and organized basis for making cost-effective public service and facility investments. Development areas serve to:

- Designate appropriate locations and sites for various types and densities
- Minimize conflicts of land use between neighboring properties and land uses
- Assist in setting priorities for public investment in infrastructure.
- Ensure multi-modal (that is, vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian) transportation interconnectedness among existing and planned development areas.

Development areas are not zoning districts; they do not establish boundaries within which certain specific uses are permitted and from which others are excluded. Instead, the recommended development characteristics for the various districts are intended to guide the application of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Development areas include the following:

- Existing Community, centered on Downtown
 - Mixed-Use New Development Districts Highway Corridors
 - Industrial Areas
 - Commercial Areas
- ♦ **Existing Community, centered on Downtown.** See Map 5.4 on the following page. This is basically the City within its earlier municipal boundaries. It includes the Central Business District (CBD), the Historic Districts and close-in suburban areas such as Forest Hills.



All of these areas have distinctive design and quality of life traits that benefit current residents. As a result, they also provide special opportunities for redevelopment and infill development. The land and buildings within them need to be protected and enhanced, regulated and improved in order to not jeopardize that success.

The policies and regulations contained within this Plan, and also in the updated Zoning Ordinance, should encourage pedestrian-oriented retail and service activities and a mix of residential and business activity in single buildings in the CBD. Additionally, provisions for parking must be made so as to maximize activities in those areas. Large commercial uses, industrial uses, and other uses that could threaten the economic and historic character of Walterboro's downtown are discouraged; the objectives are to maintain a pedestrian scale, to enhance the historic character of existing development and to encourage patronage of CBD businesses by residents of and visitors to Walterboro.

The chief goal is to continue to strengthen these areas, both economically and aesthetically, by means of increasing density without incurring the costs of providing new infrastructure. New commercial and residential development, in the form of infill and the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized land is encouraged. Brownfield mixed-use redevelopment of sites that were used for industrial purposes, and where industry is no longer a feasible use, will also be supported.

New construction, as well as additions to and renovations of existing structures will reflect the scale, massing and architectural details of the surrounding area; demolition of existing buildings will be limited to those whose structural integrity has been compromised by damage caused by fire, wind, flooding and other disasters and/or lack of maintenance. This will include one or more districts designated for historic preservation and will take the form of Overlay Districts in the Zoning Ordinance.

- ♦ **Mixed-Use New Development Districts** are defined as those areas of 25 or more acres in which large-scale developments that combine residential and commercial uses in the same buildings or in close proximity will be concentrated, and/or which contain adequate amounts of developable land necessary to support substantial amounts of new development. Such development nodes will be both within Walterboro's existing municipal boundaries and in areas within the projected future growth boundaries.

Mixed uses are especially appropriate for a historic community such as Walterboro. In the US, almost all towns and cities originally developed as mixed-use environments, with most people living in buildings that were places of work as well as domestic life. The Smart Growth Network described some of the benefits of mixed-use development on their web site:

"By putting uses in close proximity to one another, alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking, once again become viable. Mixed land uses also provide a more diverse and sizable population and commercial base for supporting viable public transportation...It helps streets, public spaces and pedestrian oriented retail again become places where people meet, attracting pedestrians back onto the street and helping to revitalize community life."

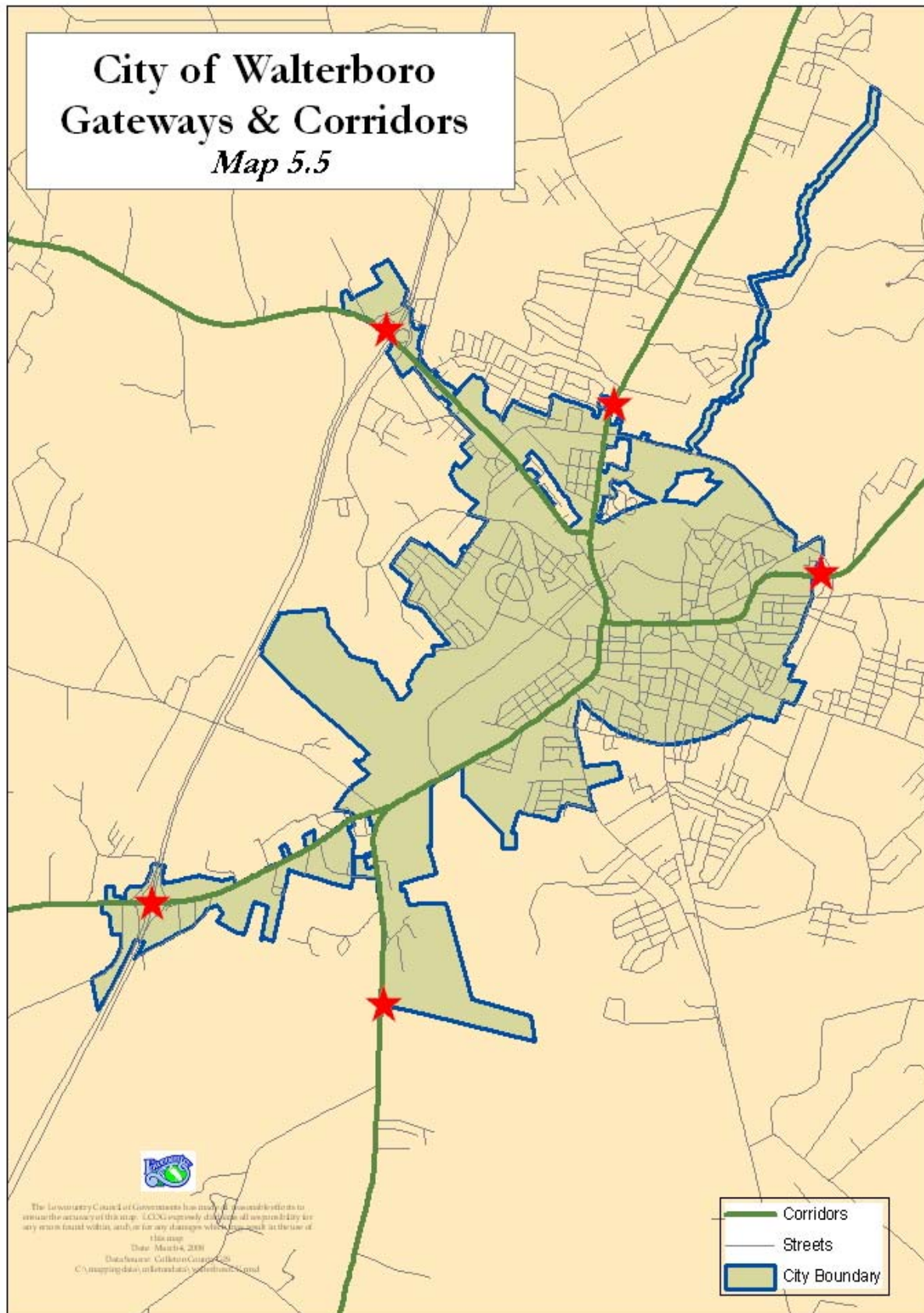
In Walterboro these areas will be the most appropriate locations for a full range of land uses of a more urban character, including a wide range of commercial, residential, and business activities that may not be appropriate for downtown because of size, scale or type. They should have good transportation access to major roads in the City and an internal transportation system that reflects the existing City pattern and includes bicycle

and pedestrian circulation, as well as adequate parking and access for future public transit services. They are or will be served by existing municipal water and sewer systems, or are located where existing services can be most economically extended to support new development.

Community development patterns and styles will reflect those of Walterboro's downtown-centered urban area if they extend directly outward from the Existing Community (discussed above); if they are in new areas of the City (as shown on Map 5.3) the District plans will incorporate and enhance any natural and historic features of their immediate environment. Such plans will follow the policies and regulations in the Comprehensive Plan and also the revised Zoning Ordinance. District Plans will also include traffic and other community services impact analyses.

Uses will include, but not be limited to:

- Low-to-medium-density mixed uses that may include retail centers and business parks. Retail centers and other commercial services will serve the needs of the Districts, but will not weaken the economic function of Downtown Walterboro.
- A variety of housing types and densities will be encouraged to promote economic and social diversity.
- ♦ **Highway Corridors** are especially important to the future commercial viability and economic development potential of Walterboro. The City is fortunate to have the major and minor highway access that it presently enjoys, and should treat it as a valuable resource (see Map 5.5 on following page). As well as potential locations for future economic development, they are gateways to Walterboro, and planning policies and design standards need to emphasize this.



The two types of highways—interstate and US/state should be treated differently in terms of developing corridor overlay planning and design standards and in terms of the uses that are permitted.

Currently, large-scale retail, especially “big-box” stores, and industrial and distribution center development in the City are concentrated along I-95, especially at interchanges 53 and 57.

Retail development is not the only alternative possible. Interstate interchanges must be evaluated as to their highest and best use in terms of Walterboro’s long-term economic well-being. Retail, industrial, and tourism-related development at I-95 interchanges must be planned to maximize both short-term and long-term economic development benefits. While there is a necessity for tourism related jobs, which are generally lower paying, it is desirable to make provisions along the interstate for higher paying distribution, industrial, and logistics employment.

As well as interstate interchanges, there is a need for **commercial nodes** at key intersections and also along the major highways to ensure their long-term economic potential in a growing and changing Walterboro.

Properly planned development, including remedying negative features along I-95, US 17A, SC 64 and US 15, would result in making Walterboro more attractive for future investment and its present residents, improving the community’s quality of life. Planning policies for development along these highways, and other present and future major arterial roads, should include at least the following:

- The several **gateways** to Walterboro are treated as significant places;
- Access driveways are spaced to enhance safe traffic flow;
- Traffic impact analyses are required to ensure that necessary traffic management improvements (e.g., intersection improvements; traffic lights; turning, deceleration and acceleration lanes; road widenings) are implemented prior to completion of construction and that appropriate payment for those improvements is made by the responsible parties;
- Landscaped buffers, where feasible, are required along highways and around parking lots to enhance the visual quality of new development.
- Sign requirements in the Zoning Ordinance are enforced to prevent unattractive and excessive advertising displays;
- Design guidelines are developed to encourage natural blending of colors and materials;
- Buildings of architectural or historic interest [**Note:** examples include several along 17A south of downtown] are preserved and enhanced;
- Other design and development guidelines are coordinated with those of surrounding Colleton County.

GOAL & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR LAND USE

This is where all of the other components come together.

GOAL: Promote an economically viable and elevated quality of living and working environment through balanced growth, compatible land-use patterns, efficient public services and facilities.

OBJECTIVE #1: Designate adequate amounts of land for targeted uses to ensure that the City is able to accommodate desirable growth and development to provide a balance of good jobs and a good quality of life for present and future Waltherboro residents.

OBJECTIVE #2: Enforce the City's updated development regulations, especially a revised Zoning Ordinance, to implement the recommendations of this new *Comprehensive Plan*.

1. Utilize the performance standards of the Zoning Ordinance to promote the appropriate distribution, scale and pattern of land uses throughout the City and its planning area.
2. Evaluate all development proposals for compliance with these updated regulations.

OBJECTIVE #3: Designate and implement Corridor Overlay Districts to protect the capacity and aesthetics of high visibility, critical highway corridors.

1. Design standards for Corridor Overlay Districts should be in addition to any underlying district standards applicable to a property and should be coordinated, where applicable, with Colleton County.
2. The Planning Commission should develop and prioritize a list of corridors for designation and embark upon their planning.

OBJECTIVE #4: Designate areas to be annexed as special study areas and prepare Development District plans to guide and direct new development that meets the goals of and criteria set forth in this *Comprehensive Plan* and the updated Zoning Ordinance.

Chapter 6: Community Facilities

6.1 OVERVIEW

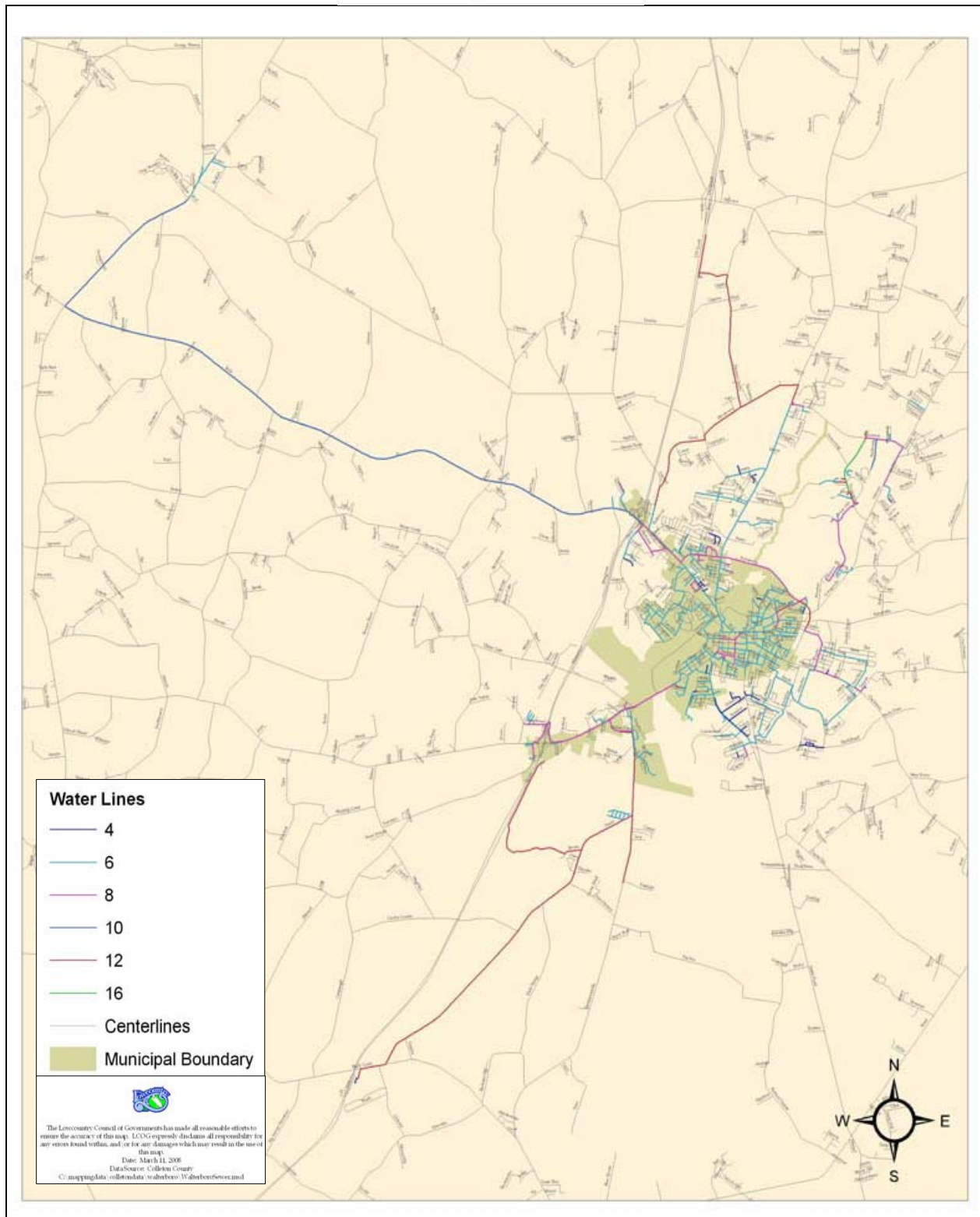
The Community Facilities section of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the current infrastructure and community programs that are essential to the health and growth of the City of Walterboro. The City has committed to provide sufficient infrastructure to encourage economic growth. These services need to be provided in a timely manner relative to the phasing in of new development, and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner that fairly allocates the cost of the services relative to the new and existing population. The overriding objective for the City as it plans for future growth is to create new development and redevelopment that pays for itself. To ensure that growth pays for itself, the City should require development impact analyses and it should establish related compensation policies and procedures. As part of the new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Walterboro, the following areas will be evaluated for ability to serve present and future populations:

- Water and sewer supply and treatment
- Storm Water Drainage
- Solid waste collection and disposal
- Police, fire, and emergency medical services
- Government facilities
- Educational facilities and libraries
- Public Space and Recreational Facilities
- Emergency Preparedness

6.2 PUBLIC SERVICES

Water System: The Water Department is responsible for all activities related to providing citizens with clean, safe and reliable water. In addition to working with contractors to locate the water lines and force mains, the City's employees check all wells and pumping stations daily, make taps and repairs and read meters. Someone is on duty at all times. Currently the City uses a system of wells to serve the majority of the population within its service area, which extends well beyond the City limits. There are presently nine wells which draw from several different aquifers including the Tuscaloosa, Mendendorf, Floridan, and Black Creek (Refer to Map 6.1 on following page). There are also eight storage tanks: seven being elevated and one (100,000 gallon) ground storage tank. The City utilizes eleven operating wells and four emergency wells. A number of private wells located in the City are primarily used for irrigation. According to the latest survey, there are 5,366 total taps, 1.600 MGD of production on average, and a max of 2.0 MGD. The City's drinking water is safe and meets federal and state requirements which should be maintained.

City of Walterboro Water Availability *Map 6.1*



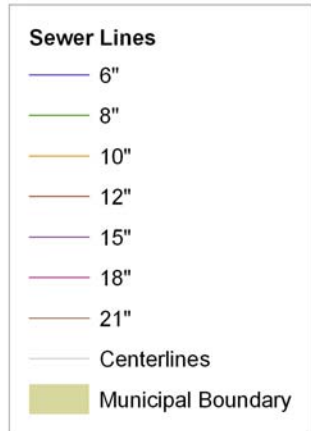
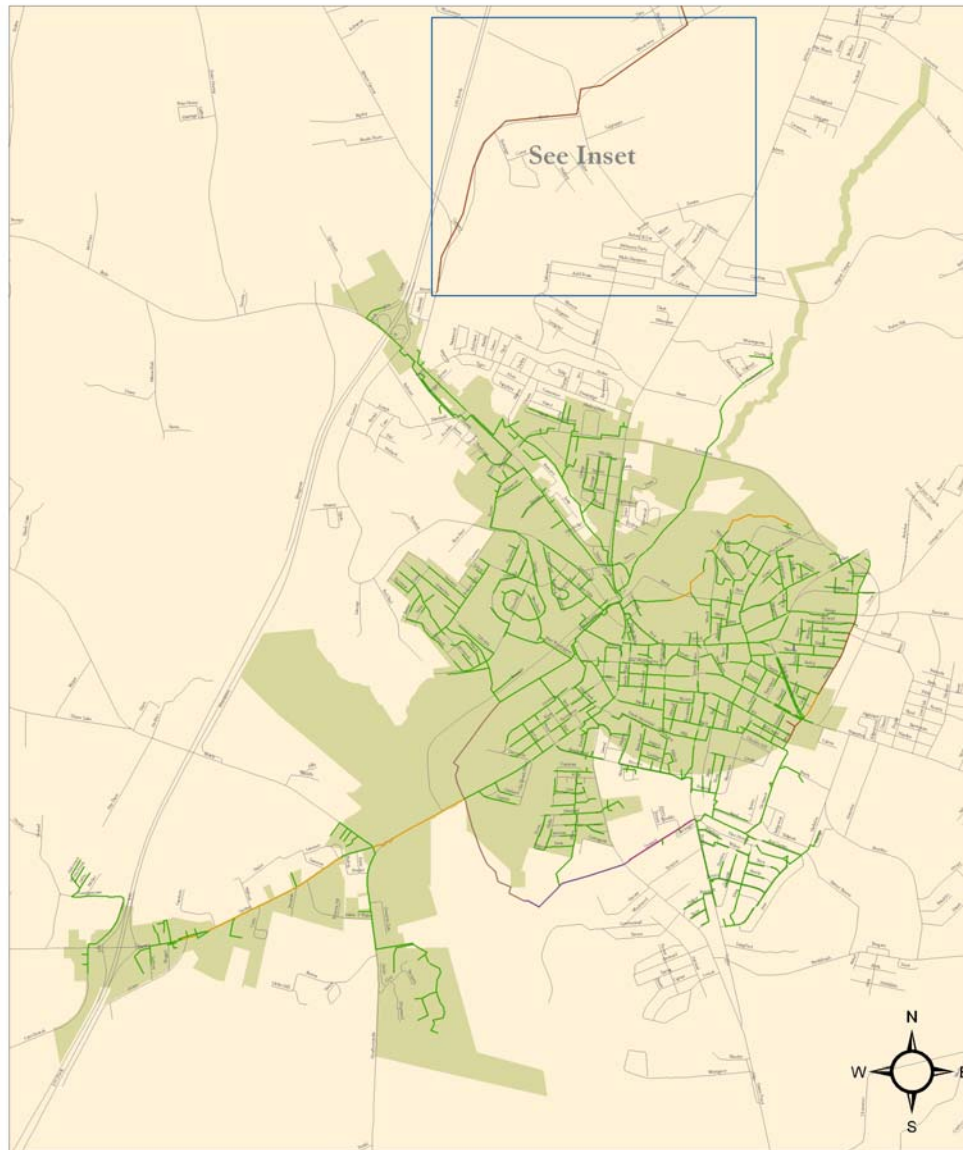
In the past, the City had explored other options for a long-term surface water source. The options investigated included the *Lake Marion Water Use Plan* and wholesale purchase from the City of Charleston. However, the current water supply has a 5mm/gpd surplus and excessive drain down is not a problem. In the foreseeable future, therefore, it is expected that outside supply sources will not be needed.

- ***Sewer/Septic System.*** Walterboro's wastewater treatment plant has a 2.64 MGD (million gallons per day) treatment capacity and maintains an effluent average of .90 MGD. It is presently operating under capacity, since the amount used each day is now 1.1 to 1.7 MGD. There is a sufficient property at the wastewater treatment facility to add another 2.64 MGD of treatment capacity, and the chlorination units are already sized to serve that expansion. The treatment plant is operating well within its permit limits, but in the future some repair of older lines and pumps will be necessary.

The sewer system covers most of the City limits and small adjacent portions of the county (See Map 6.2 on the following page). There are only a few septic tanks operating within the City limits. There are fourteen city-owned pump stations throughout the City. The wastewater plants are located on Gervais Street. The City's service area extends beyond the City limits.

Areas outside the City limits may hook onto Walterboro's system if the developer installs the necessary lines and equipment and the property owners sign an agreement to annex when their property becomes contiguous to the City. While the City has been able to avoid the implementation of impact fees to offset the loss of capacity to new developments, a study should be conducted to evaluate the need and possible structure for such a fee.

City of Walterboro Sewer Availability *Map 6.2*



The Colleton County Council of Governments has made all reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of this map. CCCOG expressly disclaims all responsibility for any errors found within and/or for any damages which may result in the use of this map.
Date: March 11, 2008
Data Source: Colleton County
C:\mapping\data\colleton\data\walterboro\WalterboroSewer.mxd

- ***Solid Waste Collection and Disposal.*** The City of Walterboro provides curb side garbage and yard waste collections. This service does not include recycling. All waste is transferred through the Colleton County landfill and transfer station and disposed of outside the County. The garbage is then hauled by the County to a landfill in Dorchester County. The only available recycling is the limited service offered at the Colleton County convenience centers. The City should move towards providing more convenient recycling options.
- ***Storm Water Drainage.*** There is currently no storm water drainage plan for the City of Walterboro. Although not required by law, it is recommended that the City move towards creating a new plan. The City (See Map in Land Use Section 5.2 -

Wetlands) contains a large amount of forested wetlands and natural resources such as the Great Swamp, which creates an increased need for storm water drainage planning in order to preserve those natural features.

6.3 PUBLIC SAFETY

Public Safety covers those services provided by the City, the County, and private agencies relating to public health and safety including police and fire protection and emergency management services. The Police and Fire Departments are now combined into the new Public Safety Department. The employees in this department include: administrative staff, Dispatchers, Public Safety Officers (Trained in both Police and Fire Operations), Police Officers (not yet trained as Fire Fighters), and Fire Fighters (not yet trained as Police Officers).

- ***Police Services.*** There is one police service office that is located in City Hall. The police service patrols the corporate city limits. The force maintains one Public Safety Director, twenty-five full time officers, and no reserves or interdiction teams. There are no plans for expansion as Walterboro has one of the highest sworn officers per thousand ratios in the state, with the average in the state being below 3 per 1000 residents and Walterboro having 5.05. There are substations located on Sniders Highway in the Welcome Center and currently there are plans for a new substation to go on Robertson Blvd.
- ***Fire Services.*** The Walterboro Fire Department was established in 1869 and has since been dedicated to the protection of the City through the use of both career and volunteer fire fighters. The Fire Station Headquarters is located behind the City Hall, and there are two substations located on Sniders Hwy. and on Robertson Blvd. The Department is rated a class 5 by ISO with three volunteer fire fighters and ten full time fire fighters. There are currently five pumper trucks and no ladder or rescue/command trucks for use by the City. The department serves the corporate City limits. The City is pursuing an upgrade to an ISO class 3 rating, which will include water line and fire hydrant improvements, new substations, and a new ladder truck.
- ***HAZMAT Team.*** Walterboro and Colleton County have facilities that handle hazardous material. In the past no hazardous material response team training had been given to any of the first responders or fire fighters. However, there is currently a HAZMAT Team which has been trained and serves the City of Walterboro.
- ***Emergency Medical Services.*** Emergency Medical Services are provided by Colleton County. First response teams are all volunteers. Colleton County EMS currently has one station within the City and is looking at adding another station in or near the northern part of the City. This will be a good location as growth continues to move northward.

6.4 GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

The term government facilities refers to the office and working space of major City offices. In the City of Waltherboro these include the Municipal Complex (City Hall, the police station, and the fire station) and the public works facilities.

- ***Municipal Complex.*** City Hall, Public Safety Department which includes the Fire Station and the City Hall Annex are all located at one site on Hampton Street. A *Space Needs Analysis* conducted by Smith Gerber and McClure & Associates in June of 1997 analyzed current and future space needs in this facility and prepared a concept design for restructuring the Complex. The “Space Needs Analysis” resulted in the Annex opening. It is located in a historic home and functions include Utility Billing, Finance, Personnel, and Judicial functions. The Public Safety Department moved to their old location in City Hall. The City is at capacity at City Hall and will be in need of new administrative facilities if there is a significant increase in service demand.
- ***Public Works.*** Office of the Public Works Department is at City Hall, but the main facility is on Robertson Boulevard. They are responsible for solid waste collection, facility maintenance, and infrastructure repair.
- ***Utilities Department.*** Office of the Utilities Department is at City Hall. The Utilities Department includes the Water Department, the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Lift Stations, Water Towers and Wells. The Water Department shares space with the Public Works Department at the Robertson Blvd. facility.
- ***Parks Department.*** Office and maintenance facility is located on Gervais Street within the Wastewater Treatment Plant facility.

6.5 RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL / ARTS FACILITIES

Waltherboro contains many parks, open spaces, and public recreational facilities which are vital to the health of the community and its citizens. Open spaces and recreational facilities are integral parts of the community that increase beautification and quality of life. The City should create incentives for the creation and preservation of public spaces in the community through overlay zoning and new development requirements. In the future, there will likely be a need for the improvement and creation of community fitness and recreational facilities. These and other improvements should be according to national community recreational standards in order for the present and future needs of City residents to be met.

The following are the current recreational facilities (See Map 6.3 on the following page) within the City which include parks, open spaces, school facilities, and community facilities:

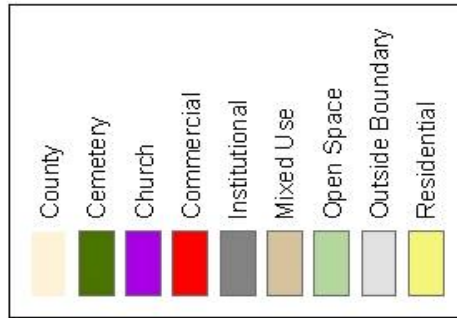
- Great Swamp Sanctuary. Planned construction of the 10,000 square foot discovery center in the Great Swamp Sanctuary. Currently, there are more than 3 miles of ADA accessible trails, kayaking trails, and bicycling. It serves as the gateway to other nature-based centers in the state and a mechanism for eco-tourism in the region.
- Downtown Plaza: seating, shade trees, and fountain
- Gladys Whidden Park: playground, passive park with lake
- Pinckney Park: large play area, playground equipment, and picnic facilities
- Joseph Wyman Field & Sankey Maree Park: playground and ball field
- Other open and/or vacant lots scattered throughout the City (public and private ownership)
- Dogwood Hills Golf Course: A privately owned 9 hole course
- Doodle Hill Park: playground equipment
- Little Library Park: seating, shade trees and historic building
- Mayfield Park: playground equipment.

❧ ***Other Facilities and Services.*** There are other facilities, such as The Colleton Center in the former Hampton Street School, that offer a strong civic presence in the downtown. In the past, Walterboro has had a lack of community activity space such as public exercise facilities, art studios, and workshop facilities, which are now being partially accommodated in that center (which previously “starred” in the movies *Forrest Gump* and *Radio*). The South Carolina Artisans Center is also located in the downtown and is the showcase and market for juried artists and craftsmen from across the state.

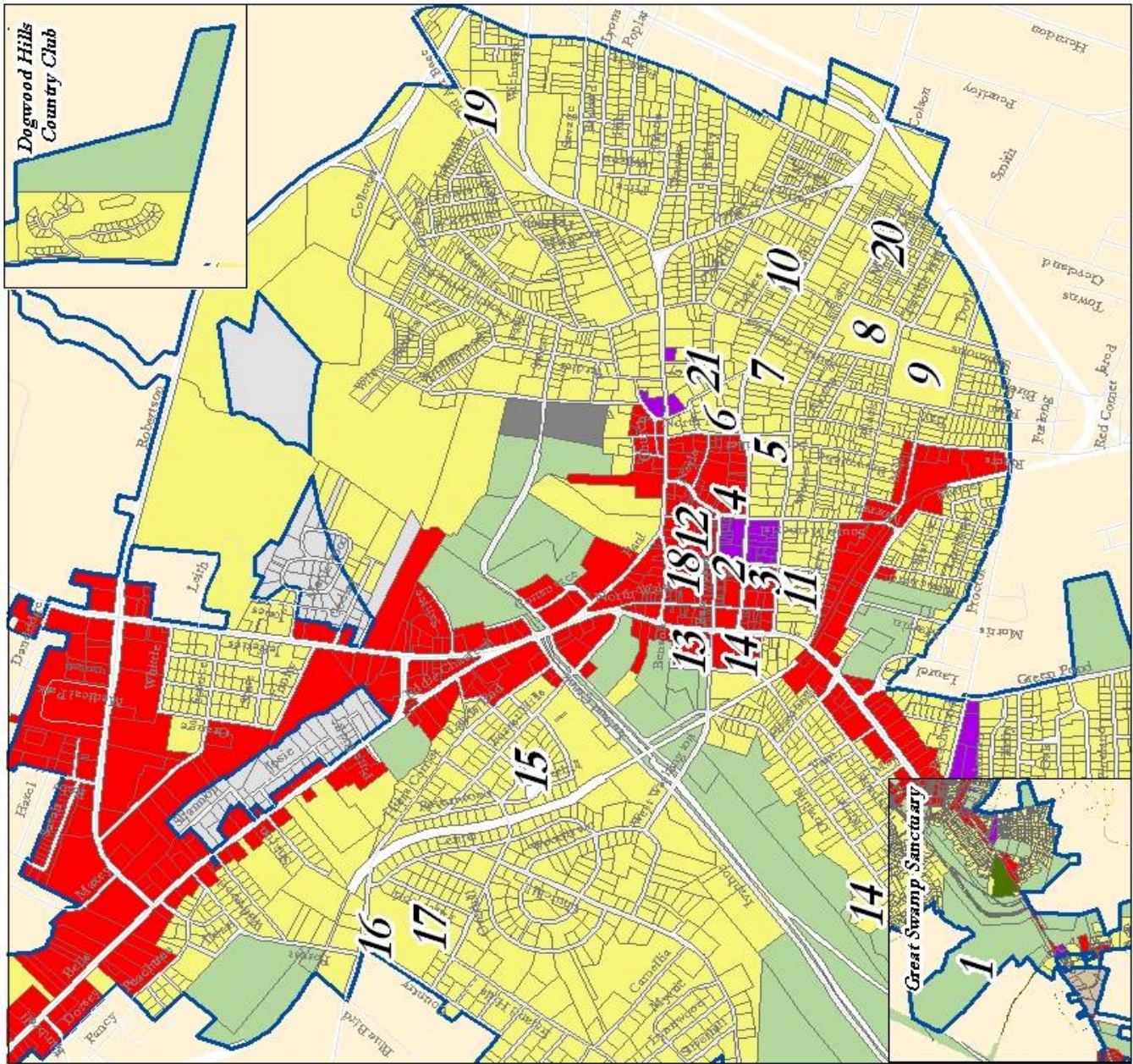
Currently, there is a FitLife™ Center that has exercise facilities and a wellness center that can be utilized by residents of the City of Walterboro. Citizens have talked about the need for a larger community-oriented sports and fitness center such as a YMCA. Such a recreation center could serve a vital role for provide youth and adult recreational services in addition to the services provided by the Colleton County Recreation Commission.

City of Walterboro Land Use Map 6.3

- 1-Great Swamp Sanctuary
- 2-Courthouse Complex
- 3-City Hall Complex
- 4-Fire Station
- 5-Collerton Center
- 6-Pinckney Park
- 7-Collerton County Memorial Museum
- 8-Collerton County Bernard Warshaw Complex
- 9-Congrat Stadium
- 10-University of South Carolina
- 11-Salve Rehe Museum
- 12-Artisans Center
- 13-Collerton County Museum
- 14-Collerton County Complex
- 15-Gladys Whilden Park
- 16-Forrest Hills Elementary School
- 17-Forrest Hills Tennis Courts
- 18-Deventer Park
- 19-Joseph Wynn Field & Sankey Marie Park
- 20-Devote Hill Park
- 21-Little Library Park
- 22-Mayfield Park



The Land Use Commission is responsible for the development of the City of Walterboro's land use plan. The plan is a guide for the City's growth and development. The plan is a guide for the City's growth and development. The plan is a guide for the City's growth and development.



6.6 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The planters who lived in Walterboro during the summers established the first library in 1820. This historically significant building is still standing today. The City's current residents share deep-seated respect for the value of education. Walterboro's youth have ample opportunity to increase their level of education. The University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie at Walterboro offers undergraduate and graduate programs. There are six major colleges within 50 miles offering four-year and graduate degrees.

☞ ***School Facilities.*** *In addition to several private schools,* Walterboro falls into the Colleton County School District. The following is a list of public schools, which provide facilities for community use, and which serve the citizens of Walterboro:

- Black Street Elementary
- Colleton Middle
- Colleton County High School
- Northside Elementary
- Forest Hills Elementary
- Forest Circle Middle
- Thunderbolt Career and Technology Center

As the population grows, demographic composition changes and the current facilities age, the City will need to re-evaluate the school system facilities and plan for expansion, reconfigurations or renovations. The City wishes to see new educational facilities located in coordination with the location of new or planned residential development.

☞ ***Public Library.*** Walterboro contains one library, the Colleton County Memorial Library, which is located on Hampton Street. This is a prime location due to its easy walking distance to the Central Business District and its design complements the surrounding historic residential area. There are three outlets in the public library system of Colleton County with the headquarters on Hampton Street, Edisto Beach Station, and the bookmobile that operates out of the library headquarters. The library hours include Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those who live or own property in Colleton County can use this public library service. There are a number of employees in the library such as the Director, Assistant Director, Reference Librarian, Children's Librarian, Technical Processing, and six Library Clerks. The library offers an extensive children's program throughout the year with its highlight being the Summer Reading Program. The Library also has similar programs for adults, a bookmobile, and interlibrary loans.

☞ ***Higher Education.*** Walterboro is home to a campus of the University of South Carolina -Salkehatchie. The University acknowledges and enjoys its position as an integral part of a neighborhood. USC-Salkehatchie is planning for moderate growth (to reach 1,000 students) and would like to expand its facilities without losing its

“walking campus” atmosphere. It is critical that neighborhood-based and corridor planning must include the University administration. USC-Salkehatchie also has resources such as satellite hookups, classrooms, and a gymnasium which could be used by the community. The location in the traditional built-up section of City allows for increased educational and cultural opportunities for residents and has the potential to draw development to a highly educated workforce living in the City of Walterboro. The City is also served by the Technical College of the Lowcountry in Beaufort and there are plans to construct a new technical school facility near Walterboro.

6.7 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

With its inland location, Walterboro is not at as high a risk for natural disasters in comparison to surrounding coastal towns. However, due to its location it is a strategic point when there are natural disaster evacuations. Of all the forms of natural disasters, the City of Walterboro has a low vulnerability to winter storms, tornadoes, and flooding because most of the City is not located in a flood zone.

There is also a mid level vulnerability to earthquakes because it is in close proximity to the Middleton Place-Summerville Seismic Zone. The probability of a wildfire is 100% but since the wildfires that occurred in the past caused very insignificant damage they are considered mid level vulnerability.

Those natural disasters that have had the greatest effect on the area and a high probability that they will occur in the Walterboro region are Hurricanes and Wind Storms. It is clear from the past occurrences of hurricanes that they have caused significant damage and have reached level four in this region. There is also a very high probability that damaging windstorms will hit the region and cause significant damage which indicates why it is high vulnerability.

All of the above information is from the *Hazard Mitigation Plan* of 2004 which discussed the probability of future events and the effects all previous natural disasters have had on this region and the City. This plan will be updated in the near future.

6.8 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Goal 1: Provide efficient and adequate public services to meet the needs of the present and future population of the City of Walterboro and those who visit.

Goal 2: Engage in projects to expand and advance the public services and/or facilities to enhance the quality of life for the residents and visitors of the City of Walterboro.

Goal 3: Focus on planning for future growth in a way that development and

redevelopment pay for themselves in terms of the provision of new and additional community facilities and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE #1: Maintain Community's Character

1. Provide development guidelines that are sensitive to the natural environment and community goals.
2. Maintain new growth that is at a balanced level, compliments the City, and has a level of connectivity to existing development.

OBJECTIVE #2: Sewer/Septic, Solid Waste and Water

1. Continue to follow the Utilities Master Plan for sewer and water upgrades and service needs.
2. Prioritize sewer line repairs in the budget.
3. Develop a long term plan that prioritizes a sewer expansion plan for new development
4. New development should be encouraged, through incentives or requirements, to use the existing sewer system instead of septic tanks as capacity allows.
5. Encourage water conservation.

OBJECTIVE #3: Open Space/Natural Resource Conservation

1. Continue to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources.
2. Explore recycling options for the City which could include curbside pickup, public/private drop-off, and cooperative programs to teach residents about backyard composting.
3. Determine the carrying capacity of the City's natural resources and any man-made facilities.
4. Reduce the spread of non point source pollutants to the area's natural resources.
5. Maintain current conservation standards and encourage the maintenance and creation of more public green space.

OBJECTIVE #4: Recreational Facilities

1. Improve existing recreational facilities, specifically the Great Swamp and those other parks along creeks and wetlands.
2. Optimize the location of new recreational sites to reach all citizens of Walterboro.
3. Connect recreational facilities with surrounding facilities and downtown such as tie-in with the ACE Basin or Rail to trail through the use of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

OBJECTIVE #5: Capital Improvements

1. Use the inventory of public facilities and the capacity maps with the location of sewer and water facilities in this section and the map of the areas the City is willing to serve in the future in the Land Use section as a guide for future planning.
2. Develop a five-to-ten year projection of future service demands and maintenance needs with a list of priority projects.
3. Develop a capital improvements budget, listing the time, location and financial arrangements for different projects. Improving the City's ISO fire rating should be a priority.
4. Analyze all electric utility lines to determine which should be placed underground; this may include renegotiating electric and cable franchise agreements.
5. Maintain new development taxes and fees to ensure the maintenance and development of community facilities are feasible.

OBJECTIVE #6: Improve Government Facilities.

1. Provide adequate and appropriate facilities to efficiently and effectively serve the needs of Walterboro's citizens and visitors.
2. Maintain a strong presence in the downtown by locating appropriate public offices there.

OBJECTIVE #7: Planning for future growth.

1. Devise a plan to address the changing population's need for improved and new facilities. Currently, there is a need to focus on fitness and recreational improvements.

2. Require new developments and redevelopments to aid in the cost of improved or new facilities based on the amount of population they would bring to the community.
3. Create a monitoring system to track current needs and project future growth – in terms of numbers of persons and expected ages, genders and other demographic characteristics--to prepare for the City to meet the community's changing facility and service needs.

Chapter 7: Population

To prepare this component of the Walterboro Comprehensive Plan, the most recent data available were used. Since this quantitative information is assembled and released by different organizations and at different times, there are variations among the dates.

Also, some numbers are available only at the county level. While Walterboro does exhibit a different demographic profile than Colleton County as a whole, county statistics are utilized as the best available surrogate when it is the only information available.

7.1 POPULATION GROWTH

Between 1990 and 2000, in contrast with Colleton County as a whole and the rest of the Lowcountry, the City of Walterboro's population decreased slightly.

Table 7.1: Population Change 1990-2000: Walterboro and Colleton County

	Percent Change 1990-2000	Census 2000 Population	Census 1990 Population
Colleton County	11.31%	38,264	34,377
Walterboro	-.08%	5,449	5,492

Source: US Census

The population continued decreasing until 2003. Since then that trend has been reversed, and Walterboro's growth rate became more than twice that of the entire County. The cause for that dramatic reversal is likely not attributable to a single factor, because no major new industry or other large business located in the City during that period.

Table 7.2: Population Growth 2000-2007: Walterboro and Colleton County

	Percent Change 2000-2007	July 1, 2007	July 1, 2006	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2004	July 1, 2003	July 1, 2002	July 1, 2001	Census 2000
Colleton County	1.67%	38,903	38,903	38,878	38,890	38,730	38,612	38,435	38,264
Walterboro	5.32%	5,739	5,745	5,733	5,681	5,604	5,395	5,396	5,449

Source: US Census Estimates

7.2 POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2027

In the foreseeable future – the next 15 to 20 years – the City of Walterboro will probably continue to grow at a rate similar to that experienced during the recent past, unless City and County initiatives to bring new economic development to the area produce large-scale results. At the same time, it does not seem likely that the population will begin to decline again, barring some unforeseen crisis.

To assess what could take place, two sets of forecasts were prepared for Walterboro:

One using the average annual growth rate (.76%) between 2000 and 2007;
A higher growth set using the average annual population growth rate for the whole four-county Lowcountry region (2%) between 2000 and 2007.

Table 7.3: Walterboro Population Projections 2007-2027			
	Walterboro 2000-2007 Rate	Current Population 2007	Lowcountry 2000-2007 Rate
<i>Average Rate/Year</i>	0.76%	5,739	2%
2012	6,113		6,315
2017	6,511		6,948
2022	6,935		7,645
2027	7,387		8,412

These projections are very important in planning Walterboro's future; even the lower rate would add about 1650 people to the existing population by 2027 – an increase of 29 percent from the present number of residents. Planning implications may include but not be limited to:

- A need for higher residential densities More land, to maintain lower densities, by means of annexations.
- More large-scale commercial development to serve the new residents.
- New schools and other community facilities and services.
- Additional transportation opportunities and problems.

Since these are simply projections forward of possible growth trends and not forecasts of certain growth for Walterboro, they should continue to be revisited and revised every year when population estimates for the previous year are released. The present version was completed upon the release of city and town population figures in July 2008.

7.3 INCOMES AND POVERTY

Although the number of persons living in Walterboro decreased between 1990 and 2000, the economic conditions of the population improved significantly and at a greater rate than for Colleton County as a whole and the state of South Carolina. Neither median household incomes nor poverty levels reached the state averages, nevertheless.

Table 7.4: Walterboro and Colleton County Income and Poverty Levels

	Median Household Income		% Change 1990-2000	% Individuals Below Poverty Level		% Change 1990-2000
	1990	2000		1990	2000	
Walterboro	\$17,167	\$32,200	87.57%	32.26%	22.0%	-31.8%
Colleton County	\$20,617	\$29,733	44.22%	23.38%	21.1%	-18.18%
South Carolina	\$26,256	\$37,082	29.19%	15.4%	14.1%	- 8.44%

Source: US Census

The increase in income and decline in poverty rates are likely a result of improved employment conditions throughout the Region during that period.

More recent data are available only at the county and state level, which is why Walterboro is not on the table; they show continued improvement for this area. However, Walterboro and Colleton County still have to improve in order to meet even South Carolina's economic performance levels for local residents.

Table 7.5: Colleton County (including Walterboro) Income and Poverty Levels

	Median Household Income		% Change 2001-- 2004	% Individuals Below Poverty Level		% Change 2001- 2004
	2001	2004		2001	2004	
Colleton County (including Walterboro)	\$28,861	\$30,733	6.49%	20.4%	20.0%	-1.96%
South Carolina	\$36,953	\$39,454	6.77%	13.8%	15.0%	8.70%

Source: US Census, SAIPE

7.4 AGE GROUPS

It is a well-known fact that the population of the US is aging, but the percentage of Walterboro's population that is 65 years-old or more is considerably greater than that of South Carolina or the Lowcountry Region as a whole, and that proportion had increased between 1990 and 2000.

To put the 20.16 percent (see table below) into perspective, Beaufort County's 2000 rate was 15.5 percent; the percentage of the population 65 and older in the City of Beaufort (which is frequently touted by the national media as one of the top places in the US to retire) was 12.2 percent; on Hilton Head Island (long a retirement destination) that ratio was 24.0 percent.

Table 7.6 Age Group Composition

	Age Group Composition: Percent of Population											
	0-5 years old		5-17 years old		18 - 24 years		25 - 44 years		45 - 64 years		65 years +	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Walterboro	7.28%	7.45%	20.3%	17.45%	8.65%	7.32%	26.06%	24.63%	19.06%	23.00%	18.65%	20.16%
Colleton												
County	7.58%	6.92%	21.81%	20.56%	9.26%	8.04%	28.95%	26.92%	19.61%	24.68%	12.78%	12.88%
Lowcountry												
Total	8.30%	7.00%	19.20%	17.90%	12.40%	10.70%	30.10%	27.80%	17.70%	22.50%	12.40%	14.20%
South												
Carolina	7.30%	6.60%	19.00%	18.60%	11.60%	10.20%	31.90%	29.60%	18.50%	23.00%	11.30%	12.10%

At the same time, the number of young adults (18-24 years) and people in the prime family-formation age groups (25-44 years) declined between 1990 and 2000 and were also smaller proportionately than their counterparts for the four Lowcountry counties together or the state of South Carolina.

Relative sizes, and increases or decreases in the age segments will offer significant opportunities for the future development of Walterboro and the planning of the community, such as:

- Community facilities requirements. An older population will require fewer schools and more health care facilities as well as different types of recreational services.
- Improved public transportation may be more important than more or better roads.
- With a smaller young labor force and the potential to utilize older, experienced workers, economic diversification and development in the area may take different forms.
- The different buying patterns of an older population may lead to commercial development that differs from that which is already in place.

7.5 ETHNICITY

The years since 2000 (see Table 7.7 below) have seen a truly notable increase in the Hispanic population of the Lowcountry, but Colleton County's rates of increase have not been as great as those of Beaufort or Jasper Counties. [**Note:** Recent – that is, post-Census – race and origin data is only available at the County level; the trends are likely applicable to the City of Walterboro.] Given the difficulties of obtaining truly accurate data about the total Hispanic population in communities throughout the US, it is likely that even these comparatively high numbers are low.

Table 7.7: Ethnicity		Race				Origin
		Total Population	Total White	Total Black	Other Races	Total Hispanic
Beaufort	2000	120,937	89,065	29,340	2,532	8,208
	2005	137,849	104,351	30,141	3,357	11,921
	2006	142,045	107,883	30,590	3,572	12,618
	% Change 2000-2006	17.45%	21.13%	4.26%	41.07%	53.73%
Colleton	2000	38,264	21,478	16,180	606	551
	2005	39,430	22,519	16,228	683	737
	2006	39,467	22,679	16,106	682	758
	% Change 2000-2006	3.14%	5.59%	-0.46%	12.54%	37.57%
Hampton	2000	21,386	9,301	11,918	167	547
	2005	21,329	9,278	11,923	128	630
	2006	21,268	9,223	11,844	201	643
	% Change 2000-2006	-0.55%	-0.84%	-0.62%	20.36%	17.55%
Jasper	2000	20,678	9,472	10,941	265	1,190
	2005	21,398	10,319	10,825	254	1,872
	2006	21,809	10,595	10,895	319	2,258
	% Change 2000-2006	5.47%	11.86%	-0.42%	20.38%	89.75%
Lowcountry	2000	201,265	129,316	68,379	3,570	10,496
	2005	220,006	146,467	69,117	4,422	15,160
	2006	224,589	150,380	69,435	4,774	16,277
	% Change 2000-2006	11.59%	16.29%	1.54%	33.73%	55.08%
Note: The numbers of white, black, other and Hispanic add up to more than the total county populations because Hispanic residents have been counted as members of one or more of the other races as well.						

If the growth of the Hispanic population continues into the future as it has during the past several years, there may be long-term impacts on Walterboro. It has the potential for altering the historic balance between the African-American and white segments of the population; between 2000 and 2006, the black population of Colleton County declined slightly, while the Hispanic population grew by nearly 38 percent during the same period.

The Hispanic populace may introduce a new set of needs to be met. The different perception of community among these newcomers may mean that in the future a special communication program will be needed to ensure that Hispanic residents understand Walterboro's planning and development objectives.

7.6 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Walterboro's levels of educational attainment, including the percentage of adults who have graduated from high school, are generally better than those for the whole of Colleton County; the percentage of the population over 25 with a bachelor degree doubled between 1990 and 2000, bringing the level near to the state average. The numbers that are of concern, though, are the declines in the percentage of high school graduates between 1990 and 2000 and the percentage with associate degrees. Those figures can have important implications for future economic development in Walterboro, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 7.8

Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years Old										
	Less than 9th Grade		Some High School		High School Grad		Associate Degree		Bachelor Degree	
	Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population		Percent of Adult Population	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Walterboro	14.84%	11.8%	24.3%	19.9%	32.38%	27.1%	8.37%	3.3%	6.15%	12.7%
Colleton County	16.25%	10.2%	26.40%	20.2%	39.49%	37.0%	6.4%	5.1%	7.37%	7.4%
Lowcountry Total	11.39%	6.87%	15.83%	13.24%	30.37%	29.22%	5.79%	5.98%	12.90%	15.82%
South Carolina	13.62%	8.31%	18.09%	15.35%	29.50%	29.97%	6.33%	6.68%	11.22%	13.54%

Chapter 8: Transportation

8.0 PREAMBLE

In common with many communities in the US, Walterboro has become almost completely dependent upon the automobile for transportation during the past 40 years. Now, both in Walterboro and throughout the country, the viability of long-term automobile-dependence is being questioned by citizens and decision-makers.

The City of Walterboro, though, is fortunate. Over time it has maintained a relatively compact urban form with a strong core, both of which are conducive to alternate forms of transportation that will be encouraged in the future. As well, Walterboro's size and relative lack of traffic congestion together mean that there are no overwhelming short-term problems that have to be solved before plans for the future can be implemented.

8.1 ROADS AND HIGHWAYS OVERVIEW

Walterboro is well served by major highways. Interstate 95, the major East Coast north-south thoroughfare runs along or through the municipal boundaries, thanks to strategic annexations during the recent past. US 17A and US 15 also run through the City as does SC 64.

With the recent extension of the Walterboro Bypass, only one potential problem area in Walterboro has been identified by SCDOT. The US 15/SC 64 North Jefferies Blvd.-Robertson Blvd. intersection has been identified as one of four High Accident intersections in the Lowcountry, with 28 crashes and 19 injuries in 2007 and a 2006 crash rate of

3.118. At the present time this intersection is a candidate for STIP-funded improvements to be recommended by the Transportation Committee of the LCOG Board of Directors.

The most recent Vehicle/Capacity (V/C) ratio analysis of roads and highways in Colleton County with Average Annual Daily Traffic counts (AADT) by SCDOT shows that as of 2005 only one road segment (see Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1 on the following pages) in Walterboro was already at 100% of its capacity [V/C ratio 1.0=traffic at 100% capacity]. SCDOT forecasts that by 2025, five highway segments in Walterboro will have V/C ratios of more than 1.0. [**Note:** The higher the number, the worse the congestion.] Therefore, the section of SC 64 bypass between US 15 and US 17A, which is predicted to have a ratio of greater than 2.0 by 2025, will need improvements to handle increased traffic and to minimize congestion. Planning for upgrading of the US 15/SC 64 intersection (see above) should incorporate this expected growth in traffic.

Future economic development, combined with expansion of the municipal boundaries, is likely to increase freight traffic in Walterboro, leading to more highway segments reaching or nearing the congested level in the future. At this time, it is not possible to predict those V/C ratios.

Table 8.1

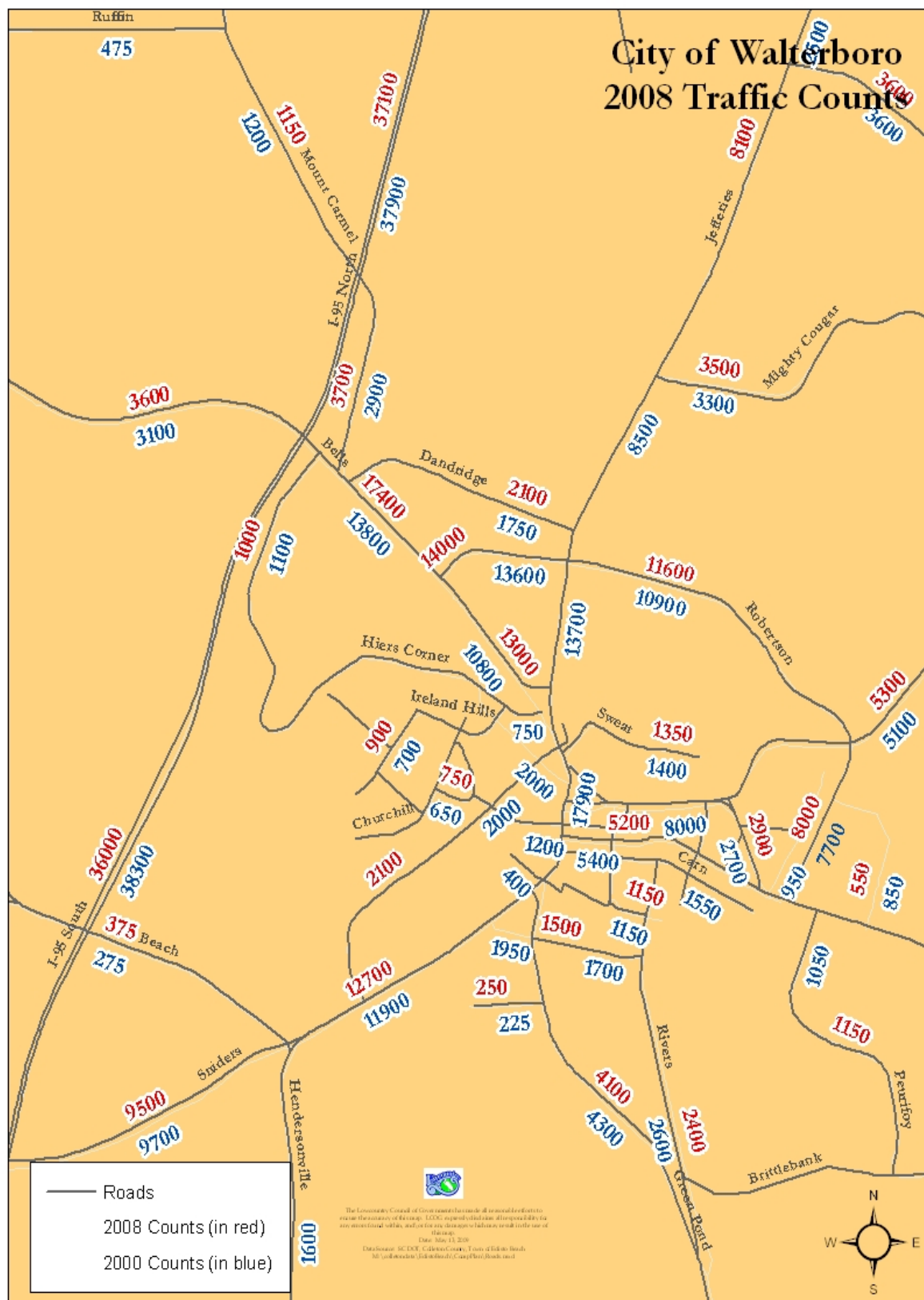
Colleton County Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts: 5000 and Over

Station	Route	Location	2005 Volume	Capacity	05V/C Ratio	2015 Vol	2015 V/C	2025 Vol	2025 V/C
100	15	"U.S. 17 ALT. TO S.C. 64	20700	24800	0.83	29700	1.20	37400	1.51
101	15	"S.C. 64 Bus TO SC 64	15900	21600	0.74	12800	0.59	11900	0.55
103	15	"SC 64 TO S-459	8300	17200	0.48	10800	0.63	12500	0.73
107	17	"Beaufort Co. Line S.C. 64	10800	14600	0.74	13200	0.90	15700	1.08
108	17	"S.C. 64 TO Charleston Co.	16000	29200	0.55	24400	0.84	31600	1.08
111	17	"S.C. 63 TO S.C. 303/S- 282	13000	21600	0.60	8800	0.41	6700	0.31
113	17	"S.C. 303/S-282 TO U.S. 15	20200	24800	0.81	19200	0.77	20100	0.81
115	17	"U.S. 15 TO S.C. 64 Bus	6600	10800	0.61	6800	0.63	7100	0.66
117	17	"S.C. 64 Bus TO S.C. 64 Bus	7900	14600	0.54	4700	0.32	2600	0.18
119	17	S.C. 64 Bus TO S-21	5200	10800	0.48	3200	0.30	2000	0.19
121	17	"S-21 TO S-91	7700	10800	0.71	9500	0.88	11100	1.03
122	17	"S-91 To Dorchester Co. Line	7400	10800	0.69	13200	1.22	17800	1.65
132	63	"I-95 TO U.S. 17 ALT.	10200	24800	0.41	11300	0.46	12600	0.51
133	63	"U.S. 17 ALT. TO S.C. 64	5200	10800	0.48	4900	0.45	4600	0.43
143	64	"I-95 TO S-206/SC 64 Bus	14000	24800	0.56	15600	0.63	17000	0.69
145	64	"SC 64 TO U.S. 15	15000	24800	0.60	16400	0.66	19400	0.78
151	64	S.C. 64 Bus TO S-199	5700	8600	0.66	7600	0.88	9200	1.07
169	64	"S-206/SC 64 Bus TO U.S. 15	14200	19600	0.72	21100	1.08	26300	1.34
171	64	U.S. 15 to U.S. 17 ALT	11400	8600	1.33	14900	1.73	17900	2.08
173	64	"U.S. 17 ALT. TO S.C. 64 Bus	8000	8600	0.93	10400	1.21	12400	1.44
261	21	"U.S. 17 Alt. TO S-459	5600	8600	0.65	9500	1.10	12200	1.42
2371	95	"U.S. 21 (Colleton) To S.C.63	40300	58600	0.69	62100	1.06	78700	1.34
2373	95	"S.C. 63 TO S.C. 64	40300	58600	0.69	63100	1.08	80200	1.37
2375	95	"S.C. 64 TO S-34	40200	58600	0.69	62400	1.06	79300	1.35
2377	95	"S-34 TO S.C. 61	40300	58600	0.69	57600	0.98	71300	1.22

Notes:

2005 Volumes are actual 2005 AADT. The 2015 and 2025 Projected volumes are based on a trend lines from previous years; they are not modeled volumes.

Stations 119 and 151 were added.



8.3 ROADS AND HIGHWAYS – REGIONAL CONTEXT

Both economic development initiatives and proposed highway upgrades will have a direct impact on traffic volumes and patterns in the City of Walterboro.

- Implementation of the *Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan*, in concert with the construction of the new port in Jasper County and the distribution/logistics center near Orangeburg, will increase the amount of freight traffic on I-95 through Walterboro and along the roads and highways of the City on which new distribution centers will be located. Neither the locations nor the volumes can be determined at this time, but there will be long-term needs for upgrades to handle the larger and different traffic movements. Road-widenings, interchange reconfigurations and intersection expansions will be required in the future before congestion occurs and the number of accidents increases.
- The future widening of US 17 between the Beaufort and Charleston county boundaries will not directly affect Walterboro, but it will have an impact in more than one form:
 - a. Heavy truck traffic between Savannah and Charleston is likely to be diverted through Walterboro and onto I-95 or US 17A, causing short-term congestion and passenger-freight vehicle conflicts.
 - b. The improved highway will probably bring more tourists through the ACE Basin, which could be an economic advantage for Walterboro if the City is promoted as the front porch of the ACE Basin.
 - c. The future widening of US 17A from Walterboro to Dorchester County will also bring more vehicles to and/or through Walterboro, as will improvements to SC 64.

8.4 ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Alternative modes exist at the present time but need significant enhancements and support in order to encourage widespread utilization. They would provide benefits to the residents of Walterboro by:

- Lessening the congestion forecast for the City;
- Providing transportation opportunities to jobs, education, medical appointments, shopping and entertainment;
- Decreasing transportation costs.

The implementation of specific transportation-oriented land use and community planning policies are essential for both providing and using these alternatives to automobiles and light trucks.

Public Transportation

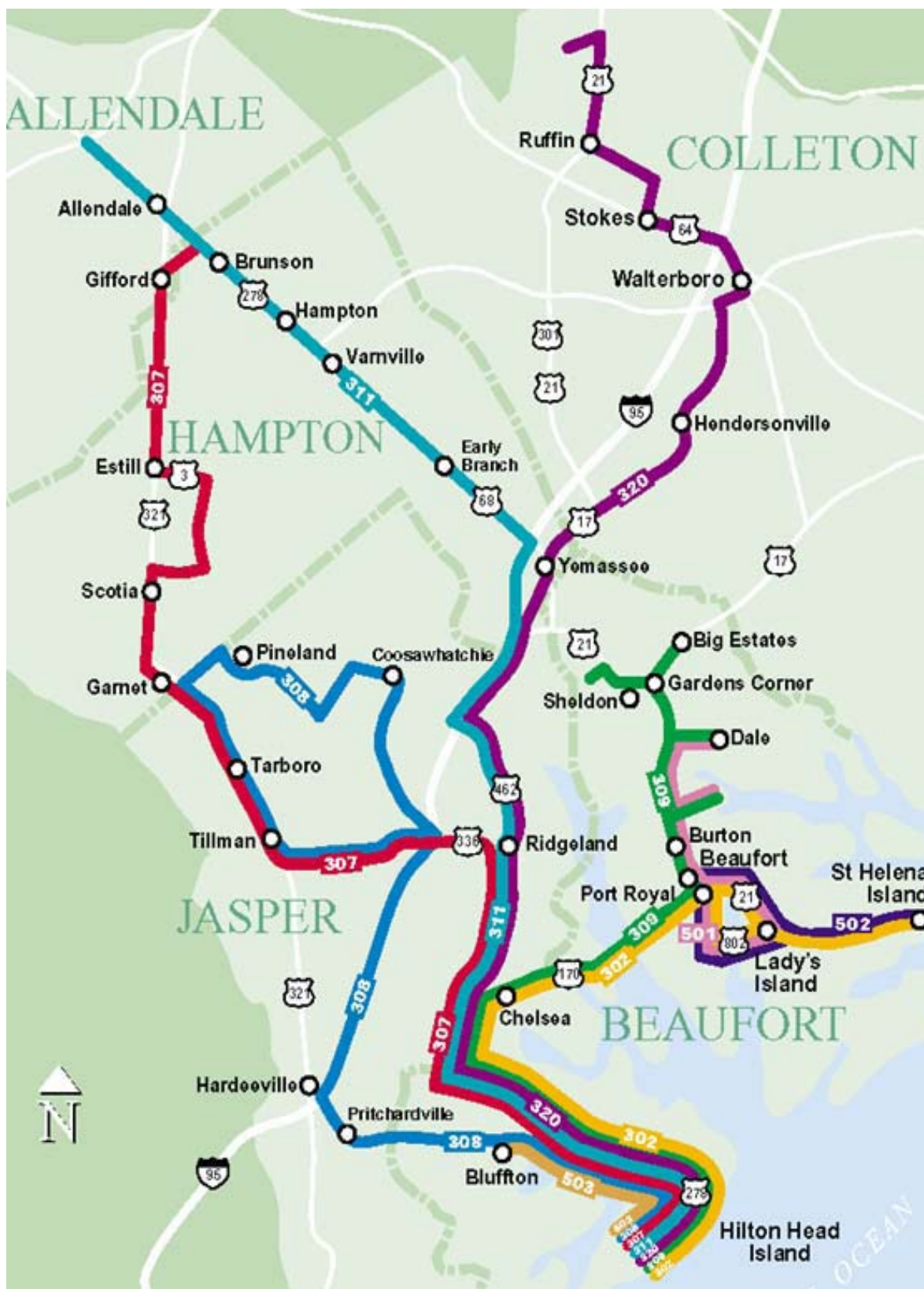
The Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority (dba Palmetto Breeze) is the public transportation provider for Walterboro and Colleton County and also for the other three Lowcountry counties as well as Allendale. At the present time there is one route that originates in Ruffin, passes through Walterboro, and finishes on Hilton Head (see Map 8.2 on following page). It leaves Colleton County early in the morning and returns in the evening and is utilized mostly by service employees working in southern Beaufort County.

Palmetto Breeze and LCOG are in the process of planning a number of major system expansions that will eventually result in the provision of different types of public transit to serve a much wider range of potential passengers. The long-term goal is to provide both “need” (usually defined as persons with low incomes and/or special needs) and “choice” (all other segments of the population) riders with opportunities to use public transit for trips to and from work, shopping, education, medical appointments and entertainment. LCOG will update Walterboro as the implementation of the plans moves toward implementation so that the City and its residents will be able to support and then to take advantage of the proposed improvements.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) created a requirement that a locally-developed, coordinated public transit/human service planning process and an initial plan be developed by 2007 as a condition of receiving funding for certain programs directed at meeting the needs of older individuals, persons with disabilities and low-income persons. The Lowcountry Plan was developed through a process that included representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human service providers, as well as the general public. Implementation of the Plan, which will benefit residents of the City of Walterboro, is in its first phases and focuses on the development of a coordination infrastructure:

- Mobility management (both human and technological components)
- An interactive web site for both information/marketing purposes and also for making trip reservations and scheduling trips
- Other education/marketing initiatives
- Installation of “Smart-Card” system, starting with a small-scale pilot project
- GIS mapping of origins, destinations and schedules of trips; an updatable system will be developed
- Inventory of services presently being provided by all agencies and providers and their origins, destinations and schedules.

Map 8.2 Palmetto Breeze Bus Route



Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities

Walterboro's urban scale and form together should encourage walking and bicycle riding as a form of transportation, as well as for recreation and exercise. Large numbers of residents of all ages and socio-economic groups should be able to safely and efficiently navigate around the community by either foot or bicycle. At the present time that is not generally possible due to several obstacles that can be overcome, including:

- Pedestrian walkways or sidewalks on **both** sides of the street not provided in all parts of the City;
- Separate bicycle paths/trails or lanes not available in most areas;
- Safe bicycle/pedestrian connections not available between newer sections of Walterboro and the downtown and surrounding areas;
- Safe bicycle/pedestrian connections not available between residential areas and highway commercial areas and between the older part of the City and highway commercial areas.

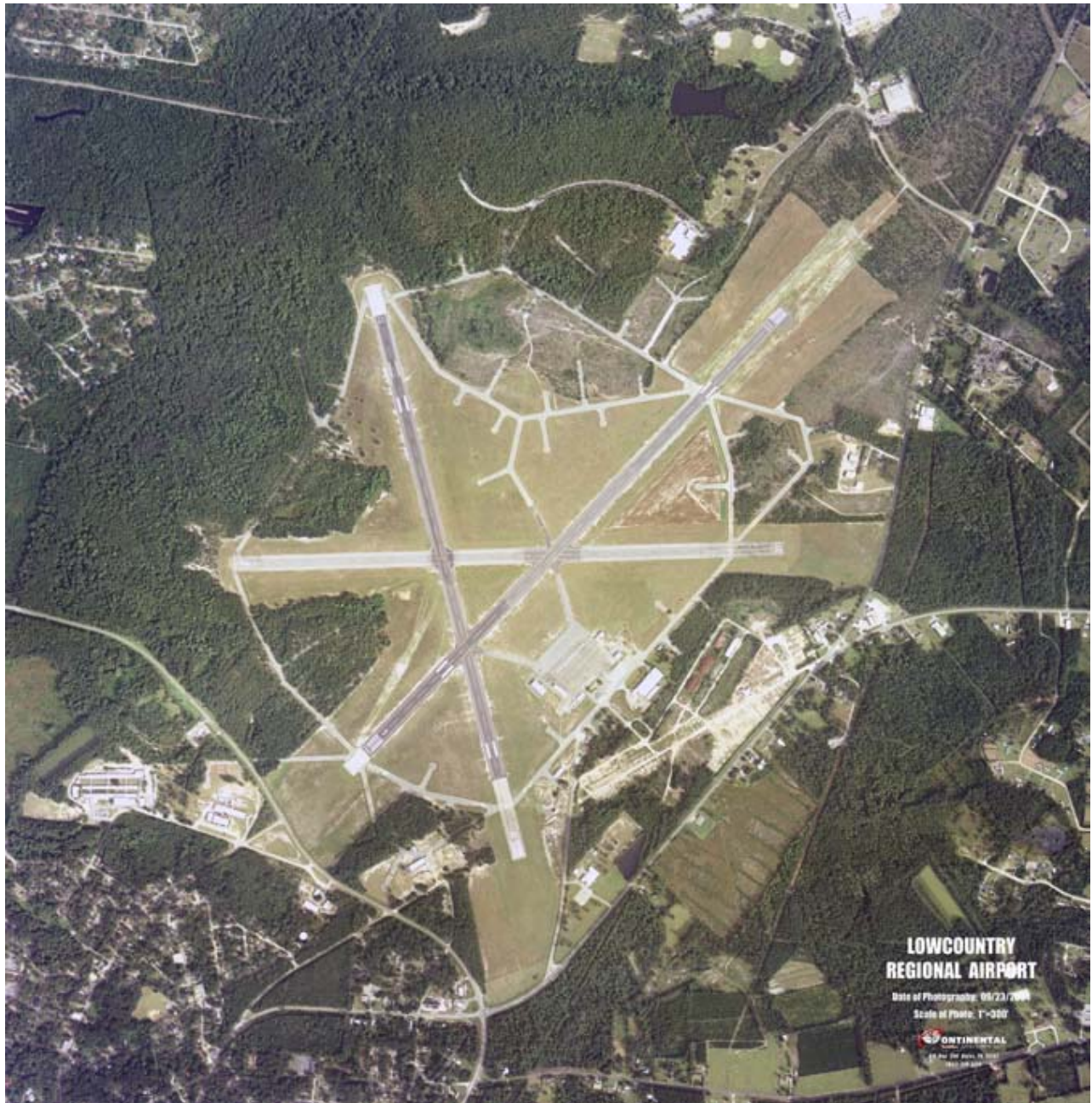
8.5 LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL AIRPORT

The Lowcountry Regional Airport, is a general aviation (GA) facility owned by the City and Colleton County and operated by the Walterboro-Colleton County Airport Commission. During the past several years it has experienced significant growth in both the number of GA operations and the size of its runways, with the longest of its three runways a concrete and asphalt surface of 6002 feet that can handle multi-engine and jet planes (see aerial photo on the following page).

Although it does not handle commercial flights, the airport plays a role in both the City's and the County's economic development that has considerable potential to grow in the future. Increasing numbers of US corporations value the convenience of private air connections to their markets, their raw materials and their manufacturing facilities. This has resulted in innovative arrangements, including fractional ownership of business jets by companies and the launch of a new class of small jets being used for air taxis to and from cities that are underserved by the major carriers.

As well as serving as an alternative to Charleston International Airport, Lowcountry Regional Airport can serve as an important asset for attracting new businesses to the area.

Figure 8.2 Lowcountry Regional Airport



8.5 VISION

The provision of adequate and sustainable transportation is a cooperative and collaborative process since the movement of people and goods goes far beyond municipal boundaries. Working with Colleton County, the Lowcountry Council of Governments, SCDOT and the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority, the City of Walterboro will coordinate transportation planning with land use and community planning. The overall intention is to ensure that residents enjoy an improved quality of life by means of improved access to employment, education, shopping and medical and social services both within and around the City.

☞ Roads and Highways Goals

GOAL: Preserve Road Capacity by Adopting and Implementing Policies to Reduce Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT's).

OBJECTIVE: Use land use and development planning and road and street designs to manage traffic flow and reduce the need for road and street expansions

- 1 Encourage the development of mixed use structures in the traditional built-up area and in residential neighborhoods to allow residents to shop and obtain services without driving.
- 2 Promote site planning that facilitates the use of alternative transportation.
- 3 Promote development locations and densities which will support public transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

GOAL: Lessen and Prevent Vehicular Traffic Congestion

OBJECTIVE: Work cooperatively to implement improvements recommended in the *Lowcountry Long-Range Transportation Plan* and other future transportation plans.

- 1 Implement intersection improvements to enhance flow at present and future bottleneck intersections and highway segments, thereby increasing underutilized capacity along highway corridors.
- 2 Implement other recommended operational improvements (such as turning lanes at appropriate locations).

GOAL: Develop a Coordinated Strategy to Fund Road and Highway Improvements that Result from Major New Developments

OBJECTIVE: Ensure that negative traffic impact upon Walterboro of major new residential, commercial, industrial and mixed use development both within the City and outside its municipal boundaries is not a financial burden upon present City residents.

- 1 Review proposed major developments for their traffic impact, prior to project approval to ensure that proposal does not have an adverse impact on the City's network of roads and highways.
- 2 Where there is a negative impact, a traffic impact fee should be assessed upon the developer to pay for the road and operational improvements needed to mitigate those impacts.

☞ Public Transportation Goal

GOAL: Support the Expansion of Public Transit as an Effective Alternative Means of Transportation in Walterboro.

OBJECTIVE: Use land use and community planning to make public transit viable in Walterboro.

- 1 Encourage the increase of residential densities by means of infill in the traditional built-up areas and as higher density neighborhoods in future new development areas.
- 2 Work with LCOG, LRTA and SCDOT to expand public transit options for Walterboro residents.

☞ Bicycle and Pedestrian Goal

GOAL: Plan and Implement a Pathway, Sidewalk and Bike Lane System within Walterboro.

OBJECTIVE: Ensure that the needs and safety of pedestrians and cyclists are met as they move through Walterboro.

- 1 Working with SCDOT, ensure that all roadway improvement plans include the Pathway, Sidewalk and Bike Lane System Plan for purposes of right-of-way acquisitions, design and funding.

2 Require all residential, commercial, industrial and mixed use development and redevelopments to provide bicycle and pedestrian amenities to meet the safety needs of their residents and business occupants and employees.

3 Develop safe bicycle and pedestrian linkages among sections of the existing built-up area, including highway commercial areas, that are not currently safely linked to each other.

4 Require all new developments to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to other nearby and/or surrounding areas of the City.

✎ Airport Goal

GOAL: Support the Increasing Economic Development Importance of the Lowcountry Regional Airport.

OBJECTIVE: Prevent encroachment by incompatible development and land uses that would interfere with safe aviation operations.

1 Establish an FAA “Noise Compatibility Planning Program” (per *Federal Regulations, Title 14: Aeronautics and Space, Part 150*).

2 Enforce the provisions of the above program through the establishment of an overlay zoning district to protect runway approaches.

Chapter 9: Priority Investment

9.1 INTRODUCTION

On May 23, 2007, the Governor of South Carolina signed into law the Priority Investment Act, adding to the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan:

"A priority investment element that analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools. The recommendation of those projects for public expenditure must be done through coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies. For the purposes of this item, 'adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies' means those counties, municipalities, public service districts, school districts, public and private utilities, transportation agencies, and other public entities that are affected by or have planning authority over the public project. For the purposes of this item, 'coordination' means written notification by the local planning commission or its staff to adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies of the proposed projects and the opportunity for adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies to provide comment to the planning commission or its staff concerning the proposed projects. Failure of the planning commission or its staff to identify or notify an adjacent or relevant jurisdiction or agency does not invalidate the local comprehensive plan and does not give rise to a civil cause of action."

The City of Walterboro recognizes that it is important for all units of government with adjoining or overlapping jurisdictions to cooperate and plan together to insure they grow in a coordinated manner – maximizing resources of each. As a result, this Comprehensive Plan takes into consideration each of these jurisdictions, even though the City does not have planning and development control in all of these areas.

During the planning process, regional and local plans were considered. The Colleton County comprehensive plan was being prepared at the same time as the City's Plan. The City of Walterboro planning staff, planning consultants and Planning Commission met with the Colleton County Planning Staff throughout the development of this plan. Efforts to coordinate the land use elements among the local government comprehensive plans were addressed through staff meetings and presentations at Planning Commission meetings during the drafting process. The Land Use element of this plan, especially the map delineating future growth, shows some of the results of this coordination.

9.2 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ISSUES

- A. Annexation. Staff discussions were held between the City and Colleton County regarding annexation issues and future growth patterns. Recommendations that grew out of those discussions include proposed annexation areas for the City of Walterboro for the purpose of providing urban services to adjacent growing residential/commercial areas, and are reflected in this and the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Water/Sewer Colleton County recommendations on future extensions of water and sewer were considered for planning purposes. However, the City should concentrate on infill and looping improvements as service extensions are the responsibility of developer/benefactor of such extensions. Using the inventory of public facilities and the capacity maps (Map 6.1 and Map 6.2) with the location of sewer and water facilities in section 6 (Community Facilities) and Map 5.3 of the areas the City is willing to serve in the future in the Land Use section as a guide for future development, staff will continue to work with Colleton County to develop mutually beneficial projects.

Also, the City should develop and regularly update--as new residential, commercial and industrial development is planned and built--a Fire Protection Master Plan to guide future capital expenditures in order to continue to improve the City's ISO rating.

- C. Schools Discussions with the School District confirmed that the recently approved school bond for new construction will meet the needs of the area through the planning period. Unless there is an unexpected development change outside the scope of this plan, additional facilities are not anticipated. Where a significant change has occurred staff will engage the school district to determine future sites to meet additional needs.

D. Transportation

The City incorporates the recommendations outlined in the Lowcountry Council of Governments Long Range Regional Transportation Plan. However, the City recognizes the need for widening Hwy. 64 South (Charleston Hwy) to US17 at Jacksonboro, the completion of the Robertson Blvd. bypass from Greenpond Hwy. to South Jeffries Blvd. and the expansion of Hwy. 64 North (Bells Hwy) and Hwy. 278 to Augusta. These improvements would promote a route for truck traffic from Charleston to I-95 South, allow for future growth industries in the industrial and airport areas, and would create a direct link between Charleston and Atlanta.

9.3 INVESTMENT ISSUES

The Priority Investment element ties the capital improvement needs identified in other elements of the Comprehensive Plan to project revenues for the ten-year plan period. It is similar to a ten-year Capital Improvements Plan and should provide guidance to the City Council when reviewing budget requests and planning new facilities. As such, the Priority Investment element becomes one of the mechanisms for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

A. Investment Projects

Over the next ten-years in the City of Walterboro several facilities are planned that will require significant coordination.

Table 9.1: Planned City Projects/Facilities

City Projects	Cost
Great Swamp Sanctuary Discovery Center	\$6 Million
Sewer Rehabilitation	\$3 Million
Waterline looping	\$1 to \$2 Million
Streetscaping/Landscaping	\$1 to \$2 Million
Ireland Creek Rehabilitation	\$.5 Million

B. Required Coordination

City Projects

- The City will need to coordinate with all agencies and local governments to insure the planned facilities are adequately meeting the needs of City residents and have adequate funding.

School Projects

- Utilities are in place and coordination has taken place for completing the new High School.
- Coordination

Transportation Projects

- Walterboro Bypass and Hwy 64 - Widen from Robertson Blvd to Jacksonboro
 - Coordination will be needed to place on County, regional and SCDOT long-range plans

9.3 OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- While the City and County Councils meet on a regular basis there is presently no structure for formal discussion on growth issues at the City's boundaries. A formalized process should be established to ensure continuity.
- The City of Waltherboro needs to be involved early in coordinating for future school improvements, expansions and new facilities.