



City of Walterboro
2030
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	7
<i>Chapter 1: Natural Resources</i>	15
<i>Chapter 2: Historic Resources</i>	19
<i>Chapter 3: Housing</i>	23
<i>Chapter 4: Economy</i>	30
<i>Chapter 5: Land Use</i>	41
<i>Chapter 6: Community Facilities</i>	56
<i>Chapter 7: Population</i>	69
<i>Chapter 8: Transportation</i>	73
<i>Chapter 9: Priority Investment</i>	85

List of Tables

<i>Table 3.1 City of Walterboro – Building Permits</i>	24
<i>Table 3.2 Age of Existing Housing Stock</i>	25
<i>Table 3.3 Affordable Housing Definitions & Data</i>	26
<i>Table 4.1 Building Permits – New Commercial Construction</i>	31
<i>Table 4.2 Average Weekly Private Sector Wages</i>	33
<i>Table 4.3 Walterboro Commuting Patterns</i>	33
<i>Table 4.4 Education Attainment Rates</i>	34
<i>Table 7.1 Population Change 1990-2020 Walterboro and Colleton County</i>	69
<i>Table 7.2 State and County Income & Poverty Levels</i>	70
<i>Table 7.3 Simplified Age Group Composition</i>	71
<i>Table 7.8 Educational Attainment</i>	72
<i>Table 8.1 Colleton Cty. Average Daily Traffic Counts (5000 & over)</i>	74
<i>Table 9.1 Planned City Projects/Facilities</i>	87

List of Maps

<i>Map 1.1 City of Walterboro Development Constraints</i>	15
<i>Map 4.1 Economic Diversification Zones</i>	37
<i>Map 5.1 City of Walterboro Land Use</i>	42
<i>Map 5.2 City of Walterboro National Wetlands Inventory</i>	43
<i>Map 5.3 City of Walterboro Potential Growth Boundary</i>	45
<i>Map 5.4 City of Walterboro Historic Districts</i>	50

Map 5.5 City of Walterboro Gateways and Corridors... ..53

Map 6.1 City of Walterboro Water Availability... ..57

Map 6.2 City of Walterboro Sewer Availability... ..58

Map 6.3 City of Walterboro Land Use... ..63

Map 8.1 City of Walterboro 2019 Traffic Counts75

Map 8.2 Palmetto Breeze Regional Routes78

Map 8.3 Palmetto Breeze Walterboro Route79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Lowcountry Unemployment Rates... ..32

Figure 4.2 Out-Commuting from Colleton County... ..33

Figure 8.2 Lowcountry Regional Airport81

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, and commercial and industrial opportunities.”

That vision has not changed as the vision for the planning horizon ending in 2030 and it remains as the vision for this *City of Walterboro 2030 Comprehensive Plan*. The goals have been incorporated into this Plan. While a number of objectives lie outside the scope of what a Comprehensive Plan can accomplish, they will serve as a guide for implementing the recommendations contained in this planning document.

1.1 Introduction

The 1994 Planning Enabling Legislation for South Carolina requires:

“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. That plan was then updated in 2010, and this update will serve as the City of Walterboro Comprehensive Plan until 2030, where it will again need to be updated. Fortunately, the expectations and the goals for Walterboro’s future were based on that 1997 plan 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 twenty 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 for the better and so has the outlook for the future.

Meanwhile, in regards to planning, smaller communities are now receiving considerably more respect and attention 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 the new 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which will be used as a basis and guide for community development decision-making for the next 10 year planning horizon. The Comprehensive Plan will also serve as a point of reference for evaluating proposed developments, re-zonings and other decisions that may be impacted by future growth.

Overview of Changes in the City of Walterboro

Since the Plan was initially completed in 1997 and then updated in 2010, numerous 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.** The City's population continues to remain relatively flat. The 2010 Census results for Walterboro remain in question for their accuracy. The issue that was noteworthy in the past plan that remains today is that the State continues to see significant growth, but between 2010 and 2020 Walterboro and Colleton County have remained constant with only minor changes. The 2020 census will hopefully show a more accurate picture of the City and County's population, but if significant increases are realized, it will most likely be due to a more accurate count and not major growth.
- **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 heavily traveled north-south interstate highway corridor in the United States. The economic potential of these areas, and adjacent parcels, will positively impact the community into perpetuity. The City continues to annex commercial/industrial properties into the City as they develop along these corridors, which has increasingly enhanced the City's tax base, and this is planned to continue through this plan's planning horizon.
- **ACE Basin.** Colleton County's ACE Basin is a widely recognized ecological treasure that is continuously covered 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's Arts cluster has continued to grow and appears to be on a trend to continue into the future. The South Carolina Artisan's Center, which is deemed "the Official Folk Art and Craft Center of the State" and "a premier destination for travelers and state residents", has expanded its operation to a new building and even brought the Colleton County Arts Council onto their "campus", creating a hub of art that now included youth arts education. The art deco building formerly known as the Hampton Street School, has been taken to the next level as Colleton County residents voted to pass a one cent sales tax that funded a full renovation of the 500+ seat Hampton Street Auditorium. This facility also houses offices and classrooms for budding artists to hone their craft and hopefully grow into private gallery and studio space. The Auditorium will host annual concert and event series, as it is the premier theater in the area. This renovated visual and performing arts center, now known as the *Colleton Civic Center*, was also used for filming of scenes from the feature films *Forrest Gump* and *Radio*. Downtown has seen the addition of art studios and gallery space added to existing stores from antiques to multiple clothing boutiques. Another performing art space was added recently on the site of a dilapidated car dealership. The City of Walterboro constructed a state of the art, downtown amphitheater that can hold up to 800 spectators. The facility's events will be coordinated with Colleton County's Hampton Street Auditorium to make downtown Walterboro a destination for artists, fans, tourists and more. Finally, the Colleton Museum has ventured deeply into the arts world with education programs for children and adults, as well as the featuring of the history of art in Colleton County, which is deep and rich. The arts are a vital piece of the growth over the next ten years.
- The Airport. Over the past decade, the Lowcountry Regional Airport facilities and services have been further expanded and greatly improved. The addition of ADSB Guidance Systems and even the construction of a new terminal building all lead to the growth being experienced at the airport. New water and sewer lines have been installed to support industrial growth, and this growth is already materializing. General aviation continues to increase in numbers, but the most exciting aspect of the airport is this point is the potential high paying jobs in the aviation sector as Lowcountry Regional Airport functions in support of Charleston's growing aviation cluster.
- 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. The addition of resident athletic teams to the Walterboro campus was facilitated by the City working with private investors to establish small dormitory facilities in and around the downtown. This is

expected to grow into the non-athletic student body and continue to help grow the enrollment of the university. USC Salkehatchie has expanded in the number of programs offered and has partnered with the Colleton Medical Center to enhance their Nursing Program. This growth and program expansion is a priority for the City to continue to support.

- Need for Economic Development. Progress has been made along the lines of product development and the reuse of several empty industrial buildings. Most new companies have been fairly small, but diverse. 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. A major development since the last Comprehensive plan in 2010 is the expansion of the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance. In addition to Colleton County, this Alliance includes member counties of: Beaufort, Barnwell, Bamberg, Allendale, Hampton, and Jasper County. This Regional Economic Development Alliance increases exposure, leverages more funds collectively, and greatly increases the number of individuals and organizations working together to market, develop, and move the region forward as a whole. Investment and job creation numbers in the region in the past five years has been astounding. The Lowcountry Economic Diversification Strategy and the current Regional Multi-Modal Transportation Plan created by the Lowcountry COG is still in place, but with the region expanding, some plans and targets have been adjusted.

1.2 A Vision and Planning Goals for the City of Waltherboro

The City of Waltherboro offers its residents a quality of life that should be protected and enhanced. It already has many of the planning and design elements currently desirous and recommended by the American Planning Association. 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, the historic districts, and spacious Forest Hills, are special resources 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.

The City shall continue to preserve and enhance the above-mentioned special qualities through the implementation of the updated *2030 Comprehensive Plan*, revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance* as needed, and possibly *Design Guidelines* and *Subdivision Regulations*.

To ensure that future growth occurs in a manner favorable for the residents, the guiding principles stated by the authors of *The Small Town Planning Handbook* should be heeded, as they apply to Waltherboro:

“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 Waltherboro should set out to achieve the following:

- ☞ *Land use and development* patterns should reflect the present street configurations, 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, with the City's traditional grid pattern encouraged, instead of suburban cul-de-sacs.

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

In the downtown this means 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 residents can walk to shopping and services.

At the same time, additional arts, cultural and entertainment facilities shall continue to be encouraged in the downtown. Added to the existing arts and educational amenities, they will create a critical mass that will ensure the continued evolution of the 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 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 continue to 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 and 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 Walterboro Wildlife 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 Walterboro Wildlife Sanctuary.

At the same time, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including coordinated signage, should be provided to connect Walterboro's downtown with the Walterboro Wildlife Sanctuary.

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 future growth. New businesses should be in those commercial and industrial service sectors which would best compliment regional needs (per the *Regional Economic Diversification Plan*), offer job opportunities with higher pay for City residents, lessening the need for residents to travel outside Walterboro for employment. Sufficient and appropriately located 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 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 continuing to enforce the development standards through the previously established overlay zoning district, to prevent encroachment by incompatible development and land uses that could interfere with safe aviation operations and future airport expansion.

- ☞ The City of Walterboro should continue to 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 future 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* remains 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 shall continue to be involved as the City of Walterboro's development process continues to evolve.

Chapter 1: Natural Resources

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Because Walterboro is predominantly urbanized, the natural resources in and around 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.

1.2 CLIMATE

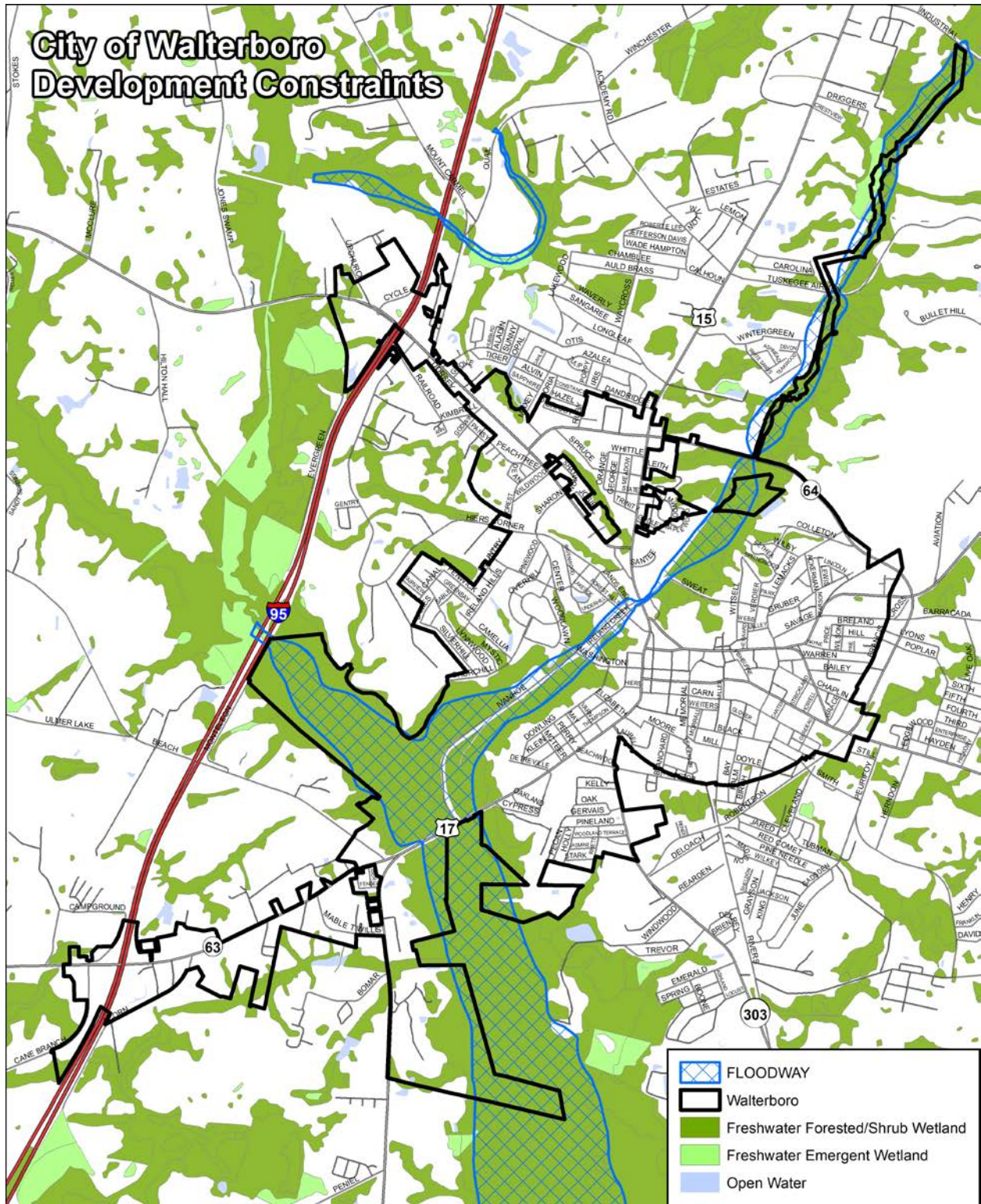
Along with most of the Lowcountry Region, Walterboro has a mild and humid climate. The average annual rainfall is 49 inches per year, and the area has a mean growing season of 238 days. Average elevation in the City is 75 feet above mean sea level (MSL) and ranges from 90 feet above MSL in the east to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



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. Aside from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), there are various restrictions placed on floodplains by state agencies, including SCDOT, SCDHEC-OCRM, DNR, 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 in the mid-90s, a reevaluation of the current surplus capacity is needed, since the City has grown in population and land area.

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 the new 10,000 square foot Discovery Center which continue to create 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. A key focus should be on Ireland Creek.
- ☞ 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 the endangered species list in order to conserve when determining development requests.
- ☞ Encourage new developers and private landowners 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 eventually be annexed into the City.

- ☞ 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 and transfer of development rights, fee simple land acquisitions, and other tools.

7. NATURAL RESOURCE ECONOMICS

- ☞ Continue to promote, grow, improve, and conserve The Walterboro Wildlife Sanctuary as a form of ecotourism for the region.
- ☞ Expand and diversify wildlife recreation opportunities in the undeveloped areas of Walterboro to increase tourism, gain larger local interests, and stimulate the economy.
- ☞ Feature and grow educational and entertainment offerings at the newly opened Walterboro Wildlife Center & Amphitheater.

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 almost 200 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:

Historic Albert House Hotel: also known as the Shoppes at the Albert House. It is located on E. Washington Street and has been renovated to be used as a multi-use commercial. It is currently partially vacant and on the market. 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's Probate Judge, County Administrations, Finance Department, and the County Council Chambers.

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. Since the initial plan, the Historic Preservation Overlay has been expanded and the Ordinance was updated and expanded, as part of the Uniform Development Ordinance, to include guidelines.
- ☞ 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 has been 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: This City has adopted the Bailey Bill to incentivize renovation and preservation of historic commercial buildings in the City's Historic Overlay District. Every effort should continue to 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 ensure 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 has since updated the survey. This also provides information to the 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, such as the Bailey Bill, through the preservation ordinance to encourage compatible new development and adaptive re-use of existing structures.

4. Enforce design regulations in the now established 'Historic Overlay District' which include more than just the specific properties 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 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, supplemented by 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. From 2000 to the beginning of the Great Recession in 2008 the total number of housing units in the City grew only slightly. After 2008, housing growth all but stopped during the Great Recession and only since 2017 has the number of new houses within the City limits started to grow again, at an extremely conservative and slow rate. During this period from 2000 to 2017, along with the very slow growth experienced in new housing units being constructed, some houses were lost to demolition and fires, and as a result, the available housing stock has essentially remained static since the turn of this new century. In the future, further population growth will lead to a related escalation in demand and then supply. Since there is no housing data for the City of Walterboro that is available just for the City from either the U.S. Census Bureau or the Lowcountry Council of Governments, we've had to extrapolate the total number of current housing units available based on Building Permit Data from the City's Building Department since 2008. As a result, see the Building Permit Statistics and Table 3.2 below for current housing unit counts since 2008.

☞ **Building Permit Statistics.** Building permit data shows only types of housing, but not tenure. However, most single family homes are owner occupied. Table 3.2 below shows that between the years of 2008 and 2020, 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 3.1**

TYPE	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
SF-SINGLE FAMILY NUMBER	5	6	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	4	3
SF-SINGLE FAMILY VALUE	\$ 946,382.00	\$ 840,000.00	\$ -	\$ 210,000.00	\$ 504,724.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$212,000.00	\$ -	\$335,000.00	\$ 385,000.00	\$ 360,000.00
MH-MOBILE HOME NUMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MH-MOBILE HOME VALUE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MF-MULTI-FAMILY NUMBER	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MF-MULTI-FAMILY VALUE	\$ 300,000.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COMMERCIAL NUMBER	4	3	3	2	3	4	2	0	0	1	0	3	4
COMMERCIAL VALUE	\$2,163,595.00	\$2,550,000.00	\$2,231,403.00	\$1,900,000.00	\$1,975,000.00	\$8,430,796.00	\$3,963,174.00	\$-	\$ -	\$200,000.00	\$ -	\$1,583,590.00	\$1,626,010.00

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 citywide and specifically in the Historic Districts to determine where and how much renovation and preservation is needed.

Table 3.3 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 3.2
City of Walterboro: Age of Existing Housing Stock**

<u>Year Structure Built</u>	<u># of Units</u>
Total:	2038
Owner occupied	1291
2011 to 2021	17
2001 to 2010	64
1995 to 2000	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 Bureau

☞ **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.

Walterboro’s median household income more than doubled from \$17,617 in 1989 to \$35,996 in 2019.

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 2020 the organization found that approximately 47 percent of renters in Colleton County were unable to afford a two bedroom apartment at fair market rent. Although the information in Table 3.4 on the following page is for the entire county, the numbers are a reliable indicator of current conditions in the City.

**Table 3.3
Rental Housing Affordability in Colleton County**

Number of Households	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
TOTAL	1,894,711	15,145
RENTER	589,362	3,675
PERCENT RENTERS	31%	24%
Fair Market Rent	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
ZERO-BEDROOM	\$697	\$536
ONE-BEDROOM	\$771	\$597
TWO-BEDROOM	\$900	\$680
THREE-BEDROOM	\$1,184	\$883
FOUR-BEDROOM	\$1,445	\$921
Annual Income Needed to Afford	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
ZERO-BEDROOM	\$27,898	\$21,440
ONE-BEDROOM	\$30,843	\$23,880
TWO-BEDROOM	\$35,984	\$27,200
THREE-BEDROOM	\$47,341	\$35,320
FOUR-BEDROOM	\$57,794	\$36,840
Minimum Wage	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
MINIMUM WAGE	\$7.25	\$7.25
RENT AFFORDABLE AT MINIMUM WAGE	\$377	\$377
Renter Wage	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
ESTIMATED MEAN RENTER WAGE	\$13.52	\$12.55
RENT AFFORDABLE AT MEAN RENTER WAGE	\$703	\$653

Income Levels	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
30% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)	\$20,389	\$13,170
ESTIMATED RENTER MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$33,843	\$28,285
Rent Affordable at Different Income Levels	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>Colleton County</i>
30% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI)	\$510	\$329
ESTIMATED RENTER MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$846	\$707

☞ **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, 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 Wildlife Sanctuary, 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 "Gateways" to the ACE Basin, a nature-based tourism attraction that brings ecological and outdoor activity visitors to the area. The development of the Walterboro Wildlife Center shall be a focal point in drawing more visitors to the City and region. 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. Commercial construction in the City saw a large boom from 2014-2019, Residential has picked up from 2016 through 2020, as shown in Table 4.1 below. Even more important, in terms of balance, the total value of commercial permits in Waltherboro between 2010 and 2020 was \$ 91,159,117 while the residential total was \$20,951,220. The combined total of the categories was \$112,110,337. Both categories grew versus the previous 11 year period where Commercial was \$72,199,596 and Residential improvement was \$17,114,115 totaling \$89,613,805.

Table 4.1: Building Permits for Commercial Construction in Waltherboro, 2010-2020

CITY OF WALTERBORO
Commercial & Residential Permit List – Values

Year	Residential		Commercial		Total Value
	# of permits	Value	# of permits	Value	
2020	467	\$ 4,078,991.00	100	\$ 3,289,046.00	\$ 7,368,037.00
2019	376	\$ 2,226,353.00	167	\$ 8,350,027.00	\$ 10,576,380.00
2018	221	\$ 1,405,945.00	161	\$ 12,347,156.00	\$ 13,753,101.00
2017	303	\$ 2,110,266.00	110	\$ 11,143,870.00	\$ 13,254,136.00
2016	302	\$ 2,543,125.00	263	\$ 14,442,656.00	\$ 16,985,781.00
2015	363	\$ 1,193,632.00	207	\$ 11,762,903.00	\$ 12,956,535.00
2014	269	\$ 983,848.00	227	\$ 17,942,152.00	\$ 18,926,000.00
2013	299	\$ 1,963,163.00	245	\$ 2,350,784.00	\$ 4,313,947.00
2012	323	\$ 2,075,948.00	246	\$ 1,952,351.00	\$ 4,028,299.00
2011	356	\$ 1,229,340.58	293	\$ 5,472,133.45	\$ 6,701,474.03
2010	389	\$ 1,140,608.32	261	\$ 2,106,038.36	\$ 3,246,646.68
TOTALS		\$ 20,951,219.90		\$ 91,159,116.81	\$ 112,110,336.71

4.3 JOBS, EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE

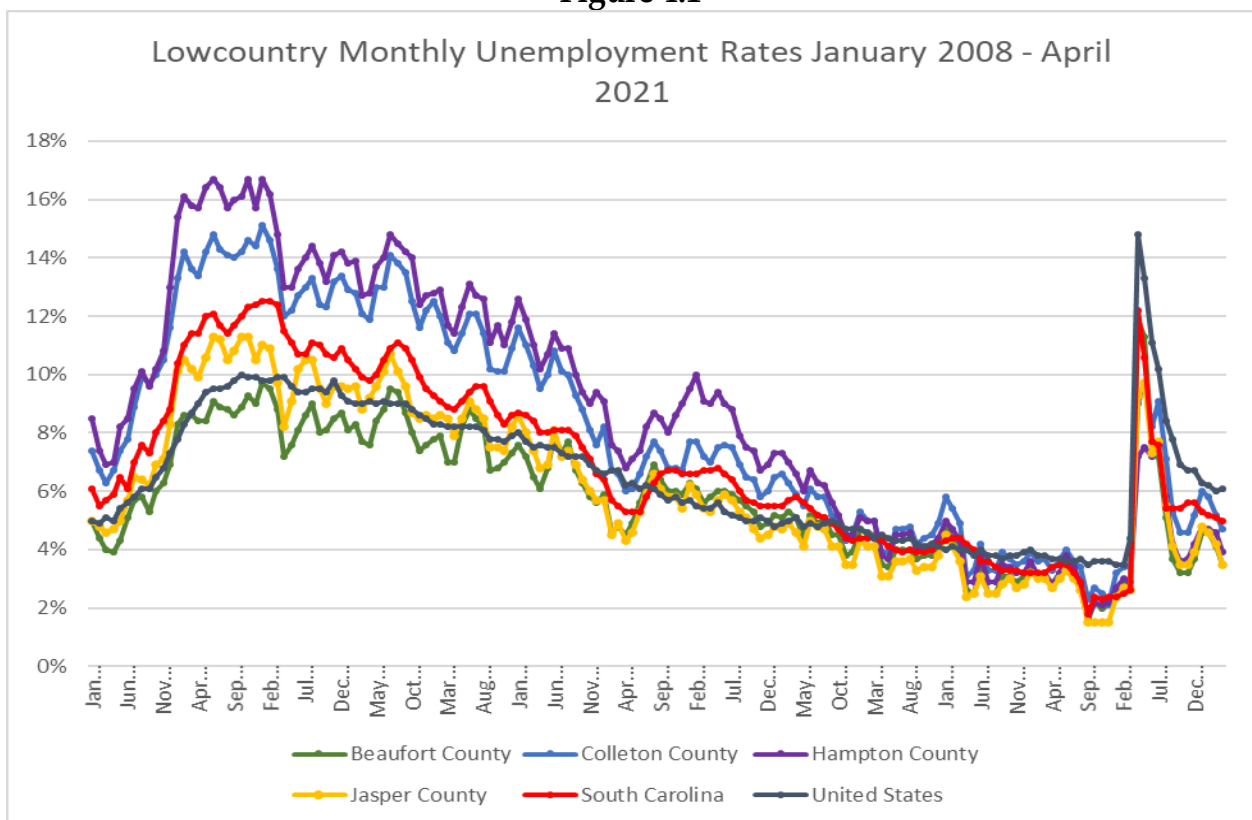
Jobs and Employment

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 Waltherboro 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.] since the “Great Recession” that began in 2008, has rebounded considerably and we now see a greatly reduced unemployment rate and an increased number of people in the workforce, as Figure 4.1 shows.

Figure 4.1



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] 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.
- Grown the most in recent years 2016-2020.
- Decreased (a very small percentage) between 2014 and 2015.

Table 4.2: Average Weekly Private Sector Wages

Average Weekly Private Sector Wages 2008 - 2019															
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2008-2020	% Change 2019-2020
Beaufort County	\$583	\$572	\$579	\$588	\$603	\$638	\$638	\$660	\$687	\$704	\$706	\$739	\$799	37.05%	8.12%
Colleton County	\$535	\$542	\$542	\$550	\$552	\$554	\$580	\$578	\$593	\$623	\$644	\$671	\$698	30.47%	4.02%
Hampton County	\$644	\$648	\$648	\$691	\$716	\$696	\$729	\$744	\$730	\$731	\$770	\$801	\$744	15.53%	-7.12%
Jasper County	\$653	\$615	\$584	\$578	\$640	\$652	\$680	\$708	\$709	\$711	\$689	\$735	\$779	19.30%	5.99%
South Carolina	\$681	\$688	\$707	\$726	\$744	\$752	\$772	\$795	\$812	\$838	\$847	\$879	\$911	33.77%	3.64%
United States	\$873	\$868	\$893	\$920	\$946	\$956	\$986	\$1,017	\$1,029	\$1,064	\$1,100	\$1,138	\$1,170	34.02%	2.81%

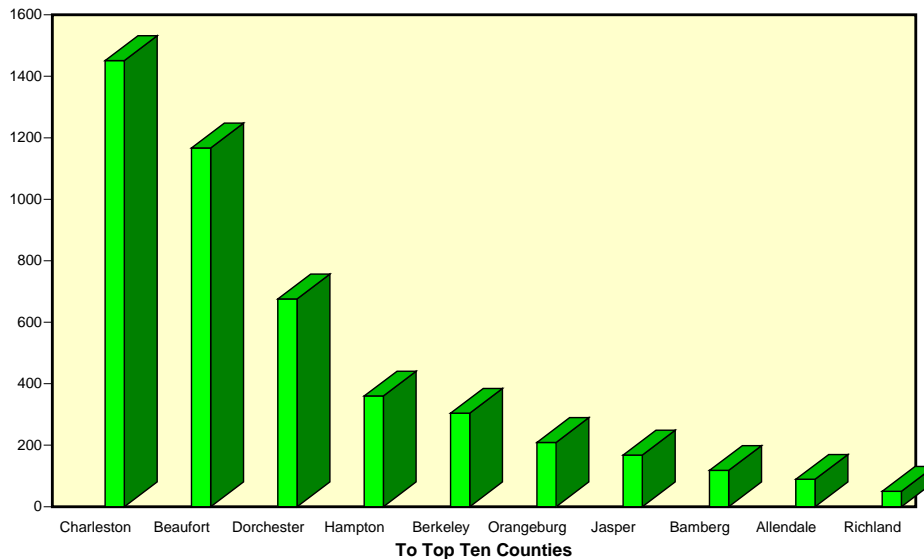
Note: 2008-2019 data are annual average weekly data. 2020 data are based on preliminary quarterly data (Q3).
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Labor Force

☞ *Commuting Patterns.* Commuting patterns have remained fairly constant over the past decade. Approximately 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.

Figure 4.2

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 2010 and 2019 there have been 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 Rates 2000 – 2019

Note: Population 25 years and over.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Educational Attainment

	2000	2010	2018	2019
City of Walterboro				
Less than 9th Grade	11.8%	5.7%	7.8%	6.6%
Some High School	19.9%	18.2%	5.9%	5.7%
High School Graduate	27.1%	29.0%	38.3%	37.4%
Associate Degree	3.3%	7.4%	5.9%	7.9%
Bachelor Degree	12.7%	16.2%	12.5%	12.9%
Colleton County				
Less than 9th Grade	10.2%	8.5%	3.6%	3.7%
Some High School	20.2%	16.2%	9.7%	9.7%
High School Graduate	37.0%	39.1%	44.1%	45.4%
Associate Degree	5.1%	5.6%	11.6%	11.9%
Bachelor Degree	7.4%	9.5%	9.8%	9.6%
Lowcountry Region				
Less than 9th Grade	6.9%	5.1%	3.0%	3.3%
Some High School	13.2%	9.5%	7.0%	6.8%
High School Graduate	29.2%	29.5%	29.2%	28.4%
Associate Degree	6.0%	7.0%	8.9%	7.5%
Bachelor Degree	15.8%	18.1%	19.3%	19.7%
South Carolina				
Less than 9th Grade	8.3%	5.9%	4.2%	4.1%
Some High School	15.4%	11.1%	8.7%	8.4%
High School Graduate	29.5%	31.2%	29.5%	29.1%
Associate Degree	6.7%	8.3%	9.6%	9.8%
Bachelor Degree	12.5%	15.5%	17.4%	17.8%

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 County built and opened a Career Skills Center in 2011 in an effort to increase technical training for the workforce. The County, together with the Lowcountry Council of Governments, contracted to bring in a private provider, Palmetto Training. Since that point, hundreds of certified CDL Drivers, Welders, CNC Operators, and more have come out of the facility. This facility will surely be an integral part of growing our workforce locally. 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.
- ***WIOA.*** The Lowcountry Workforce Development department at LCOG is also involved in the training of prospective job seekers and the area's youth. WIOA 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 WIOA provide funds for 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

In 2011, Colleton County joined the Southern Carolina Economic Development Alliance. This membership in the Alliance will be a large part of the development future of Colleton County and Walterboro as its county seat.

The no six-county region works together to attract new businesses and target industries to aid in community growth, tax base diversification, and quality of life enhancement.

Colleton County and the Alliance determine target industries for the region. Cluster analyses help identify 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.

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

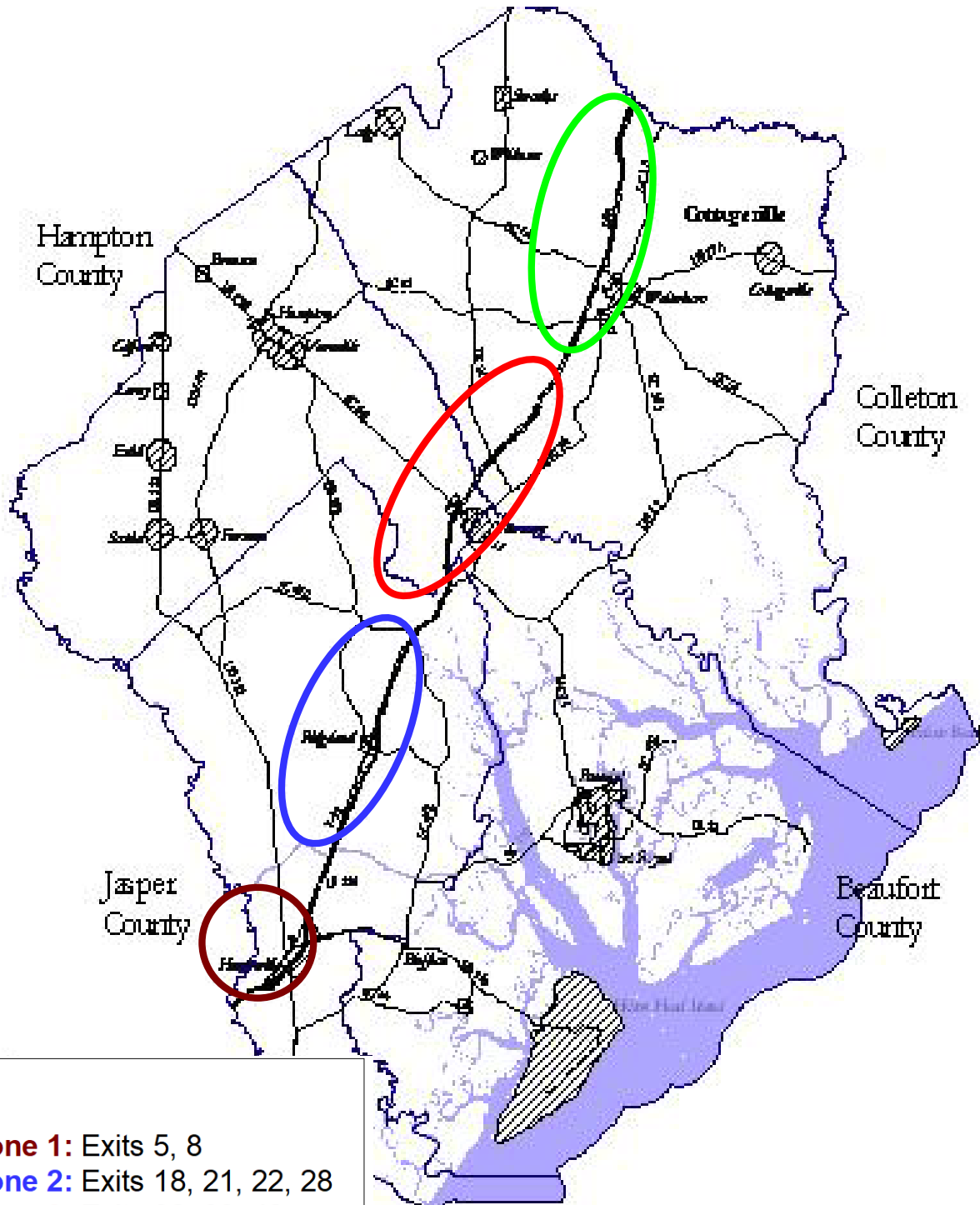
Although it was not discussed in the study, because of the improvements to and the increasing use of the airport, aviation-related and aviation-dependent industries should also be emphasized in future economic development initiatives.

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 Artisans Center, mid-scale Hotels and B&B options, 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, varied hotels and many restaurant options.
- ◇ 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. The first 100,000 spec building has been sold and is occupied by Crescent Dairy & Beverages. There has been a second 100,000 square foot “spec” building built and is suitable for a distribution/logistics center. Additionally a pad has been prepared for a third building. Recent road improvement make the sites even more attractive and accessible.
- ◇ 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 operational and with its FTZ benefits and prominent location along I-95, more development is expected. 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.

GOAL: Develop a diversified economic base for Walterboro that will provide jobs that pay at least the state average wage and attract local talent that historically has left the region for higher education and not returned for employment (Brain Drain).

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. Coordinate with, support, and participate in efforts of the Colleton County Economic Alliance and Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance.
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 Walterboro Tourism Department 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. Effort to create jobs that require higher educational attainment in order to reverse the trend of “Brain Drain” as explained in Chapter 7.
7. 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. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, 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, 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.

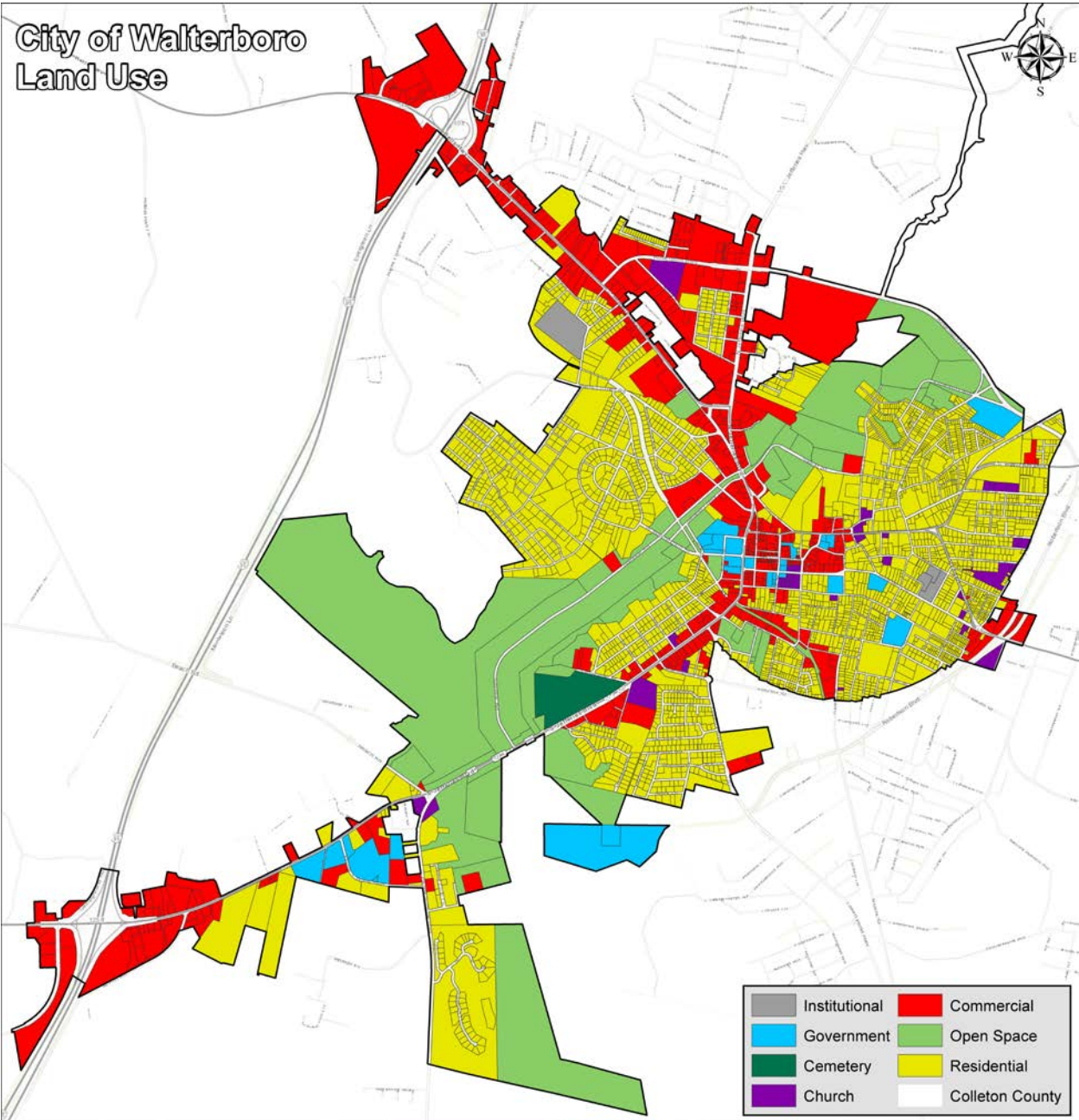
Given the impact and importance of sound economic growth, it is a proper time for the City of Walterboro to identify specific development goals to establish a solid foundation for properly planned, long-range growth that will take advantage of opportunities without destroying the lifestyle that current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

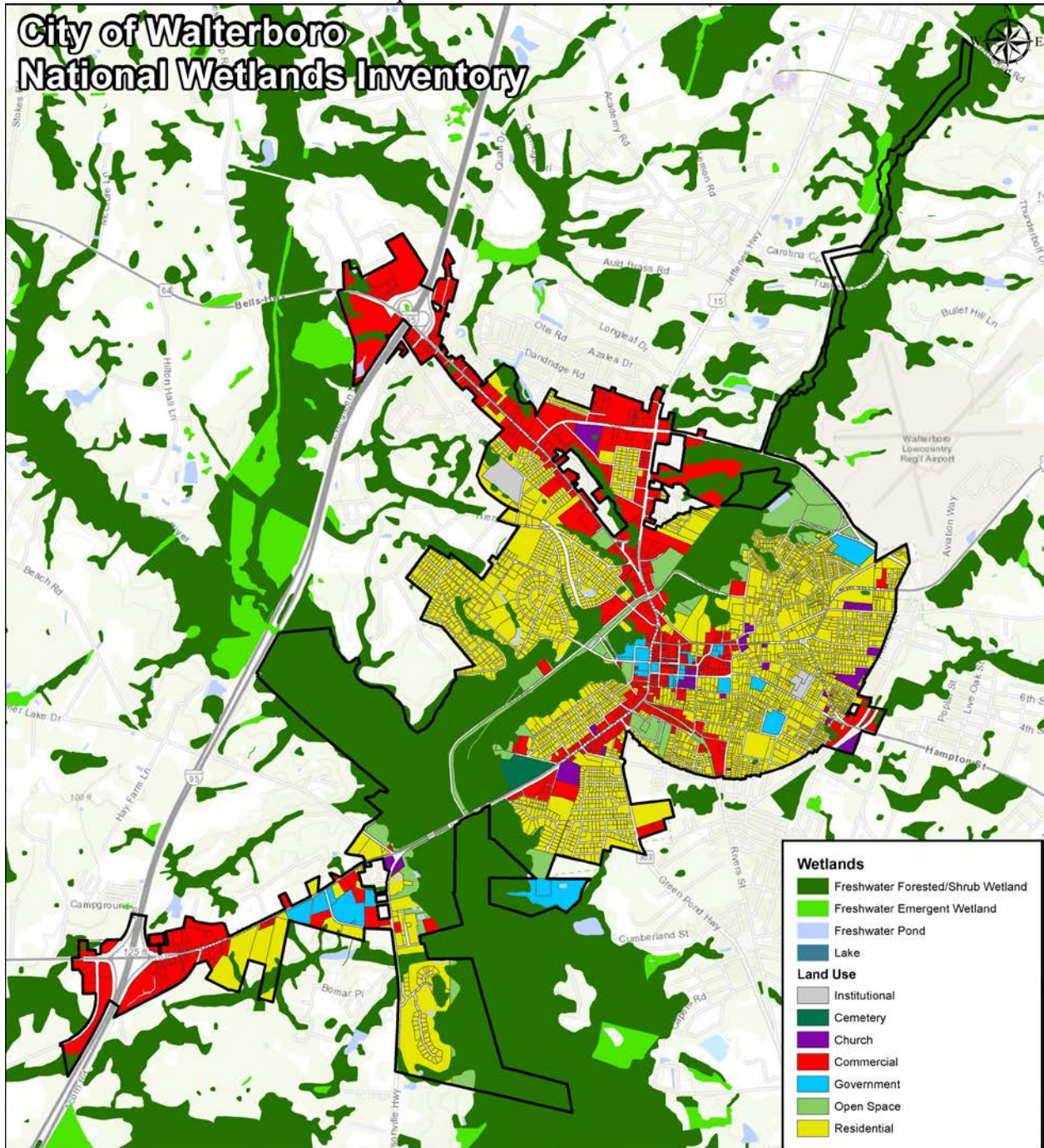
5.1 EXISTING LAND USE

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.

Map 5.1



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.



5.2 DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Development trends affecting land use in Walterboro are related to economic, market and social changes that are expected to impact the community. They include an aging population (in Walterboro 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.

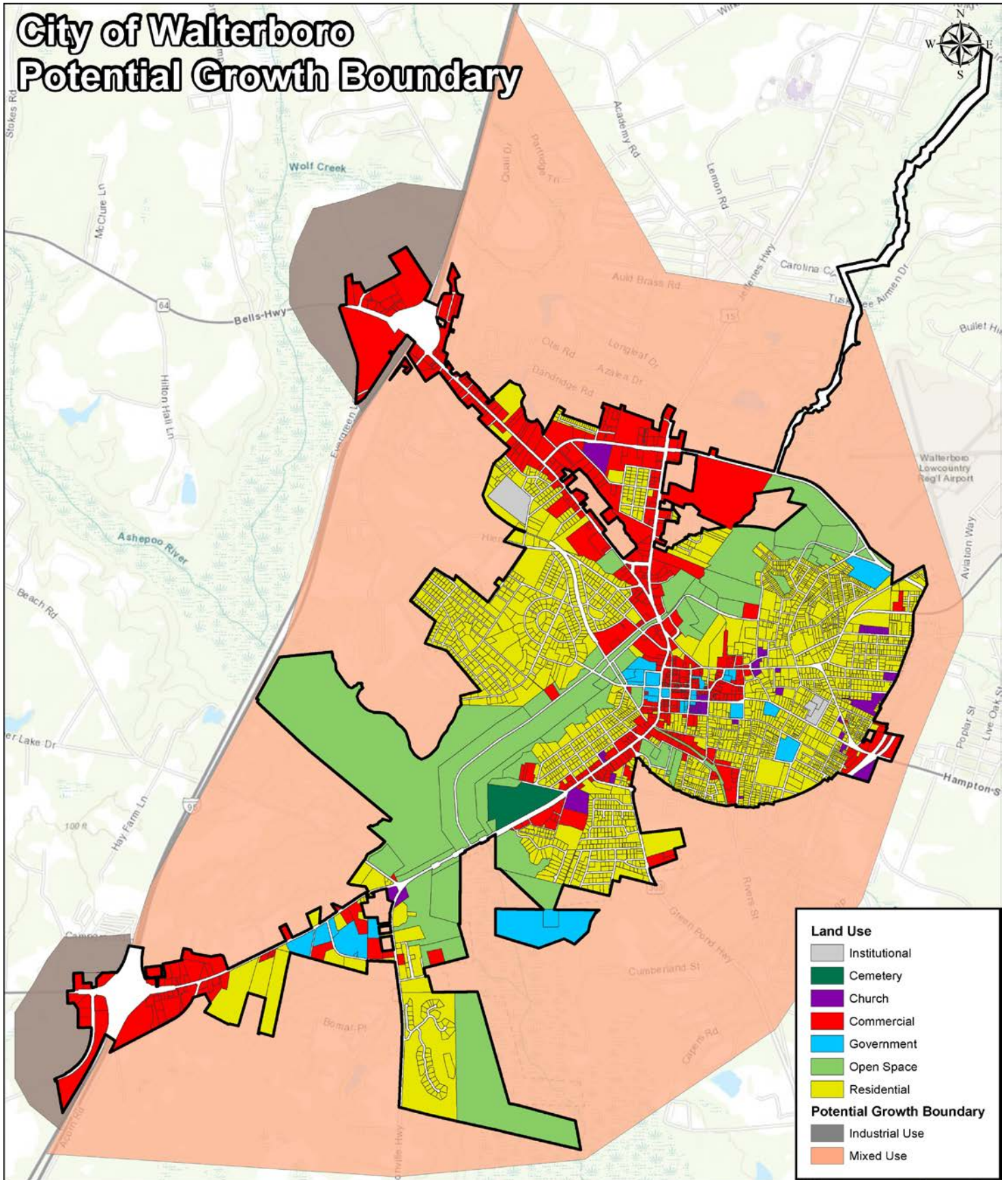
Map 5.3 on the following page shows suggested areas of future growth for Walterboro.

☞ *Future Growth Boundaries.* Future growth boundaries have been created to show where it is most feasible for growth to take place in Walterboro 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 Walterboro 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 commercial and 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.

City of Walterboro Potential Growth Boundary



☞ *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 commercial development along I-95.

- 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

☞ *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. 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, 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 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 of 100 acres or more, 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 continue to be strengthened.

5.3 EXISTING REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Walterboro is currently operating under *The City of Walterboro 2010 Comprehensive Plan* approved in 2010. Because of the nature of that plan, combined with major changes in Walterboro since then, and larger ones expected in the foreseeable future, the city will be operating under this new 2030 Comprehensive Plan, once approved and adopted by the City Council.

The City's development regulations contained in the current Unified Development Ordinance will need minor changes in order to implement the planning and community development policies and goals contained in this new 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The updated Zoning Ordinance will reflect and incorporate the policies and regulations contained in this new Comprehensive Plan.

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 land to accommodate market demands for new

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

- Ensure connectivity between new development and existing 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 the 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 Waltherboro 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 urban sprawl to spread 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. 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:

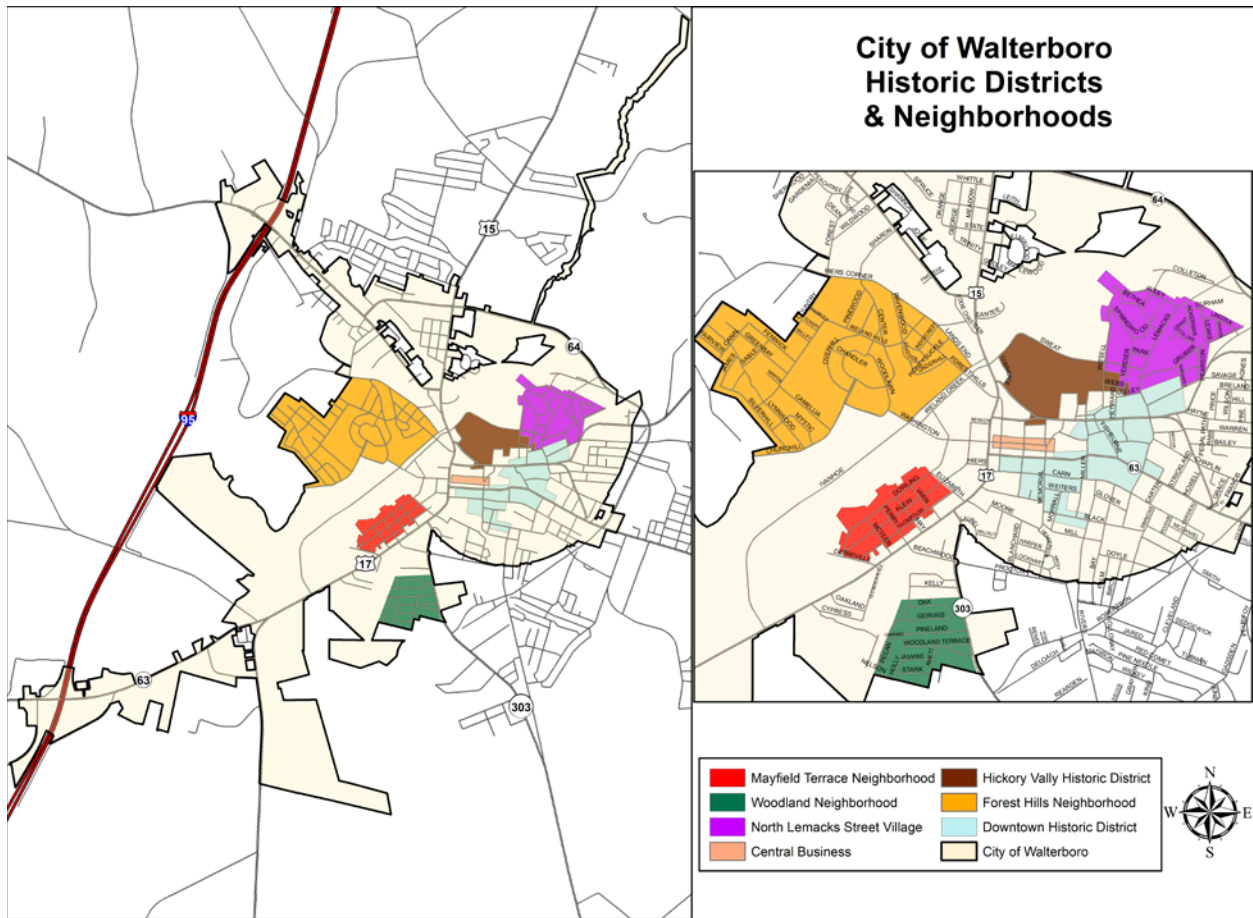
- Designate appropriate locations and sites for various types and densities
- Minimize conflicts of land use between neighboring properties and land uses
- Assist in setting priorities for public investment in infrastructure.
- Ensure multi-modal transportation interconnectedness among existing and planned 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, industrial 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 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 and renovations to 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. 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 in the existing municipal boundaries and 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:

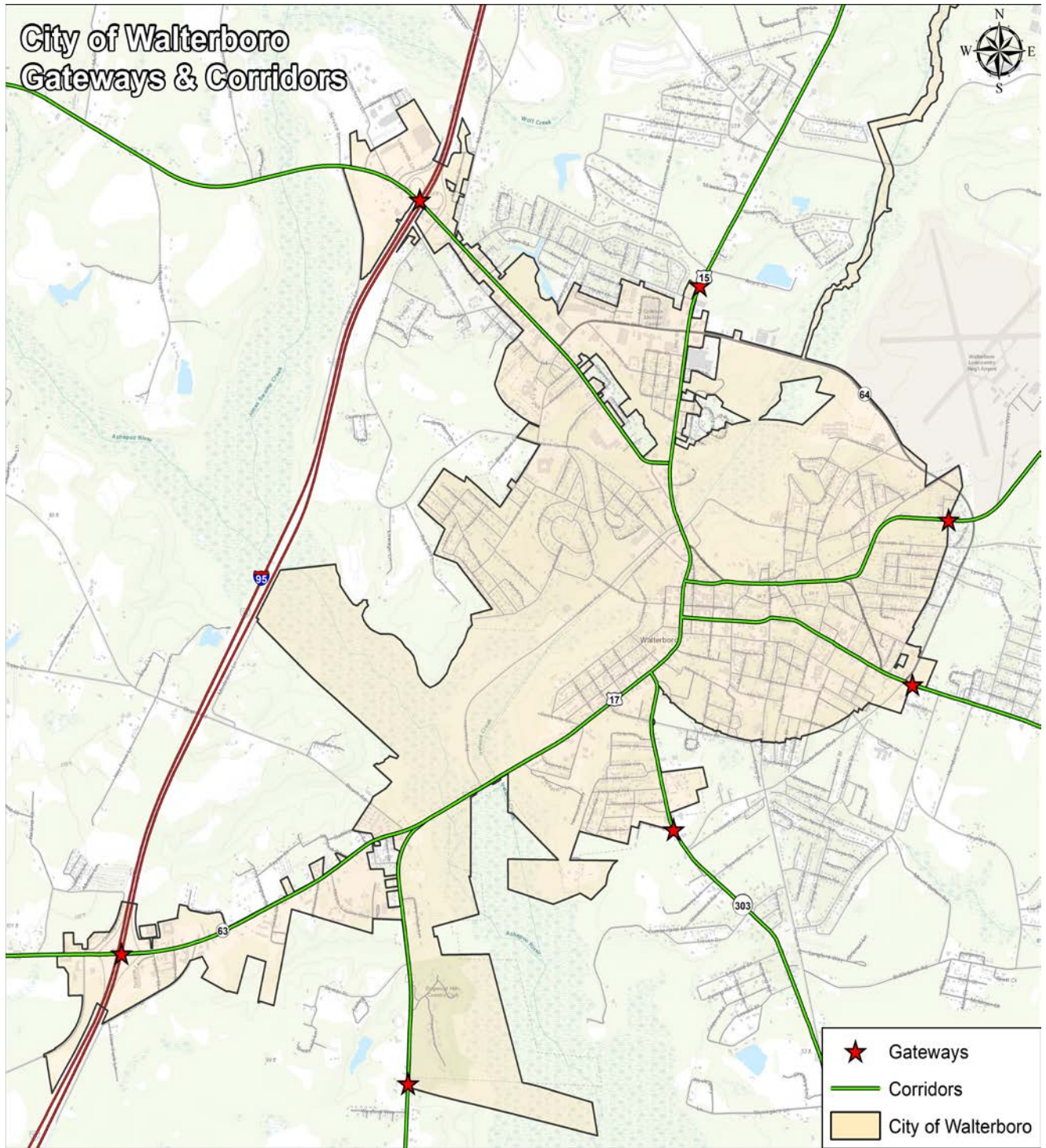
“By putting uses in close proximity to one another, alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking, once again become viable. Mixed land uses also provide a more diverse and sizable population and commercial base for supporting viable public transportation...It helps streets, public spaces and pedestrian 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 will be served by existing municipal water and sewer systems, or be 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.
 - ◆ **Loop Project**
The City has started to implement its "Loop Project" to beautify the corridors into the City and set the stage for business investment and a more usable city for its citizens.



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

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

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 and redevelopment, along I-95, US 17A, SC 64 and US 15, would make Walterboro more attractive for future investment and its present residents, while improving the community’s quality of life. Planning policies for development along these highways, and other present and future major arterial roads, should include the following:

- The several **gateways** into 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 developments.
- 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 are preserved and enhanced; and,
- 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 Walterboro residents.

OBJECTIVE #2: Enforce the City's updated development regulations, in order to implement the recommendations of this new *2030 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 and criteria set forth in this *2030 Comprehensive Plan* and the updated Zoning Ordinance.

Chapter 6: Community Facilities

6.1 OVERVIEW

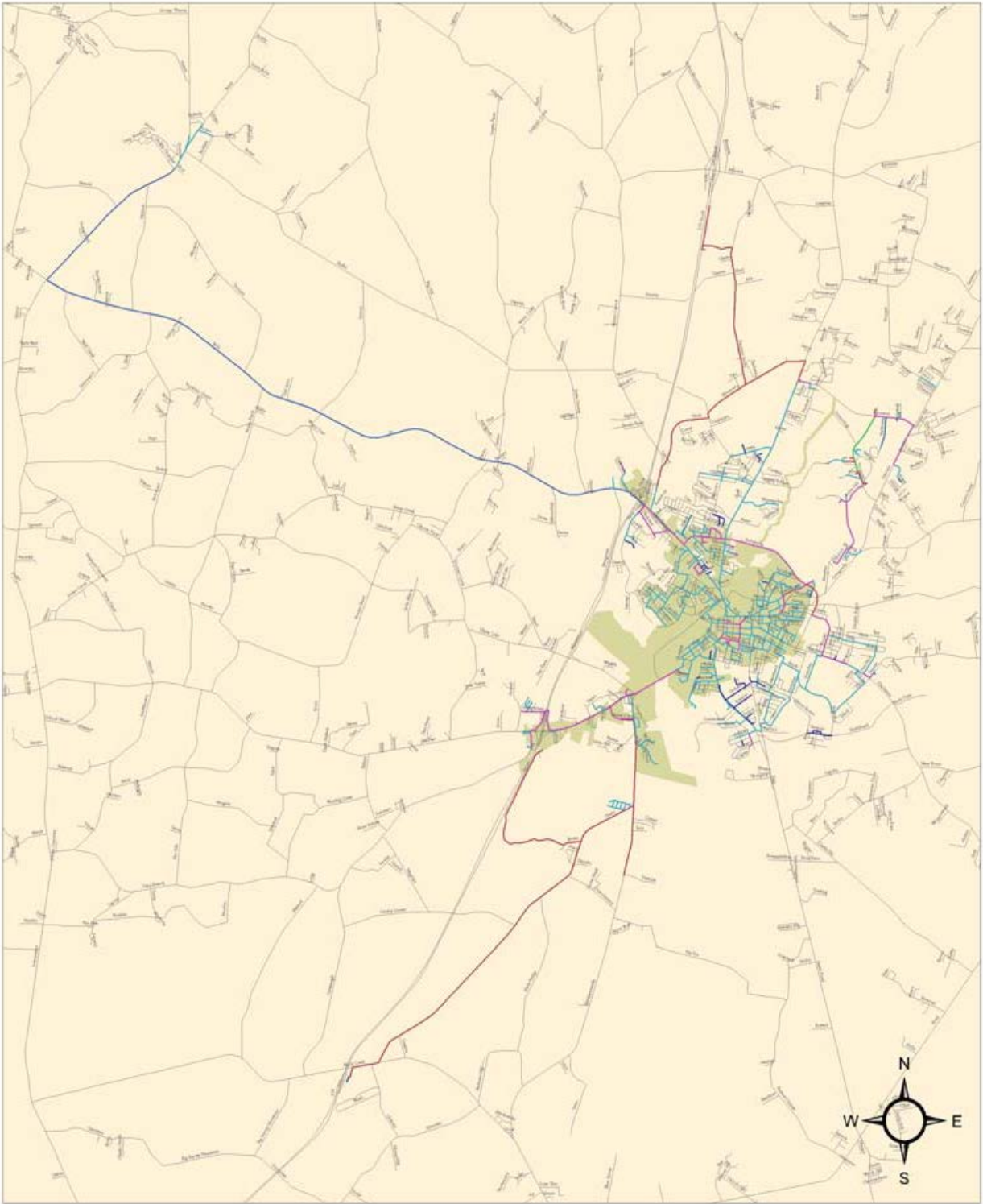
The Community Facilities section of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the current infrastructure and community programs that are essential to the health and growth of the City of Walterboro. The City has committed to provide sufficient infrastructure to encourage economic growth. These services need to 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, the following areas will be evaluated for ability to serve current and future populations:

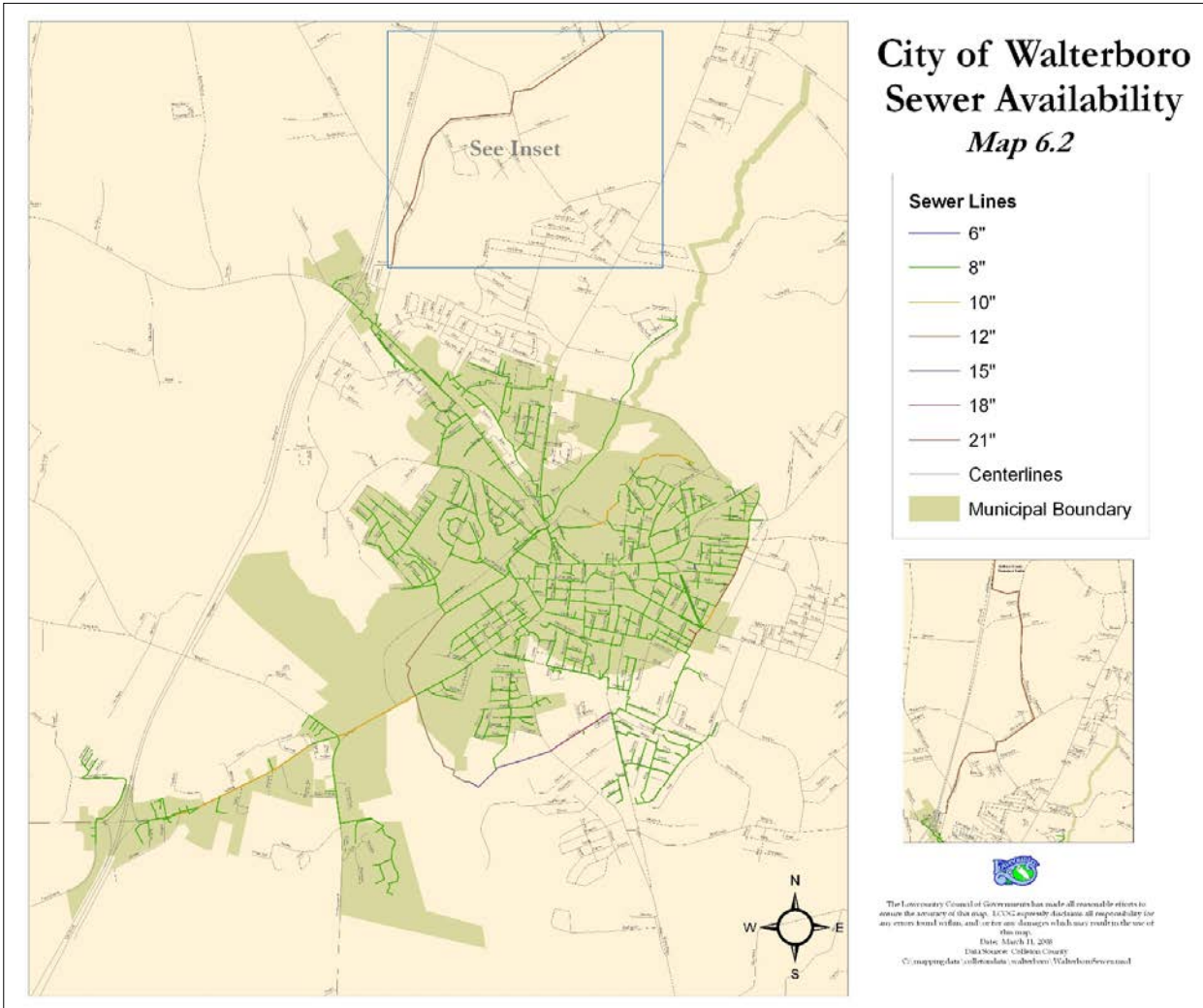
- Water and Sewer supply and treatment
- Storm Water Drainage
- Solid Waste collection and disposal
- Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services
- Government Facilities
- Educational Facilities and Libraries
- Public Space and Recreational Facilities
- Emergency Preparedness

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, City 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 the following page). There are also eight storage tanks: seven being elevated and one (1,000,000 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 6,883 total taps, 1.60 MGD of production on average, and a max of 3.34. 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 1.9 MGD. Due to growth of Industrial and Commercial business in and around the City over the past 10 years, the wastewater treatment plant is operating at close to capacity. The City secured a federal EDA grant of more than \$16,000,000 in order to expand its wastewater treatment plant. The expansion project is in the final design phase. The new plant will have a capacity of 5.63 MGD. This will help to serve continued commercial growth as well as support large scale industrial growth into the next decade or more.

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.

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

- ***Police Department.*** There is one police service office that is located in City Hall. The police service patrols the corporate city limits. The force maintains a force of thirty full time class 1 officers, and no reserves or interdiction teams. 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 nearly 6.
- ***Fire Department.*** 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 3 by ISO with fourteen full time fire fighters and 8 part time firefighters. There are currently four pumper trucks, one ladder truck, and one service truck. The department serves the corporate City limits. The department continues to pursue an ISO 2 rating through equipment and training upgrades and expanding services.
- ***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.
- ***Emergency Medical Services.*** Emergency Medical Services are provided by Colleton County. Colleton County EMS currently has two stations within the City.

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, Police & Fire Departments. This includes the Fire Station and the City Hall Annex, and Citizen Service Center are all located at one campus on Hampton Street. 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.
- ***Planning & Development.*** Office and staff are located at in the new Citizen Service Center and handle all permitting, planning, plan review, and economic development and code enforcement issues.
- ***Finance Department - Includes Water & Sewer Support.*** Offices and staff located in the new Citizen Services Center located at 300 Hampton St.

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:

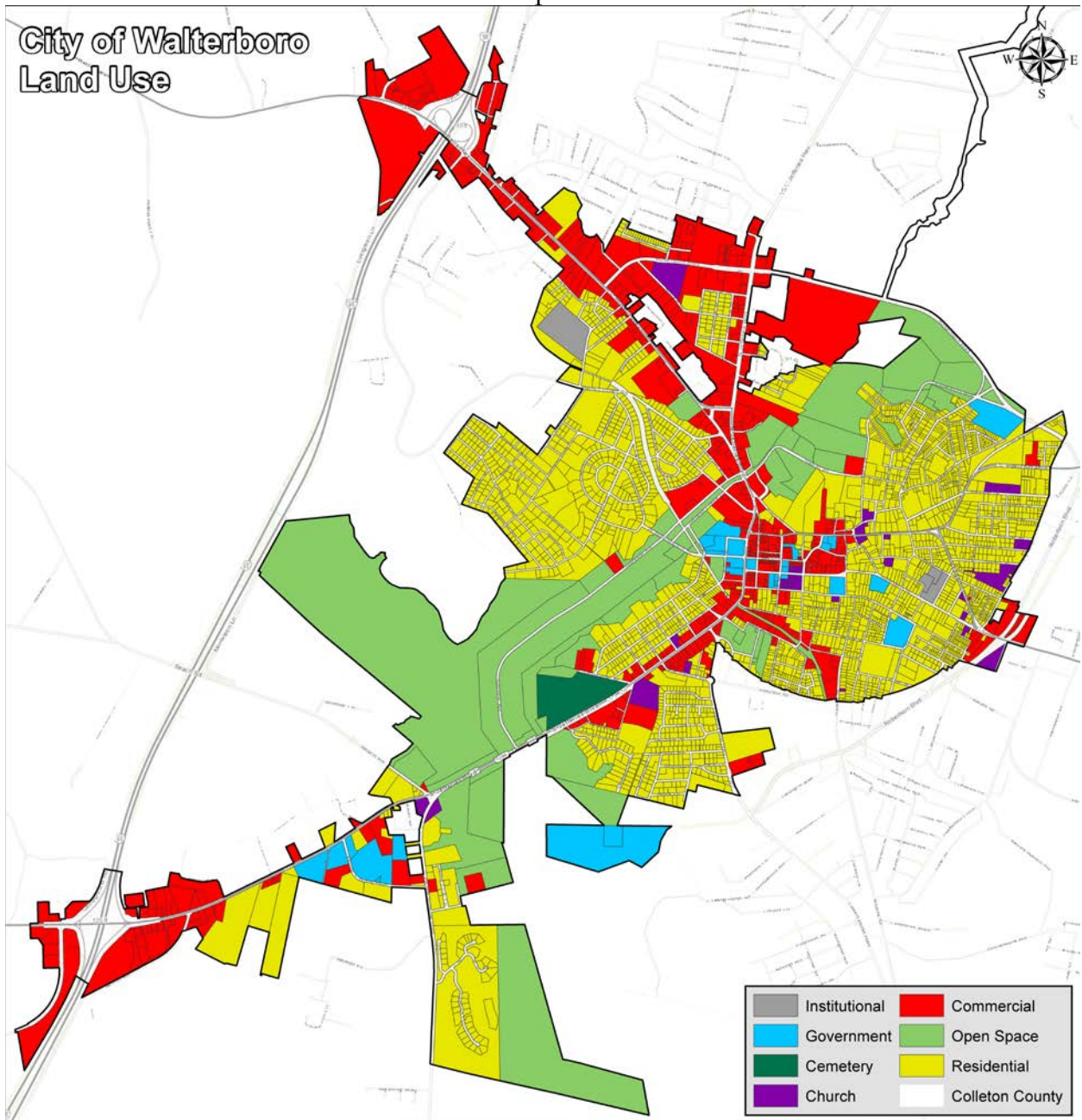
Walterboro Wildlife Center & Sanctuary. The newly opened Wildlife Center features the wildlife and educational information that is afforded by the preservation and enjoyment of the Walterboro Wildlife Sanctuary. Currently, there are more than 3 miles of ADA accessible trails, kayaking trails, and bicycling. 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 D. 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 County 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 Civic 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 Fit4™ Fitness Center that has exercise facilities and a wellness center that can be utilized by residents of the City of Walterboro. As part of the County’s “penny sales tax” referendum, the County built an new full service fitness center located at the newly expanded and renovated Colleton County Recreation Complex. Development of more recreation opportunities within the City’s densely populated areas should be a focus in the next decade.

Map 6.3



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
- Thunderbolt Career and Technology Center
- Colleton Career Skills 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. Additionally, the Library has grown its online access greatly to serve more citizens throughout the City and County. 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 the 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.

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.

In 2020, Colleton County wrote a new and updated Hazard Mitigation Plan. It compiles the probability of future events and the effects all previous natural disasters have had on this region and the City. This plan is available on Colleton Fire Rescue’s website.

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 City’s residents and visitors.

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 installation and maintenance 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 ever-changing facility and service needs.

Chapter 7: Population

To prepare this element of the Walterboro Comprehensive Plan, the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data, as well as data provided by the Lowcountry Council of Governments was used. Since this information is assembled and released at different times, we were able to use the data from the 2010 Census and the 2019 Survey Updates, for the most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

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 CHANGE

Table 7.1: Population Change 1990-2019: Walterboro and Colleton County

	Census Survey Estimate 2019	Census 2010 Population	Census 2000 Population	Census 1990 Population
Colleton County	37,540	38,892	38,264	34,377
Walterboro	5426	5,398	5,449	5,492

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. This trend continued through 2010 when the population of Walterboro began to see slight increases each year to 2019. Overall, the population of Walterboro has remained static for several decades, and the new increased growth in population is inspiring, showing that the City is on an upward slope towards more growth, due to the Goals that have been implemented in the past two decades.

Source: US Census

7.2 POPULATION PROJECTION TO THE 2030 PLANNING HORIZON

During the 10 year planning horizon for this 2030 Comp Plan Update, the City of Walterboro will probably continue to grow at a rate similar to that experienced during the recent past, which is approximately 0.11% per annum, unless City and County initiatives to bring new economic development to the area produce larger-scale developments, demanding a higher number of employees. 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, a forecast was prepared using the recent average annual growth rate of .11% realized between 2010 and 2019, which would net an estimated population of approximately 5,500 in 2030.

Since this is simply a projection of a possible growth trend and not a forecast of certain growth for Walterboro, this 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 2019.

7.3 INCOME AND POVERTY

Although the number of people living in Walterboro has essentially remained static since 1990, with minor ups and downs throughout that period, and a rebound to the approximate population realized in 1990, the economic conditions of the population have improved as a whole.

Table 7.2: South Carolina and Colleton County Income and Poverty Levels

The most recent data for these categories are available for the State and County levels only, but with Walterboro being the largest incorporated community in the County, the County data is closely indicative of what is taking place in the City.

	Median Household Income		% Change 2010-2019	% Individuals Below Poverty Level		% Change 2010-2019
	2010	2019		2010	2019	
Colleton County	\$33,263	\$35,996	8.21%	21.3%	22.5%	5.63%
South Carolina	\$43,939	\$49,781	13.29%	16.4%	16.7%	1.81%

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.

7.4 AGE GROUPS

Table 7.3: Simplified Age Group Distribution for Census Divisions - 2017 Population Estimates U.S. Census Bureau

	County Total	Cottageville CCD	Greenpond CCD	Hendersonville CCD	Lodge CCD	Smoaks CCD	Walterboro CCD
Total	37,581	6,077	2,025	6,258	1,538	1,668	20,015
Under 5	5.7%	4.5%	2.4%	14.6%	3.9%	3.7%	4.0%
5 to 17	17.1%	14.4%	9.8%	13.6%	11.9%	20.6%	19.9%
18 to 24	7.8%	5.7%	12.2%	13.2%	4.9%	6.5%	6.6%
25 to 44	22.7%	28.6%	14.4%	22.4%	25.2%	17.2%	22.0%
45 to 64	27.9%	31.5%	30.2%	22.4%	35.3%	31.3%	27.6%
65+	18.7%	15.3%	31.3%	13.9%	18.9%	20.7%	19.9%

Since the U.S. Population as a whole continues to get older each year, the same holds true for Colleton County and the City of Walterboro, whose age group percentages almost mirror each other with an overall variance of less than 3%. These age group distributions in the City and County are more balanced and in line with the State and national averages, as opposed to Lodge, Green Pond and Smoaks, with over 50% of their populations being in excess of 45 years of age.

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 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Walterboro’s levels of educational attainment, including the percentage of adults who have graduated from high school, have remained near or above those for the whole of Colleton County; the percentage of the population over 25 with a bachelor’s degree has remained steady since 2010 remaining 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. Walterboro has historically been a grower of great minds. These numbers do not reflect educational achievements or failings. They reflect an issue in retaining them. It is important to note that these numbers are those present at or after the age of 25, which shows that too many of our great minds leave and do not return. This is a term referred to as Brain Drain. Economic Development efforts should be directed at reversing this trend. (See Chapter 4)

Table 7.4: Highest Degree of Educational Attainment by City/Town, Population 25 and Older – 2017 U.S. Census Bureau

	County	Town of Cottageville	Town of Edisto Beach	Town of Lodge	Town of Smoaks	City of Walterboro	Town of Williams
Less than 9th Grade	4.3%	3.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%
9th to 12th Grade, no Diploma	9.9%	15.0%	0.7%	9.5%	12.8%	5.5%	11.3%
High School Graduate	40.9%	39.3%	9.9%	50%	37.2%	40.0%	31.3%
Some College, no Degree	19.1%	16.8%	15.6%	7.1%	23.4%	21.8%	22.5%
Associate Degree	10.5%	13.7%	9.2%	14.3%	10.6%	6.3%	10.0%
Bachelor's Degree	10.4%	9.2%	34.8%	4.8%	6.4%	13.2%	13.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	5.0%	2.7%	29.4%	14.3%	9.6%	9.1%	11.3%

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 a major highway. Interstate 95, the major East Coast north-south thoroughfare runs through the municipal boundaries, thanks to strategic annexations during the recent past. Additionally, secondary Highways 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

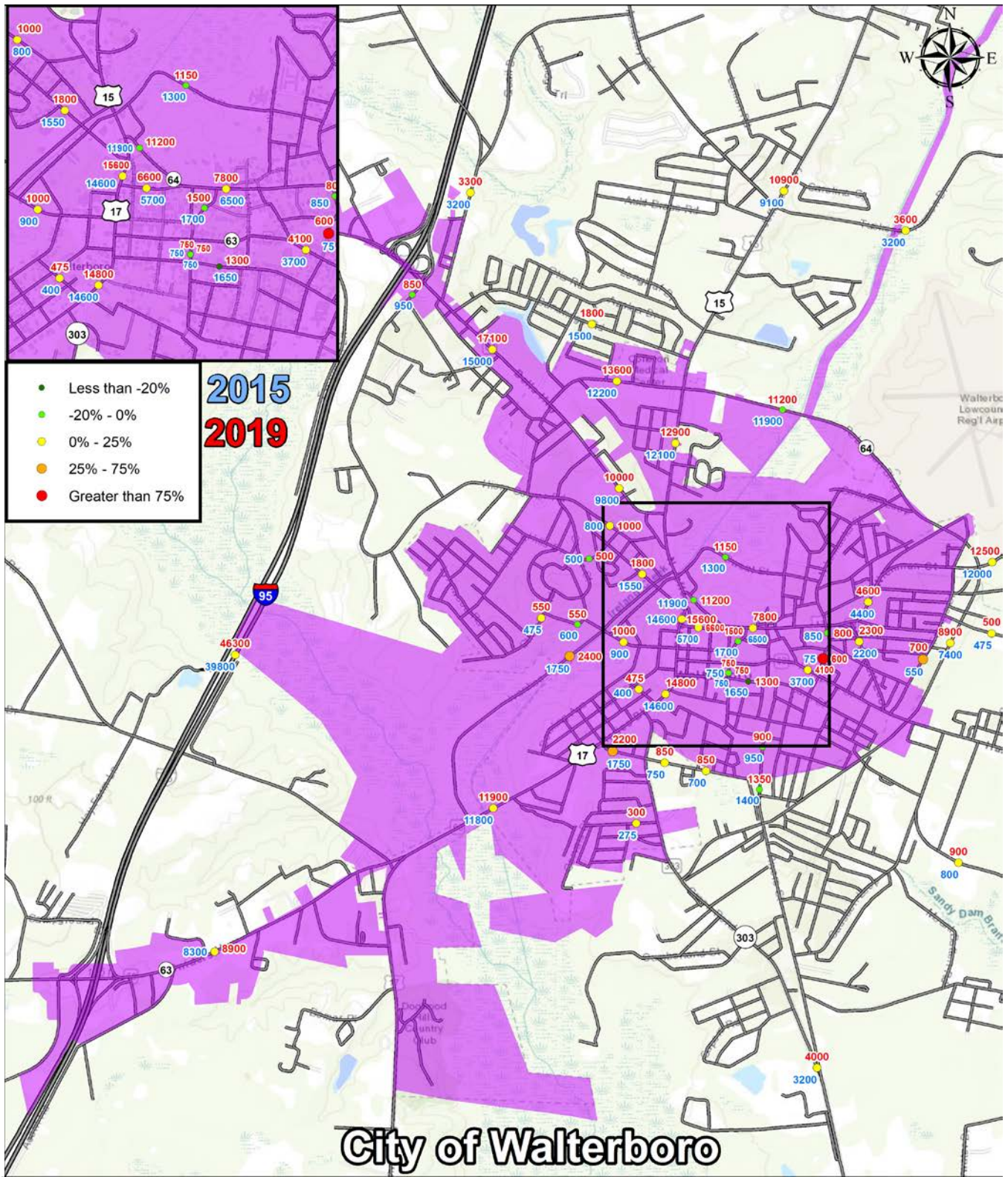
Colleton County Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts: 5000 and Over

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.



8.2 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 widening of US 17 between the Beaufort and Charleston County boundaries has not directly affected Walterboro, but it has had an impact in more than one form:
 - a. 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.
 - b. The future widening of US 17A from Walterboro to Summerville will also bring more vehicles to and/or through Walterboro, as will improvements to SC 64.

8.3 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. There continues to be 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. Additionally, LRTA added a local Walterboro bus named the “Walterboro Works” bus. This new service moves workers and potential industrial trainees to and from work, technical training, and home. It also serves shoppers and citizens without personal transportation throughout the City. See Map 8.2 for detail.

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.

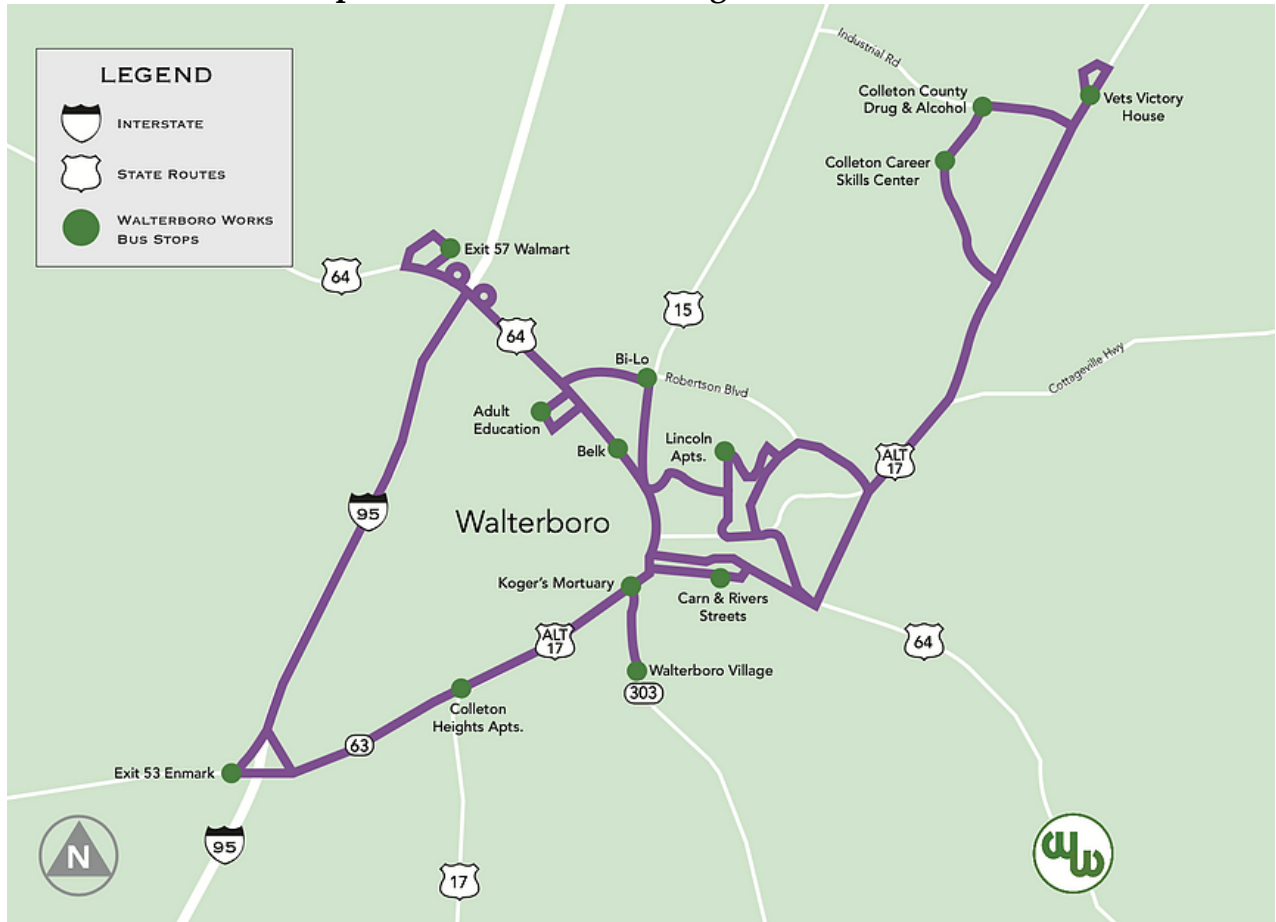
The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) created a requirement that a locally-developed, coordinated public transit/human service planning process and an initial plan be developed by 2007 as a condition of receiving funding for certain programs 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 Regional Bus Routes



Map 8.2 Palmetto Breeze Regional Bus Routes



Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities

Walterboro's urban scale and form should encourage walking and bicycle riding as a form of transportation, as well as 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 on 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.

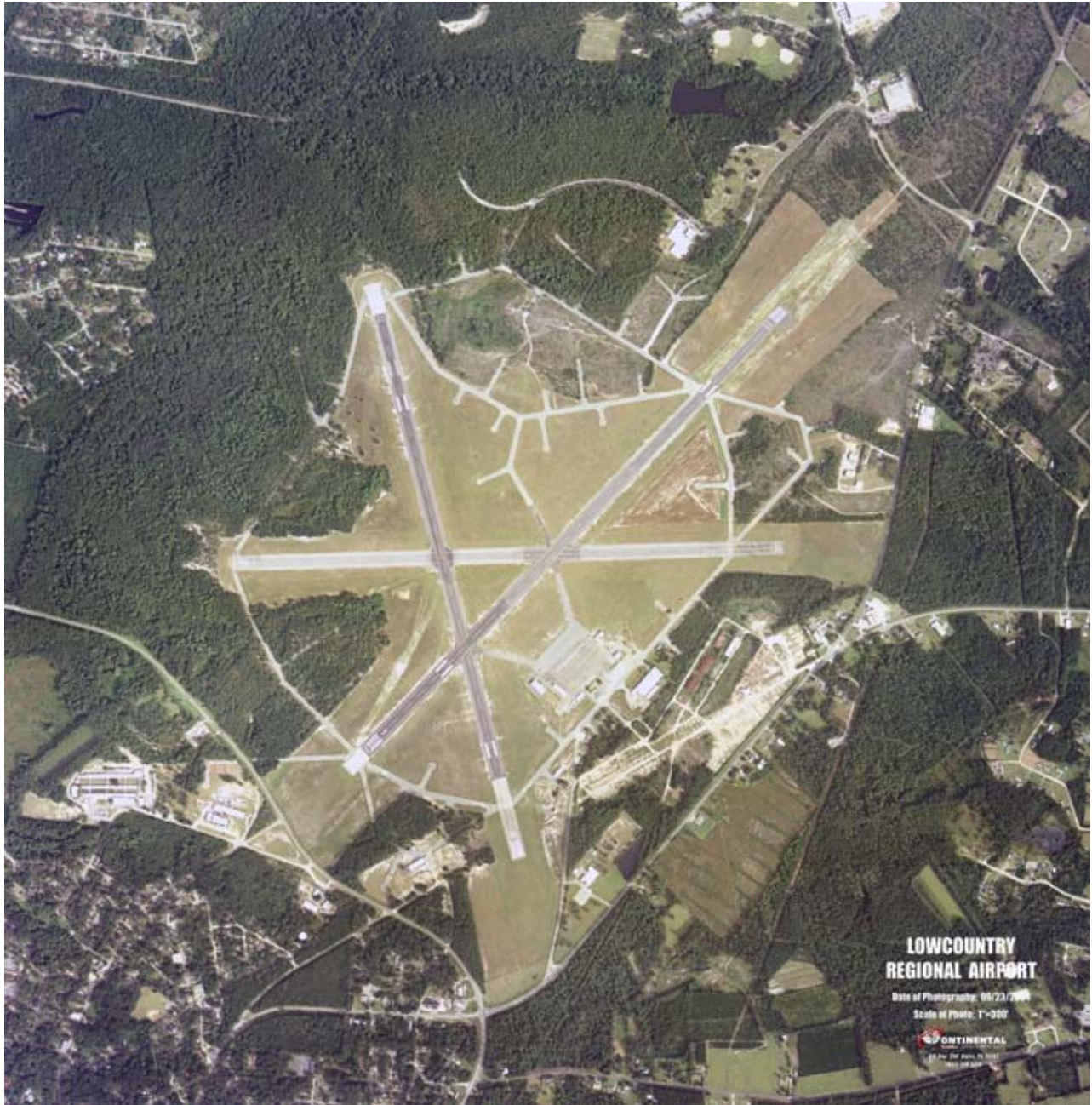
8.4 LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL AIRPORT

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 runways a concrete and asphalt surface of 6002 feet that can handle multi-engine planes and jets (see aerial photo on the following page).

Although it does not handle commercial flights, the airport plays a role in the City and the County economic development that has considerable potential to grow.

The Lowcountry Regional Airport serves as an important asset for attracting new businesses to the area for both accessibility reasons and the potential for airplane assembly, service, and repair.

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, 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, 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 (LRTP)* and other 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 Waltherboro of major new residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use development both in and around the City is not a financial burden upon present City residents.

1 Review proposed major developments for their traffic impact to ensure it 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 Waltherboro.

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

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 Waltherboro residents.

☞ Bicycle and Pedestrian Goal

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

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

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, business occupants and employees.

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

4 Require all new developments to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to 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 and quality of life within the City.

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 recognizes the importance for all units of government, with adjoining or overlapping jurisdictions, to cooperate 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.

During the planning process, regional and local plans were considered. The Colleton County 2030 Comprehensive Plan had just been completed and adopted prior to preparing the City's Plan. The City's Planning Staff and Planning Commission met with the Colleton County Planning Staff throughout the development of this plan. Efforts to coordinate the land use elements amongst the two Comp 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 included proposed annexation areas for the City for the purpose of providing urban services to adjacent growing residential/commercial/industrial areas, which are reflected in this and the County's Comprehensive Plans.
- 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 to guide future capital expenditures in order to continue to improve the City's ISO rating.

- C. 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 Green Pond 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 planning period which 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 Waltherboro several facilities are planned that will require significant coordination.

Table 9.1: Planned City Projects/Facilities

City Projects	Cost
Sewer Rehabilitation	\$3 Million
Waterline looping	\$1 to \$2 Million
Streetscaping/Landscaping - Loop Phases	\$5 Million
Ireland Creek Rehabilitation-Revitalization	\$3 Million
Wastewater Treatment Plan Expansion	\$20 Million

B. Required Coordination

City Projects

- The City and County should continue to interface throughout the planning and undertaking of City projects as both entities are affected and benefit. Recent cooperation is a great indicator going into this next ten-year period.
- Capital Project Sales Tax funding and other funds available through state and federal agencies should continue to be a focus in order to leverage local funds further into bigger and better projects to improve the City.
- The City will need to continue coordination with all agencies and local governments, beyond funding to ensure the planned facilities are adequately meeting the needs of area residents and have adequate funding.

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

- City and County Staff should continue to communicate regularly on growth issues at the City's boundaries so that necessary joint meetings of Councils can be arranged as needed.
- The City of Walterboro needs to be involved early in coordinating for future school improvements, expansions and new facilities.
- City involvement in the County Transportation Commission is essential in coordinating road improvements in the City.
- Regular coordination with County and State SCDOT offices should continue as well.