Hampton County

Comprehensive Plan
2009
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0.1 Introduction

The 1994 Enabling Legislation for South Carolina requires that:

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

The Hampton County Comprehensive Plan was approved in 1999. Economic and other conditions in the County, the Lowcountry Region and the state at that time were different from the present situation and the Plan was based on 1990 data. The expectations and the goals for Hampton County’s future were based on that foundation and also what were considered “good planning” principles and practices at that time.

Although the County’s population has not grown during the past ten years, attitudes toward such key issues as economic development, the types and forms of new residential development that residents wish to see and community service needs have changed.

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

As well, in the spring of 2007, the state of South Carolina made changes to the Enabling Legislation, and now requires additional elements in the Comprehensive Plan, as well as communication between jurisdictions regarding annexation. Hampton County’s updated plan, as a result, will contain the following components, the last two of which are the result of the new legislation:

- History
- Population/Demographic Data
Since the Plan was completed ten years ago, a number of changes have occurred in the 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.** Between 1990 and 2000, Hampton County’s population grew at a faster rate than the state average, but it did not match the pace of the Lowcountry as a whole. Between 2000 and 2006 that trend was reversed; Hampton County, and all the municipalities except for Yemassee, experienced decreases in population; between 2006 and 2007 both the County and all the municipalities showed small increases in their populations.

- **Economic Activity Outside Hampton County.** Developments planned, being constructed or recently completed will provide Hampton County with unprecedented opportunities if plans are made to take advantage of these large-scale, long-range initiatives taking place both within and outside the Lowcountry. They include, but are not limited to:
  - The expansion of the Port of Charleston
  - The new port to be built in Jasper County
  - Industrial distribution centers and related development along I-95 from the Georgia border to I-26
  - Large-scale new foreign trade/logistics center on I-26 in Orangeburg

- **Need for Economic Development.** Hampton County, 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 the County and that they do not have to make long commutes to Charleston, Summerville, Hilton Head and Beaufort for employment.
  - A reduction in the high unemployment rates.
• A balanced tax base, with industrial and commercial development to ensure that present and future residents do not bear a disproportionately large tax burden.

➢ Regional Initiatives. Hampton County will be impacted by major Region-wide initiatives, including the implementation of the Lowcountry Economic Diversification Strategy and the Regional Multi-Modal Transportation Plan. Both are discussed in detail in the relevant sections of this document.
0.3 Vision and Planning Goals for Hampton County

On February 17, 2007, a group of more than 20 Hampton County community leaders and elected and appointed officials got together with Lowcountry Council of Government staff to assess the future of the County in planning terms. They started by identifying both strengths and weaknesses in the County and its communities, summarized by the following:

Strengths (that provide opportunities for future development)

1. Community and Social
   A. Attractive Communities
   B. Strong and Viable Downtowns
   C. Strong sense of Community
      (1) Family
      (2) Church
   D. Tradition of Collaboration and Sharing
E. Pride in Community
F. Affordable Housing
G. Good Health Care
   (1) New doctors
   (2) New hospital
   (3) EMS
F. Education, including TCL branch
G. Active Arts and Entertainment
H. Strong Communities
I. Correctional Institutions in Estill—employment and economic development opportunities

2. Geography and Natural Resources
   A. Strategic Location
      (1) Between two major urban areas (Charleston and Savannah); near services and amenities.
      (2) Large and growing ports in Savannah and Charleston provide economic development opportunities
      (3) Good freight transportation (I-95 and railroads)
   B. Natural Resources Plentiful
      (1) Clean air
      (2) Clean water
      (3) Outdoor recreation opportunities
      (4) Wildlife/Public GMA
      (5) Good climate
      (6) Timber
   C. Agriculture
   D. Low Traffic Volumes—no congestion
   E. Land Available—small communities and lots of space

3. Political/Governmental
   A. Strong Elected Officials
   B. Forward-thinking Appointed and Elected Officials
   C. Motivated Economic Development and Planning Commissions
   D. Learning from mistakes of neighboring counties and municipalities

Weaknesses (that can be overcome as obstacles to future economic development)

1. Community and Social
   A. Education Needs Improvement
      (1) Need career and technical center to provide trained work force
      (2) Perception of differences between school districts
      (3) High drop-out rate
(4) Discipline needed in schools  
(5) TCL branch needs to offer more programs and courses HERE
B. Arts, Entertainment and other Recreation Limited  
C. High Poverty Rates  
D. Lack of Job Opportunities  
E. Small Non-Profit Sector (and many people don’t know what is available)  
F. Apathy  
G. Lack of Recognition of “Strengths” by Residents  
H. Unwillingness to Embrace Change  
I. Perception that Rural Life not a Good Thing

2. **Geography and Natural Resources**  
A. Infrastructure Lacking  
   (1) Roads  
   (2) High-speed internet  
   (3) Public transportation (buses and taxis)
B. Outdoor Recreation Not Easily Accessible

3. **Political/Governmental**  
A. Taxes  
   (1) Weak Base  
   (2) High Property Taxes  
B. Zoning  
   (1) Lack of County zoning  
   (2) Most zoning for residential uses  
C. Leadership Divided  
D. Lack of Follow-Through  
E. Lack of Communication

Following the analytical process, the group then developed a comprehensive set of planning goals that will form the basis for the policies and recommendations contained in this new Comprehensive Plan.
Planning Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Growth in Hampton County should be orderly.

Objectives
A. No sprawl should be permitted
B. Development should meet the needs and goals of Hampton County and its residents; it should not be what the developers want.
C. New subdivisions should grow outward from existing communities and not “leapfrog.”
D. New subdivisions should incorporate interconnectivity, by means of roads and bicycle and pedestrian paths, with existing communities and other new communities.
E. Maintain open space and agricultural land.

Goal 2. Good economic development should be encouraged.

Objectives
A. Agriculture and timber should continue to play an important role in the County’s economy.
B. Economic development should be selective to preserve the integrity of Hampton County’s communities.
C. New industries and other businesses that are good for the community and that offer wages and benefits at least at the state average should be recruited.

Goal 3. Historical and environmental features and resources, including trees and wetlands as well as buildings, should be preserved.

Goal 4. Planning and zoning standards should be the same in the County and the municipalities.
A. Design standards will ensure that communities will still “look like themselves.”
B. A variety of land uses will be accommodated, appropriate for their locations.

Goal 5. All residents and organizations in Hampton County and its municipalities should be considered and included in the planning process.
A. Community education and participation should be encouraged.
B. The benefits of good planning and development should be made clear.
C. A program to accomplish this should be developed.
Goal 6. The new (as a result of this process) Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance should be enforced equally and strictly.

A. Professional staff will be needed to accomplish this.

B. A capital improvements budget and program will be needed to determine the costs of meeting the requirements of the Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

C. Planning Commission members, other relevant public officials and interested citizens should regularly take part in planning education.

D. An ongoing communications program should be implemented to keep Hampton County residents updated on planning, zoning and development matters.

In addition to the above goals and based on the Strengths and Weaknesses analysis, the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation will also incorporate the following objectives:

- **Public and community services** must adequately and efficiently meet the demands of the County’s present and future population. Capital investments for infrastructure, schools, parks and recreational facilities should be strategically planned to help implement the County’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 a provision in the new zoning ordinance to require either land or financial contributions for parks and recreation facilities, new development will make a positive financial contribution to Hampton County and its present and future residents.

- **Agriculture and Forestry Industries** should be recognized, preserved and supported as important segments of the County’s present and future economic base and as viable long-term renewable resources.

- **Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination** is essential to the successful achievement of all of the above objectives. Economic Development Commission, both school districts, Emergency Management, the Sheriff’s office and the Fire Department and other organizations should be involved as Hampton County’s development process evolves.
➢ *Agriculture and Forestry Industries* should be recognized and supported as important segments of the County’s present and future economic base and as viable long-term renewable resources.
Chapter 1: Natural Resources

In a jurisdiction where natural resources have long played an important role in the lives of its residents, it is appropriate that Hampton County’s northwest-southeast boundaries follow primarily natural drainage systems: the Savannah River to the South, the Coosawhatchie River on the southeast, and the Salkehatchie-Combahee River to the northeast. The County's northeast-southwest boundaries follow man-made lines.

The total land area of the County is just over 360,000 acres, not including water (rivers), or approximately 562 square miles. Hampton County is primarily level, with gentle slopes along major rivers and swamps. Elevation ranges 10 feet above sea level near Yemassee, to 150 feet above sea level near Estill, with its slopes presenting few constraints for development.

The benefits of its natural resources to Hampton County are both quantifiable and non-quantifiable. In general, the quantifiable aspects are those related to economics and the non-quantifiable are those that come under the heading of “quality of life.” Both are essential to the lives and work of present and future residents of the County, and should be treated as irreplaceable assets. It seems appropriate to utilize the accounting definition of “asset” here: “a resource from which future economic benefits are expected to flow.”

As a result, the approach to natural resources in this Comprehensive Plan will be that they are assets to be protected and enhanced rather than barriers to development to be overcome. At the same time, the preservation of physical features can serve as a positive way to direct and manage growth.

1.1 Physical Features

Since a Comprehensive Plan is a policy document, a detailed survey of Hampton County’s physical features will not be included here. A county-wide Natural Resources Plan containing that level of detail should be undertaken, however.

For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, the emphasis will be on natural features in terms of their contributions to life and work in Hampton County. See Maps 1.1 and 1.2 on the following pages.

Surface Waters

The County’s rivers and streams provide fishing and boating opportunities for residents and visitors. They also contribute to the natural beauty of the area. The Salkehatchie-Combahee River and its tributaries comprise a significant watershed in the
northern part of the County, the Coosawhatchie River in the central portion, and the Savannah River in the south.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) has classified all of the surface waters in the State based on the characteristics and use of the waters and water quality standards. Each of the classifications must be protected from degradation resulting from development or other activity. The waters in Hampton County fall into the following four categories:

- **Shellfish Harvesting Waters (SFH)** - tidal waters protected for shellfish incubation and harvesting. Specific water quality standards must be maintained for harvesting to be allowed.
- **Freshwaters (FW)** - suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation and as a source of drinking water supply after conventional treatment. Suitable for fishing and the survival and propagation of a balanced indigenous aquatic life. Specific water quality standards are required.
- **SA** - tidal saltwaters suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, crabbing, and fishing. Harvesting of clams, mussels, and/or oysters for human consumption is not allowed. Suitable for fishing and the survival and propagation of a balanced indigenous aquatic life. Specific water quality standards are required.
- **SB** - same as SA, except standards for water quality are lower.

Major surface water resources of Hampton County include the following:

- Jackson Creek - FW
- Combahee-Salkehatchie River - SFH
- Combahee-Salkehatchie River, all portions of the river to salt water intrusion - FW
- Coosawhatchie River, headwaters to salt water intrusion - FW
- Sanders Branch, the entire stream tributary to Coosawhatchie River - FW
- Savannah River, to Seaboard Coastline RR - FW
- Savannah River, from Seaboard Coastline RR downriver - SB

**Wetlands**

Wetlands are the transitional zone between uplands and water bodies. Because of their unique position in the landscape, many types of wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on the earth. They provide value to the land and prevent harm to communities and the environment. These environmentally sensitive areas provide critical habitat for many parts of the life cycles of finfish, shellfish, birds, and other animals and plants, as well as providing some extraordinary scenic beauty. Wetlands provide economic benefits to their adjacent communities including flood control and mitigation, erosion control, storm abatement, recharge of ground water, fisheries, habitat for game, and open space for enjoyment and recreation. Wetlands can improve the quality of water in rivers, streams, and other water bodies by filtering pollutants and nutrients. Wetlands are the key elements in the water cycle, continuing to replenish and purify our water supply.

Although wetlands are protected by state and federal legislation, local governments have the authority to conserve wetlands. Some of local governments’ available tools are the development of regulations which support lower ratios of impervious surfaces, resource protection areas, performance-based development, overlay protection corridors, environmental guidelines for subdivisions, and land-use planning based on infrastructure availability. Implementation of any of these tools should be based on a comprehensive wetlands protection plan.
Concern for these coastal wetlands is increasing as more becomes known about the interdependence of wetlands with many other segments of the natural and man-made environment.

**Forests and Forestry**

A large portion of Hampton County’s landscape is forested: 254,300 acres or 70.6 percent of the County’s total acreage. This land has given many residents their primary reason for living in Hampton County, either from employment in forestry or agriculture or due to the many recreational opportunities available. Not only do the forests and habitats add to the County’s natural landscape, they are an important part of Hampton County’s economy and way of life (see subsection 2.4). They also have the potential to play an even larger part in the economic life of Hampton County as the search for alternative and renewable energy includes the use of woodchips and a number of forestry byproducts as potential feedstocks.

Timberland in Hampton County was over 254,300 acres in 1998, with the forest types as follow:

- Planted longleaf/slash pine - 4,200 acres
- Natural longleaf/slash pine - 14,000 acres
- Planted loblolly/shortleaf pine - 83,600 acres
- Natural loblolly/shortleaf pine - 11,200 acres
- Oak/pine - 22,400 acres
- Oak/hickory - 10,000 acres
- Oak-gum/cypress - 105,800 acres
- Elm/ash/cottonwood - 2,800 acres.

Ownership of the timberland in Hampton is by private individual (78,966 acres), farmers and ranchers (73,000 acres), the forest industry (56,500 acres), private corporations (25,300 acres), the State (23,400 acres), and Hampton County and/or its municipalities (1,400 acres), according to the South Carolina Forestry Association in 1999. In 2003, the Association combined categories for a total private ownership of non-industrial forest lands of 228,104 acres.

The American Forest & Paper Association developed the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). SFI is a system of principles, guidelines, and performance measures that integrate the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with the protection of wildlife, plants, soil, air, and water.

“South Carolina companies are instituting sustainable forestry practices in every aspect of their business, from promptly reforesting lands to promoting the biodiversity of plant and wildlife species. These companies understand that to be truly successful in conserving our natural resources for future generations, the forest industry must demonstrate progress each and every year.
“Understanding that no issue -- from protecting endangered species to watershed analysis -- can be dealt with in isolation, members are cooperating with conservation groups and others to develop and employ management strategies that foster forest growth. This is being done in a manner that is consistent with the promotion of biological diversity and with the protection and conservation of wildlife habitat.

“Sustainable forestry contributes to water quality enhancement. Members are committed to protecting streams, lakes, and other water bodies on their lands.

“Using sustainable forestry practices also includes recognizing company lands that have special ecological, geographic, or historic value and pledging that these places will be managed to protect their unique qualities for the benefit of all citizens.”

One area in which County land use patterns can come in conflict with forestry is in the instance of allowing widespread scattered residential development. This pattern not only is more costly for the County to maintain, it breaks up the larger acreages needed for wildlife habitat, and also increases the occasions for misunderstandings between neighbors (residents and forest landowners). In addition, a significant amount of hunting and tourism activities take place on large, forested acreages.

It is important for Hampton County to recognize and support forestry as a renewable resource that is an important segment of the County’s present and future economic base and support its continuation as a viable and significant industry.

❖ **Wildlife Management**

A large segment of the County’s forested land is under wildlife management, actively maintained as wildlife habitat primarily used for hunting. Some of these lands are vast and contain significant ecosystems and species. The hunting leases on these lands provide a positive economic impact to the County. Because these activities contribute substantially to the economic well-being of the County, the County should encourage the continuation of these wildlife management landholdings.

2006 economic impacts of hunting data for the state of South Carolina are contained in Appendix A.

❖ **Soils**

For many generations the soils of Hampton County have provided fertile opportunities for the growth and harvesting of a number of crops, including cotton. Future land use and development plans and regulations should take into account the need to protect these prime farmlands.
The following aerial photography map (1.2) shows general locations of agricultural areas. Unfortunately, data that can be mapped about soils good for agricultural purposes is not available for Hampton County. Detailed agricultural analysis and mapping are needed to ensure that planning policies and regulations are developed to protect areas with good agricultural soils for long-term farming uses, while directing new development to other locations.

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The current land use pattern in Hampton County has resulted in an extraordinary habitat for plants and animals of all kinds.

This could produce positive economic benefits for Hampton County because, as the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) observed in 1996 (the most recent year for which data is available) 63 million people in the US took part in observing, feeding and photographing wildlife in this country—compared with 73.8 million who attended all major league baseball and football games that year.
SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) discussed the potential economic contributions to this state in a 2001 report:

“Wildlife watching economically impacts numerous travel and retail markets--food, lodging, transportation, gasoline, binoculars, cameras, film and developing, guidebook publishing, wild bird food, membership in wildlife organizations, camping equipment, motor homes, campers and off-road vehicles. An analysis of the money trail shows that equipment accounts for 57% of expenditures, versus 32% for the trip itself. In terms of trip expenses, food accounts for 37%, followed by transportation at 31% and lodging at 20%. By any account, people who travel to watch wildlife are a significant economic asset to those communities close to good habitats.”

2006 economic impacts of wildlife watching data for the state of South Carolina are contained in Appendix B.

Threatened and Endangered Species. A number of studies have been initiated by the State, and The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (Heritage Trust) has identified rare, threatened, and endangered species within Hampton County, including the following 19 animals plus an additional 23 species of plants:

- Barrel floater
- Rafinesque's big-eared bat
- Gopher tortoise
- Bird-voiced treefrog
- Mississippi kite
- Wood stork
- Pine/gopher snake
- Eastern floater
- Black bear
- Eastern creekshell
- Spotted turtle
- Bluebared pygmy sunfish
- Bald eagle
- Striped mud turtle
- Northern yellow bat
- Red-cockaded woodpecker
- Dwarf siren
- Gopher frog
- Paper pondshell

1.2 Special/Significant Natural Areas

Several special or significant natural areas exist in Hampton County, including the Webb Wildlife Center, the Palachucola and Hamilton Ridge Wildlife Management Areas and Lake Warren State Park. The first three areas together represent a total of 14 miles of Savannah River frontage—a significant and unique natural resource.

At this time these places attract visitors, but the lack of a tourism infrastructure means that tourists spend relatively little money in the County (see section 2.4).
There are also some partially protected areas such as longleaf pine ecosystems and Carolina bays on the large landholdings. Some of the less fragile of these special areas could be linked by trails with other natural areas, parks, bike paths, and historic sites to form a County-wide network which could be very well-used by residents and effectively marketed to visitors.

- **The Webb Wildlife Center.** The 25,000-acre Center is located along the Savannah River and contains blackwater swamps and other ecosystems. Hunting, fishing, hiking, and other outdoor activities, including canoe and nature trails, are available as is a building equipped for overnight accommodations.

- **Hamilton Ridge Wildlife Management Area.** This 13,280-acre reserve was acquired from International Paper.

- **Palachucola Wildlife Management Area.** When developers and agencies plan projects affecting wetlands, they are required to limit the amount of wetlands destroyed or to mitigate for any negative impact to the wetlands. One method of mitigation is to place funds in a "wetlands bank" which are used to purchase and protect wetlands elsewhere. This Management Area was founded with this type of funding. Palachucola contains over 10,000 acres and is situated between the Webb Wildlife Center and Jasper County along the Savannah River. Over 4,000 people visit the Area every year.

- **Lake Warren State Park.** Situated on 420 acres surrounding Lake Warren in central Hampton County, this State-owned and operated park provides picnic shelters, nature trails, boat ramps, a fishing pier and other recreational facilities.

- **Longleaf Pine Ecosystems.** Longleaf pine ecosystems dominated an estimated 90 million acres of the southeast at the time of early European settlement. Now, less than 3 million acres still exist in scattered, isolated locations, often threatened by development. In Hampton County, these ecosystems are most often found on the large landholdings and plantations. The longleaf pine ecosystem supports a wide variety of species including wire grass, turkey oaks, quail, deer, wax myrtle, and many threatened and endangered species, such as the red-cockaded woodpecker. Nationwide over 30 threatened and endangered species are associated with longleaf pine forests. The longleaf ecosystem is dependent on fire for its survival, being very fire tolerant, possibly from adaptation to a location with many lightning-caused fires.

- **Carolina Bays.** Scattered across the eastern coastal plain from southern New Jersey to northern Florida, these wetland depressions are perfect or near-perfect ovals ringed by ridges of sand all pointing northwest to southeast. Theories of their origin are many and varied. Viewed as unproductive in the past, many of these
bays have been filled in and/or drained and used for agriculture, forestry, or even homesites, but most are still visible from the air. Many of those that remain have been found to contain rare plants and animals. Potential Carolina Bays have been identified in Hampton County by SCDNR and merit further investigation for possible special preservation efforts.

1.3 Discussion Issue: Conservation Easements

A tool for combined land use planning and conservation of natural resources is a conservation easement. It is already used in Hampton County on a limited basis but has considerable potential for widespread application.

According to the Nature Conservancy of South Carolina:

“A conservation easement is a legal agreement by which a landowner voluntarily restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on his or her property. Each easement’s restrictions are tailored to the particular piece of property, the interests of the individual owner, and the resources being protected.”

The land can still be used and managed by the owner. Easements run with the deed in perpetuity. Examples of allowable uses are residential, recreational, agricultural, forestry, and wildlife management. The easement can provide tax benefits to the owner (federal income tax and property tax) and estate benefits to the heirs. The amount of the tax deduction is based on the value of the development rights given up. To determine whether the easement qualifies for a deduction, it must undergo a “conservation purposes test”. As the South Carolina Department of Revenue has explained, “the more significant the property is, the more it contributes to the public good, the more likely that you will qualify for the deduction.”

The right to enforce the agreement is given to a qualified tax-exempt charitable organization, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, or a government agency. If a local trust is chosen as the primary designee, designation of a secondary land trust of national acclaim is recommended. Among the Trusts involved in Hampton County are the Lowcountry Open Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy of South Carolina, and Ducks Unlimited. A Trust will assist a landowner on all the available techniques and incentives for land preservation, evaluate land for suitability, and assist in the development of land preservation planning.

Ducks Unlimited’s Wetlands America Trust has identified specific areas of the U.S. which are important to waterfowl. Their Lowcountry Initiative for coastal South Carolina is designed to protect areas of outstanding ecological value. One of the five focus areas of this conservation effort is the South Lowcountry (SOLO) Focus Area, which includes land in Hampton, Allendale, Beaufort, and Colleton counties. Attributes of the Area include 19 rivers, 60 plantations incorporating 315,000 acres, one
million acres of forests, and over 90,000 acres of coastal wetlands. The SOLO Focus Area is said to be “a mecca for wildlife and outdoor recreationists.”

1.4 Natural Resource Economics

It is very difficult to put a “dollar” value on Hampton County’s natural resources, but they have always been extremely important to the economic health of the County and its residents. This began literally with Native Americans who hunted and fished in the area and extends in time to today’s modern agricultural and forestry operations, as well as hunting, commercial fishing and nature-based tourism businesses.

It is possible to obtain an impression of the economic contribution that natural resources makes to the economy by looking at data such as employment and payroll. Table 1.1 (on the following page) compares the number of jobs and payroll in the agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting sectors in 2001, 2007 and the first quarter of 2008 (the most recent numbers available) and also shows them as the percent of total Hampton County jobs and payroll for those periods. As a recent state-wide study demonstrated, the economic contributions of these sectors—especially the agriculture and forestry industries—have been on the upswing. It is likely that this trend will continue since the final products produced by agriculture and forestry include many items that are necessities and are relatively recession-proof.

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<th>2001 (annual)</th>
<th>2007 (annual)</th>
<th>Q1 2008 (quarter)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Monthly Employment</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hampton County Average Monthly Employment</td>
<td>6069</td>
<td>5407</td>
<td>5255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Hampton County Average Monthly Employment</td>
<td>5.21%</td>
<td>8.43%</td>
<td>8.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector Payroll</td>
<td>$6,992,490</td>
<td>$17,500,115</td>
<td>$2,712,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hampton County Payroll</td>
<td>$169,137,600</td>
<td>$183,675,952</td>
<td>$40,005,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Hampton County Payroll</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
<td>9.53%</td>
<td>6.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SCLMI

Another indicator is the value of timber. In 2003 (the most recent year for which data is available) Hampton was in the Top 10 of South Carolina counties in terms of cash receipts from timber harvests, with a delivered value of $26,199,543. The stumpage value was $17,120,596 to all owners.
Although the County’s natural resources provide considerable potential for the development of ecotourism in Hampton County, the hospitality sector is not well developed and the economic impacts are limited at this time, as Table 1.2 and 1.3 (below and on the next page) demonstrate.

Table 1.2
Economic Impact of Visitors to the Lowcountry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Expenditures by Visitors</th>
<th>Total Gross Taxable Sales</th>
<th>% of Sales by Visitors</th>
<th>Payroll Related to Tourism</th>
<th>Tourism Employment</th>
<th>Total Jobs</th>
<th>% of Jobs Related to Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$958,110,000</td>
<td>$3,887,259,912</td>
<td>24.65%</td>
<td>$198,100,000</td>
<td>12,800</td>
<td>60,297</td>
<td>21.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$1,026,320,000</td>
<td>$4,058,389,971</td>
<td>25.29%</td>
<td>$211,090,000</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>62,198</td>
<td>21.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$80,490,000</td>
<td>$619,659,163</td>
<td>12.99%</td>
<td>$15,550,000</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>15,915</td>
<td>6.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$86,330,000</td>
<td>$657,301,391</td>
<td>13.13%</td>
<td>$16,590,000</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>15,617</td>
<td>6.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$10,800,000</td>
<td>$291,108,843</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
<td>$1,950,000</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>7,472</td>
<td>1.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$11,260,000</td>
<td>$293,722,695</td>
<td>3.83%</td>
<td>$2,020,000</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>7,373</td>
<td>1.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$44,050,000</td>
<td>$886,051,537</td>
<td>4.97%</td>
<td>$9,090,000</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>10,068</td>
<td>6.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$46,870,000</td>
<td>$956,839,044</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
<td>$9,620,000</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>9,761</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hampton County 2% Accommodations Tax Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County (total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,123.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$28,594.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$33,052.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,301.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,689.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,967.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,616.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,880.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,040.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,754.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,719.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,374.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>65.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furman</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifford</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
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<tr>
<td>$14,780.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>$16,571.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>$18,240.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$17,125.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotia</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Varnville</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$449.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemassee</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,613.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,301.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>$9,476.40</td>
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<td>$8,470.78</td>
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<td>224.17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,248,057.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>$39,157,739.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,625,725.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$43,958,149.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GOAL & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal: Conserve and enhance Hampton County’s natural resources as irreplaceable assets to be shared, enjoyed, protected and passed on into perpetuity.

- Protect land permanently through a variety of protective land conservation mechanisms such as easements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, fee simple land acquisitions, and other tools.

- Encourage private landowners to use conservation easements, purchase of development rights, and other conservation related incentives.

- Ensure that areas with soils most suited for agricultural purposes are preserved for such uses.

- Provide incentives within the County’s development regulations for flexible development practices to promote the protection of natural habitats for rare, threatened and/or endangered plants and wildlife.
• Ensure that existing floodplains and wetlands are maintained in a state where their essential natural functions can be performed.

• Charge an additional mitigation fee for the loss or conversion of wetlands to contribute directly to the protection, restoration, and management of other wetlands in the County by use of a County Conservation Bank.

• Promote forestry and agricultural conservation best management practices for farms, forests, and plantations.

• Protect traditional land management practices related to farm and forest management, such as prescribed fire.

• Charge an impact fee for development of prime farmlands and forest land and redistribute those funds to protect other prime farmlands and forest land in the County.

• Expand and diversify recreation opportunities in Hampton County to increase tourism and stimulate the economy.

• Partner with natural resource agencies and other public and private sector organizations to develop a natural resource-based strategic recreation and tourism plan for the County.
Chapter 2: Historic Resources

The presence and preservation of historic resources in Hampton County serve three important purposes:

- To teach present and future residents of Hampton County about its multi-faceted history;
- To contribute to the special character and quality of life of Hampton County;
- To serve as the basis for the development of a heritage tourism industry.

2.1 Historical Background

The first inhabitants of the area now known as Hampton County were the Yemassee, Cherokee, Huspah, and approximately 24 other tribes. When European settlement began, this area was originally designated "Indian Lands" and then Prince William Parish, one of three parishes of the Beaufort District.

By the time of the Revolutionary War, what is now Hampton County contained small agricultural settlements, some centered on plantations. McPhersonville was one of these, (see Map 2.1 on the following page), and it was the home of the McPherson brothers, who were Revolutionary War leaders. When British troops marched across the Lowcountry on their way from Savannah to Charleston in the spring of 1780, they made a detour to McPherson Plantation. A skirmish between the Patriots and the British ensued, and the latter remained at McPhersonville for several days afterwards, "living off the fat of the land," according to the diary of a Loyalist doctor from New Jersey, while Isaac McPherson, "a great Rebel, a man of property" was in Charleston.

McPhersonville is now one of the interpretive sites on the Lowcountry Revolutionary War Trail (which recently won a national award for Excellence in Regional Transportation).
During the Civil War, Hampton County lay in the path of General Sherman of the Union Army, and McPhersonville was destroyed. It is one of a number of Civil War sites in the County.

In 1878, Hampton County was formed, named after Wade Hampton, a General of the Confederacy. Because the movement to form the County was primarily based on the location of the courthouse in the Beaufort District, the location of the courthouse in the new County was very important. An election indicated that residents wanted the courthouse to be located in the exact center of the County, which surveyors identified as being within a large cypress swamp. The second election identified Varnville as the location of choice with the stipulation that the courthouse (and associated structures) be located within the center of Town and that the Town had to supply land and building materials. Reluctance and/or a slow response on the part of Varnville's officials resulted in representatives of Hoover's Station offering County Commissioners land,
materials, and an artesian well. A compromise was reached wherein surveyors measured two miles from the center of Varnville toward Hoover's Station. The courthouse was erected on that spot, and Wade Hampton laid its cornerstone. Hoover's Station (which in 1879 became the Town of Hampton) moved to surround it. Varnville and Hampton today share a common boundary due to this unusual courthouse location process.

In 1912 Hampton County graciously ceded some of its unused eastern lands, and Jasper County was formed from them. Allendale County was created in 1919 from other Hampton County surplus territory.

The County's economy has been primarily agriculture, with cotton, oats, rice, corn, sugarcane, and sweet potatoes being the largest crops in the 1900s. Cowpeas were also grown for forage and to enrich the soils. Forestry has also been an important activity. In the 1930s the first manufacturing jobs came to the County via the Plywoods-Plastics Company which began plywood manufacturing. Today the County has a mixture of agricultural, forestry, manufacturing, and commercial activity.

2.2 Historic Buildings and Sites

Hampton County’s heritage continues to be displayed in many historic buildings and places. Although a complete survey of historic resources has not been undertaken in Hampton County, many of these important sites were identified during a regional survey conducted by the Lowcountry Council of Governments in the 1970’s. These sites are included in a book entitled *Historic Resources of the Lowcountry* (LCOG, 1979). Those properties that are located in the unincorporated areas of Hampton County are shown on Map 2.2, on the following page. They are listed in the remainder of this sub-section.

These historic properties have been divided into three categories: Listed on the National Register, Eligible for Listing on the National Register, and Other Historic Resources. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) includes significant national, state, and local historical, architectural and archaeological resources. Nominations to the NRHP are submitted by the State to the National Park Service for consideration. Sites that qualify for nomination include those that:

- Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to our history
- Are associated with the lives of significant historic persons
- Embody a distinctive architectural or artistic style
- Have yielded information that is important in prehistory or history.
Hampton County has two properties listed on the National Register:

- **Oak Grove Plantation** (Richardson Place), Sec. Rd. 68, Brunson vicinity/Richardsons Crossroads (listed in 1976) -- This house was built in 1852 by James Cameron Richardson, a local planter. Built on the old stagecoach road from Pocotaligo to Augusta, at one time stagecoaches stopped to change horses at the house. It is said that 22,000 Union troops camped overnight here on their march up the Pocotaligo Road in 1865. One of the few ante-bellum structures standing in Hampton County, Oak Grove has been considered a local landmark for many years.

- **Cohassat**, U.S. Hwy 601, Crocketville vicinity (listed in 1986) -- This two-story classic farmhouse was constructed ca. 1873 by William James Gooding, a cotton farmer who held a number of county and state political positions, including member of the state house of representatives from Prince William Parish, Beaufort District (1858-61, 1864).

  Gooding constructed the house from pine trees which were lumbered on the premises and sawn at a sawmill owned and operated by him.
In addition to the two properties listed on the NRHP, five other sites have been determined by the S.C. Department of Archives and History to be eligible for listing:

- **Stoney Creek Presbyterian Church** (Summer Chapel), McPhersonville
- **Maner-Garnett House** (John King Garnett House), now located in Garnett, but formerly at the Webb Wildlife Management Area
- **Groton Plantation**, (Hampton and Allendale Counties), Luray vicinity
- **The Pineland** (Black Swamp Plantation Summer House), Garnett vicinity
- **Woodside Plantation** (William Evans Martin House), Estill vicinity

Other Historic Resources Note: This list is currently being updated by the Hampton Museum and Visitors Center.

1. Crocketville Mill District, Crocketville Vicinity
2. Harmony Presbyterian Church, Crocketville Vicinity
3. Four Crocketville Stores, Crocketville
4. W. Fred Lightsey House, Crocketville Vicinity
5. John Adams Heirs House, Crocketville Vicinity
6. Jacob Lightsey House, Crocketville Vicinity
7. Cotton Barn, Crocketville
8. Bill Tuten House, Crocketville Vicinity
9. Lightsey Brothers Mill-Steam Engine, Miley
10. John W. Gregorie House, McPhersonville Vicinity
11. Hutson Place, McPhersonville Vicinity
12. Sheldon Chapel, McPhersonville Vicinity
13. Prince William’s Primitive Baptist Church, Brunson Vicinity
14. Fitts House, Brunson Vicinity
15. Youman’s House, Brunson Vicinity
16. Trotty Riley House, Brunson Vicinity
17. Willock Hogarth House, Brunson Vicinity
18. Bonnywood Plantation, Estill Vicinity
19. Charles Lawton Peeples House, Estill Vicinity
20. Lawton-Wyman-Platts House, Estill Vicinity
21. Wilcox House, Estill Vicinity
22. Jericho Plantation, Estill Vicinity
23. Heavenly Rest Episcopal Church, Estill Vicinity
24. Woodstock Plantation, Estill Vicinity
25. Lebanon Methodist Church, Scotia Vicinity
26. Steep Bottom Baptist Church, Furman Vicinity
27. Belmont Plantation (Webb Wildlife Center), Brighton Vicinity
28. Mistlegrove, Brighton Vicinity
29. Walter Smith House, Brighton Vicinity
30. Kittles House, Brighton Vicinity
31. Brighton Store, Brighton
32. Bostick Cemetery, Brighton Vicinity
33. Union Cemetery, Brighton Vicinity
34. Black Swamp Cemetery, Garnett Vicinity
35. Josh Lawton House, Luray

The other historic resources listed above have not yet gone through an official determination process, but many of these may be eligible for listing as well. Each of these resources contributes to the culture of Hampton County and should be both acknowledged and preserved.

### 2.3 Historic Preservation Strategies

The actions and decisions made by private property owners, County Council and the Planning Commission will decide the long-term fate of Hampton County’s historic resources. If these properties are to be protected to maintain the County’s identity and attractiveness for residents, visitors and investors, the County will need to work with local, regional, state and federal laws to develop an effective preservation program, which should include, but not be limited to:

- **Community Involvement:** support local preservation efforts and organizations, encouraging public awareness of preservation issues and opportunities

- **Development Regulations:** The County, through a revised Zoning Ordinance, should create Overlay Districts with design regulations in areas of historic concentration. This should include provisions to control demolition, incentives to encourage appropriate new infill development and rehabilitation of and additions to existing buildings. Hampton County should create Design Guidelines to incorporate historic preservation needs and requirements.

- **Obtain National Historic Designation:** The structures listed above as eligible need to be designated in order for there to be a clear signal of its historical value, not only locally but at a national level.

Historic Survey: A survey is needed to be conducted for all of Hampton County to identify historic resources within the County and its municipalities. As is already happening in the Town of Estill, an organization such as the Historic Beaufort Foundation (which now considers its area of responsibility to include the original Beaufort District) may be able to assist. This will be useful in order to place current and future buildings on the National Registry of Historic Places.

- **Public Education:** Community support is the key to any preservation effort. This should be a joint effort between County, municipal, regional and state
historic preservation organizations and present and prospective builders and developers. Developers and builders should be made aware of the zoning incentives and tax advantages related to buildings with historic stature.

Develop Financial Incentives: At the present time there is relatively little funding available for historic renovations and/or maintenance. New approaches, for instance through zoning, should be utilized.

More details about and photos (showing present conditions) of each of the listed structures (and included in a digitized data base) 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.

2.4 Heritage Tourism and Economics

According to “Heritage Travel,” South Carolina 2001 Tourism Report Series, “heritage travel is generally defined as traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past. It includes visiting historic sites, churches, museums, art galleries, old homes and mansions. Heritage tourism, including cultural tourism and travel to history-based national and state parks, is one of the most popular sectors of the travel industry.”

A recent Travel Industry Association of America survey found that 53.6 million adults said they visited a museum or historical site in the past year and 33 million U.S. adults attended a cultural event such as a theater, arts or music festival. Cultural and historic travelers spend more, stay in hotels more often, are older and more highly educated, visit more destinations and are twice as likely to travel for entertainment purposes than other travelers.

Palmetto Conservation Foundation, the Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History contracted with Miley & Associates, Inc. of Columbia, to complete a comprehensive assessment of preservation and heritage tourism activity in South Carolina including the impact of the Historic Rehabilitation Incentives Act of 2002. Harry Miley, the project’s leader, is President of Miley & Associates, Inc., an economic development consulting firm that provides a variety of economic analysis services to public and private sector organizations.

The report, Smiling Faces Historic Places, contains these five major conclusions:

1. **Historic Preservation Activities Create Jobs**
   Preservation activities directly create 400 jobs annually — mostly in construction, architectural services and related activities. Another 369 jobs are indirectly created throughout the economy as a result of this historic preservation construction activity.
2. **Historic Preservation Increases Property Values**
   Properties located within locally designated historic districts are in general worth more, appreciate faster, and retain more of their value than properties located outside the district.

3. **Historic Preservation is the Vehicle for Heritage Tourism**
   Heritage Tourism results in $325.6 million annually in direct spending in South Carolina —resulting in the direct creation of 9,097 jobs —another 2,300 jobs are created indirectly.

4. **Historic Preservation has spurred Downtown Revitalization**
   Downtown revitalization, in the years 1984-2000, has resulted in a total investment of $375 million — creating 6,153 jobs, 1,752 businesses and rehabilitating 1,597 buildings.

5. **Historic Preservation is an economic force in South Carolina**
   Annual historic preservation activities are estimated to have added $73.5 million in total spending and increased labor earnings by $22 million.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1999 surveyed 400 communities with revitalized historic downtowns and neighborhood districts and found:
1. Retail sales increased in 65% of the areas.
2. Ground-floor occupancy rates rose for 57% of the areas.
3. Over 58% attracted new retail businesses to historic Main Streets.
4. Over 33% reported an increase in people living on Main Street.
5. Property values increased for 66.5% of the areas.

Although the results are dated, the relative economic impact is still valid.

**GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The goals and implementation strategies will become increasingly important as development pressures increase in Hampton County. These will help maintain the quality of life that present residents enjoy and that will attract visitors, investors, and future residents.

**GOAL:** Protect and enhance historic sites, structures and resources, and foster compatible new development to maintain the County’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. Conduct a historic inventory survey in order to identify all resources of historic significance and whether they qualify for NRHP. This will also provide information to SHPO as it reviews projects requiring OCRM permits or those receiving federal funding to ensure that State’s historic resources are protected from adverse impacts.

2. Revise the zoning ordinance with specific provisions to avoid impacts to all historically significant sites and structures. The updated historic inventory should be used to direct development.

3. Revise the zoning ordinance in order to control demolition of historic resources and to limit demolition to only those buildings whose structural integrity has been compromised to be in a condition beyond viable repairs.

4. Provide additional incentives through the zoning ordinance to encourage compatible new development and adaptive re-use of existing structures.

OBJECTIVE 2: Support efforts to involve and educate all members of the County’s diverse communities in the process of preserving Hampton County’s historic resources.

1. Commit to an ongoing community education and communication program so that the advantages and benefits of preserving the County’s historic resources are clearly understood by residents, business owners, builders, developers and visitors.

OBJECTIVE 3: Utilize Hampton County’s historic resources to develop a heritage tourism industry.

1. Partner with County, municipal, regional and state and private sector historic and tourism organizations to develop a heritage-based strategic recreation and tourism plan for the County.

2. Encourage incorporated municipalities to form Main Street organizations.

3. Encourage the municipalities to establish historic districts.
Chapter 3: 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 county with diversity in business opportunities, a trained and educated workforce, and a dynamic economy is one that is one that functions successfully even during economic downturns.

3.1 LOCATION

Hampton County is fortunate in terms of its location. In fact, it has transportation and other advantages that counties and municipalities 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). The County has an interchange on I 95; it is approximately an hour from the ports of Savannah and Charleston, two of the busier ports on the east coast of the US; it is also about an hour from both Charleston and Savannah International Airports, whose volume of both passenger and freight traffic has also been growing. It is also well served by two CSX railroad mainline routes, which may be of more strategic importance to the County than it has been recently. As the high costs of diesel fuel continue, it is expected that moving freight by train will become an increasingly viable option.

Future major developments outside the area are expected to make the location even better. Hampton County’s I-95 interchange will be approximately equidistant from the massive inland port/international logistics center on I-95 in Orangeburg County and the new port in Jasper County on the Savannah River. Land use planning and zoning along the SC 68 corridor near the I-95 interchange will ensure that the County will be able to benefit from its location.

3.2 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, and 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. The number and value of new commercial projects in Hampton County went up and down between 2001 and 2007. Unlike much of the Lowcountry, the best year during that period was 2007, when many areas were experiencing a significant slow-down in activity. Unfortunately, in terms of balance, the total value of...
commercial permits in Hampton between 2001 and 2007 was only $20,362,307; the residential (single-family, mobile home and multi-family) total was $46,725,029.

Table 3.1: Building Permits for New Commercial Construction in Hampton County, 2001-2007

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Number</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Value</td>
<td>$10,268,260</td>
<td>$1,954,390</td>
<td>$1,239,000</td>
<td>$2,496,621</td>
<td>$713,301</td>
<td>$355,898</td>
<td>$3,334,837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 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 indirectly to the Hampton economy, with residents employed in Hilton Head hospitality jobs, this is not a desirable situation:

- Employment in this sector tends to be at the lower end of the pay scale, is not full-time, is seasonal and does not offer benefits.
- Long commutes (up to three or four hours each way by bus) are required, which can lead to family problems.

Hampton County has lost a significant number of jobs in the manufacturing sector during the past year, at least partly because the jobs were in companies supplying the housing industry, which is in a major nationwide decline. In other parts of the Lowcountry and the state, manufacturing jobs have been nearly replaced by low-paying retail and food service in new stores and restaurants, but in Hampton County even that option has not been available.

Overall, unemployment in Hampton County increased during 2008 and the beginning of 2009, as Figure 3.1 (on the following page) shows. As of January 2009 it had reached 15.5 percent, which economists consider very high.

Figure 3.2 (on page 40) demonstrates that the problem is becoming a long-term situation.
Figure 3.1

Lowcountry Unemployment Rates

Hampton County Comprehensive Plan
June 2009
Another indicator of the need for both more jobs and higher paying jobs is usually average weekly private sector wages. The most recent data available is for 2007, and at that time Hampton County’s private sector wages were then the highest in the Lowcountry and had increased the most between 2006 and 2007, although they were still lower than the state average (see Table 3.3 below).

That situation is likely to have changed by the third quarter of 2008 (the most recent period for which data is available), with the loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector.
Table 3.2: Average Weekly Private Sector Wages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
<td>$404</td>
<td>$423</td>
<td>$440</td>
<td>$460</td>
<td>$480</td>
<td>$493</td>
<td>$516</td>
<td>$505</td>
<td>$525</td>
<td>$560</td>
<td>$564</td>
<td>$588</td>
<td>$595</td>
<td>$565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
<td>$364</td>
<td>$374</td>
<td>$382</td>
<td>$404</td>
<td>$427</td>
<td>$445</td>
<td>$458</td>
<td>$445</td>
<td>$457</td>
<td>$491</td>
<td>$511</td>
<td>$534</td>
<td>$532</td>
<td>$515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>$393</td>
<td>$411</td>
<td>$434</td>
<td>$460</td>
<td>$468</td>
<td>$497</td>
<td>$536</td>
<td>$524</td>
<td>$531</td>
<td>$570</td>
<td>$581</td>
<td>$604</td>
<td>$647</td>
<td>$572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td>$309</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>$339</td>
<td>$361</td>
<td>$390</td>
<td>$428</td>
<td>$447</td>
<td>$441</td>
<td>$474</td>
<td>$531</td>
<td>$568</td>
<td>$627</td>
<td>$643</td>
<td>$652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>$448</td>
<td>$462</td>
<td>$481</td>
<td>$501</td>
<td>$523</td>
<td>$541</td>
<td>$562</td>
<td>$567</td>
<td>$582</td>
<td>$602</td>
<td>$623</td>
<td>$649</td>
<td>$668</td>
<td>$665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Labor Force

**Commuting Patterns.** In 2000, the most recent year for which commuting data is available, nearly one-third (32 percent) of Hampton County’s employed civilians worked outside the County and another 5 percent worked outside South Carolina (see Table 4.4 on the following page). As a result, the average commuting time for all residents, including those that worked within their hometowns, was more than a half hour each way. Residents of Gifford and Scotia both had average one-way commutes of more than an hour.

Table 3.3: Hampton County Commuting Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Employed Civilians</th>
<th>Mean Commuting Time (minutes)</th>
<th>Worked in Place of Residence</th>
<th>Worked Outside Place of Residence</th>
<th>Worked Outside County of Residence</th>
<th>Worked Outside State of Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>7,787</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>2,521</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(includes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and unorganized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunson</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estill</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furman</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifford</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>1,181</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luray</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotia</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varnville</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemassee</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal 1,131 132
Out-commuting data, demonstrating which counties Hampton residents commute to, is shown in Figure 3.3 (below).

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

**Figure 3.3**

Out-Commuting from Hampton County

---

**Education and Training.** The labor force most attractive to potential industry is the one which is highly educated and/or highly-trained. Hampton County’s levels of higher educational attainment are generally not as good as the Lowcountry region or South Carolina as a whole, but they all improved between 1990 and 2000 (see Table 4.5 on the following page).

The relatively high percentages of Hampton County adults who have graduated from high school were superior in both years to those of the larger areas, which provides a good basis for programs to train or retrain residents for new employment opportunities in the County.

Nevertheless, to improve the economic base of Hampton County, improving the performance of the schools, increasing the percentage of students graduating from high school and going on to post-secondary education or training, is a paramount need.
Table 3.4: Educational Attainment Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than 9th Grade</th>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School Grad</th>
<th>Associate Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Adult Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowcountry Total</td>
<td>11.39%</td>
<td>6.87%</td>
<td>15.83%</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
<td>30.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>13.62%</td>
<td>8.31%</td>
<td>18.09%</td>
<td>15.35%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Adult Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. A variety of educational opportunities are planned or are already accessible to residents.

- **Secondary/Career Education.** Hampton County, the Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL) and the Lowcountry Workforce Investment Area (WIA) are cooperating on an initiative to provide such training.

- **Post Secondary Education.** Public and private colleges and universities in the Lowcountry are available to Hampton County residents and provide a diverse spectrum of programs that provide the student with either certificate, diploma, undergraduate or graduate degrees. TCL has a branch in Varnville and is actively expanding the course offerings available there. USC Salkehatchie, located in nearby Allendale, is a post-secondary resource readily available to the community.

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

### 3.4 FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan.**

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

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

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

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

- Logistics/Distribution centers (emerging industry)
- Health Care/Medical
- Construction
- Wholesale Trade
- Manufacturing

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. Hampton County is in Zone 3 (see Map 4.1 on following page).

A discussion of Zone 3, excerpted from the Plan, with specific recommendations for development of that zone in which Hampton County is located, follows the map on the next page.
I-95 Economic Development 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

Map 3.1
Economic Diversification Zones

Zone 3: Hampton County--- I-95 Exit 38

◊ The CSX rail line runs along Exit 38 to US-278 in addition to economy motels, gas stations and fast food restaurants.

Utilities are accessible at Exit 33.

Zone 3 is in close proximity to four small public airports including Beaufort County Airport (73J), Ridgeland Airport (3J1), Lowcountry Regional Airport (RBW) and Hampton Varnville Airport (3J0) in addition to the larger Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV) and Charleston International Airports (CHS). The Lowcountry Regional Airport recently underwent upgrades including resurfacing of two runways and remodeling of the terminal building. The airport commission also received a $1.7 million FAA grant to install and maintain and ILS system. A future runway extension to 10,000 feet is possible.
Zone 3 should be marketed to the construction, distribution, wholesale trade and manufacturing clusters. Hampton County currently provides a majority of the region’s manufacturing jobs. Locating additional manufacturing companies in Zone 3 may provide overlap synergy opportunities (i.e. manufacturers may use the same types of raw materials and/or suppliers which could lead to combined shipments thus reducing costs). See Appendix N – Synergy and Relationship Analysis for more details.

A CSX spur is located near the Hampton County/Colleton County line with access to US-601 which leads to US-278 and US-321. CSX also forms the boundary/border between Hampton and Beaufort Counties in the Town of Yemassee. The access to the CSX spur well positions this zone for easy transport of construction materials and manufacturing and warehouse products via rail. The six public aviation facilities and two large ports would also aid candidate companies with moving materials and products throughout the nation.

The following NAICS industries would find it beneficial to locate operations in Zone 3:

- 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.)

- 3261 – Plastics product manufacturing (floor coverings, pipe and fittings, building materials, packaging materials, countertops, plastic bottles, etc.)
Lowcountry Distribution/Logistics Center Cluster Study

LCOG has recently completed this project, which was jointly funded by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), LCOG, SCE & G and Palmetto Electric Coop. It was an outgrowth of the Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan and its objective was to assess the infrastructure needs of large-scale distribution and logistics centers and the availability and capacities of Lowcountry water and wastewater facilities, I-95 interchanges, land and other services to accommodate that development. The overriding goal was to determine what the area needs to do to capitalize on its locational advantages.

The recommendations below are for the Lowcountry as a whole, but can equally be applied to Hampton County.

1. All of the jurisdictions in which candidate I-95 interchanges are located (Exits 62, 53, 38, 22, 18 and the new port-related exit) should ensure that large parcels (100 or more acres) and contiguous parcels of land are zoned for “Industrial” use to protect them from other less economically-beneficial forms of development. In some cases it may be necessary for the land to be annexed into the nearby municipality in order to meet the planning goals and objectives of both jurisdictions.

2. Transportation planning for infrastructure for the new port and for improvements to the existing I-95 interchanges to accommodate the development of logistics/distribution centers should begin immediately. It should be a cooperative effort among SCDOT, the Lowcountry counties, the municipalities with I-95 interchanges, the bi-state port development organization and relevant private sector landowners and developers.

3. Encourage private investors and/or developers to assemble smaller parcels of land at these locations into large buildable cluster/business park sites.

4. Where necessary, the counties and/or municipalities should apply to grant funding programs to provide sewer and water services to the sites.

5. A Lowcountry regional comprehensive marketing and promotional strategy should be prepared and implemented. The goal will be to attract distribution and logistics facilities developers—who will then market to their own client base of potential tenants and owners—as well as the necessary support service businesses.

Hampton County Economic Development Commission (HCEDC) and the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance (SCA)

Garnet Consulting Services, Inc., Wadley-Donovan Growth Tech, LLC in conjunction with Taierica, Inc. and Development Counsellors International were hired by Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance (SCA), of which Hampton County is
a member, to prepare a combined strategic plan, target industry analysis and marketing plan for the region of Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell and Hampton counties in 2007. In 2008, the goals established in the assessment were reviewed for progress and updates. In addition, a secondary wood market analysis was conducted by Lupold Consulting, Inc which further identified appropriate wood markets and recruitment opportunities for the region.

The SCA goals and strategies are:

**Goal #1: Grow and Diversify the Regional Economy**

- Strengthening Marketing and Recruitment Efforts
- Enhancing Product Development
- Assisting Project Managers and EDCs in Developing County Plans with Local Partnerships and Initiatives
- Encouraging Revitalization of Chambers and Downtowns
- Continuing “incubator without walls” assistance

**Goal #2: Increase and Train Pool of Qualified Labor**

- Continuing to Work Closely with Industry and Technical Colleges
- Promoting the Attainment of a GED through Existing Programs
- Designing and Operating a Regional Annual Job Fair for High School Freshmen and Sophomores
- Facilitating “Come Home Again” programs through Chambers and EDCs
- Continuing our workforce development partnership grant, which continues to build this pool of qualified workers

**Goal #3: Facilitating Community Development**

- In community development, SCA committed to continue partnership with Clemson to fund a community development agent to assist our towns in master planning through 2009.

- SCA also committed to use public relations campaign to raise awareness of how community development issues, such as health care, education rankings, litter, amenities, etc. affect our economic development efforts.

- SCA planned to continue regional leadership development efforts.
Bio-Energy Opportunities.

Hampton County is already tapping into the many economic development opportunities being offered by the impetus to develop new and renewable energy sources in the US. The bio-diesel plant in Estill could be the cornerstone of a more comprehensive effort to make Hampton County one of South Carolina’s centers for the development of alternate fuels.

The fact that one source of future fuels may be wood by-products positions Hampton County well because of its active timbering industry. Other agricultural products and by-products are also being considered as potential feedstocks, and the County’s farming operations could be or become major contributors.

Clemson University is becoming the state’s hub for renewable fuel research, and the County has a long-standing relationship with the university through its Extension program.

In addition to enhancing its relationship with Clemson, there are other opportunities in South Carolina that the County could utilize to its advantage, including:

- Encouraging entrepreneurs to locate in Hampton County through cooperative efforts with SC Launch! This a joint venture of South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA) and the Research Foundations of Clemson University, The Medical University of South Carolina, and The University of South Carolina. SC Launch! supplies qualified entrepreneurs and researchers with key tools for success, providing high-potential companies with a mix of upfront counseling, facilities, and seed funding of up to $200,000 in loans or investments and ongoing mentoring. These tools build a bridge that spans the gap between the spark of innovation and the reality of application and production.
- Working with producers to utilize the provisions of the “Energy Freedom and Rural Development Act Amendment,” which include an incentive payment for production of electricity or methane gas fuel.
- Working with researchers and entrepreneurs to utilize the South Carolina Renewable Energy Revolving Loan Program and the South Carolina Renewable Energy Grant Program to locate operations in Hampton County.

Tourism and Hunting.

Both tourism and hunting contribute to the economies of Hampton County and its municipalities, and there is anecdotal evidence available about the benefits eco-tourists, heritage tourists and hunters provide to local economies. However, data from South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) and the South Carolina Department of Revenue show that the contribution, in terms of such indicators as jobs and payroll,
expenditures by visitors to Hampton County and Accommodations Taxes collected plays a minor role in the county.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7, below and on the following page, demonstrate this clearly. The Accommodations Taxes are likely as low as they are because of the relative scarcity of motels, hotels and even Bed-and-Breakfasts in the County and the Towns.

Table 3.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Impact of Visitors to the Lowcountry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures by Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 $958,110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 $1,026,320,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 $80,490,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 $86,330,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 $10,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 $11,260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 $44,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 $46,870,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.7  
Hampton County 2% Accommodations Tax Collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County (total)</td>
<td>$25,123.16</td>
<td>$28,594.86</td>
<td>$33,052.87</td>
<td>$35,301.10</td>
<td>40.51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>$5,689.18</td>
<td>$6,967.03</td>
<td>$1,616.84</td>
<td>$5,880.41</td>
<td>3.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunson</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estill</td>
<td>$2,040.16</td>
<td>$2,754.63</td>
<td>$3,719.24</td>
<td>$3,374.43</td>
<td>65.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furman</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifford</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>$14,780.78</td>
<td>$16,571.66</td>
<td>$18,240.39</td>
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<td>15.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luray</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varnville</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>Yemassee</td>
<td>$2,613.04</td>
<td>$2,301.54</td>
<td>$9,476.40</td>
<td>$8,470.78</td>
<td>224.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC Total</td>
<td>$35,248,057.94</td>
<td>$39,157,739.39</td>
<td>$41,625,725.46</td>
<td>$43,958,149.23</td>
<td>24.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Their contributions to the economy at the present time are definitely not high, but hunting (the popularity of which, according to an SCPRT study, is declining) and eco-tourism and heritage tourism (both of which are growing in South Carolina) have the potential to continue to provide some jobs and to result in local expenditures for food and services. Unfortunately the jobs are not usually of the type described by economic development professionals as “good” (that is, full-time, paying above the state average and providing benefits and opportunities for growth).

To result in more expenditures by visitors, a larger tourism infrastructure of accommodations, restaurants and other services will be needed. The provision of more up-scale hunting camps would also be beneficial.

Movie-Making.

Hampton County, and some of its residents, have already starred in one of the most popular and successful movies of the 20th century. Literally millions of people worldwide have seen downtown Varnville and the Wade Hampton High School football field (and local high school players) in Forrest Gump. In addition to the status that is conferred by being in a movie, there are definite economic advantages for areas that serve as film locations.

Exact figures are not available, but even 15 years ago when Forrest Gump was made in various places throughout the Lowcountry, approximately $5 million was spent in the region by the filmmakers—on everything from accommodations for cast and crew to catering, vehicle rental, props, extras, massage therapists, etc.
In addition to money spent directly on film production, there are indirect financial contributions, in the form of increased tourism, which has not been measured. Movie locations do attract tourists, as Beaufort, SC and Moab, UT (among others) have learned.

Hampton County’s attractive and traditional small towns, hunt clubs and rural areas are marketable resources that can be “sold” to makers of feature films, television shows and commercials.
GOALS & 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 Hampton County’s location and the opportunities accruing are now recognized. The Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan, which was completed in September of 2005, outlines an economic role and provides directions for future economic development here. Those goals and strategies developed for the SCA that apply to Hampton County (as discussed previously in this section) provide implementation specifics.

GOAL: Develop a diversified economic base for Hampton County that will provide jobs that pay at least the state average wage. This will necessitate strengthening marketing and recruitment efforts and increasing and training a pool of qualified labor through the implementation of WorkKeys certification in Hampton County.

Objective 1: Implement the relevant recommendations of the “Lowcountry Economic Diversification Plan,” the “Lowcountry Distribution/Logistics Center Cluster Study,” the 2007 combined strategic plan, target industry analysis and marketing plan for the SCA region and the sections of the Comprehensive Plan that deal with both attracting new businesses to Hampton County and also growing the businesses that are already here.

Objective 2: Planning Commission should pursue an active role in facilitating economic development with the Economic Development Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, County Council, the municipalities and service and business associations.

Objective 3: Work with Clemson University, SCRA, the South Carolina Biomass Council, other relevant agencies, agriculture and timber operations, local municipalities and entrepreneurs and investors to establish Hampton County as a Bio-Energy Center.

Objective 4: Maintain policies necessary to attract the identified candidate businesses to Hampton County and to provide expansion opportunities for existing businesses. This includes the designation and servicing of land for distribution centers and other specific industrial and related commercial purposes on SC 68 near the I-95 interchange, along US 321 in and on both sides of Estill and in other appropriate locations (see map in Land Use section of this Plan). Industrial Zoning should include standards and regulations that will ensure the continuing desirability of sites in Hampton County for high quality new development and expanded existing development.

Objective 5: Encourage the further development of eco-tourism and heritage tourism in Hampton County and its municipalities by means of:
* Preservation of historic and natural resources (see chapters 1 and 2 of this Plan for detailed recommendation);
* Supporting revitalization of the traditional downtowns of the County’s towns. Appropriate zoning and façade improvements will attract visitors while improving the quality of life for residents and expanding opportunities for the growth of locally-owned small businesses.
* Developing and promoting event tourism—including bike races, artist studio and gallery tours, historic homes and site tours, etc.
* Establishment of a Tourism Commission to promote the unique resources of the area;
* Development of incentives to encourage the provision of Bed-and-Breakfast inns.

Objective 6: Encourage hunting by people from outside Hampton County by means of:
* Preservation of land and resources necessary for good hunting (see Chapter 2 for detailed recommendations).
* Development of incentives to encourage the provision of high-end hunting lodges.

Objective 7: To attract movie, video and commercial production activities—which generate both direct expenditures and follow-up tourism—Hampton County should promote its visual assets, and its successful track record as a location for making 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:

* Establishment of a Film Commission to work with 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.
* Working with property owners to make available vacant industrial buildings (which have the necessary high ceilings and large floor areas without columns) as temporary studios and sound stages.

Objective 8: The County should work with the other counties and municipalities in the Lowcountry to stress Regional economic development, in which everyone benefits.

Objective 9: Hampton County should 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.
Objective 10: Ensure that small businesses are able to operate and to expand within Hampton County and its communities by ensuring that land is zoned for commercial and industrial uses in locations suitable for a variety of enterprises.
Chapter 4: Housing

Housing is one of the most basic human needs -- important not only to the well-being of the families who occupy it, but contributing to the overall economic well-being of the entire community. To attract new businesses and industries, there must be an adequate supply of housing for all occupational and income levels.

The housing needs of Hampton County are different than those of other counties in the region. The growth pressures of the late 1990s and first years of this century were limited in Hampton County. As a result, the County did not experience a rapid increase in the number of dwelling units constructed (see Table 4.1 below) nor did it experience the massive escalation of housing prices that occurred in Beaufort County and many other places in the US during that period.

Table 4.1: Housing Unit Increases, 2000-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Change July 1, 2000-2007</th>
<th>Housing Unit Estimates</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>July 1, 2007</td>
<td>Census 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
<td>34.50%</td>
<td>81,383</td>
<td>60,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
<td>4.79%</td>
<td>18,998</td>
<td>18,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>1.64%</td>
<td>8,723</td>
<td>8,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td>10.20%</td>
<td>8,737</td>
<td>7,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowcountry Total</td>
<td>23.85%</td>
<td>117,841</td>
<td>95,148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This turns out to have been beneficial for Hampton County because there is not currently a large unsold inventory of vacant homes that may not meet the needs of future residents/buyers. At the same time, housing prices are not falling drastically as they are elsewhere in the Lowcountry and throughout the United States. It also means that Hampton County ranks 39th of South Carolina’s 46 counties in the number of foreclosures (as estimated by HUD).

As a result, when the economy improves and economic development returns to Hampton County, developers and builders will be presented with a “clean slate” opportunity to provide the types and sizes of housing needed by present and future residents and the opportunity to take innovative approaches to community and residential planning and design. They will not have to work off their unsold and outdated inventory first.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTY’S HOUSING STOCK

Hampton County contains a wide variety of housing stock that ranges from large historic homes to small dwelling units and mobile homes. There is only a small number
of multi-family dwelling structures due to the fact that the County is still mostly rural in nature.

There were a total of 8,582 housing units in Hampton County 2000, according to the Census, compared to 7,058 in 1990—an increase of nearly 22 percent. Of these, slightly more than 78 percent were owner-occupied, as shown in Table 3.2. A large majority of owner-occupied homes is generally a good indicator of socio-economic stability and well-maintained homes. Another significant, and positive, housing indicator is that 98 percent of all housing units had complete plumbing and kitchen facilities in 2000, compared to 96 and 95 percent (respectively) in 1990.

Median home prices increased between 1990 and 2000—from $43,700 to $73,200, or about 6.8 percent per year. However, building permit data up through 2007 (the most recent available) show that housing prices have continued to increase more rapidly and substantially after 2000, at least partially because Hampton County housing was considered “affordable” by Beaufort County residents and newcomers who were willing to trade commuting for larger homes and more land. In 2007, the average single-family building permit value in Hampton County was $145,300. Since this figure does not include land, and since building permit values may be lower than final construction costs, the actual selling price of a single-family home would have been higher.
Table 4.2: Hampton County Housing Unit Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
<td>7058</td>
<td>8582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>6322</td>
<td>7444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>89.57%</td>
<td>86.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>10.43%</td>
<td>13.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>4705</td>
<td>5813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>74.42%</td>
<td>78.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>1617</td>
<td>1631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>25.58%</td>
<td>21.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Year Structure Built</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Plumbing Facilities</td>
<td>5926</td>
<td>7629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>97.63%</td>
<td>96.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Kitchen Facilities</td>
<td>5940</td>
<td>7608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>97.86%</td>
<td>95.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change 1990-2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Value for Owner-Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>$43,700</td>
<td>$73,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>67.51%</td>
<td>168.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Gross Rent</td>
<td>$138</td>
<td>$370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With traditional stick-built homes having become less affordable for Hampton County residents (in common with much of the rest of the US), mobile homes have provided an alternative. Between 2004 and 2007 a total of 694 dwelling units were added to the Hampton County stock. Of that number slightly less than 21 percent were single-family homes; almost all of the rest were mobile homes.

### Table 4.3. Hampton County Residential Building Permits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>SF Number</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF Value</td>
<td>$3,550,365</td>
<td>$3,120,747</td>
<td>$5,516,856</td>
<td>$4,071,564</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average SF (w/o Land)</td>
<td>$107,587</td>
<td>$89,164</td>
<td>$112,589</td>
<td>$145,413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH Number</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH Value</td>
<td>$2,537,323</td>
<td>$2,972,250</td>
<td>$3,165,302</td>
<td>$1,998,324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF Value</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$149,799</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SF = Single Family Homes  
MH = Mobile Homes  
MF = Multi-Family Structures

### 4.2 REGIONAL HOUSING COMPARISONS

Because of the very rapid residential growth that has occurred in parts of the Lowcountry region during the last several years, Census 2000 data is no longer very useful in assessing the current situation. Therefore the most recently available building permit data for all four counties has been utilized to provide an overview of numbers of new units and their relative average prices without land. See Table 3.4 on the following page.

Because Hampton County did not experience a rapid run-up in the number of housing units between 2004 and 2006, it also did not experience a major drop-off in activity in 2007.

Table 3.4 (next page) compares the numbers, types and values of residential building permits issued within the four counties of the Lowcountry region between 2004 and 2007. While Beaufort (especially the southern portion of the county) definitely led in both numbers and prices, it also showed a dramatic decline in 2007 that is continuing into 2009.
Table 4.4: Lowcountry Building Permit Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>SF Number</td>
<td>3319</td>
<td>2861</td>
<td>3096</td>
<td>1,926</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SF Value</td>
<td>603,414,316</td>
<td>708,883,313</td>
<td>805,603,960</td>
<td>736,074,269</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average SF (w/o Land)</td>
<td>181,806</td>
<td>247,775</td>
<td>260,208</td>
<td>382,117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Number</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>246</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Value</td>
<td>29,405,504</td>
<td>69,201,596</td>
<td>58,709,216</td>
<td>19,404,467</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton</td>
<td>SF Number</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SF Value</td>
<td>7,328,754</td>
<td>15,078,491</td>
<td>25,279,885</td>
<td>28,614,564</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average SF (w/o Land)</td>
<td>60,072</td>
<td>150,785</td>
<td>208,925</td>
<td>176,633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Value</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Value</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$1,462,180</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>SF Number</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SF Value</td>
<td>3,550,365</td>
<td>3,120,747</td>
<td>5,516,856</td>
<td>4,071,564</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average SF (w/o Land)</td>
<td>107,587</td>
<td>89,164</td>
<td>112,589</td>
<td>145,413</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Number</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Value</td>
<td>2,537,323</td>
<td>2,972,250</td>
<td>3,165,302</td>
<td>1,998,324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Value</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$149,799</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper</td>
<td>SF Number</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SF Value</td>
<td>11,199,465</td>
<td>16,505,249</td>
<td>26,247,503</td>
<td>43,950,099</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average SF (w/o Land)</td>
<td>100,896</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>115,628</td>
<td>160,402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Number</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MH Value</td>
<td>8,645,000</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF Value</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$2,921,000</td>
<td>$1,041,627</td>
<td>$48,437,220</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Many factors affect the affordability of housing: the housing finance system, employment and wages, land and construction costs, provision of water and sewer services and regulatory requirements. Many of these factors are dependent upon regional, state, and national trends; however, it is important for the County to focus on what steps can be taken at the local level to make housing safer and more affordable for the residents of Hampton County.
The term “affordable housing,” though widely used, can only be appropriately used when a target population for the affordable housing is clearly stated. The standard definition of affordable housing is *housing for which 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*. Because affordability is determined primarily by household income, it is difficult to define a single housing “price” that is affordable to all families. What may be affordable to a family of four with two working adults may not be affordable to a single person.

Hampton County’s median family income increased significantly between 2000 and 2008, according to data from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development—from $34,561 in 2000 to $41,600 in 2008. Using the 30 percent of gross income ratio, in 2008 the median household (which means that half of the households in Hampton County had a lower income and half higher) could have afforded payments of $1,040 a month for housing. In mortgage terms, assuming a 100 percent mortgage for 30 years at 6 percent, that household could have purchased a home for $173,000.

### 4.4 HOUSING STRATEGIES

There are a number of housing strategies that may be appropriate for Hampton County to either continue to utilize or to adopt anew. The County and its municipalities, by already agreeing to become partners in the regional Affordable Housing Consortium, will be participating in some of these upon completion in May 2006 of the Consolidated Housing Plan. Others will require changes to the County’s development regulations. These strategies include:

- Rehabilitation programs to address substandard housing conditions;
- Programs to encourage and assist residents in becoming homeowners;
- Development standards to ensure quality residential development and to protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible development;
- Flexible regulations to encourage new development of a wide variety of housing types for all income levels.

**Housing Rehabilitation.** Unfortunately, there is a lack of recent and comprehensive data on the condition of the housing stock in Hampton County.

There are several grant programs available to address both the rehabilitation of substandard housing and the replacement of dwellings that are beyond repair. Two of these programs, CDBG and HOME, are administered nationally by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through grant moneys passed through to the State. These programs are specifically targeted to families of low and moderate income. In the past several years, towns in Hampton County have used the owner-
occupied rehabilitation provisions of the HOME Program. The County should continue to pursue these and other grants for the rehabilitation and/or replacement of substandard dwelling units to ensure that those units, especially for low and moderate income families, are brought into standard condition, yet remain affordable for residents.

**Homeownership Programs.** Hampton County has historically had an exceptionally high percentage of homeowners. This may decrease, however, as increasing housing costs make home-buying more difficult for lower income families. Households within this income group often experience difficulty in the homeownership market and are often concerned with saving money for down payments and closing costs needed to purchase a home. Compared to Beaufort County, Hampton County is not a high cost/high price housing market, but the problems of prevailing low incomes and poorly qualified buyers are effective barriers to finding affordable housing and increasing homeownership opportunities for residents. Increasing unemployment compared with lower average weekly wages (data provided in “Economy” element of this Plan), may reduce the “affordability” threshold for a growing segment of the Hampton County population.

Hampton County should focus its attention on homeownership programs for the County to help residents overcome buyer qualification difficulties. A homeownership assistance program is especially important because there is federal funding for this purpose (both HUD and the Department of Agriculture have grant programs), in which the County can participate via its membership in the new Housing Consortium.

**Quality Residential Development.** One of the problems Hampton County currently faces is the need to offer consistent land use protections, such as zoning, that encourage new residential development that will fit in comfortably with existing communities. While it is difficult to dictate individual housing design, the County can address aspects of site design that will contribute overall to an increase in the quality of new residential developments. Examples of this include upgraded subdivision standards to insure adequate roads, access, and drainage systems; policies that discourage development on land that may be unsuitable for housing because of severe environmental constraints; and requirements that infill development in existing residential neighborhoods be compatible in terms of density and housing type.

Manufactured housing (which can include mobile homes but also includes high-end dwelling units) also needs to be given special consideration in promoting quality residential development. Where manufactured homes are installed, they should conform to standards which provide for a safe and attractive dwelling unit. Some factors to be considered include: density, setbacks, access, site location (parallel or perpendicular to the road), and buffering. Installation and foundation requirements are
critical due to the potential threat from severe storms. Some communities also require that manufactured homes conform to certain appearance standards which define construction materials, roof lines, colors, and accessory structures such as porches and garages. Other communities are encouraging the integration of manufactured housing into residential neighborhoods by not permitting the development of new mobile home parks [Note: This is done not through prohibition but simply by not including mobile home parks as either uses or districts in their Zoning Ordinances.]

**Flexible Development Regulations.** When creating design standards to ensure quality development and encouraging development patterns to meet the various goals in the Comprehensive Plan, the County should not eliminate or preclude its ability to meet a range of housing needs. While a precise profile of new residential development cannot be accurately predicted, it will likely contain a diversity of housing types and prices. The more affluent will undoubtedly seek development located near water or with other amenities, while housing that is more affordable to middle and lower income households will tend to gravitate toward those areas where development costs are minimized. It is also anticipated that manufactured housing will continue to play an important role in providing residents an affordable alternative to site-built housing.

The private sector housing industry is expected to continue to provide the vast majority of the County’s housing stock; nevertheless, it is the County’s responsibility to implement the overall regulatory framework within which the private sector must operate. Local development policies and regulations do affect the production and cost of housing. Development restrictions can effectively reduce the amount of land available for development and increase development costs. These increased costs have a disproportionate impact on the low to middle income housing sector of the market.

Hampton County can assist the private sector in meeting housing needs by ensuring that its land development regulations and permitting procedures are efficient, and that they contain no unnecessary regulations that may inflate the cost of housing. Land development regulations and policies, although necessary to ensure health, safety, and welfare, should also be considered for their impact on housing supply and affordability. For example, a policy to permit higher density in areas with in-place or programmed infrastructure can help developers take advantage of existing investments in these facilities and thus reduce the costs of providing housing. As well, density and other incentives can be utilized effectively to increase the supply of affordable housing.

As Hampton County works toward revising its Zoning Ordinance to implement the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, it will be critical to maintain open lines of communication with property owners, builders, and developers to ensure that new regulations do not cause confusion or unnecessary construction delays. The County should consider providing printed, easy-to-understand guidelines to explain new
development requirements and review processes for subdividing property, setting up mobile homes, building new homes, and renovating or expanding existing dwellings.

4.5 THE LINK BETWEEN HOUSING AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

When residential housing demand again grows, it will be necessary to provide infrastructure and services to accommodate it. It is critical for Hampton County to guide residential growth into areas that are planned for public infrastructure improvements and that the costs of these improvements are fully supported by new development. Otherwise, Hampton County will be constantly struggling to meet the service demands of haphazard new development that could prove to be very inefficient and costly for the County.

Rural housing costs are initially lower because of less expensive land and the lack of urban services such as sewer and water. However, as the population increases, the services which were initially unnecessary to support a rural population become necessary and must be paid for. Development contiguous to present development, rather than scattered throughout the County, is more economical to serve with sewer and water, electricity, telephone, schools, parks and roads. Other costs incurred in scattered urbanization result from the need to travel farther to destination points. The transportation costs for individuals is much higher in rural areas than in areas where shopping, service, educational and employment opportunities are convenient to all.

Residential growth also brings with it increased requirements for other community services such as fire protection, law enforcement, emergency services, and public health. The type and quality of services that Hampton County and its municipalities will offer to the public will play key roles in determining the amount and type of residential growth in the County.
GOAL & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING

A major challenge in the coming years will be to ensure that there is good housing available for all segments of the Hampton County population.

GOAL: “Ensure that an adequate supply of safe and affordable housing is available for all residents of Hampton County.”

STRATEGY #1: Provide opportunities for the housing needs of Hampton County residents to be met.

1. Encourage innovative residential development that is economically sound, desirable and livable. The Planning Commission has the authority to include incentives for innovative developments in a new Zoning Ordinance.

2. Hampton County should make use of its participation in the Lowcountry Regional Affordable Housing Consortium to obtain financing for housing for low and moderate-income residents.

STRATEGY #2: Promote development practices that will increase the quality of housing and neighborhoods.

1. The Zoning Ordinance should ensure that subdivision street design takes into consideration the size and maneuverability of Emergency Service vehicles.

2. Bike and pedestrian systems should be provided in each development with lots less than 1/2 acre. Incentives should be instituted by means of the Zoning Ordinance and a system implemented to encourage developers and builders to connect bicycle and pedestrian systems to local and County sidewalk systems.

3. While mixed use is recommended in areas of Hampton County, contiguous incompatible land use should be prevented by means of the County Zoning Ordinance.

4. The Zoning Ordinance and other development regulations should be in the form of user-friendly, illustrated documents and guidelines to be distributed to developers, builders and landowners to avoid confusion and potential conflicts. These documents should also be available on the County Website as well as compact disk for distribution.
Chapter 5: Community Facilities

5.1 OVERVIEW

The community facilities element of the comprehensive plan addresses the current infrastructure and community programs that are essential to the health and growth of Hampton County. As part of the new Comprehensive Plan for Hampton County the following areas will be evaluated:

- Water and sewer supply
- Electricity and Natural Gas
- Telecommunications
- Solid waste collection and disposal
- Police, fire, and emergency medical services
- Government facilities
- Educational facilities and libraries
- Park, Recreational and Cultural Resources

Community facilities are directly tied into the quality of life, economic diversity and overall well being of Hampton County and its residents. To attract new residents, investors and businesses, the County needs 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 County as it plans for future growth is to create new development and redevelopment that pays for itself.

5.2 Public Services.

Water and Sewer Facilities

There are eight public (community) water systems in the county serving approximately 55 percent of the population, some of whom reside in the unincorporated area. The Luray facility is currently listed as inactive according to DHEC. Less than one percent of the population receives water from private residential systems. The balance relies on individual wells.

Water service areas are shown on Map 5.1. It is clear from this map that all urbanized/developed areas of the county are accessible to a community water system.
The eight public providers, their production capacity and average daily production are listed on Table 5.1. All eight draw from groundwater sources. With the exception of some of the smaller systems, each has considerable “production capacity” in reserve, Hampton and Varnville in particular.

The County and the municipalities are also in the process of working with a consultant to coordinate at least some parts of the separate water services to gain some efficiencies of scale that small, individual community systems cannot obtain.

Map 5.1
Based on the population projections in Chapter 7, it would appear that these systems have in combination sufficient water supplies to accommodate future growth and development of the county over the next 10 years.

Public sewer systems are not as extensive in the unincorporated areas as are community water systems. Service is confined to four areas – Hampton-Varnville, Estill, Brunson and Yemassee. There are only limited extensions into nearby unincorporated areas. The extent of coverage is shown on Map 6.2 (on the following page).

However, it is unlikely that existing sewer systems will be able to accommodate the major new economic development that is projected to take place in the future along SC 68 between I95 and the Industrial Park. As a result the County has begun discussions with the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority about providing sewer services there.
Table 5.2 shows the wastewater treatment plants, their permitted capacity, and current operating capacity.

**Table 5.2: Hampton County Community Sewer Systems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Current Effluent Disposal (MGD)</th>
<th>Permitted Capacity (MGD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yemassee</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunson</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estill</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton-Varnville</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, Water Supply Division, 2009

Table 6.2 shows the wastewater treatment plants, their permitted capacity, and current operating capacity.
The Estill system is operating at about 57 percent capacity, the Hampton-Varnville system is operating at 50 percent capacity and Yemassee is operating at 34 percent capacity. All three of these facilities have the ability to accommodate the projected growth over the next 10 years. The Brunson system is operating at or close to 100% capacity, and will be upgraded in order to accommodate any future growth.

To ensure that future growth and development in Hampton County takes place in what is called an “orderly” manner (that is, does not promote sprawl or “leapfrogging”), all new construction of more than one dwelling unit or one commercial unit of more than 5000 square feet, should be served by sewers. This means that new development should grow outward from existing Hampton County towns with adequate servicing or it should take the form of serviced Planned Development Districts (PDDs).

At the present time, therefore, Yemassee, Hampton-Varnville and Estill are better prepared than the balance of the County in terms being able to accommodate higher intensity development. Economic development generally is contingent on sanitary sewer facilities. Thus, much of the future development in the county may be expected to occur in these four areas, barring the construction of additional treatment facilities elsewhere in locations that are selected as candidates for future growth.

Electricity and Natural Gas

The County is supplied with electric power through a network of 46 and 115 kV transmission lines provided by South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G). SCE&G supplies electricity to all nine municipalities and most densely developed areas of the county. The more sparsely developed rural areas of the county are either served by Palmetto Electric Cooperative or Edisto Electric Cooperative. Both providers work cooperatively with area governments and businesses to expand economic development opportunities.

Natural gas is supplied to the county by the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company via a transmission line extending through the county from Yemassee to Fairfax, and serving all areas in-between including Varnville, Hampton and Brunson. SCE&G also extends service south along U.S. 321 to Estill. Based on current and future growth projections, the utilities feel that the current infrastructure can support the anticipated growth for the next 10 years.
Telecommunications

Today many types of businesses consider telecommunications services to be as necessary to their success as any other public utility. In fact, during the preparation of a recent study on the infrastructure needs of distribution and logistics centers, LCOG learned from developers and economic development officials in other areas that “the key telecommunications infrastructure needed as of mid-2008 is for fiber optics services. The availability of wireless phone and data service is now taken for granted and satellite tracking is also a given.”

At the present time, these services are not uniformly provided throughout Hampton County. Generally, they are available near I-95 and in and near the larger towns. Some areas have only regular telephone and satellite television capabilities.

In order to be able to accommodate—and attract—new business (including health care) operations, up-to-date telecommunication services will be needed throughout Hampton County. These services are also required for public safety.

A detailed assessment of what telecommunications services are now available should be undertaken, followed by recommendations for the services that are both technologically and economically feasible in locations throughout the County. Because technology changes rapidly, other types of networks may become essential in the future, so the assessment should be an ongoing process.

While new services will be provided by the private sector, there is some Federal government assistance available for the extension of broadband internet capabilities in rural areas.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Hampton County currently has 10 convenience centers for solid waste collection. There locations are shown on Map 6.3. These centers are staffed and are open from 7:00am to 7:00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday and they accept household solid waste for disposal as well as aluminum, plastic, glass, newspaper, cardboard, scrap metal and yard waste for recycling.
Curbside garbage collection is carried out in Hampton, Varnville, Estill, Yemassee and Brunson.

There are three solid waste facilities in Hampton County: a long term construction and demolition landfill and recycling center, a composting facility and a shredding facility located in the Town of Yemassee. The only solid waste that is transported out of the County is household garbage which is taken to either the Hickory Hill Landfill in Jasper County or the transfer station in Bamberg. The Hickory Hill Landfill is expected to have the capacity for another 20 years.
The County employs a solid waste director to oversee the waste management activities of the county. The county does not have a formal collection program for recyclables, but newspapers are accepted at designated locations in the towns of Estill, Hampton and Varnville.

The recycling efforts for Hampton County have improved greatly of the last 10 years. The chart below shows the breakdown of recycled material for the County. Hampton County’s recycling rate is at 28%, which is among the top 10 percent per capita in South Carolina. Recycling is not only a benefit to the environment it can also save money by decreasing the amount of solid waste that is put into the landfill which will increase the amount of time before it reaches its capacity at which time it will need to be expanded. The County is continuing to increase its recycling efforts by apply for grants that would allow for more drop off location for recycling specifically at schools and businesses.

Table 5.3: Hampton County Solid Waste and Recycling
Annual Tonnage and Pounds per Day per Person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tons</th>
<th>Pounds per Person per Day (PPD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recycled</td>
<td>7,244</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposed</td>
<td>18,367</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25,611</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources- 2007 data from County Landfill.

Manned convenience centers are effective in rural areas where people are accustomed to using drop-off sites and they are more cost efficient than a rural curbside collection system. However, Hampton County should periodically assess usage of the convenience centers relative to distance between sites and, where applicable, consideration should be given to adjusting the number of sites and capacity of each site. The County should also continue its efforts promote and increase recycling.
5.3 POLICE, FIRE, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Fire Protection The availability and level of fire protection has a direct bearing on the security of life and property and the cost of insurance premiums, which affects the area’s attractiveness to new businesses and residents. Fire protection is provided throughout Hampton County by a coordinated system of 10 fire departments, linked by a radio dispatch system and a central 911 Emergency Communications Center.

The 10 departments comprising the county system, and their ISO ratings are shown on Map 5.4.

Map 5.4
Table 5.4: Fire Districts and ISO Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Station/District</th>
<th>1999 Classification</th>
<th>2008 Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brunson</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estill</td>
<td>20/21</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furman</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifford</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>50/51</td>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varnville</td>
<td>60/61</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemassee</td>
<td>70/71</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nixville</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cummings</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Insurance Service Organizations (ISO) rates the fire districts for their ability to provide fire protection. The lower the ratings, the better the service. The ISO ratings are then used to establish fire insurance rates for the given area, which means less expensive insurance costs. The current ISO ratings show an improvement from the 1999 data. This improvement can be contributed to better equipment and training, and the expansion of water services.

The Town of Yemasee has the only paid firefighter in the County. This position is the Fire Chief for the 10 volunteer fire departments.

- Brunson Fire Department- 20 members, 2 engines, 1 tanker, 1 equipment truck
- Cummings Fire Department- 12 members, 2 engines, 1 tanker
- Estill Fire Department-22 members, 4 engines, 1 tanker, 1 rescue
- Furman Fire Department- 13 members, 1 engine, 1 tanker
- Gifford Fire Department- 13 members, 2 engines, 1 tanker
- Hampton Fire Department- 20 members, 3 engines, 1 tanker, 1 equipment truck, 1 rescue
- Nixville Fire Department- 17 members, 1 engine, 2 tankers
- Shirley Fire Department- 14 members, 1 engine, 1 tanker
- Varnville Fire Department- 20 members, 3 engines, 1 equipment truck
- Yemassee Fire Department-16 members, 3 engines, 1 tanker, 1 rescue

Since the last comprehensive plan, the County has purchased 2 pumper trucks. The County has also scheduled the replacement of 10 additional trucks throughout the next 10 years. The largest need within the area of fire protection for the next 10 years will be to continue to replace aging equipment and to increase the amount of paid firefighters. The retention of an all volunteer department has become increasingly difficult in light of the current economic situation and slow projected increases in population. Increasing the number of paid staff could provide both improved fire protection service and an additional source of employment for the residents of Hampton County.
Police Protection The Hampton County Sheriff’s Department currently has 42 employees including the Sherriff, 38 deputies and office staff. In addition, the detention center currently employs a staff of 20 jailors. The Sherriff’s department has added several programs since the 1999 Comprehensive Plan was written. They include: an auxiliary police force with 8 reserve officers, a gang unit, a multi-jurisdictional drug task force, a traffic enforcement unit and 8 neighborhood crime watch organizations. The Sherriff’s Department would like to continue to expand its services to the community. The department is working toward become accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA has established standards designed to increase law enforcement capabilities, prevent and control crime and reduce liability. The department will need continued budgetary support in order to achieve these goals.

Government Facilities. The following chart show all the current listing for the location, usage and expected lifespan of all the county-level government facilities within Hampton County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUILDING LOCATION</th>
<th>OFFICE</th>
<th>MEETS 10 YR NEEDS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.T. DeLoach Building 201 Jackson Avenue West, Hampton</td>
<td>Administrator Auditor Building Department County Council Public Works Finance Tax Collector Human Resources Treasurer Information Technology</td>
<td>No (Size &amp; aging structure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courthouse &amp; Annex 1 Courthouse Square, Hampton Other Gov. Agencies located at Courthouse &amp; Annex</td>
<td>Clerk of Court Probate Dept. of Juvenile Justice Probation &amp; Parole Public Defender Solicitor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parker Building 201 Lee Avenue, Hampton</td>
<td>Assessor Election Commission &amp; Voter Registration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council on Aging 108 Pine Street West, Hampton Center Locations 541 Fifth Avenue, Estill 19 Railroad Ave, Yemassee 108 Pine Street West, Hampton</td>
<td>Council on Aging (Main Office)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement Center 409 Cemetery Road, Varnville</td>
<td>Detention Center Magistrate Sheriff’s Department</td>
<td>No (Size)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are several facilities that are in need of replacement or expansion due to either the age or size of the structure. At the same time, the County should coordinate with the municipalities to provide more public services more cost effectively (on a per capita basis). A Public Facilities Assessment should be undertaken to inventory and analyze all public facilities (County, municipal and State) within the County. The results of this survey should be added to the priority investment list and scheduled into a Capitol Improvement Plan for the County. It should also identify property that is no longer used or needed and that could be declared “Surplus” and sold to the highest bidder. The resulting revenues could then be used to help pay for other needed community facilities.

### 5.4 EDUCATION FACILITIES & LIBRARY

- **Public Schools.** Hampton County is divided into two school districts. District 1 includes the Northern portion of Hampton County, while District 2 includes the Southern portion of Hampton County. It appears that District 1 is achieving slightly higher academic results than District 2 based on current ACT scores. However, both schools did not fare well on the 2007 district report card issued by the South Carolina Board of Education. District 1 received a below average rating and District 2 received an unsatisfactory rating. Due to limited resources, it is suggested that the two districts consider combining such functions as administration in order to focus resources on improving the overall education level for Hampton County. Education is vital to the
long range vitality of the County and its ability to have a diverse workforce and attract economic development.

Hampton County also has two independent/private schools, Patrick Henry Academy in Estill and the Community Christian Academy.

The Technical College of the Lowcountry has a campus in Varnville called the Mungin Center. This branch offers classes in a variety of technical area and continuing education classes. The Technical College of the Lowcountry is a comprehensive two-year school serving Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper Counties. The Mungin Center has recently received a grant to renovate and update the facility.

**Public Library.** Hampton County contains two libraries, the Hampton County Library, located in the town of Hampton, and the Estill Public Library. Both libraries are part of the Allendale-Hampton-Jasper Regional Library System. Those who live in Hampton, Jasper or Allendale counties have access to all of the branches of this library system. The Hampton County Library branch is open Monday through Saturday varying hours. Their services include internet, children and adult level books, Xerox, South Carolina History, CD, DVD, video, reference, genealogy, magazines, and newspapers. The Estill library is open Monday through Friday with varying hours.

### 5.5 PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Some jurisdictions consider these to be “soft” services—as compared to the “hard” infrastructure services of sewers, water and roads.

However, an increasing number of communities throughout the US realize that these facilities are as important to an area’s fiscal health as they are to physical and mental well-being. In Hampton County fitness-related parks and recreation facilities deserve special attention, because of a variety of health conditions, the prevention and treatment of which include physical activity. Indicators of these problems include:

- Hospitalizations for heart disease (18.7% in Hampton County, compared to a state average of 14.8%)
- Hospitalizations for diabetes (4.2% in Hampton County, compared to a state average of 2.1%)
- In the four-county Lowcountry Region, which includes Hampton County, in 2007, 25.4% of the population was classified as obese (64% overweight and obese); in 2005 the rates were 21.7% and 59% respectively.

Meanwhile, the South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department recently updated its Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) in 2008. The purpose of the plan is to examine outdoor recreation issues relating to the needs of residents and visitors to...
South Carolina. The plan is also used as a guide for the distribution of both State and Federal park and recreation related grants. A few of the many items that are stated in the plan have relevance for Hampton County as it continues to maintain, expand and promote its parks, recreation and cultural resources.

- Walking for pleasure or exercise remains the activity in which the largest percentages of State residents participate.
- As the population of the State ages, the provision of recreational facilities and programs that meets the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities is becoming increasingly important.
- The growing emphasis on heritage and nature-based tourism continues to hold economic promise for any communities in South Carolina.

Parks and Recreation. Hampton County owns and operates one recreational facility located in Varnville. The facility is housed in an old gymnasium where such programs as karate, basketball, gymnastics, dance, aerobics and senior programs are offered. In addition to the gym, the site contains a small park which includes a playground, benches and a natural trail. The recreation department employs two full-time staff—a director and a program coordinator. While the current facility has had the roof replaced and a fresh coat of paint, it is in need of replacement. Staff has determined that a new updated multi-use facility is needed to meet the growing demand for current programs.

The State of South Carolina owns and operates Lake Warren State Park in the unincorporated portion of the county. This is a 440-acre park that contains boat ramps, fishing pier, community center, picnic areas and a playground. The state also owns the Webb Wildlife Center which is a 25,000-acre wildlife management area offering opportunities for public outdoor recreation including hunting and fishing by application. Although owned by the state and used by visitors, both facilities provide important outdoor recreation opportunities for Hampton County residents.

As previously mentioned in the Government Facilities section, the coordination of recreational resources among the County and its municipalities is essential for both present and future residents and visitors of Hampton County. The needs of the population for recreational facilities should also be included in the Public Facilities Assessment and Capital Improvement Plan for the County.

Cultural Resources. The Palmetto Theater located in Hampton, is the center for cultural activity in Hampton County. The theater originally opened in 1946 and was purchased by the Hampton County Arts Council and reopened it in 1993. The theater has 221 seats and is the setting for plays, concerts, art shows and continuing education for both children and adults. In addition to the Palmetto Theater, Hampton County is host to a number of festivals throughout the year. Two of the largest festivals include
the Hampton County Watermelon Festival and the Yemassee Shrimp Festival. Hampton also houses the Hampton County Museum which is located in the old jailhouse. The museum contains a collection of artifacts, memorabilia and photographs from the Civil War to the present day. The County is also rich in history with numerous historic sites that are detailed in the History Section of the Comprehensive Plan.

Heritage and eco-tourism are areas that should be expanded on by the County. Together they provide economic growth potential and are suited to Hampton County. Hampton County could become a destination for those travelers seeking recreation, historic and cultural resources.

5.6 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the changing needs of the existing Hampton County population as well as expected needs of future residents, more and different facilities will be needed both in the short-term and the long-term. Their provision must be the result of conscious planning instead of reaction to an immediate need or problem.

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

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

Goal 3: Focus on planning for future growth in a way that development and redevelopment pays for itself in terms of the provision of new and additional community facilities and services.

Goal 4: Ensure that adequate community facilities are provided in a manner which is responsive to community needs, consistent with future development goals, environmentally sound, financially feasible, and which promotes economic opportunity for County residents.

STRATEGY #1: Identify and prioritize community facility needs that are necessary to maintain maximum long-term service efficiency and help achieve the County's future land use and development goals.

1. Participate in long-range service planning process to ensure that adequate service is available before development takes place; coordinate with the Towns regarding future expansion into areas beyond the current municipal boundaries.
2. Develop and regularly update, as new residential, commercial and industrial development is planned and implemented, a Fire Protection and EMS Master Plan. The Plan should become an ordinance and be enforced for all new development and redevelopment.

Continue to identify pre-disaster mitigation projects and document projects in the mitigation plan. Work with Beaufort County Emergency Management on shelter needs and planning to accommodate Northern Beaufort county evacuees.

3. Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Hampton County that identifies improvements--type, size and location -- necessary to correct current deficiencies and meet future demands, per community planning standards and the results of community surveys and/or focus groups. Coordinate with community facilities inventory and planning (below).

4. Conduct an inventory and map current community facilities, including telecommunications; assess the condition of facilities for determining if repair or replacement is required. Identify current community facilities deficiencies and future needs, utilizing accepted planning standards and the results of community surveys and/or focus groups.

5. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan and update its budget annually.

STRATEGY #2: In coordination with the School Districts, establish and pursue long-range goals for facility and program development as necessary to improve public education in Hampton County. A representative of the School District should serve in an ex officio capacity on the Hampton County Planning Commission.

STRATEGY #3: Identify and plan for other community needs, including telecommunications, solid waste management and criminal justice administration.

STRATEGY #4: Maintain new development taxes and fees to ensure the maintenance and development of community facilities is financially feasible.

STRATEGY #5: Assess all County-owned property to determine what is no longer needed or used or is insufficiently utilized to justify continued ownership and maintenance; offer property considered “surplus” for sale to the highest bidder and apply the revenues received to the provision of other community facilities.
Chapter 6: Population

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

6.1 POPULATION GROWTH

Between 1990 and 2000, Hampton County’s population grew at a faster rate than the state average, but it did not match the pace of the Lowcountry as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990 Census</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>% Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>86,425</td>
<td>120,937</td>
<td>39.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton</td>
<td>34,377</td>
<td>38,264</td>
<td>11.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>18,191</td>
<td>21,386</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper</td>
<td>15,487</td>
<td>20,678</td>
<td>33.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>154,480</td>
<td>201,265</td>
<td>30.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>3,486,703</td>
<td>4,012,012</td>
<td>15.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census

Between 2000 and 2006 that trend was reversed; Hampton County, and all the municipalities except for Yemassee, experienced decreases in population. However, between 2006 and 2007 both the County and all the municipalities showed small increases in their populations (see Table 6.2 on the following page). These numbers should be monitored annually to determine which trend—growth or decline—will predominate over the next few years.

It is also important to note that more than half of the County’s populace lives outside a municipality.
Table 6.2: Population Change 2000-2007: Hampton County and the Municipalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>-0.80%</td>
<td>21,210</td>
<td>21,106</td>
<td>21,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunson town</td>
<td>-2.38%</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estill town</td>
<td>-1.72%</td>
<td>2,337</td>
<td>2,328</td>
<td>2,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furman town</td>
<td>-2.10%</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifford town</td>
<td>-1.92%</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton town</td>
<td>-2.08%</td>
<td>2,773</td>
<td>2,762</td>
<td>2,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luray town</td>
<td>-1.74%</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotia town</td>
<td>-1.76%</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varnville town</td>
<td>-1.96%</td>
<td>2,056</td>
<td>2,048</td>
<td>2,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemassee town</td>
<td>5.91%</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unorganized Hampton County</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.39%</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,635</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,577</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,681</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Estimates

### 6.2 POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2027

In the foreseeable future—the next 15 to 20 years—it is difficult to predict whether and how much the County will grow. If County initiatives to bring new economic development to the area produce significant results, growth could return to the 1990 to 2000 level of 1.76 percent per year. Otherwise, it is likely that there will only be small increases similar to those of 2006 to 2007, or about .5 percent per year.

To assess what could take place, two sets of forecasts were prepared for Hampton County (see Table .3 below):

- One using the average annual growth rate (1.76%) between 1990 and 2000;
- A limited growth scenario using the growth rate (.49%) between 2006 and 2007.

Table 6.3: Hampton County Population Projections 2007-2027

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hampton County Population Projections 2007 - 2027</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate/Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2027</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LCOG Planning Department
These projections are very important for planning Hampton County’s future; even the lower rate would add more than 2000 people to the existing population by 2027—an increase of more than 10 percent from the present number of residents. The faster growth scenario would mean an increase of almost 8900 residents, for a 42 percent increase over 20 years.

Planning and capital budgeting implications may include but not be limited to:

- A need to ensure that development occurs in and around existing communities in order to prevent sprawl and leapfrogging.
- Development of larger-scale commercial and retail projects to serve the all the residents of the County.
- Provision of new schools and other community facilities and services.
- Provision of water and wastewater treatment facilities.
- Additional transportation opportunities and problems.

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

6.3 INCOMES AND POVERTY

As the number of persons living in Hampton County increased between 1990 and 2000, the economic conditions of the population improved significantly. However income levels were not as high as or poverty levels as low as the state averages (see Table 6.4 on following page).
Table 6.4: Hampton County Income and Poverty Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individuals in Poverty Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>4,989</td>
<td>4,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Household Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$18,615</td>
<td>$28,771</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per Capita Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,578</td>
<td>$13,129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| State Average | | |
| **Individuals in Poverty Status** | | |
| Number | 517,793 | 547,869 |
| Percent | 15.4 | 14.1 |
| **Median Household Income** | | |
| $26,256 | $37,082 |
| **Per Capita Income** | | |
| $11,897 | $18,795 |

Source: US Census

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

More recent data are available for Hampton and the other counties in the Lowcountry. See Table 6.5 (below).

Table 6.5: Hampton County Income and Poverty Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty Levels</th>
<th>Median Household Incomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2001</strong></td>
<td><strong>2005</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
<td>7,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>4,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td>5,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>550,775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between 2001 and 2005 the percentage of people in poverty decreased in the other three Lowcountry counties and South Carolina as a whole, but the rate rose in Hampton County. On the other hand, median household incomes in Hampton County grew at a greater rate than in two of the other counties and also the state.

### 6.4 AGE GROUPS

#### AGE GROUPS

It is a well-known fact that the population of the US is aging, and Hampton County is no exception, with the oldest age groups (70 years of age and older) contributing the highest rates of increase between 2000 and 2007. Table 6.6 below demonstrates that.

**Table 6.6: Age Group Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21,386</td>
<td>21,268</td>
<td>-0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 4</td>
<td>1,431</td>
<td>1,339</td>
<td>-6.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>1,659</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>-15.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14</td>
<td>1,774</td>
<td>1,542</td>
<td>-13.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>1,599</td>
<td>1,572</td>
<td>-1.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>1,256</td>
<td>1,425</td>
<td>13.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 29</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>8.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 34</td>
<td>1,551</td>
<td>1,325</td>
<td>-14.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 39</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>1,418</td>
<td>-11.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 44</td>
<td>1,679</td>
<td>1,527</td>
<td>-9.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 49</td>
<td>1,557</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>-0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 54</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>9.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>35.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>24.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 69</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>-8.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 74</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>5.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 79</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>3.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 84</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 +</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>36.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time, the number of young people (under 19) and people in the prime family-formation and earnings age groups (30-49 years) declined between 2000 and 2007. On a very positive note for the future of Hampton County, the number of young adults (20 to 29) grew significantly during that period.
Relative sizes, and increases or decreases in the age segments will offer significant opportunities for the future development of Hampton County and the planning of the county and its communities, 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.

6.5 ETHNICITY

The years since 2000 (see Table 6.7 on the following page) have seen a truly notable increase in the Hispanic population of the Lowcountry, but Hampton County’s rates of increase have not been as great as those of Beaufort, Colleton or Jasper counties. This is probably a result of the fact that there has been relatively little construction activity in Hampton County during the past several years—especially compared to Beaufort and Jasper counties. Given the difficulties of obtaining truly accurate data about the total Hispanic population in communities throughout the US, it is likely, though, that all of these numbers are low.

If the growth of the Hispanic population continues into the future as it has during the past several years, there may be long-term impacts on Hampton County. It has the potential for altering the historic balance between the African-American and white segments of the population; between 2000 and 2006, the black populations of Hampton County declined slightly, while the Hispanic population grew by nearly 18 percent during the same period.

The fact that the Hispanic populace has different social and cultural values than the long-term residents and that is also a younger population, may introduce a new set of needs to be met. The different perception of “community” among these newcomers may mean that in the future a separate communication program will be needed to ensure that Hispanic residents understand Hampton County’s planning and development objectives.
Table 6.7: Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total White</th>
<th>Total Black</th>
<th>Other Races</th>
<th>Total Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>120,937</td>
<td>89,065</td>
<td>29,340</td>
<td>2,532</td>
<td>8,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>137,849</td>
<td>104,351</td>
<td>30,141</td>
<td>3,357</td>
<td>11,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>142,045</td>
<td>107,883</td>
<td>30,590</td>
<td>3,572</td>
<td>12,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.45%</td>
<td>21.13%</td>
<td>4.26%</td>
<td>41.07%</td>
<td>53.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>38,264</td>
<td>21,478</td>
<td>16,180</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>39,430</td>
<td>22,519</td>
<td>16,228</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>39,467</td>
<td>22,679</td>
<td>16,106</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.14%</td>
<td>5.59%</td>
<td>-0.46%</td>
<td>12.54%</td>
<td>37.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>21,386</td>
<td>9,301</td>
<td>11,918</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21,329</td>
<td>9,278</td>
<td>11,923</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>21,268</td>
<td>9,223</td>
<td>11,844</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.55%</td>
<td>-0.84%</td>
<td>-0.62%</td>
<td>20.36%</td>
<td>17.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>20,678</td>
<td>9,472</td>
<td>10,941</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21,398</td>
<td>10,319</td>
<td>10,825</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>21,809</td>
<td>10,595</td>
<td>10,895</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>2,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.47%</td>
<td>11.86%</td>
<td>-0.42%</td>
<td>20.38%</td>
<td>89.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowcountry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>201,265</td>
<td>129,316</td>
<td>68,379</td>
<td>3,570</td>
<td>10,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>220,006</td>
<td>146,467</td>
<td>69,117</td>
<td>4,422</td>
<td>15,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>224,589</td>
<td>150,380</td>
<td>69,435</td>
<td>4,774</td>
<td>16,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>2000-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.59%</td>
<td>16.29%</td>
<td>1.54%</td>
<td>33.73%</td>
<td>55.08%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The numbers of white, black, other and Hispanic add up to more than the total county populations because Hispanic residents have been counted as members of one or more of the other races as well.
Hampton County’s levels of higher educational attainment are generally not as good as the Lowcountry region or South Carolina as a whole, but they all improved between 1990 and 2000. Notably, however, the percentages of Hampton County adults who have graduated from high school were superior in both years to those of the larger areas. Those figures can have important implications for future economic development in Hampton County, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 6.8: Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years Old</th>
<th>Less than 9th Grade</th>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School Grad</th>
<th>Associate Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowcountry Total</td>
<td>11.39%</td>
<td>15.83%</td>
<td>30.37%</td>
<td>5.79%</td>
<td>12.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>13.62%</td>
<td>18.09%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
<td>6.33%</td>
<td>11.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 7: Land Use

Hampton County is faced with the challenge of attracting and accommodating new growth while preserving the quality of its communities, natural resources and financial stability. Economic growth has recently slowed throughout the state and the Lowcountry region, providing the County with the opportunity to carefully plan its future. The eventual economic recovery will enhance the potential of Hampton County’s strategic location, discussed in considerable detail in Chapter 3.

Given the impact and importance of sound economic growth, it is a proper time for Hampton County 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 Hampton County. 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, strengthening and extending the existing communities. The framework is not intended to be a detailed blueprint for future development, but rather is intended as a guide for making development decisions, both public and private. The recommendations included in this chapter should be used as the basis for future detailed development strategies and regulations in the County.

7.1 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 Hampton County.

The most densely built-up residential and commercial areas of the County are concentrated around and near the historic centers of the existing communities. Development quickly becomes less dense and more rural away from each community core. Industrial land within the County has traditionally been located in towns along railways—both the east-west and north-south lines. In fact, many of Hampton County’s municipalities developed as a result of the industrial development along or near railroad lines. More recently, highways have become focal points for industrial development, especially Interstate 95. The Lowcountry Industrial Park, on SC 68 several miles from Hampton County’s only I-95 interchange, and across the road from a railroad line, is the one recent major exception to this.
Relatively undeveloped areas surround municipal boundaries on all four sides. Due to the presence of wetlands, shown on map 7.1 (on the following page), not all vacant land in and around the towns is developable.
Natural Boundaries to Development

Map 7.1

Future Growth Areas
FORESTED WETLAND
NON-FORESTED WETLAND
OPEN WATER
7.2 DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Development trends that will affect future land use in Hampton County are related to larger economic, market and social changes that are expected to impact the County and most of its communities. They include an aging population (in Hampton County 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 cores of the existing towns and new forms of as a result of changes in this country’s likely economic and energy futures. In practice the results are likely to mean smaller homes, more emphasis on walking and bicycling as a form of transportation and more, smaller commercial development in and near residential areas. Their location, size and form will determine how beneficial they are to the County, its towns and its residents.

Map 7.2 (following page) shows suggested areas of and directions for future growth in Hampton County. It is an attempt to “translate” the Vision and Planning Goals discussed in the Introduction section of this plan and the conclusions and recommendations of the Energy section into physical form.

Future Growth Areas. Future growth areas have been created to show where it is most feasible for the growth envisioned or recommended to take place in Hampton County over the next 10 to 15 years.

The locations on the map are suggestions for use in guiding future growth of in Hampton County and do not represent exact sites or definite municipal boundaries. They incorporated the following criteria:

- Undeveloped land at the I-95 interchange and along SC 68 is utilized for the highest and best industrial and commercial uses.
- Higher density development is encouraged only near the existing communities.
- Development grows outward in an orderly manner from the current town centers.
- Future development can be provided economically with municipal water and sewer services.
- The County’s potential role as a center for the development of alternative energy sources is not only recognized but highlighted.
- The importance of preserving natural resources—for both environmental and economic reasons—is emphasized.
- The farming and timber industries will continue to play important roles underpinning the County’s economy.
• The success of planning and future development in Hampton County is dependent upon the strengthening of all the communities within the County.

Map 7.2

Future Development Demands in Hampton County. The new economic development both inside and outside the County, discussed in the previous section of this Plan, will lead to increased residential, commercial and industrial development demands on Hampton County during the next 10 years. However, given the present state of the US economy, it cannot be predicted with any certainty when the expected growth will take place in the future. As a result, the County has the unique opportunity to work to ensure that new development is well planned and meets the goals and objectives enunciated previously.
and also to embody the planning principles stated in the Introduction section of this Plan. For instance, new, redeveloped/infilled and existing residential areas can be connected to each other and to the downtown and to other commercial and arts/cultural/educational centers by means of bicycle and pedestrian trails or pathways, thereby minimizing vehicle traffic on major arterials and contributing to energy-saving and residents’ fitness efforts. At the same time, it is possible to plan for greenbelts around existing and future development areas, preserving wetlands for recreational and visual purposes, farmland for agricultural purposes and woodlands for timbering.

The Economy Chapter deals with significant opportunities for economic development such as distribution centers and bio-energy operations to diversify the County’s economic base. Diversification is essential for Hampton County’s social and economic health for two key reasons:

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

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

**Land-Use Issues.**

- One of Hampton County’s biggest land use challenges during the future will be to balance the competing demands for land throughout and around existing towns 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 communities, rather than leapfrogging or sprawling. Unplanned and uncontrolled residential development of that type utilizes large amounts of land better preserved for farming and timbering uses. It is also very expensive to provide a thinly spread-out
population with community and other services, including police and fire protection that the residents will require.

- The third land use planning challenge will be to encourage development and redevelopment while maintaining adequate open space to meet the needs of the communities as they grows economically and demographically.

### 5.3 EXISTING REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

The County is currently operating under *The Hampton County Comprehensive Plan* approved in 1999. Because of the nature of that plan, combined with major changes in and to the County, the Lowcountry, the state and the US since then, and those larger ones expected in the foreseeable future, the specified update of the existing Comprehensive Plan will not serve the community’s needs. As a result, this is basically a completely new Plan for Hampton County.

The County’s development regulations contained in the *Unified Land Use Development Ordinance* will need a major revision, or complete replacement, as well in order to implement the planning and other community development policies contained in this new Comprehensive Plan. That Ordinance should reflect and incorporate the policies and regulations contained in this new Comprehensive Plan if it is to be useful and effective to Hampton County.

### 5.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

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

- Provide for adequate amounts of land to accommodate market demands for new development expected in the County, including residential, commercial and industrial activities.
- Ensure that new development is connected to existing development and to other new development by means of both roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Make more efficient use of existing and planned public facilities and services.
- Ensure that growth pays for itself by establishing development impact analysis and compensation policies and procedures.

- Preserve the unique character of the communities of the County and extend the traditional street patterns and the scale, quality and design of the existing
communities into new development both inside and outside municipal boundaries.

- Preserve natural resources and reserve land for farming, timbering, and passive and active open space and other recreational purposes. To provide the maximum aesthetic and recreational benefits for present and future County 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 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.”

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

**Growth and Development Areas.** Rather than allowing unplanned sprawl to spread out from the existing communities in a haphazard manner, the recommended framework uses a “growth area” concept (see Map 5.2) to manage future growth by encouraging and enhancing growth outward in the traditional patterns that have already occurred in the County. 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 of land use
• Minimize conflicts between neighboring properties and land uses
• Assist in setting priorities for public investment in infrastructure.
• Ensure multi-modal (that is, vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian) transportation interconnectedness among existing and planned development areas.

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

Development areas include the following:

• Existing Communities, centered on their downtowns
• Mixed-Use New Development Districts within or outside existing municipal boundaries
• Larger-scale Planned Development Districts (PDDs)
• Industrial Areas
• Highway Commercial Corridors

➢ **Existing Communities, centered on downtowns.**

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 recommendations contained within this Plan, and the regulations that will be in the new Zoning Ordinance, should encourage pedestrian-oriented retail and service activities and a mix of residential and business activities. Additionally, provisions for parking must be made so as to maximize activities in those areas. Large commercial uses, industrial uses, and other uses that could threaten the economic and historic character of traditional communities are discouraged; the objectives are to maintain a pedestrian scale, to enhance the historic character of existing development and to encourage patronage of local businesses by residents of and visitors to Hampton County.

The chief goal is to continue to strengthen these areas, both economically and aesthetically, by means of increasing density by extending services without incurring the costs of providing new infrastructure. New commercial and residential development, in the form of infill and the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized land is encouraged. Brownfield mixed-use redevelopment of sites that were used for industrial purposes, and where industry is no longer a feasible use, will also be supported.
New construction, as well as additions to and renovations of existing structures will reflect the scale, massing and architectural details of the surrounding area; demolition of existing buildings will be limited to those whose structural integrity has been compromised by damaged caused by fire, wind, flooding and other disasters and/or lack of maintenance.

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

Mixed uses are especially appropriate for traditional communities such as those in Hampton County. 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 provides 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 Hampton County 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 County and an internal transportation system that reflects the existing pattern of the community of which it is an extension, and includes bicycle and pedestrian circulation, as well as adequate parking and access for future public transit services. They are or will be served by existing municipal water and sewer systems, or are located where existing services can be most economically extended to support new development.

Uses will include, but not be limited to:
• Low- to medium-density mixed uses. Commercial services will serve the needs of the Districts, but will not weaken the economic function of the existing downtowns.

• A variety of housing types and densities will be encouraged to promote economic and social diversity.

➢ Planned Development Districts (PDDs) are defined as those areas of 100 or more acres in which large-scale mixed use new development will be concentrated, and/or which contain adequate amounts of developable land necessary to support substantial amounts of new development. These areas are 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 County and an internal transportation system that reflects existing County community road and street patterns and includes bicycle and pedestrian circulation and access for potential public transit services. They are or will be served by central public water and sewer systems, or are located where existing services can be most efficiently expanded to support new development. Community development patterns and styles will reflect those of Hampton County’s existing downtown-centered communities. PDD plans will incorporate and enhance the natural and historic features of their immediate environment.

At the present time there are no designated PDDs in Hampton County, but all development proposals of 100 or more acres will be classified as PDDs and a District Plan will be prepared for each under the direction of the Planning Commission. Such plans will follow the policies and regulations in the new Comprehensive Plan and also the new Zoning Ordinance. District Plans will also include traffic and other community services impact analyses.

Land uses permitted in PDDs 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 PDDs, but will not weaken the economic functions of the County’s existing towns. Specialized mixed use “Town Center” types of mixed use development will be encouraged in PDDs.

• A variety of housing types and densities.

• Public facilities such as schools, cultural and recreational facilities, and hospitals.
Highway Corridors are especially important to the future commercial viability and economic development potential of Hampton County. The County is fortunate to have the major and minor highway access that it presently enjoys, and should treat it as a valuable resource. As well as potential locations for future economic development, they are gateways to the County, and planning policies and design standards need to emphasize this.

Both large-scale retail, especially “big-box” stores, and industrial and distribution center development in the County should be concentrated along SC 68, US 278, and US 321 outside of the core areas of the communities along those routes. Provision of significant ingress and egress to development within the Highway Corridors from other abutting arterial, collector, and minor roads to enhance the movement of traffic may be also be considered.

Properly planned development, including remedying certain negative features along the highways will result in making Hampton County more attractive for future investment and for its present residents, improving the community’s quality of life.

Planning policies for development along these highways, and other present and future major arterial roads, should include at least the following:

- The several gateways to Hampton County are treated as significant places;
- Access driveways are spaced to enhance safe traffic flow;
- Traffic impact analyses are required to ensure that necessary traffic management improvements (e.g., intersection improvements; traffic lights; turning, deceleration and acceleration lanes; road widenings) are implemented prior to completion of construction and that appropriate payment for those improvements is made by the responsible parties;
- Landscaped buffers, where feasible, are required along highways and around parking lots to enhance the visual quality of new development;
- Sign requirements in the Zoning Ordinance are enforced to prevent unattractive and excessive advertising displays;
- Design guidelines are developed to encourage natural blending of colors and materials;
- Buildings of architectural or historic interest are preserved and enhanced;
- Other design and development guidelines are coordinated with those of the municipalities along the highway.
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 County is able to accommodate desirable growth and development to provide a balance of good jobs and a good quality of life for present and future Hampton County residents. Ensure that small businesses are able to operate and to expand within Hampton County and its communities by ensuring that land is zoned for commercial and industrial uses in locations suitable for a variety of enterprises.

OBJECTIVE #2: Enforce the County's development regulations, especially a revised Land Use/Zoning Ordinance, to implement the recommendations of this new Comprehensive Plan.

1. Utilize the performance standards of the zoning ordinance to promote the appropriate distribution, scale and pattern of land uses throughout the County.

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 the relevant municipalities.

2. The Planning Commission should develop and prioritize a list of corridors for designation and embark upon their planning.

OBJECTIVE #4: Designate Growth and Development Areas as special study areas and prepare Development District plans to guide and direct new development that meets the goals of and criteria set forth in this Comprehensive Plan and the updated Land Use/Zoning Ordinance.
Chapter 8: Transportation

8.0 PREAMBLE

In common with many areas and communities in the US, Hampton County has become almost completely dependent upon the automobile for transportation during the past 40 years. However, not everyone in Hampton County is able to drive or can afford to own, operate and insure a car. The County has a dispersed and very low density settlement pattern, which features a number of small communities widely separated by rural areas, except for the Hampton-Varnville urban area (see Table Combined with a lack of public transportation, the result is both social and physical isolation for a number of segments of the population. This means that outside the towns, distances are almost always too great for children, the elderly, the handicapped, and those living in poverty to either walk or bicycle to school, to church, to medical appointments, to shop, to visit friends or to take part in recreational programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Densities (per Square Mile)</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>133.2</td>
<td>148.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
<td>206.1</td>
<td>256.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleton County</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>36.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton County</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>37.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasper County</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>34.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the low density of the County, combined with relatively low traffic flows (see Figure 8.1 on the following page) means that there are very few instances of traffic congestion. Except for during special events or hurricane evacuations from Beaufort County, vehicular traffic generally moves smoothly through Hampton County and its communities.
Figure 8.2: Road Network and Traffic Counts
8.1 ROADS AND HIGHWAYS OVERVIEW

SCDOT regularly assesses highways and intersections in every county on a regular basis to determine where improvements, especially those related to safety, may be needed. The US 321/S-35 intersection has been identified as the only intersection with a safety problem through this analysis, but it does not have a high priority for improvements because the accident rate there is low. With an accident rate of .301 per 1 million cars through the intersection, compared to a “High-accident” rate of 1.0 or greater, it is not likely to receive attention. Although not on the SCDOT list, the US 278/SC68 intersection is also considered to be a potential problem by Emergency Management officials in both Hampton and Beaufort counties; it is a major bottleneck during evacuations from coastal areas.

The most recent Vehicle/Capacity (V/C) ratio analysis of roads and highways in Hampton County with Average Annual Daily Traffic counts (AADT) by SCDOT shows that as of 2005, no highway segments had V/C.

Traffic counts (AADT) by SCDOT shows that as of 2005, no highway segments had V/C ratios of 1.0 or greater; only two highway segments (see Table 8.2 below) in Hampton County are expected to be at 100% of their capacity [V/C ratio 1.0=traffic at 100% capacity] by 2015. By 2025 the expected congestion of I-95 through Hampton County is expected to increase further. Since both of those segments are on Interstate 95, the County has no control over its future widening. However, Hampton County can influence decisions.

Table 8.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>Allendale Co. Line TO S-287</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>10800</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>6500</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>7400</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>*S-287 TO S-83</td>
<td>5800</td>
<td>21600</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>*S-83 TO S.C. 363/S-232</td>
<td>11100</td>
<td>21600</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>16400</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>*S.C. 363/S-232 TO S-356</td>
<td>12600</td>
<td>21600</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>12300</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>12800</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>*S-356 TO S.C. 63/S-50</td>
<td>8800</td>
<td>21600</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>12600</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>15200</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>*S.C. 63/S-50 TO S.C. 68</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>10800</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>7400</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>8600</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>*S.C. 333/S-25 TO S.C. 3/S-39</td>
<td>5900</td>
<td>10800</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>6900</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>7800</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>*S.C. 3/S-39 TO S-616</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>10800</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>7700</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>381</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>U.S. 278/S-232 TO S-31</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>10800</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>5300</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2367</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>*(Jasper) U.S. 17 TO S.C. 68</td>
<td>41200</td>
<td>58600</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>62900</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>80200</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2369</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>S.C. 68 TO U.S. 21 (Colleton Co.)</td>
<td>40700</td>
<td>58600</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>63700</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>81100</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As discussed in Chapter 4, the “Economy” section, future economic development in Hampton County is likely to be dependent upon its access to I-95 and is also likely to
further increase freight/commercial truck traffic on that highway. Therefore, ongoing efforts should be made to ensure that state and federal elected and appointed officials are aware of the potential economic benefits of improving the I-95.

One of the most important sites for industrial and distribution/logistics centers will be along the SC 68 corridor in the proposed “super site,” from near the I-95 interchange up to the Lowcountry Industrial Park. Approximately 10 years ago, widening of the highway to a divided four lanes all the way to Varnville was planned. However, there was a large and rapid increase in road construction costs during the early part of this decade, which meant that the available funding paid only for a short stretch of road-widening. While a limited-access four-lane road will be needed to accommodate the type of commercial truck traffic generated by the planned development, at this time it is hard to demonstrate the need for road widening because traffic volumes along SC 68 have remained low. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) count is only about 4000, and actually decreased slightly in 2007 from 2000 levels. As a result, the County may find it necessary to explore alternative means of financing the widening of the highway outside the very limited FHWA/SCDOT funding now available and that has to be utilized across the entire Lowcountry region.

More intensive economic development along US 321 in and near Estill will also mean that that section of the highway will need to be widened. At the present time the AADT on US 321 in and around is approximately the same as that for SC 68 (with a similar slight decrease between 2000 and 2007), so a present need cannot be demonstrated.

8.3 ROADS AND HIGHWAYS—REGIONAL CONTEXT

As mentioned above, economic development initiatives will have a direct impact on traffic volumes and patterns in Hampton County.

- 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 and along SC 68, where distributions centers are likely to be located. Neither the exact locations nor the additional traffic 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-widening and interchange improvements will be required in the future before congestion occurs and the number of accidents increases.

- Since SC 68 and US 278 in Hampton County play a very important role in hurricane evacuations from both northern and southern Beaufort County, improvements to both highways and their intersection should be a cooperative undertaking with Beaufort County.
8.4 ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

These 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 Hampton County by:

- Providing transportation opportunities to jobs, education, medical appointments, shopping and entertainment;
- Decreasing transportation costs;
- Lessening congestion along roads and in the towns as growth occurs in the future.

Public Transportation

The Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority (dba Palmetto Breeze) is the public transportation provider for Hampton County and its towns and also for the other three Lowcountry counties as well as Allendale. At the present time there are two routes that serve Hampton County (see Figure 8.2 on page 7). Both leave early in the morning and return in the evening and are utilized mostly by service employees working in southern Beaufort County. As such, they do not provide transportation among the County’s communities during the day or evening.

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 in the long-term. In the short-term they are undertaking improved coordination and information about human services agency transportation services available to the general public.

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 Hampton County, 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.

Figure 8.2 Palmetto Breeze Routes shown on next page.
Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities

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

- Pedestrian walkways or sidewalks not provided in most of the County and its towns;
- Separate bicycle paths/trails or lanes along highways and roads not available in almost all areas;
- Safe bicycle/pedestrian connections not available between the towns and surrounding areas and between towns.

8.5 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Ensure that the highway and roads system in Hampton County will accommodate and encourage economic development.

Goal 2: Support projects to expand and advance transportation services to enhance the quality of life for all present and future residents of Hampton County.

STRATEGY #1: Work cooperatively with municipalities, SCDOT and other agencies to effectively complete the projects identified in the section.

STRATEGY #2: Work with municipalities and neighboring counties to plan, fund, and implement transportation improvements.

STRATEGY #3: Work cooperatively with the state and federal governments to develop a strategy to fund existing and future transportation capital improvements needs on the County’s road network in a way that is environmentally sensitive, so that the image and character of the county is maintained, to the maximum extent practicable.

STRATEGY #4: Hampton County and its municipalities will plan and implement a connecting multi-use pathway, sidewalk, and bike lane system throughout the county.

STRATEGY #5: New residential developments will provide connectivity for both motorized vehicles and for pedestrians and bicyclists between new residential areas and existing urban areas.
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 intent of this new element is apparently to encourage interjurisdictional cooperation and communication.

Although it is still largely untried in the state (that is, to date only a few jurisdictions have included this element in their Plans and there have not been any legal challenges to date), the approach being taken is to provide fairly general financial planning policy recommendations in Comprehensive Plans at this time.

This element will not generate a specific Capital Improvements Program. Instead, the Priority Investment element will help provide guidance for the future growth and funding of projects throughout Hampton County, and will include cooperative approaches for obtaining financing.
9.2 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of the other elements of the Hampton County Comprehensive Plan contain specific recommendations that can only be implemented through capital expenditures. Therefore, to implement this plan, future capital budgets should incorporate those items as priority investments. As a result, a Capital Improvements Plan should be prepared that incorporates Comprehensive Plan policies and priorities. This goes beyond the annual capital budgeting process to include longer-term projects.

The following recommendations are from the individual elements and include only those items that involve capital expenditures.

**Community Facilities:**

1. Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Hampton County that identifies improvements--type, size and location -- necessary to correct current deficiencies and meet future demands, per community planning standards and the results of community surveys and/or focus groups. Coordinate with community facilities inventory and planning (below).

2. Conduct an inventory and map current community facilities; assess the condition of facilities for determining if repair or replacement is required. Identify current community facilities deficiencies and future needs, utilizing accepted planning standards and the results of community surveys and/or focus groups.

3. Develop and regularly update--as new residential, commercial and industrial development is planned and implemented--a Fire Protection and EMS Master Plan to guide future capital expenditures.

**Transportation:**

1. Work with the municipalities to plan and implement a connecting multi-use pathway, sidewalk, and bike lane system throughout the County.

2. If regular sources of road-building funds are not available, develop an alternative financing plan for the widening of SC 68 to the Industrial Park.

3. Work with Beaufort County Emergency Management to develop and finance a solution to the hurricane evacuation bottleneck at the intersection of US 278 and SC 68 (which may include road-widening to Varnville). FEMA may be one alternative source of funding.
Overall, Hampton County should develop community-services based capital planning priorities and a decision-making methodology or matrix to determine the relative needs for capital improvements and expenditures. Developing a methodology ensures that the most feasible and pressing projects are addressed first to achieve the best use of public funds and potential overall return on investments, while at the same time ensuring the highest quality of services for residents. The following priorities also reflect most of the recommendations in the Community Facilities and Transportation elements of this Plan:

- Priority 1 – New public facilities and improvements to existing facilities that eliminate public hazards.
- Priority 2 – The repair, renovation or replacement of obsolete or worn out facilities that are necessary to achieve or maintain existing levels of service.
- Priority 3 – New and expanded facilities that reduce or eliminate existing deficiencies in levels of service.
- Priority 4 – New and expanded facilities necessary to serve new development and redevelopment projected as envisioned and recommended in this Comprehensive Plan.

9.3 COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND JURISDICTIONS

The legislation is very specific about the importance of this process. As a result, Hampton County shall coordinate the planning and provision of capital improvements with other relevant agencies and jurisdictions, including all the municipalities, the two School Districts, utility providers (present and potential) and the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

This process will be both formal and informal and will include the facilitation of ongoing dialogue with the various agencies and organizations in order to maintain and improve the quality of life, sustainability and positive growth for Hampton County and its political subdivisions.

As well the County will provide written notification to all agencies, jurisdictions, the school districts, transportation agencies and other relevant entities about all major and minor subdivisions or development proposals affecting their service or jurisdictional area and will work with them to ensure that the needs of present and future residents and businesses are met. In turn, the County will actively seek the same cooperation from those organizations and agencies.
9.4 DEVELOPMENT OF A FUNDING STRATEGY

Hampton County should develop a coordinated funding strategy to fund prioritized capital projects. The Capital Improvements Plan will incorporate expected funding sources. Since it is extremely likely that traditional sources of project funding will be limited for the foreseeable future, it will be necessary to consider as many alternative (and innovative) sources and approaches as possible.

All possible future revenue sources should be explored and include, but are not limited to:

**Local Options**

General Obligation Bonds

A primary means of funding for Capital Improvement Projects, General Obligation Bonds (G.O. Bonds), would be guaranteed by Hampton County’s projected future property tax revenue streams. Under current allowances, the State of South Carolina allows local governments to borrow 8% of the assessed value of taxable property. To issue bonds in excess of the 8% maximum would require a referendum.

Tax Increment Financing

Primarily designed to provide financing for the public costs associated with private development projects, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a method that has been around for many decades. Under a TIF, the property tax increases resulting from a development are targeted to repay the public investment expended on a project.

Impact Fees

Impact Fees are another major means of providing for infrastructure and community facilities improvements to newly developed properties. The funds generated from these fees cannot be used towards existing deficiencies or to create a higher level of service for future projects than what is currently the standard. They provide a means to both permit growth and development, while not passing along the costs to all the taxpayers.

Capital Projects Sales Tax

This tax is implemented in many counties throughout South Carolina and has the ability to allow projects and construction not previously possible. As with many taxes to help provide funding, this can be dedicated to a variety of capital projects, including transportation and parks and recreation.
Other Potential Local Options

- Revenue Bonds
- Business Improvement District
- Municipal Improvement District (joint projects with one or more towns)
- Hydrant Fees
- Sales Tax
- Business License Fees
- Fees, Fines, & Permits
- Water & Sewer Revenue

State Options

- Sales Tax
- Accommodation and Hospitality Tax
- Revenue Sharing
- Capital Bonds
- Department of Transportation

Federal Options

- Brownfields Programs
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Economic Development Administration
- Homeland Security (including FEMA)
- Community Development Block Grant
- Department of Justice
- Land and Water Conservation Fund

Public/Private Partnerships