

VOLUME I: MONCK'S CORNER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Lowcountry is experiencing a re-emergence of the small-town community character atmosphere, with Moncks Corner being at the forefront of this movement. This has led to an increase in residential and commercial desirability in the greater Moncks Corner area. Small-town communities, like Moncks Corner, are often challenged with balancing the sways of the market with the will and perception of the community. [Plan Name Here] serves as the roadmap to guide local officials and policymakers towards achieving this balance and creating a community that epitomizes the Lowcountry Hometown identity.

The content and ideas within this Plan and throughout the planning process were driven by two main concepts: preserving community character and supporting growth. Striking a balance between these two concepts is no easy feat but is key to creating a highly desired and sustainable community for current and future residents. Despite the political and physical limitations surrounding much of Moncks Corner, demands of the market and the desirability of the community bestow the opportunity for the Town to continue to grow. However, it will be through responsible, quality, and form-based growth that will allow Moncks Corner to continue to expand in a sustainable manner.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan, or simply a comp plan, is a long-range planning document that carries no legal weight but is very influential in policy and zoning decisions made by councils and commissions. In accordance with the 1994 State Comprehensive Planning Act (S.C. Code §6-29-310 - §6-29-380), the state requires local municipalities to form a Planning Commission and facilitate a comprehensive planning process every ten years with updates recommended every five years. The Town's previous comp plan, adopted in 2017, served as the 10-year revision, as required by state law. However, local public officials, the Planning Commission, and Town staff desired an entirely new 10-year plan and facilitated the detailed planning process despite not being required to by law. This decision was inspired by the recent growth in Moncks Corner since 2017 and the commitment of these public servants to achieving the vision of the community.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS COMP PLAN?

Throughout the planning process, key components are required that provide insight, direction and guidance for those involved to maximize the potential for/usefulness of this plan. [Plan Name Here] assessed the historical and current trends that Moncks Corner faces and provides modern, proactive and targeted strategies to guide the community in their desired direction.

A comprehensive plan should include the following components:

- A vision statement that is created by the people, for the people.
- A list of goals and strategies to help guide the Town Council and Planning Commission toward fulfilling the vision of the community.
- An inventory of existing conditions that will help identify the strengths, weaknesses and areas of opportunity of the community. The 10 required existing condition elements are:
 1. Community Facilities

2. Economic Development
 3. Historic and Cultural Resources
 4. Housing
 5. Land Use
 6. Natural Resources
 7. Population
 8. Priority Investments
 9. Resiliency
 10. Transportation
- An implementation strategy or action plan that will outline a list of strategies and the relevant stakeholders and timeframe.
 - A future land use map with accompanying designations and descriptions that are created using existing land uses, public input, council and commission feedback, and modern planning practices.

WHY DOES A COMMUNITY NEED A COMP PLAN?

A comprehensive plan does more than simply fulfill state requirements; a comprehensive plan is the embodiment of the public’s vision for the future of their community. However, the future can be ambiguous due to many different people with many different paths leading to many different destinations. [Plan Name here] compiles these paths into a cohesive vision that the community can follow. It is through the planning process that the strengths, weaknesses, areas of opportunity, and common community concerns are revealed. Current and future decision-makers will use these findings to inform and guide them on matters regarding new development proposals, annexations, infrastructure, public services, land use/zoning and economic development. With input from residents, property owners, business owners, community leaders and other stakeholders, this plan was formulated by the people, for the people, therefore, [Plan Name here] will serve as a tool and advocate for the people of Moncks Corner.

TOWN VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES STATEMENTS

[Plan Name Here] will work towards achieving the Town’s vision and mission while maintaining and enhancing the core values of the community.

VISION STATEMENT:

The Town of Moncks Corner is an attractive, thriving community which provides opportunity for its citizens and businesses while remaining safe and fiscally sound.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Town's mission is to provide reliable, quality services, protect our citizens and property, improve the quality of life and promote development through managed growth.

VALUES STATEMENT:

The purpose of the Town is to provide safe, quality services, therefore customer service, and professionalism are the highest priorities. For everyone we meet, we are the Town of Moncks Corner. In everything we do, we will look the part, act the part, and do our part.

LOCATION OF MONCK'S CORNER

The Town of Moncks Corner is located within and the County Seat of Berkeley County, South Carolina. This has led to several County administrative, judicial, and other governmental agencies being located within the greater Moncks Corner area. The closest municipalities are Bonneau (approx. 8 miles northeast), Goose Creek (approx. 2 miles south), and Summerville (approx. 15 miles southwest). These municipalities, along with Moncks Corner and others, are all a part of the US Census-designated Charleston-North Charleston Metropolitan Statistical Area. This metro area comprises the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester tri-county region (BCD Region).

As seen on Map X, Moncks Corner is located just south of Lake Moultrie and adjacent to the Tailrace Canal and Cooper River. The original location of Town was located at the crossroads of two major colonial routes connecting Charleston to the Santee River and inland South Carolina. The proximity to the Cooper River and later the Santee Canal (replaced by the Tailrace Canal) is what led to Moncks Corner developing into a small-town rural community. This area surrounding the original location and historical center of Town is frequently referred to as Old Moncks Corner throughout this Plan.

MAP X: LOCATION OF MONCK'S CORNER

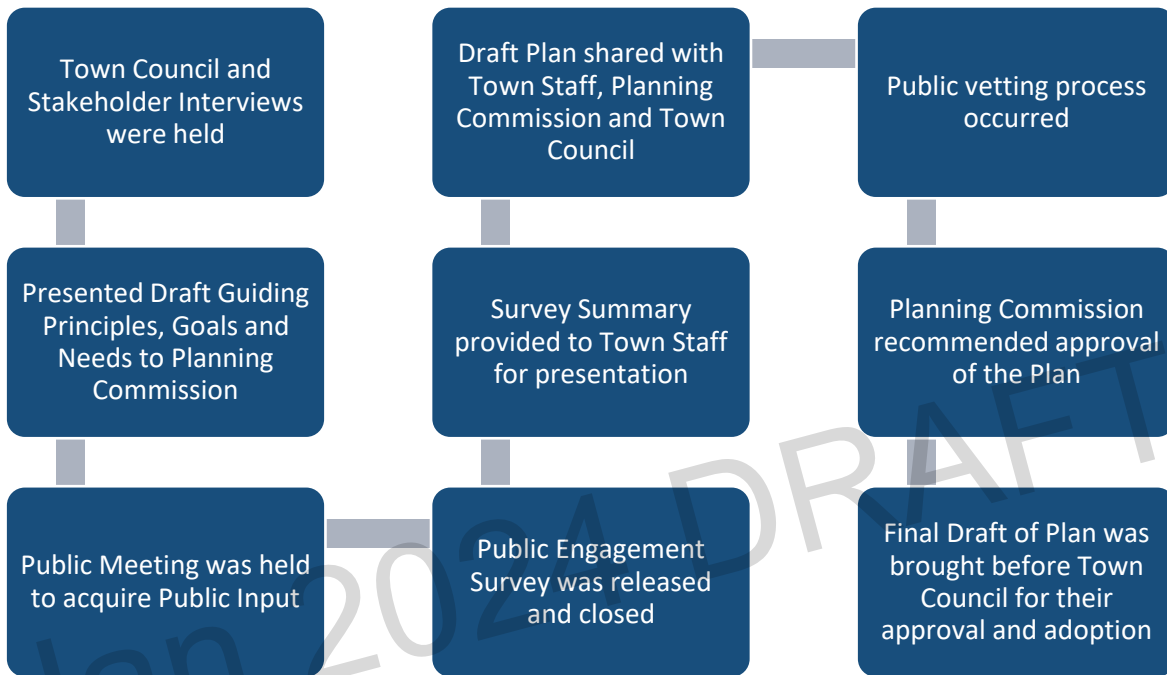
Modern-day roadways such as US Highways 52 and 17A and State Route 6 parallel these historical routes providing similar connections and continue to be an important asset for Moncks Corner. These connections provide residents direct access to major employment centers such as North Charleston, Goose Creek and Summerville. It is because of these connections that has led to Moncks Corner becoming a desirable hometown. According to the 2019 ACS, the population of Moncks Corner was estimated at about 10,700 residents which was a 43% increase since 2010 and an 80% increase since 2000. Despite this population increase, Moncks Corner remains a rural community on the urban fringe of the Charleston-North Charleston urban area. The small-town community character is an important asset that the Town capitalizes on, coining the slogan "Lowcountry's Hometown."

The location of Moncks Corner was an important factor throughout the development of this plan. The historically rural atmosphere of Moncks Corner has led to a highly desirable small-town character. As this desirability continues to grow, this plan will aim to protect the integrity of the rural- and town-like neighborhoods and preserve the small-town community character while encouraging the expansion of infrastructure, development and services to areas already within Town and to new areas annexed in the future. While the location of the Town has had a mostly positive impact on the Town thus far, the areas north, south, and east of the Town have been increasingly constrained by political, environmental, infrastructural, and physical limitations.

DEVELOPMENT OF [PLAN NAME HERE]

The process to create [Plan Name here] was divided into four tasks that spanned the course of a year and a half. The state requires certain actions be taken as part of the planning process, however, the way in which the process is conducted is different for each community. Below is the timeline of the planning process.

Planning Process for creating [Plan Name here]



PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

The foundation of a comprehensive plan is built around public participation. All of the public participation opportunities occurred during the middle of the planning process. This allowed for information and statistics to be gathered beforehand and presented to the public, noting their feedback and reactions. The public meeting and public survey were very closely related in that the survey was the online version of the meeting; using the same graphics and asking similar questions. A summary of each public participation method is outlined below.

TOWN COUNCIL INTERVIEWS

Before the assessment of the existing condition elements and the formulation of guiding principles, internal interviews were conducted to get an idea of where and how Town Council sees this plan taking Moncks Corner. Throughout these interviews, there were several reoccurring topics and concerns: preservation of community character, traffic congestion, suburbanization/overdevelopment and economic opportunity. These interviews set the framework for the remaining public participation questions and topics.

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

The first public outreach effort was a public meeting workshop in which several informational boards were on display for the public to read, ask questions and interact with. Between the ten boards, topics ranging from population growth to traffic patterns to public facilities were highlighted. Most of the boards asked questions about topics of concern or areas of opportunity that Moncks Corner currently faces, allowing participants to interact with the information and think critically about the vision of their community. There were about 25 people in total that participated in this workshop, expressing the following concerns:

- Increased traffic and traffic safety concerns
- Overdevelopment and sustainable development
- Expanding economic opportunity
- Additional parks and recreation facilities/improving existing facilities

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SURVEY SUMMARY

The Public Participation Survey (Public Survey) was released shortly after the in-person public meeting workshop. The questions on this survey were directly related to the ten info boards used during the workshop. Open from the middle of September to the end of October, there were over 520 respondents, of these, 260 were either residents, property owners, and/or business owners in Moncks Corner. Specific questions were included to better understand the demographic makeup of the respondents and to identify any underrepresented groups of people such as minorities, lower-income families, renters, the elderly, etc. Those questions revealed several noteworthy demographic trends:

- Six out of ten respondents were women
- Over 90% were White or Caucasian
- Age of respondents was well diverse
- A majority of respondents had some level of college experience
- 92% were homeowners
- Two-thirds of respondents had a combined household income of at least \$75,000

These demographic trends are important as it demonstrates the gaps in public outreach efforts, the level of commitment between the different groups of people, and the difference in participation and representation. Despite the demographics of the respondents not 100% reflecting the demographics of the Town, the number of responses was greater than expected which is always a plus. The responses varied between the different groups of people, but overall, the conclusions and key takeaways were similar to the responses from the in-person workshop. Some of the reoccurring responses throughout the survey include:

- Concerns over the increase in traffic and traffic safety
- Overdevelopment and characterless development
- Expanding economic opportunity
- Additional parks and recreation facilities/improving existing facilities
- Protecting and enhancing the small-town character

A summary of the results was presented to Town Staff and Planning Commission during the November Planning Commission Meeting. These key takeaways and demographic trends were very influential when conducting the Needs Assessment Matrix.

Note: This Plan will also use and reference survey results from the Moncks Corner Parks and Recreation Master Plan (P&R Survey)

Jan 2024 DRAFT

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Conducting a needs assessment is a vital step in the planning process and is often the preliminary draft of the Action Plan. A needs assessment outlines the potential needs of a community that should be addressed in the Plan. This analysis can act as a reality check of sorts for communities, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and areas of opportunity. In addition to the Public Survey results, the inventory of the existing conditions was also very influential when conducting this needs assessment. The existing conditions outlined historical trends in population, housing, employment, and affordability as well as take an inventory of the assets that Moncks Corner has to offer such as the current community facilities, natural resources and transportation infrastructure. The takeaways from the needs assessment and existing conditions were influential not only when formulating the Action Plan but also in the Future Land Use Map, designations and descriptions.

OVERALL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principle 1: Maintain a family-oriented, small-town feel with a high quality of life that appeals to existing and future residents of all ages.

Guiding Principle 2: Enhance and expand the quality and range of public services and infrastructure to accommodate the needs of current and future residents.

Guiding Principle 3: Support economic development that provides daily services and employment for residents.

Guiding Principle 4: Reinvest in existing residential and mixed-use neighborhoods to diversify population and economic opportunities.

Guiding Principle 5: Provide a diverse, accessible and high-quality range of public recreational facilities and services for residents and visitors.

Guiding Principle 6: Manage the strategic location and density of future residential developments to be consistent with best management practices and the town's character.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Throughout the planning process, it became evident that the preservation of community character would be one of two main concepts of this comprehensive plan. Although not required through the Planning Act of 1994, the influence that community character will have on all other aspects of this Plan warranted this addition.

Community character refers to the unique impression a town, neighborhood, or community makes on residents and visitors, whether that be through one visit or a lifetime of residency. People often choose the places they live, invest, and spend time based – in part – on their perceptions of the community. Several factors can influence these perceptions, such as historic, cultural and natural resources, demographics, building design, land use patterns, and community facilities. Many of these factors have been sewn into the fabric of the community throughout the history of Moncks Corner.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER IMPRESSIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Typically, there are two types of community character impressions with which people can identify; shared societal values and shared aesthetic values. A community is not limited to one type or another, but rather a mixture that, over time, cultivates a unique character or identity. As seen in Table X, societal values are based heavily on social interactions between residents, whereas, aesthetic values are based partially on the physical and natural environments, economics, neighborhood design, and infrastructure that contribute to the quality of life. Aesthetic values, such as community facilities and the natural environment, are commonly used to enhance or facilitate societal values.

TABLE X: LIST OF COMMON CONTRIBUTING COMMUNITY CHARACTER IMPRESSIONS

Shared Societal Values	Shared Aesthetic Values
Family Structure	Building Design
Education	Neighborhood Street Patterns
Religious Institutions	City Beautification
Social Networks	Historic and Cultural Resources
Demographic Makeup	Natural Environment
Financial Stability	Economic Vitality
Political Ideology	Community Facilities
Community Vision	Walkability

The community character in Moncks Corner has been described in several different ways by several different groups of people through stakeholder meetings, Council interviews, interactions with the public, planning commission meetings, and most importantly, through the online Public Survey. However, based on these exchanges, it was observed that there are essentially two separate sections of town, Old Moncks Corner and the US 52 Corridor, each with its own set of impressions and values. The character of Old Moncks Corner has slowly formed over decades while the neighborhoods along US 52 have more of a planned suburban impression. Any future master-planned communities would likely have similar impressions.

OLD MONCKS CORNER

Old Moncks Corner has many of the shared societal values, such as family structure, education, religious institutions, social networks, demographic makeup, and some shared aesthetic values such as historic and cultural resources, the natural environment, and community facilities. However, Old Moncks Corner lacks some of the other complimentary aesthetic values and impressions to fully capitalize on the shared societal values, such as building design, neighborhood street patterns, quality streetscaping, and walkability. These missing features, coupled with strong societal values, can create a unique and cohesive sense of place which can be highly influential in establishing a vibrant downtown.

To preserve the current values within Old Moncks Corner, protection measures need to be in place that requires new smaller infill developments to have quality design over quantity. Although there are a few likely unchanging contributors, community character is never static. Incompatible development and land uses pose a threat to this desirable community identity and the overall quality of life of residents.

US 52 NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods along US 52 lack the historical aspect due to the recentness of the development. However, because of this recentness and the fact that most were master-planned communities, these neighborhoods have many of the shared aesthetic values, such as a cohesive building design, neighborhood street patterns, well-maintained streetscaping, community facilities/amenities, and high walkability.

Even with a perfectly planned community, having shared societal values are almost solely dependent on the people and social interactions that they create. Values such as the natural environment, community facilities, and/or economic vitality can enhance societal values but ultimately, they are created by the people of the community.

FUTURE IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY CHARACTER

As indicated through the Public Survey, 63% of respondents were either concerned or very concerned about the diminishing community character. Despite this strong community consensus, the future impacts on community character will vary depending on the different sections of town. However, strategic development that allows Moncks Corner to expand while also protecting or enhancing one or more of the shared values listed in Table X should be encouraged for all current and future projects. While societal values are not something one can as easily forge, the town can facilitate community/social events, promote financial stability, and develop an agreed-upon vision for the future of the community, to strengthen the shared societal values in both sections of town. Furthermore, encouraging high-quality new and infill development and a rigorous amendment to the existing design guidelines would be additional potential first steps that would apply town-wide.

OLD MONCKS CORNER

In order to protect the small-town atmosphere in Old Moncks Corner, compromises will need to be made that will expand upon and strengthen the impressions portrayed by this section of town. Encouraging sidewalks, paved walkways, and other non-motorized paths in new or infill developments will enhance walkability and connectivity while also providing gathering spaces for residents. Allowing for a mixture of single-family detached and attached residential in mixed-use neighborhoods and/or corridors can provide more affordable housing options to a wider range of demographic and income-level groups while also providing more clientele to support businesses within the Downtown. Requiring new construction to be consistent in bulk and height is important in preserving the integrity of the neighborhood and enhancing the shared aesthetic value of Old Moncks Corner.

CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANNED NEIGHBORHOODS

The recent suburban development along US 52 has created a self-sustaining neighborhood node that is essentially independent of Old Moncks Corner. This node serves as the local town center for the residents in this section of town, offering public services, commercial services, and other amenities. Creating these nodes are important when determining the desirability and marketability of the neighborhood, however, they are often auto-reliant and lack any intention of enhancing shared societal values. Therefore, encouraging any future developments to better integrate community facilities, the natural environment, walking paths, religious institutions, education facilities, and affordable housing will imbue the community with the assets it needs to cultivate shared societal values.

RECENT COUNCIL AND COMMISSION EFFORTS

Based on direction from Town Council and Planning Commission, this Plan includes recommended policies, strategies and programs that would define compatible and quality design solutions for new residential and commercial development. These recommendations hope to address recent concerns over higher-density townhomes and the quality of the architectural and site planning, among other concerns. They would also be highly influential on infill or redevelopment projects within already established neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

A challenge for Moncks Corner in portraying the community character is the town's irregular shape. This results in the continuous question and misconception of "Do I actually live in Moncks Corner?" or "Am I in Moncks Corner yet?" Consolidating the Town boundary to fill in some of the gaps between the different parts of the Town would help with this misconception, improve the distribution and efficiency of public services, and enhance the community character of the Town. Implementing gateway signs would also be an effective tool to indicate to residents and visitors they have entered Moncks Corner. As seen on Map X, Moncks Corner currently has two gateway signs, located along US 52 west and SC 6 east but has the potential for other locations such as US 52 east and along S Live Oak Drive (US 17A).

Gateway signs can also be utilized when entering specific areas of Town, such as the Downtown or an Arts/Cultural District. These gateways provide a sense of prestige or status change for properties within this area and can help establish a sense of place. Currently, Moncks Corner has one downtown sign at the intersection of E Main Street (SC 6) and US 52. However, as seen on Map X, there are several other corridors that would benefit from having gateways signifying the beginning of the Downtown area. These gateways would help re-establish the downtown as the emotional "heart" of the community.

MAP X: CURRENT AND POTENTIAL COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

▼ INSERT PHOTOS OF GATEWAY SIGNS BELOW ▼

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMMUNITY ASSETS

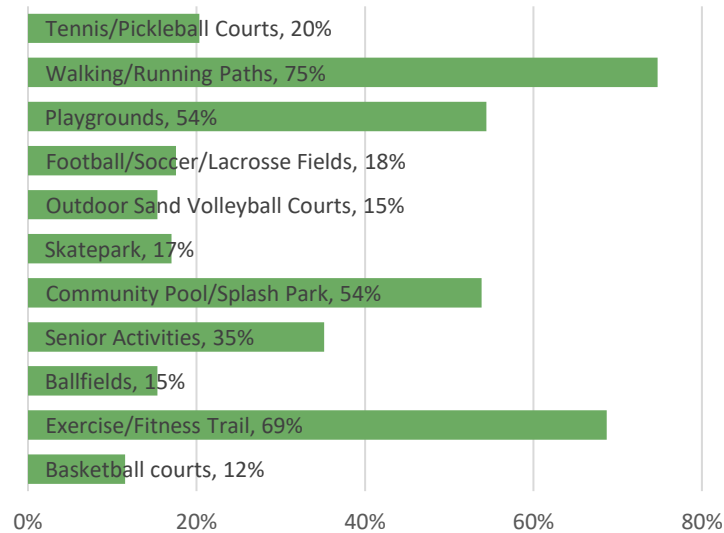
Moncks Corner takes pride in the high quality of life that the Town has cultivated over the years. A high quality of life can be created by numerous community assets such as efficient public services, clean and safe community facilities, diverse community events, quality education, and accessible historic, cultural and natural resources, to name a few. These assets oftentimes directly contribute to the impression portrayed by the community or can indirectly enhance its shared values. As mentioned previously, the community character of Old Moncks Corner is centered around shared societal values while the newer US 52 Neighborhoods have more of the shared aesthetic values. Moncks Corner relies upon the impressions of all sections of town to retain existing residents and attract new residents and visitors.

One of Moncks Corner's greatest opportunities is for the expansion of its parks and recreation services; to add additional facilities and amenities and to be more accessible and inclusive. Recent Town efforts, such as the opening of the Regional Recreation Complex in 2015 and the Miracle League field in 2022, has led to Moncks Corner establishing itself as a recreation destination, particularly for inclusive recreation through the Miracle League field. In response to this growing demand, the Town recently conducted a Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) that will take inventory, assess, and provide recommendations on existing parks and recreation facilities and programs. While the PRMP focuses on existing facilities and programs, this Plan will expand upon the PRMP recommendations to provide short- and long-term action items that would enhance the existing infrastructure and invest in future infrastructure.

Based on the needs assessment and the PRMP recommendations, opportunity exists for the Town to improve the range, accessibility, inclusivity and equity of its parks and recreation services. According to the Public Survey:

- Over half of respondents were either concerned or very concerned about the accessibility to parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- 72% of respondents want to see more parks and recreation-type uses within Moncks Corner;
- Of the 11 facilities or amenities listed in Figure X, four of them received overwhelming support (+50%) from respondents

FIGURE X: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Parks and recreation facilities or community amenities have the potential to increase land value, promote healthier lifestyles, provide community gathering spaces, and preserve cultural, historic, and natural resources, all of which, would enhance the quality of life of residents. There are currently seven town-owned facilities that serve the residents and visitors of Moncks Corner; however, a majority of these facilities are located within Old Moncks Corner. Identifying potential locations for additional parks and recreation facilities, particularly along US 52, near Foxbank, and in new areas annexed in the future, should be an ongoing effort. Encouraging new developments to incorporate walking or running paths in the initial site planning would serve as a recreational amenity as well as a multi-modal connection. These facilities are not limited to recreation or active-type activities but should incorporate passive-type activities and educational opportunities as well.

Moncks Corner has an abundance of untapped cultural, historic, and natural resources waiting to be capitalized on. Collaboration with other public and private entities to invest in the preservation, restoration, or acquisition of these resources can have lasting results. As mentioned previously, cultural, historic, and natural resources can be highly influential on the community character of the community which can impact the local economy, retention and attraction of residents, and the quality of life. In close coordination with Berkeley County, a comprehensive inventory of all cultural, historic, and natural resources within the greater Moncks Corner area should be identified with areas that have several overlapping features take top priority in preservation efforts. Creating passive parks with educational and recreational opportunities should be utilized to the fullest, a recent example being the opening of Fort Fairlawn in 2022.

Throughout the planning process, a reoccurring concern from the public was the removal of trees and deforestation in and around Moncks Corner, particularly the act of clear cutting. According to the Public Survey, over two-thirds of respondents were either concerned or very concerned about the preservation of cultural, historic, and natural resources with less than ten percent willing to sacrifice the preservation of natural resources to attract more businesses, services and amenities to Moncks Corner. This overwhelming public support for

the preservation of resources, natural resources in particular, is a strength of Moncks Corner and could spark high public involvement in environmental-type community events, such as an Arbor Day Festival or Plant-A-Tree events. Moncks Corner should strive to become a Tree City USA community through policy and action strategies. The Town currently has a strong Tree Ordinance which aims to protect legacy trees and such, however, lacks the resources to enforce these regulations as well as they would like. Furthermore, the Town should cooperate with private developers and Berkeley County in protecting core forested areas within and adjacent to town limits. Adjusting the buffer regulations along the edges of major developments would provide privacy to residents from adjacent development, protect the natural habitats, and assist in stormwater mitigation.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The quality and efficiency of public services and infrastructure are one of the many community assets that Moncks Corner has capitalized on over the years. Although the Town itself does not provide many services directly to residents, Moncks Corner partners and collaborates with various local and regional entities, most notably Berkeley County, to fulfill the daily needs and services of residents. Some of the services provided include transit (TriCounty Link), education (Berkeley County School District), and road maintenance (SCDOT). However, since the Town has experienced unprecedented growth over the past decade, there is a growing concern among residents and officials that the quality of services (i.e., police, fire protection, education, etc.) will decline as the population and coverage area increases. According to the Public Survey, over half of respondents were either concerned or very concerned about the quality of public services. This is a common misperception, and is in fact quite the opposite, as the revenue that these larger master-planned communities bring in typically offsets the costs of the additional public services. However, to ensure continued efficiency in public services, local service providers, including the Town Administration, should periodically assess the internal need for additional personnel, equipment, and facilities to accommodate for current and future growth. These findings should be appropriately reported, planned for and funded through an annually updated Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and/or a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Proactively planning for future resources and expenditures will be important in balancing future growth with available capacity, which will be further discussed in the Quality of Growth Chapter.

Residents typically focus on the tangible projects that the Town implements, such as the construction of the Miracle League Field or the recent streetscape improvements, leaving the intangible efforts, such as policy or ordinance updates, relatively unnoticed. The Town should continue to consistently update the Town website, social media pages, and any other public sources of information to inform residents of past, present, and future projects, policy updates, events, meetings, etc. will help increase public opinion and awareness of Town efforts. Local leadership should continuously attend county, regional, and/or state forums to lobby for the interests of Moncks Corner and participate in discussions that will impact residents directly.

As mentioned previously, some services, such as transportation and transit, are provided entirely by county, regional, or state entities. This presents a challenge for Moncks Corner as oftentimes regional or state priorities do not align with local priorities. However, with over 90% of respondents in the Public Survey either concerned or very concerned about traffic congestion, action must be taken to address or mitigate the issue. Identifying corridors and intersections with the largest traffic safety and congestion concerns and incorporating them into the Town's APFO, CIP, or Comprehensive Plan's opens the door for potential grant and funding opportunities. This also allows for local and regional officials to lobby and negotiate with developers and/or state agencies to address the concerns. Continuous coordination with Berkeley County and SCDOT will then be essential in implementing these traffic mitigation solutions and roadway/intersection improvements. The Town should also take a more active role in regional transportation discussions such as the US 52 Corridor Project.

In partnership with BCSD, identifying, improving, and maintaining the accessibility and safety of paths, sidewalks, and crosswalks heavily used by students should be a top priority. Moncks Corner should also continue to encourage and incentivize multi-modal transportation options, such as carpooling, rideshares, walking/biking, and public transit by providing information to the public about the different modes of transportation offered in the Region, particularly TriCounty Link. Designating areas surrounding transit stops as Transit Oriented Developments (TODs), which encourages higher density residential and commercial development in those areas, could improve transit ridership by reducing the walking time and distance for commuters. Diversifying the means of travel can help mitigate the impacts of current and projected travel demands, therefore improving traffic safety, reducing travel time, and reducing environmental impacts.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AFFORDABILITY

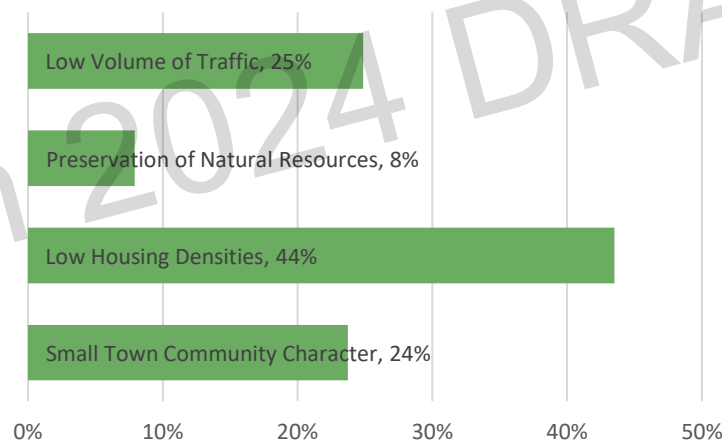
The location of Moncks Corner has played a pivotal role in several unique economic opportunities being presented to the community over the past century. Moncks Corner has capitalized on these and other past opportunities leading to over 580 businesses, including major regional employers such as Santee Cooper, Berkeley Electric, and Berkeley County, to locate within Town. Opportunities still exist to expand the local economy using community assets, such as the high-quality public services, available utility capacity, and abundance of undeveloped or underutilized land, as pull factors for attracting large and small businesses. Through targeted economic and land use policies, Moncks Corner can direct economic development into appropriate commercial areas within Town, thereby balancing the need for large employers with the desire for local employers. These commercial areas, which include the US 52 Corridor, Downtown, and Foxbank/Cypress Gardens, vary in intensity and serve different purposes in the local economy. It is therefore crucial to reevaluate zoning and land use regulations to clearly differentiate the permissible land uses between these three commercial areas.

Regardless of the commercial area, Moncks Corner should strive to become a haven for small, local businesses that provide daily services to consumers without the pressures of the city competitiveness. Coordinating with local incubation centers to incentivize new and upcoming entrepreneurial ventures to locate within Moncks Corner would help establish a

fresh, vibrant, and desirable economic environment. Frequently traveled roadways, such as Main Street, Live Oak Drive, and Foxbank Boulevard, are ideal for lower intensity service-based businesses that would primarily serve the adjacent neighborhoods and local residents. Allowing for a mixture of these neighborhood commercial uses and higher density housing along these roadways would create a flexible mixed-use corridor; serving as a transition zone between the higher intensity Downtown and Highway commercial-type uses and the low intensity residential neighborhoods.

Creating a unique sense of place in any community can be a challenge when in such a culturally affluent and diverse area such as the Lowcountry. However, Moncks Corner has met this challenge by branding itself as the “Lowcountry’s Hometown.” This creates a small-town atmosphere which enhances the community character while also offering unique economic opportunities. However, as seen in Figure X, it appears that residents would be willing to compromise key assets, such as the small-town community character, to achieve a stronger and more serviceable local economy. These are favorable results as it indicates that residents are aware of the challenges that the Town faces and acknowledge the reality behind attracting additional businesses.

FIGURE X: WHAT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE FOR MORE BUSINESSES, SERVICES, AND AMENITIES TO BE LOCATED IN MONCKS CORNER

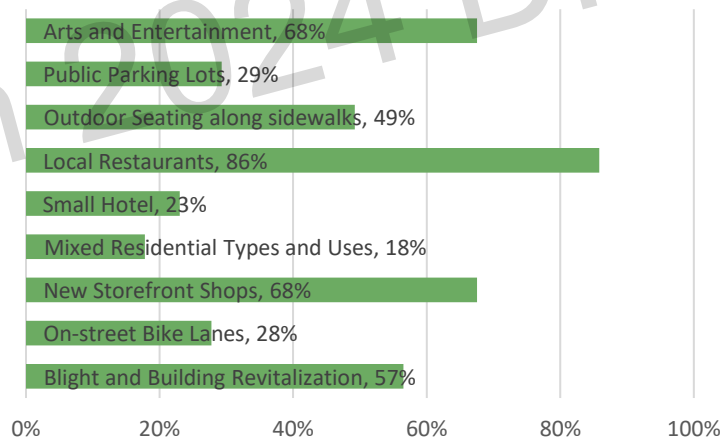


Economic development often relies heavily on the efficiency or abundance of other elements such as housing, land use, transportation, and community facilities. The Regional Recreation Complex, located adjacent to Downtown, has the potential to be a catalyst for economic growth and tourism. This community facility provides a unique service to Moncks Corner that most other municipalities struggle with, that being the proximity to Downtown. The 201X Moncks Corner Downtown Master Plan identified several economic opportunities that would benefit from the events and foot traffic that the regional park generates. Pursuing grants to market and promote the recreation complex to host regional or state tournaments or events would help establish Moncks Corner as an up-and-coming recreational destination. Business retention then becomes key in creating a successful Downtown as these (typically) weekend tournaments or events could present a challenge for Moncks Corner as service-based

businesses such as hotels, restaurants, or boutiques require consistent weekday and weekend consumers to be sustainable.

With that being said, the era of the traditional, commercial only, downtown area is becoming less and less sustainable for small towns. Incorporating a mixture of uses has been an effective method for revitalizing local town centers and enhancing the sense of place. Encouraging the 'Live, Work, Play' lifestyle within Moncks Corner's Downtown should be the focal point of all future Town economic development investments and decisions. As seen in Figure X, respondents of the Public Survey want to see a variety of different commercial uses within the Downtown as well as more amenities such as public parking, outdoor seating, and bike lanes. Promoting these services and amenities in the Downtown will only go so far without the consumers to utilize these investments. Allowing for higher density housing on infill lots within and within walking distance of the Downtown will help provide a more consistent consumer base, improve the community's walkability, and improve the affordability of housing. Encouraging infill development and building revitalization to incorporate mixed-use structures, typically with commercial on the ground floor and residential either above or behind, is a common development strategy to help diversify the Downtown while preserving the small-town character. Implementing strict design guidelines for new, infill, and redevelopment opportunities would ensure compatibility between the new and existing structures and maintain a consistent character and aesthetic.

FIGURE X: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR TOWN CENTER?



Maintaining a high value of land is important in creating a successful and sustainable Downtown. Blight and dilapidated buildings can negatively impact the value of land and quality of life by decreasing desirability, safety, welcomeness, and community character. Blight is not limited to any particular area within a community, however, can have more of an impact on local town centers. With 57% of respondents from the Public Survey wanting to see more blight and building revitalization within the Downtown, Moncks Corner has the public support to start allocating resources and pursuing funding for remediation and revitalization efforts. Conducting a blight assessment to identify all blighted properties within Moncks Corner should be the first step in addressing the issue. Streetscaping and façade improvements, particularly in the Downtown, are other effective methods for improving the

desirability and value of land. The Town is currently using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to assist qualifying local businesses in improving the aesthetics and quality of local storefronts. However, ARPA funds are finite, therefore, the Town should evaluate the financial feasibility of continuing this façade grant program and search for alternative funding sources. All improvements and investments should preserve any existing cultural, historic, or natural resources and enhance the community character and local identity.

QUALITY OF GROWTH

The Introduction of this Plan discussed the importance of balancing the preservation of community character with market demands and an increasing desirability for the small-town lifestyle. A common debate for growing cities and town is to either grow up or grow out, in other words, increase density or expand outwards. A mixture between the two would be the ideal solution, however, there are numerous factors that should be taken into consideration including housing demand, transportation infrastructure, public utilities, natural resources, the availability of land, and public opinion. The available utility capacity and abundance of undeveloped or underutilized land makes the greater Moncks Corner area highly desirable for outward growth and development, however, the quality, type, and pace of growth is what raises concerns among residents. According to the Public Survey, 75% of respondents were either concerned or very concerned about the overdevelopment and suburbanization of Moncks Corner.

Due to the constantly shifting market demands, municipalities are often playing catch up with the housing market, leading to a build now, plan later mentality. The recent annexations and large-scale developments have left Moncks Corner at a crossroads between quality and quantity. Modern subdivisions, such as Foxbank and Cypress Preserve, favor the latter and embody common suburban characteristic with “cookie cutter” homes, repetitive façade designs, and Euclidean single-family neighborhoods. Over 1,300 housing units, or about 32% of Moncks Corner’s total housing stock, were constructed between 2010 and 2019. This, on top of the approximately 22% (900 units) constructed between 2000 and 2009, has effectively doubled the housing stock of Moncks Corner in about 20 years. The impacts of these large-scale developments are just now being felt as residents are experiencing the cumulative efforts on traffic, school capacity, public safety, and the natural environment.

Despite the public’s concerns over overdevelopment and suburbanization, development will continue in and around Moncks Corner until the markets say otherwise. Therefore, to combat the build now, plan later mentality, implementing targeted design guidelines that ensure quality growth will allow for Moncks Corner to continue to expand while preserving community character. Limiting the Planned Development (PD) designation to only properties over fifty (50) acres will prevent developers from taking advantage of the PD’s more relaxed design guidelines, especially in Old Moncks Corner. While annexing land into a municipality can be fairly challenging in South Carolina, consolidating the Town boundaries and directing growth towards areas with existing infrastructure would reduce the tension that the recent growth has had on the current services and infrastructure. Collaboration between public service providers, such as BCSD, BCWS, DHEC, etc., to ensure that existing infrastructure has

the capacity to accommodate current and future growth is crucial in maintaining quality public services and infrastructure.

Quality development goes beyond residential development, as creating a welcoming, vibrant, sustainable Downtown is another focus of this Plan. However, with high business turnover, incompatible land uses, and inconsistent building designs, creating a sustainable Downtown has been an ongoing challenge for Moncks Corner. Additionally, the creation of these neighborhood commercial nodes several miles outside of the Downtown can pose a threat to any revitalization efforts. Businesses, potentially ideal for a downtown, may be drawn towards the suburbs instead possibly due to lower rents, newer buildings, better sidewalks/façade improvements, more foot traffic, more parking, etc. As Moncks Corner continues to annex land and negotiate with developers, limiting the range of commercial uses in these neighborhood commercial nodes will be key in driving businesses into the downtown area. This, on top of separating highway commercial uses from downtown uses, are the first steps in reestablishing the Downtown as the focal point of the community. Furthermore, allowing for a mixture of housing options and densities in adjacent neighborhoods to the downtown can accommodate future growth, promote walkability, increase base clientele, and expand affordable housing options. Infill development is another method used to accommodate growth while also enhancing the integrity of the neighborhood. Reevaluating Town ordinances, regulations, and guidelines specific to Old Moncks Corner to require more compatible and consistent site planning for infill and new development will help preserve the small-town character and enhance the quality of growth. Identifying transportation nodes and focusing higher density housing within walking distance would ensure access to multi-modal transportation options and encourage ridership.

IMPLEMENTATION

So far, this Plan has identified some of the strengths, weaknesses, and areas of opportunity for Moncks Corner. This chapter combines those discussion points into an implementation strategy consisting of future land use designations and a map, a priority investment summary, and an action plan.

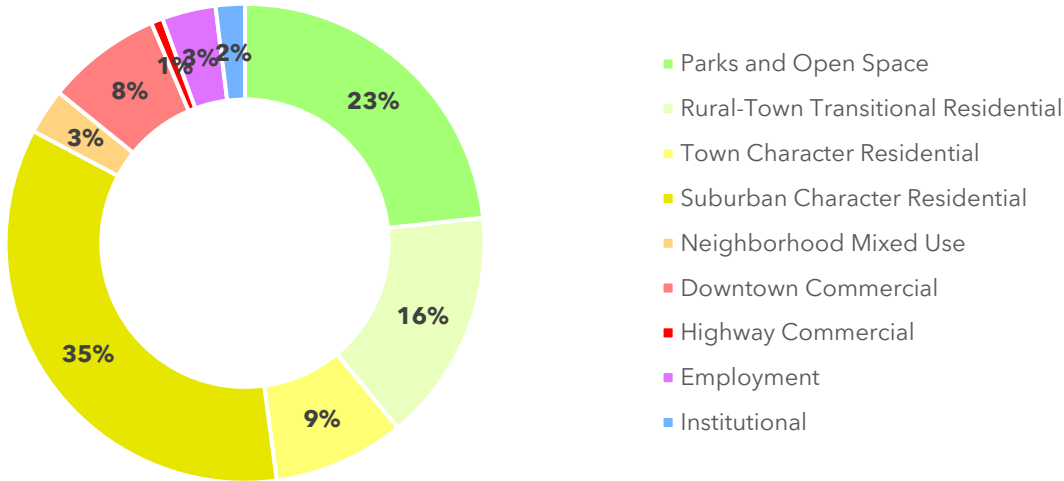
FUTURE LAND USE

Future land use recommendations compile the policies and strategies laid out throughout this Plan and associate them to an area within Town. This provides visualization for public officials and decisionmakers when implementing or approving projects. As part of the planning process, several additional factors were taken into consideration when formulating these recommendations, such as the existing land uses, public and stakeholder input, and Council and Commissioner comments. However, as has been the case for all other aspects of this Plan, the preservation of community character and ensuring quality growth were the primary factors when identifying, differentiating, and defining these future land use designations.

As mentioned in the Land Use Element in Appendix X, land use designations identify the generic activity of the property, therefore, these future designations identify the recommended land uses that should be encouraged within these areas. It is important that all land use-related goals and recommendations work towards preserving community character and encouraging sustainable growth within Moncks Corner.

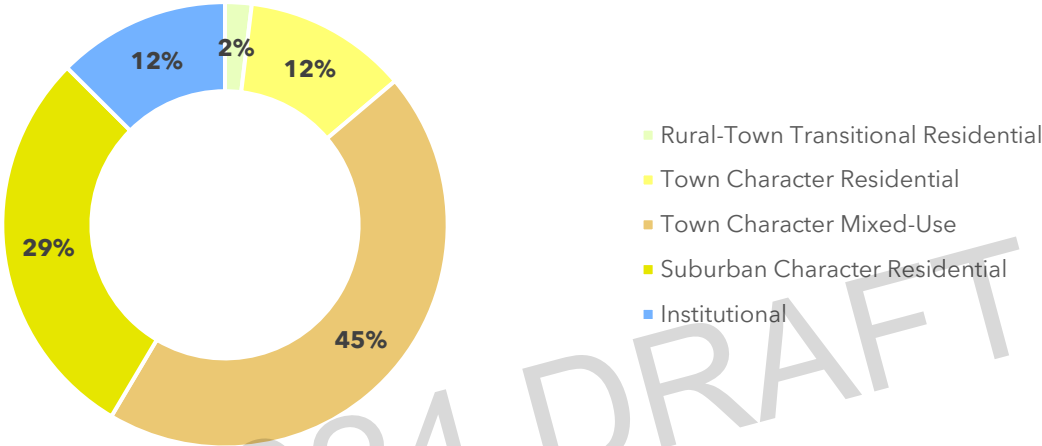
The recommended future land use designations can be categorized by the intended uses such as conservation, residential, mixed use, and non-residential. As seen in Figure X, residential designations (Rural-Town, Town, and Suburban) equate to about 60% of Town with Suburban Character Residential accounting for 35% alone.

FIGURE X: DISTRIBUTION OF FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS IN MONCKS CORNER



In addition to designating areas within the Town boundary as one land use or another, Map X includes future land use designations for areas adjacent to Moncks Corner. This area, totaling about 31 square miles, is the proposed expansion area that the Town anticipates growth towards in the upcoming future. As detailed on Map X, this expansion area will include a wide range of future land use designations, however, the major one being the Town Character Mixed-Use which encompasses nearly all of the expansion area west of US 17A. Figure X breaks down the future land use designations within the expansion area only.

FIGURE X: DISTRIBUTION OF FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS OF EXPANSION AREA



DESIGNATION DESCRIPTIONS

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Areas of Town consisting of permanent park and open space. Smaller neighborhood scale parks are not included in this designation.

RURAL-TOWN TRANSITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

Intended to protect the rural character of the neighborhoods while also recognizing the close proximity to commercial and transportation services. Generally, streets do not follow the common grid-like pattern although some sections do follow common suburban street patterns.

TOWN CHARACTER RESIDENTIAL

Intended to promote and enhance smaller lot, town mixed residential type neighborhoods near the downtown, commercial corridors and transportation nodes. A mixture of densities should be promoted to include single-family houses, duplexes, triplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and small-scale apartments.

SUBURBAN CHARACTER RESIDENTIAL

Intended for most of the newer suburban character neighborhoods along US 52 that commonly have smaller lot sizes, a mixture of housing types and privately maintained open space. Most areas were once part of a planned development or large-scale subdivision. Common housing densities range from single-family homes to townhomes with large multi-family apartments permitted only within the adjacent Highway Commercial Overlay.

NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE

Intended to provide small-scale neighborhood level services to the adjacent neighborhoods. Commercial-residential mixed uses are encouraged. Typically located along heavily traveled roadways, may act as a transition between higher-intensity commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods. This area should have a strong focus around form-based zoning and high-quality design elements.

TOWN CHARACTER MIXED-USE

Intended to allow for a mixture of residential, commercial, institutional, and parks and open space uses with varying densities throughout the area. Several small- and large-scale commercial nodes along major collector and arterial roadways should be encouraged to provide daily services to local residents. High residential density should be located near these commercial nodes and/or transit stops with residential density decreasing as the developments distance to collector and arterial roads increases. Developments are encouraged to incorporate a mix of residential densities throughout rather than separate single-use neighborhoods; however, adjacent residential densities should be complimentary with one another. Residential and commercial development should incorporate common Town characteristics, such as grid-like street patterns, diversity in commercial building designs, street- and yard-scaping, sidewalks and multi-use paths, and local amenities (i.e., parks, dog parks, and playgrounds). Vegetated buffers around the edges of development, along multi-use paths, between commercial and residential land uses, and adjacent to natural resources and conserved lands should also be encouraged.

DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL

Intended to protect and promote the historic and economic interests of the downtown. Similar to the Neighborhood Mixed Use, higher intensity commercial-residential mixed uses are encouraged. Unique, walkable and family-oriented businesses should be the focus of this designation.

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

Intended for automotive dependent commercial uses such as gas stations, banks, fast food restaurants, auto sales, groceries, etc. While less common, light industrial uses such as auto shops, car washes and storage units, as well as conditional use/special exceptions.

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL OVERLAY

A 1000 ft commercial buffer (2000 ft in total width) along the US 52 Corridor is approximately eleven miles in length and is intended to allow for low intensity (ideally service based) commercial businesses such as medical offices, banks, pharmacies, etc. along the highway corridor while permitting residential units behind. Higher density residential units such as multi-family apartments would be permitted, however, should be part of a larger planned development.

INSTITUTIONAL

Areas of Town consisting of schools and other local and County Government buildings.

INDUSTRIAL

Areas of Town for higher intensity industrial and employment uses including the Santee Cooper Headquarters and Berkeley Electric.

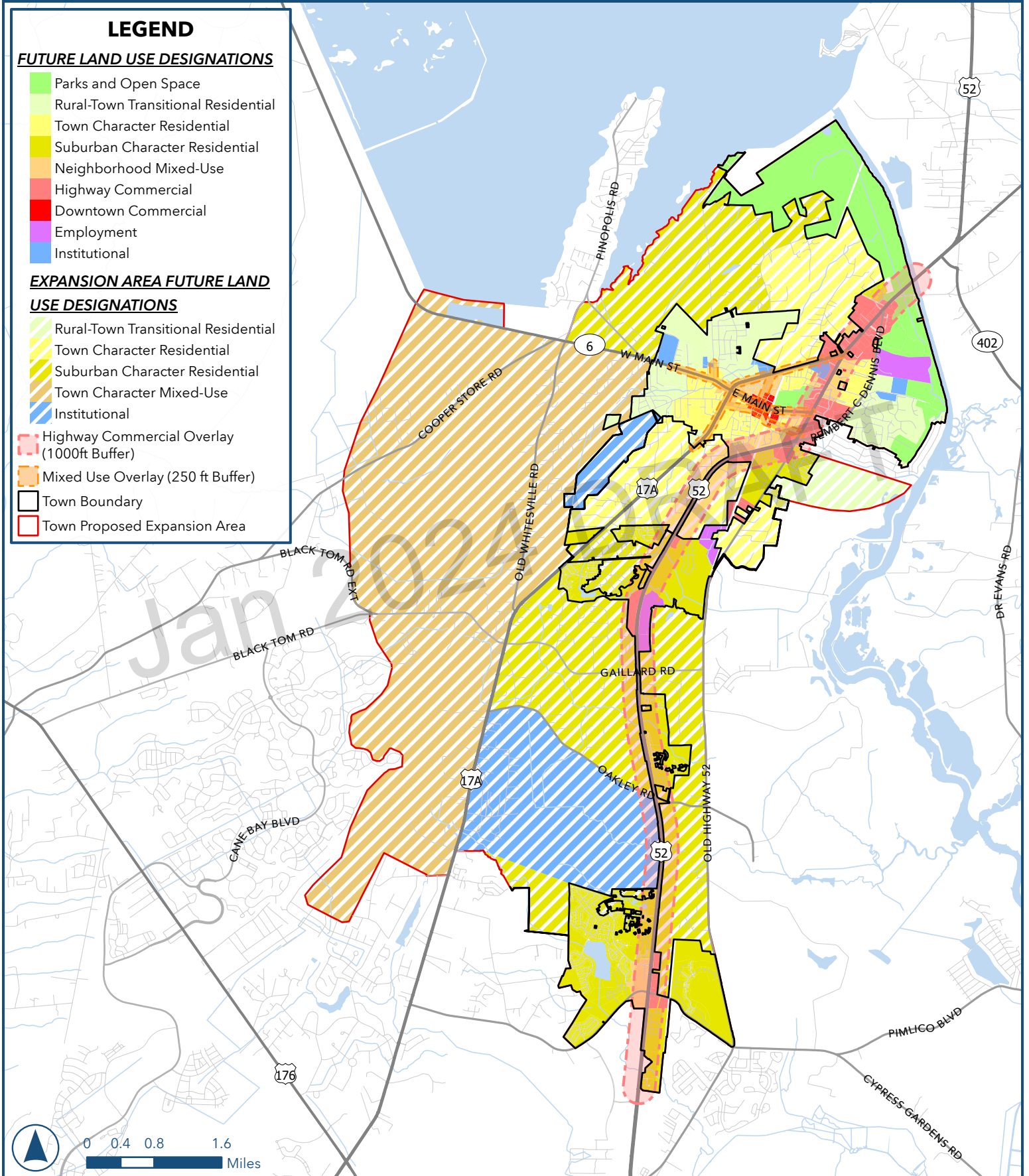
MIXED USE OVERLAY

A 250 ft mixed-use buffer (500 ft in total width) along select roadways is intended to allow for a mixture of higher density residential and low intensity service-based commercial land uses. This overlay provides flexibility for the Town to expand economic opportunities beyond the traditional downtown or strip mall type commercial corridors. Common commercial uses could include professional or medical offices, salons, corner stores, and other uses that provide daily services to local residents. Prime examples of a Neighborhood Mixed Use Corridor are along Broughton Rd and Carolina Ave. Corridors, like these, have formed naturally by the pressures and demands of a growing economy. This Overlay also encourages higher density residential units such as du-tri- or quadruplexes, townhomes, condos and multi-family apartments to be located on or adjacent to these commercial businesses.

Future Land Use - Final

Moncks Corner Comprehensive Plan: January Draft

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PRIORITY INVESTMENTS

Throughout this comprehensive plan, there were several capital improvements projects that were either planned, proposed or recommended related to improving traffic congestion, expanding parks and recreation facilities, attracting economic development, etc. This chapter will identify the priority investment projects along with potential funding sources available through federal, state, and local programs. These investment opportunities were identified based on interactions with Town Staff, Town Council, and the public as well as the conclusions from the Existing Conditions.

It is recommended that Moncks Corner adopt a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Plan that outlines the current and future expenditures on infrastructure and regular maintenance. This five-year plan will help Town Staff, Town Council, Planning Commissioners, developers, and stakeholders plan in a proactive, timely and fiscally responsible manner for these current and future projects. CIPs also provide transparency to residents on financial expenditures and what is being implemented in between comprehensive plan reports.

Based on other agencies capital improvement (or equivalent) plans, several projects are expected to be implemented in Moncks Corner over the next couple of years.

Berkeley County Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan: This Countywide plan has provided funding to construct a Miracle League Ball Field in Moncks Corner. Also identified in this plan is a project to expand and improve public facilities through blight remediation within Moncks Corner. This project will also provide affordable housing opportunities.

SCDOT 10-Year Plan: This statewide plan has identified several rural road safety improvement projects along SC 6. Although these roads are not within the Town, Moncks Corner has the opportunity to piggyback off of these projects to continue improvements along SC 6 through town.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

In coordination with CHATS and SCDOT, Moncks Corner has the opportunity to secure transportation-related funding for new roads and sidewalks, traffic mitigation infrastructure, traffic studies, alternative transportation, etc. Moncks Corner may be eligible for SCDOT Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding for new or improved pedestrian, bicyclist and streetscaping projects. Transportation related grants can also accomplish economic, recreation, environmental and transit related projects as well.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) has several funding opportunities that Moncks Corner may be eligible for to aid in funding some of the current and future parks and recreation projects. The Sports Tourism Advertising and Recruitment Grant is one of several targeted grant programs that Moncks Corner may be eligible for that provides assistance in developing, marketing and recruiting sports-related events to use the local facilities, in this case, the Moncks Corner Regional Recreation Complex. This grant hopes to use recreation as a catalyst for economic development. Other SCRPT programs that Moncks Corner may be eligible for include the Recreational Trails Program, the Park and Recreation Development

fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. These funding opportunities could assist in developing and constructing additional park and recreation facilities, connecting neighborhoods through a trail system and acquiring environmentally sensitive natural areas with the potential for on-site passive or active recreational opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

The Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) offers the Hometown Economic Development Grant that Moncks Corner may be eligible for. This grant is intended to support economic development projects that will improve the quality of life for residents. Moncks Corner may also be eligible for the SC Rural Infrastructure Authority Economic Infrastructure Program. This program helps fund local infrastructure that supports economic development such as additional parking, sidewalk improvements, city streetscaping, and the reinvestment in blighted commercial properties. This program is only available if state funds are not fully obligated for SCIP Projects.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT

As mentioned, expanding economic opportunities within Moncks Corner is a forefront topic that residents have expressed concern over. Blight removal and remediation, infill development and structure restoration are several ways to reinvest in the community and increase land value. The Berkeley County Annual Action Plan (AAP) identifies that a top priority for the County is to reduce slum and blight in residential areas. Using the HUD Community Development Block Grant, Moncks Corner may be eligible for local County funding to assist in the cost of removing and remediating blighted properties and incentivizing infill development within neighborhoods with significant vacant and/or blighted properties. These funds may also aid in the repairs or upgrades of water, sewer, stormwater, drainage, and sidewalk/pedestrian facilities.

DETAILED ACTION PLAN