Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan

Aiken, South Carolina

Adopted by City Council 12/8/97, revised in 2002, 2003, and reviewed in 2008

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

I. Introduction.....ES-1
II. Overview of the Study Area ES-2
III. Land Use and Transportation Plan ES-2
IV. Implementing the Plan ES-12

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan.....I-1
B. Relationship to the Strategic Plan I-1
C. Relationship to Development Regulations.....I-1
D. Who Uses the Plan? I-1
E. The Study Area.....I-3
F. Process Used in Preparing the 1997 Plan and Subsequent Updates.....I-3
G. Assumption.....I-5
H. Organization.....I-5
I. Amending the Plan.....I-5
J. Revising and Updating the Plan.....I-6
K. Summary of Planning Efforts.....I-6

II. Overview of the Study Area

A. Regional Context.....II-1
B. Natural Resources.....II-1
C. Historic Resources II-5
D. Existing Land Use II-10
E. Transportation.....II-16
F. Public Facilities and Services II-18
G. Demographics.....II-24
H. Housing II-38
I. Economic Base.....II-40
J. Summary of Trends and Key Issues II-44

III. Land Use and Transportation Plan

A. Overview III-1
B. General Goals and Objectives III-2
C. The Plan by District III-12
1. Old Aiken III-13
2. North Aiken III-14
3. Northwest Aiken III-20
4. Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill III-27
5. West Aiken III-34
6. East Aiken III-41
7. Horse/Hitchcock Woods III-48
8. Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road III-58
9. Houndslake III-66
10. East Pine Log Road III-73
11. Southwest Aiken III-81
12. River Bluff/Sandstone III-87
13. Woodside/Aiken Mall III-93
14. Southeast Aiken III-100
15. Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen III-105
16. Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road III-111

IV. Implementing the Plan

1. Policies IV-1
2. Development Regulations IV-4

LIST OF MAPS, TABLES, AND GRAPHS

Maps

1. Initial Study Area I-4
2. Regional Context.....II-2
3. Historic Districts II-11
4. Generalized Existing Land Use II-13
5. Old Aiken Future Land Use
   See Old Aiken Master Plan.....Page 15
6. North Aiken Future Land Use and Transportation.....III-19
7. Northwest Aiken Future Land Use
   and Transportation.....III-26
8. Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill Future Land Use
   and Transportation III-33
9. West Aiken Future Land Use and Transportation.....III-40
10. East Aiken Future Land Use and Transportation.....III-47
11. Horse/Hitchcock Woods Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-57
12. Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-65
13. Houndslake Future Land Use and Transportation.....III-72
14. East Pine Log Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-80
15. Southwest Aiken Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-86
16. River Bluff/Sandstone Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-92
17. Woodside/Aiken Mall Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-99
18. Southeast Aiken Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-104
19. Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-110
20. Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road Future Land Use
    and Transportation III-116

Tables

1. **Plans and Studies Prepared for City of Aiken since 1950 ..... I-7**
2. **Major Development Regulations Adopted by City of Aiken Since 1947 ..... I-9**
3. **Sites and Districts on the Aiken Historic Register II-12**
4. **Average Daily Traffic for Various Streets: 1975, 1987, 1994 and 1995 ..... II-17**
5. **Population Growth II-26**
6. **Population and Migration Trends II-28**
7. **Racial Distribution of the Population II-29**
8. **Population Distribution by Age, 1980 ..... II-30**
9. **Population by Age and Sex, 1990 ..... II-31**
10. **Household Composition, 1970 – 1990 ..... II-33**
11. **Population Projections II-34**
12. **Income Levels, 1980 & 1990 ..... II-35**
13. **Income Levels, 1990 ..... II-35**
14. **Educational Attainment by Race, 1990 ..... II-36**
15. **General Housing Characteristics, 1980 and 1990 ..... II-39**
16. **Industry of Employed Persons Age 16 and Over II-41**
17. **Major Employers II-42**
18. **Labor Force, 1980 and 1990 ..... II-46**
19. **Gross and Net Taxable Sales, 1995 ..... II-46**

Graphs

1. **Population Growth Trends II-26**
2. **Population by Race II-29**
3. **Population and Age Distribution, 1980 & 1990 ..... II-32**
4. **Population Density, 1970 – 1990 ..... II-33**
5. **Residential Building Permits, 1987 – 1995 ..... II-37**
6. **Dollar Value of Building Permits for New Commercial Construction II-47**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Introduction.....ES-1

II. Overview of the Study Area ES-2

III. Land Use and Transportation Plan.....ES-2

IV. Implementing the Plan.....ES-12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan

The Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan is an official document adopted by City Council as a unified set of long-range policies to guide the physical development and revitalization of the community. The Plan is not an ordinance but provides the foundation for development regulations. The Plan differs from the Strategic Plan in that it focuses on land use and transportation issues while the Strategic Plan covers a complete range of issues affecting the community.

B. Who Uses the Plan?

The Plan is used by City Council, appointed boards and commissions of the City, City staff, property owners and developers, other governmental agencies, and, of course, the citizens of Aiken.

C. The Study Area

This first phase of the Plan adopted in 1997 dealt with the area within the City limits and much of the unincorporated area to the south. The revisions of the Plan adopted in 2002 and 2003 expanded the study area to the south.

D. Process Used in Preparing the Plan

The initial draft of the Plan was prepared by a Task Force appointed by the Planning Commission; the Task Force included a cross-section of Aiken citizens with representatives of the NAACP, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Partnership, Downtown Aiken Development Corporation, Equipac, Aiken County Open Land Trust, Historic Aiken Foundation, and Aiken County Developers Committee. The Task Force submitted its draft to the Planning Commission in August of 1996. After several months of review and solicitation of public input including two open house public meetings in May, 1997, the Commission held public hearings on July 15 and September 9 of 1997 and passed a resolution recommending the draft to City Council at the September 9 meeting. City Council reviewed the Plan and adopted its final version on December 8, 1997 after a public hearing.

At City Council's direction, an update of the 1997 Plan was initiated in 2001. A task force appointed by the Planning Commission prepared a draft; the portion dealing with the area south of Pine Log Road was adopted by City Council in September of 2002 while the remainder was adopted in February of 2003. Another amendment regarding Hampton Avenue was adopted in June of 2003.

The next major update was the Old Aiken Master Plan adopted in April of 2005. The draft was prepared by a Steering Committee supported by five subcommittees and substantial citizen input.

E. Organization

The Plan includes the following chapters: I. Introduction; II. Overview of the Study Area; III. Land Use and Transportation Plan; and IV. Implementing the Plan.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

Chapter II presents a variety of information about the study area including Natural Resources, Historic Resources, Existing Land Use, Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, Demographics, Housing, and the Economic Base. The concluding section of the chapter is a "Summary of Trends and Key Issues" which states the following major issues that will affect the growth of Aiken for the next 20 years.

1. Moderate Growth Rate. Growth will be steady but not rapid.
2. Decreasing Influence of the Savannah River Site. SRS will play a lesser role in the local economy.
3. Need for Diversification. Efforts should continue to diversify the economic base to decrease dependence on SRS.
4. Support for Existing Employers. Existing businesses should be supported.
5. Increasing Numbers of Retirees. Aiken will continue to attract those seeking a pleasant place to retire.
6. Growth Toward the North. The decreasing influence of SRS and the existence of I-20 and utilities on the north side will stimulate growth in that area.
7. Protection of Character. It is essential that the qualities that give Aiken its character be protected and enhanced to preserve the high quality of life and to serve as an economic development tool.

III. LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A. Overview

Chapter III contains recommendations regarding land use and transportation and is divided into two sections.

1. "General Goals and Objectives" that are applicable to the entire study area;
2. "The Plan by District" which examines individual planning districts including goals and objectives specific to each; reference is made to the General Goals and Objectives but they are not repeated for each planning district.

B. General Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

- Rezone suitable areas to residential categories from other categories allowing more intense uses.
- Prevent the encroachment of inappropriate uses into existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage the development of "traditional neighborhoods" which allow smaller lots, reduced building setbacks, narrower streets, controlled dead-ends, more interconnecting streets, and, where appropriate, more mixed uses.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow property in the City to be rezoned Planned Residential except in sensitive areas such as the Historic District or Horse District.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to encourage preservation and creation of significant open spaces in residential subdivisions by allowing residential lots to be clustered.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations so that single-family subdivisions protect trees and increase protection of residential from commercial development.
- Develop policies and regulations on where manufactured housing may be located.
- Avoid constructing large public housing complexes or concentrating public housing within one area of the city.
- Non-residential zoning districts should be evaluated.
- Conduct periodic assessments of housing conditions.
- Implement public improvements in those neighborhoods with substandard housing.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

- Encourage commercial uses tightly clustered in nodes instead of dispersed in strips along roads. Define areas where major commercial development will be allowed and avoid annexing, rezoning, or providing utilities to unincorporated land which would allow commercial development outside of the carefully defined areas.
- Development along the Whiskey Road corridor can be Planned Residential or Planned Commercial and should be required to meet a high level of design; however, provisions of Planned Commercial should be amended to make it a more effective tool in controlling such development.
- Promote the development of attractive commercial areas that encourage the development of new businesses.

- Develop strong incentives to encourage developers not to abandon buildings.
- Facilitate the reuse of abandoned service stations.

Goal 3 **Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.**

- Evaluate land zoned Light Industrial and Industrial to determine if it is an appropriate designation.
- Identify and protect land suitable for industrial use.

Goal 4 **Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.**

- Coordination between the City, County and Department of Transportation is vital to achieve a coherent set of guidelines and regulations for development and subsequent traffic impacts.
- Discourage strip commercial development and promote the clustering of such uses at appropriate locations.
- Consider making no road improvements which would harm visual character.
- Consider landscaped medians where feasible.
- Prepare and implement streetscape plans for major roads.
- Adopt tighter regulations to control curb cuts.
- Do not annex or provide utilities to land along major roads which would result in the creation of an excessive number of access points.
- Consider resolutions which will reduce paving in commercial development by limiting the number of parking spaces and allowing uses to share parking.
- Encourage innovative placement of new shops that would create a more attractive streetscape than parking lots.
- Landscaping should be considered at major highway intersections.
- Where economically feasible, establish an on-going program to place utility wires underground.
- Provide attractive vehicular directional signage and work with the State and federal authorities to improve the appearance of highway signs.
- Consider establishing public art or other landmarks at appropriate locations to create a “sense of place”.
- Establish the boundary of Aiken and use landmarks, landscaping, or other means to identify it.
- Acquire conservation or scenic easements where appropriate and financially feasible to create or maintain attractive appearance and establish greenways, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and protect wildlife habitat.
- Attempt to develop incentives which will encourage unincorporated land along major corridors to come into the City with the goal of eventually having them comply with tree and sign regulations.

- Consult a traffic engineer about investigating the use of roundabouts as an alternative to traffic signals to improve traffic flow.

Goal 5 **Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.**

- Establish a process to review the design of significant public improvements.
- Require new projects outside of the City but receiving City services to comply with all ordinances and design standards.
- Identify, protect, and preserve historic sites and structures.
- Encourage developing a set of architectural minimal design standards to apply to all new multifamily residential and commercial properties not governed by the Historic Preservation Ordinance or within the Horse/Hitchcock Woods District.

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

- Make needed street improvements including resurfacing and the addition of turn lanes.
- Amend the Land Development Regulations to relax standards for new streets.
- Promote more interconnecting streets and limit the number of dead-end streets through amending the Land Development Regulations and placing conditions on approval of annexations, subdivisions, and City services to promote more interconnecting streets and, if necessary, limit the number of dead-end streets.
- Do not annex or provide City services to land on which a large development would be built which would create an obstacle to public access unless an easement or some other guarantee can be provided that right-of-way for a future public road will be available.
- Continue to make improvements to existing sidewalks and provide new ones where needed.
- Evaluate whether “traffic calming” measures are needed, and, if so, implement them.
- Encourage existing and proposed commercial developments to have connecting driveways to reduce the need to enter and exit main roads.

Goal 7 **Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.**

- Evaluate the need for a pathway system.
- Prepare a master park plan/regional open space plan.
- Investigate the use of regional retention ponds serving multiple properties to be focal points for parks.

- Encourage large projects to provide usable land for recreation as a condition of annexation or of receiving City services.
- Maintain a partnership with organizations such as the Aiken County Open Land Trust, the Whitney Trust, the Hitchcock Foundation and other organizations to promote the preservation of a network of open spaces available to the public.
- Investigate ways to protect agricultural land.

C. The Plan by District

This section of the Plan breaks down the larger area into numerous planning districts. Included are an overview of existing conditions and goals and objectives. The General Goals and Objectives of the previous section generally apply to each planning district; additional goals and objectives specific to each district are provided. The numbering of General Goals and Objectives is continued; for example, there are seven General Goals, so goals specific to a planning district are number 8 or higher.

1) Old Aiken

Please refer to the Old Aiken Master Plan adopted in April of 2005.

2) North Aiken

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Make improvements to the intersections of Hampton Avenue with Laurens and York Streets both to improve traffic flow and their appearance.
- Work with the State Department of Transportation to assure that the widening of Rutland Drive at U.S. 1 will be designed to accommodate pedestrians.
- If the railroad is ever abandoned, efforts should be made to acquire the right-of-way for use in the bicycle/pedestrian pathway system.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities and create new ones.

- Study the feasibility of developing a major park and recreation facility in the North Aiken Planning District.

3) Northwest Aiken

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Reduce the amount of land zoned for commercial use along Laurens Street, limit commercial zoning along Hampton Avenue, and do not allow commercial uses along Vaucluse Road.

Goal 7 **Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space..**
Investigate the creation of a park north of Redd Street.

4) Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill

Goal 1 **Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.**
Strengthen the single-family residential character of the Hayne Avenue corridor.

Goal 4 **Make the road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.**
- Consider constructing a landscaped median and other landscaping along Richland Avenue from Valley Drive westward to Gregg Highway.
- Maintain the residential character of land along both sides of Richland Avenue from Valley Road to Gregg Avenue.

Goal 7 **Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.**
- Preserve Aiken Golf Course.
- Investigate possible sites for parks/recreation areas north of Richland Avenue.

5) West Aiken

Goal 4 **Make the major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.**
- Construct a landscaped median along Richland Avenue.
- Begin to work with the State Department of Transportation now to incorporate landscaping in medians and other parts of Hitchcock and Robert Bell Parkways.

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**
- Work with the State Department of Transportation on including separated bicycle paths as part of the widening of Hitchcock Parkway.
- Evaluate the need for a parkway connecting with the planning district which would provide a more direct connection between Aiken and Interstate 20.

6) East Aiken

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.
Try to establish the grid street system of Old Aiken including parkways in the undeveloped area.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room for such uses.
- Develop a business park/industrial park in the western half of the district to attract employers to provide jobs for nearby residents, especially low-income citizens.
- Evaluate the areas zoned industrial to see if the designation is appropriate.

Goal 4 Make the major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.
- Evaluate the feasibility of a landscaped median along Richland Avenue from Old Wagener Road westward.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
- The SC 118 Bypass should incorporate a separate pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- The pathway system for pedestrians and bicyclists should be expanded into the district as it is annexed.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.
The proposed business park should incorporate a park/recreation area.

7) Horse/Hitchcock Woods

Goal 1 Protect the residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.
- Consider incentives for developers of open tracts to cluster the residential units and maintain large areas of common open space.
- If tracts of open land cannot be preserved, they should be zoned to be sure that the resulting development will have the maximum amount of open land.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.
Do not allow commercial encroachment north of Boardman Road.

Goal 7 **Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.**

Protect and enhance Hopelands Gardens and Rye Patch.

Goal 12 **Protect the horse-training businesses and polo fields as well as horses ridden for pleasure.**

- Reject any proposed rezoning that would result in an inappropriate intensity of activity that would adversely affect the horse district.
- Do not annex with inappropriate zoning, and, where annexation does occur, attach any conditions necessary to assure that subsequent development will be as compatible as possible.
- Avoid the widening of any roads in the district.
- Do not allow the paving of any unpaved roads.
- Maintain the ability of those on horseback to easily and safely cross Whiskey Road.

Goal 13 **Protect the historic character of the district.**

- Evaluate historic sites to be sure that all of those worthy of protection are considered for inclusion on the Aiken Historic Register.
- Create a task force to develop methods for the protection of privately held open spaces such as Palmetto Golf Course and the polo fields.

Goal 14 **Protect the character of Whiskey Road.**

- Avoid the widening of Whiskey Road unless required for public safety.
- Implement a streetscape plan for Whiskey Road.

Goal 15 **Protect the integrity of Hitchcock Woods while improving its accessibility.**

- Discourage the encroachment of inappropriate development or roads that would threaten the integrity of the Woods.
- Work with the Hitchcock Foundation to protect and improve the entrances to the Woods including creation of a more direct and clearly marked entrance into the Woods from the downtown area.

8) Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road

Goal 1 **Protect the residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.**

- Identify sites that could be developed for housing near existing commercial uses.
- Do not widen Silver Bluff Road between Whiskey Road and Silver Bluff Commons shopping center.

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

- Improve Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.
- Construct road connectors from Dougherty Road to nearby commercial areas to reduce traffic on Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.
- Consider extending Hamilton Drive eastward to Whiskey Road to provide an alternative for Dougherty Road.
- If Bonnieview Estates is redeveloped, acquire right-of-way for a road to connect to Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads.
- Investigate the feasibility of a mass transit line connecting the area with Old Aiken for implementation over the next 20 years.

9) Houndslake

Goal 2 **Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.**

Evaluate whether the land zoned General Business along Houndslake Drive and between Hitchcock Parkway and Varden Drive should be changed to another category.

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

- Widen Hitchcock Parkway to be a true parkway with a landscaped median and landscaping along the sides and incorporating a pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Investigate the use of the SCE&G right-of-way for use as a pathway.

10) East Pine Log Road

Goal 1 **Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.**

Residential development should be encouraged south of Old Powderhouse Road and should be buffered from the commercial area with landscaping.

Goal 2 **Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.**

- Allow low-intensity commercial uses across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park.
- Multifamily residential should be allowed at the eastern end of East Pine Log Road.

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

- Residential development should be encouraged south of Old Powderhouse Road and should be buffered from the commercial area with landscaping.
- Allow low-intensity commercial uses across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park.
- Multifamily Residential should be allowed at the eastern end of East Pine Log Road.
- Ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists along East Pine Log Road.
- Do not widen Two Notch, Powderhouse, or Banks Mill Roads except to provide turn lanes at the intersections with East Pine Log Road.
- Construct a connecting road generally parallel to and south of East Pine Log Road from Powderhouse Road easterly to Banks Mill Road or further to the east if warranted by anticipated future development.

11) Southwest Aiken

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

Widen Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.

12) River Bluff/Sandstone

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

Improve Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.

13)Woodside/Aiken Mall

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

- Construct a limited access parkway with a landscaped median and bicycle paths to connect Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.
- If feasible, widen Silver Bluff Road from Town Creek Road to the point at which it would intersect with the proposed road between Silver Bluff and Whiskey Roads, including improvements at the intersection with Richardson's Lake Road.

14) Southeast Aiken

None

15) Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Construct a limited access parkway with a landscaped median and bicycle paths to connect Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads.
- Where feasible, connectors from Banks Mill Road to the west should be constructed.

16) Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Allow low-intensity commercial uses across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Identify the rights-of-way for at least two east-west roads to connect Banks Mill Road and Woodward Drive and at least one north-south road to connect Old Dibble Road and Banks Mill Road.

Goal 7 Improve Existing Recreational Opportunities, Create New Ones, and Protect Open Space

Large areas of open space should be preserved in the area north of Toolebeck Road.

IV. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This section presents recommendations on policies and regulations to implement the Plan.

I.
Introduction

A. Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan I-1

B. Relationship to Strategic Plan I-1

C. Relationship to Development Regulations I-1

D. Who Uses the Plan? I-1

E. The Study Area I-3

F. Process Used in Preparing the 1997 Plan and Subsequent Updates I-3

G. Assumption I-5

H. Organization I-5

I. Amending the Plan I-5

J. Revising and Updating the Plan I-6

K. Summary of Planning Efforts I-6

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan

The Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan is a document adopted by City Council as a unified set of long-range policies to guide the physical development and revitalization of the community. South Carolina State Law Section 6-29-510 describing the comprehensive plan elements and planning process is provided in Exhibit 1. The Plan should be followed unless there is a public reason for not doing so, and the reason should be stated in any motion contrary to the Plan.

The Plan is the vehicle through which Council states its goals regarding land use and transportation and sets forth specific steps by which those goals are to be achieved. The Plan is prepared pursuant to South Carolina Code 6-29-310 through 6-29-1200 also known as the "South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994."

B. Relationship to the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, initially completed in 1994 and updated since, covers a broad range of issues affecting the City from economic development to the arts and health care and establishes goals and objectives for each. The Strategic Plan also involves issues regarding growth and development, and one of the goals stated was the completion of the Comprehensive Plan which is concerned primarily with the use of land and transportation issues.

C. Relationship to Development Regulations

The Plan is not an ordinance but provides the foundation for regulations governing the use of land. The Plan may be amended by Council after receipt of a recommendation from the Planning Commission with at least one public hearing held by each body.

D. Who Uses the Plan?

1. **City Council.**
   - Council uses the Plan to apply policy for the physical development and redevelopment of the community; the Plan gives the governing body a chance to step back from the pressing day-to-day issues and take a long-range view to determine what the physical character of the community should be and how it should be achieved.
   - The Plan provides a basis for Council to use in making decisions on specific development issues and to evaluate them against a clear picture of what has been deemed to be the desirable future development of the community.
   - The Plan communicates Council's view of the future of the community to others involved in development including the Planning Commission, City staff, developers, and, most importantly, citizens.

2. **Appointed Boards and Commissions.** The Plan provides the framework within which these bodies make decisions.

EXHIBIT 1

§6-29-510. Planning process; elements; comprehensive plan.

(A) The local planning commission shall develop and maintain a planning process which will result in the systematic preparation and continual re-evaluation and updating of those elements considered critical, necessary, and desirable to guide the development and redevelopment of its area of jurisdiction.

(B) Surveys and studies on which planning elements are based must include consideration of potential conflicts with adjacent jurisdictions and regional plans or issues.

(C) The basic planning process for all planning elements must include, but not be limited to:

(1) inventory of existing conditions;
(2) a statement of needs and goals; and
(3) implementation strategies with time frames.

(D) A local comprehensive plan must include, but not be limited to, the following planning elements:

(1) a population element which considers historic trends and projections, household numbers and sizes, educational levels, and income characteristics;
(2) an economic development element which considers labor force and labor force characteristics, employment by place of work and residence, and analysis of the economic base;
(3) a natural resources element which considers coastal resources, slope characteristics, prime agricultural and forest land, plant and animal habitats, parks and recreation areas, scenic views and sites, wetlands, and soil types. Where a separate board exists pursuant to this chapter, this element is the responsibility of the existing board;
(4) a cultural resources element which considers historic buildings and structures, commercial districts, residential districts, unique, natural, or scenic resources, archaeological, and other cultural resources. Where a separate board exists pursuant to this chapter, this element is the responsibility of the existing board;
(5) a community facilities element which considers transportation network; water supply, treatment, and distribution; sewage system and wastewater treatment; solid waste collection and disposal, fire protection, emergency medical services, and general government facilities; education facilities; and libraries and other cultural facilities;
(6) a housing element which considers location, types, age and condition of housing, owner and renter occupancy, and affordability of housing; and
(7) a land use element which considers existing and future land use by categories, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, mining, public and quasi-public, recreation, parks, open space, and vacant or undeveloped.

(E) All planning elements must be an expression of the planning commission recommendations to the appropriate governing bodies with regard to the wise and efficient use of public funds, the future growth, development, and redevelopment of its area of jurisdiction, and consideration of the fiscal impact on property owners. The planning elements whether done as a package or in separate increments together comprise the comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction at any one point in time. 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.

HISTORY: 1994 Act No. 355, § 1, eff May 3, 1994

3. **City Staff.** Staff should use the Plan as a guide in dealing with day-to-day issues that arise regarding development and revitalization.

4. **Property Owners and Developers.** The Comprehensive Plan is the primary vehicle through which City Council explains policies guiding land use and growth to those involved in development.

5. **Other Governmental Agencies.** The Plan provides Aiken County and other entities with a clear understanding about the City's policies on growth and development.

6. **Citizens.** The Plan should explain to citizens what policies City Council is following to guide development. Clear communication of such policies will make sure there is no misunderstanding about which way the community is heading so that citizens can voice their opinions about the direction.

E. The Study Area

Although the Plan presented here deals with only a portion of it, the complete study area will eventually include not only land within the City limits, but all of the area served or potentially served by City services because this is the area over which the City can exercise some control of land use. The initial study area for the Plan adopted in 1997 is shown on Map 1.

F. Process Used in Preparing the 1997 Plan and Subsequent Updates

1. 1997 Plan

- **Comprehensive Plan Task Force**. The Planning Commission appointed a task force to prepare a draft Comprehensive Plan in 1991. Various organizations and interests were asked to submit names for appointment including the NAACP, the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership, the Aiken Downtown Development Association, the Aiken County Open Land Trust, the Historic Aiken Foundation, the Aiken County Developers Committee, and others; the Commission selected one from each list. After working for several months, the Task Force suspended discussions until after the Strategic Plan was completed in 1994. The Task Force then resumed work in early 1995 completing its initial draft in mid-1996 for submission to the Planning Commission.

- **Planning Commission.** The Commission reviewed the draft submitted by the Task Force at several work sessions. In December of 1996, the Commission held a work session to allow public input. Two informal open house public meetings were held in May, 1997. On July 15 and September 9, the Commission held formal public hearings. After the completion of the hearing on September 9, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve a resolution recommending the draft Plan to City Council.

- **City Council.** City Council held work sessions on the Plan and adopted it on December 8, 1997, after holding a public hearing.

Map 1
Initial Study Area

2. **Update**

At City Council's request, the Planning Commission again appointed a Task Force to make a recommendation regarding changes needed to the Comprehensive Plan. The Task Force began meeting in August of 2001 and made its recommendations to the Commission during the summer of 2002. The Commission recommended a revised Plan to Council later in 2002. City Council adopted amendments to the General Goals and Objectives and the planning districts south of Pine Log Road on September 23rd of 2002 (including the creation of two new planning districts to the south) and for the area north of Pine Log Road on February 24th of 2003. Another amendment regarding Hampton Avenue west of Laurens Street was adopted by City Council on June 23rd of 2003 after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

The next major update was the Old Aiken Master Plan; a more detailed plan for the area had been stated as a goal in the revisions adopted in February of 2003. The draft Plan was prepared by the Old Aiken Master Plan Steering Committee which began work in July of 2002 and finished in December of 2003. Five subcommittees involving more than 60 people participated in numerous meetings and the review of drafts. Many more citizens provided ideas through two open house public meetings and other comments directly to the committees. The Planning Commission recommended the Plan to City Council after a public hearing on June 14, 2004. City Council held numerous work sessions on the draft and adopted the Plan unanimously after a public hearing on April 25, 2005.

G. Assumption

The Plan does not attempt to predict specifically at what rate the area will grow or change. Rather, it simply assumes that growth will occur and projects what the land use pattern and transportation system should be at "build out" when the area is developed.

H. Organization

As is the case with every such study, the Plan is not intended to be "cast in stone" but is a guide which should be revised to adjust to changing circumstances. To make it easier to keep the Plan current, it is presented in a loose-leaf format so that pages can be removed and added with ease. The major sections of the Plan are as follows:

Executive Summary

I. Introduction

II. Overview of the Study Area: a "big picture" of existing conditions in the study area including natural and historic features, land use, and demographic/economic characteristics.

III. Land Use and Transportation Plan: general goals and objectives and a detailed look at each of the planning districts including an analysis of current conditions and goals and objectives for the future plus a map depicting the land use and transportation plan.

IV. Implementing the Plan

I. Amending the Plan

The Plan is not intended to be the final word on growth and redevelopment. It is an assessment of conditions and policies at a certain point which should be regularly evaluated.

The Plan should only be amended by City Council after receipt of a recommendation from the Planning Commission after at least one public hearing before each body.

J. Revising and Updating the Plan

The 1994 South Carolina Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act states that the Planning Commission must reevaluate the Plan at least every five years and prepare a new Plan every 10 years. A Plan or any changes to it are not considered effective until adopted by City Council.

K. Summary of Planning Efforts

Aiken has a strong history of planning beginning with the original street grid laid out in 1835. The Planning and Zoning Commission was created in 1947 and renamed the Planning Commission in 1987 to clearly distinguish it from the Zoning Board of Adjustment which had been created in 1947 when zoning was adopted. Subdivision regulations were first adopted in the mid 1950's.

Sydney Carter, a consultant based in Augusta, provided the primary guidance on planning issues from the late 1950's until the late 1980's and prepared numerous studies, as well as the version of the Zoning Ordinance adopted in 1971 and updated in 1982. The Planning Department was created in 1982 and serves as staff support to the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and numerous ad hoc committees. Numerous plans and studies have been prepared with those published since 1950 listed in Table 1. Significant development regulations enacted since 1947 are listed on Table 2.

Table 1
Plans and Studies Prepared for City of Aiken Since 1950

Strategic Plans

Preserving, Improving, and Perpetuating Our Ways of Life: Summary Report, Planning Today for Tomorrow, 1994, Planning Today for Tomorrow Steering Committee (updated in 1997 and 2000)

Comprehensive Plans/Land Use Plans

Future Land Use Plan, August 1965 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Land Use Plan, April 1973 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Central Business District Redevelopment Plan and Program, June 1969 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Neighborhood Analysis, February 1971 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Initial Reconnaissance Survey, January 1973 (Lower Savannah Regional Planning and Development Council)
Neighborhood Revitalization Program, December 1978 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Columbia, South Carolina)
Land Use Development Plan, April 1979 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Columbia, South Carolina)
Comprehensive Plan, Aiken, South Carolina, November 1989 (Wilbur Smith and Associates)
Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan, December 1997 (City Planning Department)

Transportation

Major Thoroughfare Plan, Aiken, South Carolina, July 1970 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Aiken Area Transportation Study: Volume 1, Recommended Street and Highway Plan; Volume II, Statistical Data; and Summary Report, September 1975 (South Carolina State Highway Department)
Highway Approach Study, February 1978 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Parking Study, 1979 (City of Aiken Department of Engineering and Public Works)
Whiskey Road Corridor Study, November 1983 (City of Aiken Department of Planning and Community Development)
Central Business District Parking Needs Study, August 1985 (City of Aiken Department of Planning and Community Development and Department of Engineering)
Whiskey Road Corridor Traffic Study, April 2001 (ARCADIS)
Whiskey Road – Silver Bluff Road Connector Study, March 2003 (Jordan Jones and Goulding)

Housing

Housing Element, June 1973 (Lower Savannah Regional Planning and Development Council)
Regional Housing Market Analysis, March 1974 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Inc., Columbia, South Carolina)

Community Facilities/Public Improvement

Community Facilities, Aiken South Carolina, December 1964 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Public Improvements Program, June 1965 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Public Improvements Program, May 1973 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Community Facilities Plan, June 1973 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant)
Community Facilities Plan and Capital Improvements Program and Budget, April 1980 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Inc., Columbia, South Carolina)

Historic Preservation

Historical and Architectural Inventory - 1989, August 1989 (Preservation Consultants, Charleston, South Carolina)
Design Manual, Aiken, South Carolina, August 1990 (Jaeger/Pyburn, Inc., Gainesville, Georgia)
Design Review Manual, April 2002 (Margaret Marion, Aiken)

Recreation/Open Space

Recreation Plan, October 1966 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
Open Space and Recreation Plan, April 1974 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
A Study of the City of Aiken Recreation Department and Facilities, 1986 (Arbor Engineering, Inc., Greenville, South Carolina)

Utilities

Sanitary Sewer Improvements Report, June 1962 (Wiedeman and Singleton, Atlanta, Georgia)
Engineering Study Water Distribution System, 1978-79 (Pitometer Associates)
Water Supply and Distribution System Improvements Report, January 1980, (Wiedeman and Singleton, Atlanta, Georgia)
201 Facilities Plan (Sanitary Sewer), April and August 1983
Wise Hollow Drainage Study, June 1984 (Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc., Columbia, South Carolina)
Kalmia Basin Drainage Study, July 1985 (Wiedeman and Singleton, Inc. Engineers, Atlanta, Georgia)
Sewer Capacity Report, 1985 (Wiedeman and Singleton, Atlanta, Georgia)
Water Study, 1987 (Wiedeman and Singleton, Atlanta, Georgia)
Report: Water Supply and Distribution System Improvements; Network Analysis and Information, January 1988 (Wiedeman and Singleton, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia)
Stormwater Management Study for the City of Aiken: Wise Hollow Drainage Basin and Sand River Drainage Basin, June 1991 (Department of Civil Engineering, University of South Carolina and the South Carolina Land Resources Conservation Commission, Columbia, South Carolina)
Water Supply Study; February 2000 (Woolpert, Inc.)
Sand River Watershed Study, June 2003 (Woolpert, Inc.)

Annexation

Annexation Study, February 1974 (Sydney Carter, Planning Consultant, Augusta, Georgia)
City of Aiken Annexation Study, September 1984 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Columbia, South Carolina)

Other

Aiken 1976, A Survey of Public Opinion on Local Government, 1977 (Walton H. Owens, Jr., Ph.D., Clemson University)
Community Information, Aiken, South Carolina, 1980 (author unknown)
Citizen Participation Plan, March 1980 (Vismor, McGill and Bell, Columbia, South Carolina)
Tree Survey of the Parkways, 1993 (Department of Engineering/Public Works)
The Feasibility of a Proposed Commerce/Industrial Park, June 1996 (prepared for the Aiken Corporation by Edens and Avant, Columbia, South Carolina)

Table 2

Major Development Regulations Adopted by City of Aiken Since 1947

Zoning Ordinance, 1947
Subdivision Regulations, December 9, 1955
Zoning Ordinance, 1959
Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, July 12, 1971
Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, April 26, 1982
Landscaping and Tree Ordinance, July 9, 1984
Sediment Control Ordinance, May 15, 1984
Subdivision Regulations, October 1, 1987
Historic Preservation Ordinance (part of Zoning Ordinance), July 4, 1990
Tree Protection and Landscaping Ordinance, June 8, 1992
Revised Zoning Ordinance, November 22, 1999

II.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

A. Regional Context II-1

B. Natural Resources..... II-1

C. Historic Resources..... II-5

D. Existing Land Use II-10

E. Transportation II-16

F. Public Facilities and Services II-18

G. Demographics II-24

H. Housing II-38

I. Economic Base II-40

J. Summary of Trends and Key Issues II-44

II. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

A. Regional Context

Aiken is located in west central South Carolina about 15 miles east of downtown Augusta, Georgia, 174 miles east of Atlanta, and 56 miles west of Columbia. The Aiken-Augusta area, including North Augusta, is an emerging metropolitan area with a population of some 400,000 strategically situated within a triangle formed by Atlanta, Charlotte, and Charleston which also includes the Greenville-Spartanburg area. Aiken's proximity to I-20, the Atlanta and Charlotte airports, and the ports of Charleston and Savannah also reinforces the area's importance. Aiken is situated in the center of Aiken County and is the County's seat and largest city. (See Map 2)

B. Natural Resources

1. General

Aiken is located below the "fall line", the boundary dividing land with metamorphic rock at the surface from that with sedimentary rock, and in the sandhills of South Carolina's upper coastal plain. Situated on a broad, flat ridge, the City is on one of the highest points of land between Augusta and Charleston.

Aiken owes its initial and much of its subsequent development to its temperate climate and its soils. In the 19th century, the climate was believed to be healthful and was thought to compare favorably with famous resorts; the relatively mild winters and pleasant fall and spring weather continue to attract residents and businesses. The sandy soils were also considered to be an asset since they absorbed rain quickly. In addition, some 19th century writers thought the predominance of pines was beneficial and even that the presence of kaolin in the soils helped to purify the atmosphere.

2. Climate

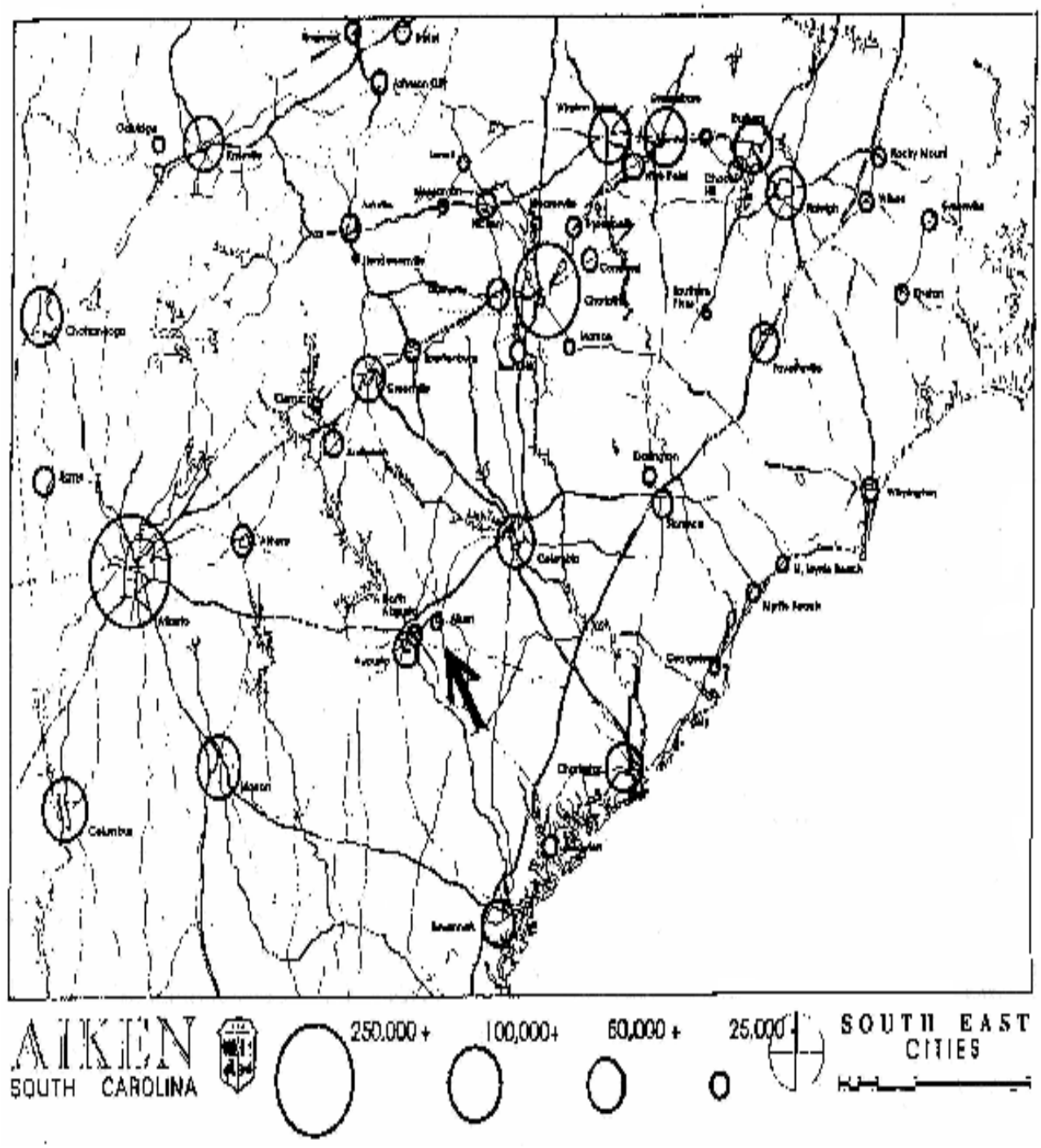
The Aiken area owes its mild, humid climate to several factors: its latitude (less than 10 degrees north of the Tropic of Cancer); its altitude of about 500 feet; the proximity of the Gulf Stream to the South Carolina coast; and mountains to the north and west that are almost as close as the coast. The average temperature is about 64 degrees with a frost-free growing season of 210-243 days. In winter, the average temperature is about 48 degrees and the average minimum about 37 degrees; in summer, the average temperature is about 79 degrees and the average maximum about 90 degrees.

3. Topography

East of Whiskey Road and Laurens Street, most of the land is level or slopes gently. To the west, the terrain is generally more sloping and even hilly. Whiskey Road/Laurens Street follows a ridge that divides a drainage basin; rainfall to the east flows into the Edisto River while that to the west flows into the Savannah River.

Map 2

Regional Context



4. Geology

The geology of the upper coastal plain has been affected by the warping of land, by the encroachment of the sea, and deposition and erosion by rivers and streams. The Aiken Plateau, the raised plain between the valleys of the Savannah and Congaree Rivers that slopes gently toward the sea, is a remnant of land left after retreat by the sea; it is made of sediments left in upper river deltas, on shallow ocean shelves, and in offshore deep waters. The oldest sediments consist of the clayey, quartzose sands and kaolinitic clays of the Middendorf formation. Much of the sandhills' sand was carried down from the Blue Ridge and Piedmont by rivers and subsequently blown into dunes.

Among the mineral resources are sand, gravel, kaolin, and fuller's earth. South Carolina is second in the nation in the production of kaolin, a fine white clay used in the manufacture of porcelain, paper, and medicine. Much of the State's kaolin comes from the Aiken area where mines have been worked continuously since 1852.

5. Soils

The soils are in three groups each of which contains one or more major soil types and several minor soils. Two of the soil units, Troup-Lakeland-Fuquay and Vaucluse-Alley-Troup, are the ones found in the sand hills and have a low available water capacity; they are well-drained, sandy soils that are generally poorly suited for crops, sometimes suited for woodland, pastures, and recreation; and usually suitable for most urban uses. The third unit is the Faceville-Fuquay-Marlboro which features well-drained, sandy and loamy soils with a clayey or loamy subsoil. Found on the broad ridge to the east and south of Aiken, the unit has a high percentage of prime farmland soils and is suitable for pasture, woodland, hayland, urban, and recreational uses.

The Soil Survey of Aiken County Area, South Carolina, which was prepared by the Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the S.C. Agricultural Experiment Station and S.C. Land Resources Commission, contains maps, charts and descriptions of soils within the study area. Information is also provided on the suitability of each soil for specific uses including recreation, building, and sanitary facilities.

6. Water

The founding and growth of Aiken depended on the railroad and roads, not rivers. The closest navigable rivers, the Savannah and Edisto, are 10 miles to the west and 20 miles to the east respectively. Aiken's location on a ridge offers the advantage of not having to deal with flooding. Coker Spring was an important source of water for early settlers. The City currently relies on ground and surface water.

The eastern portion of the study area is in the Edisto River sub-basin and is drained by Shaw's Creek, the main source of water. The western portion of the

study area is in the Savannah River sub-basin; water flowing into Sand River (in Hitchcock Woods), Wise Hollow and Hollow Creek (south of the City), and Town Creek (in the Gem Lakes area) ultimately reach the Savannah. There are no large lakes.

There is an abundance of groundwater. The most important aquifer underlying Aiken is the Middendorf, and the water the City obtains from this aquifer is of good quality. Groundwater can be affected by pollution of surface water, so it is important to protect the aquifer since it is extensive and interconnected and can take many years to cleanse itself if contaminated. Fortunately, contamination from disposal of radioactive wastes is said not to have seriously affected the quality of groundwater outside of the Savannah River Site.

7. Floodplains

While Aiken does not have to deal with significant riverine flooding, it is subject to occasional flooding caused by heavy rain and runoff from impervious surfaces resulting from development. In 1979, the City passed an ordinance to minimize damage from floods.

In and near Old Aiken, there are scattered locations subject to flooding shown on the federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. The largest area of 100-year shallow flooding is in the block occupied by the Schofield Middle School; approximate locations of some other areas are

- Park Avenue between York and Fairfield Streets;
- Fairfield Street around Abbeville Avenue;
- Edgefield Avenue between Lancaster Street and McCormick Street;
- Grace Avenue around Walker Avenue and Magnolia Street;
- at the intersection of Two Notch Road and Mead Avenue;
- south of Rutland Drive at the Southern Railroad tracks; and
- west of York Street near the northern end of Kershaw Street.

There are several areas which are classified in the 100-to-500-year flood category:

- the area north of Price Avenue and west of Two Notch Road (being considered for an expansion of Virginia Acres Park);
- from the intersection of Laurens Street and Richland Avenue east to Newberry Street and south to Hayne Avenue;
- Laurens Street midway between Hampton and Abbeville Avenues;
- South Boundary Avenue between Berkley Street and Locke Street;
- the cemetery on the east side of Laurens Street immediately north of Bethany Cemetery; and
- east of Orangeburg Street and north of Park Avenue.

One or more of these areas may be Carolina bays which are oval depressions that contain savannahs or wetlands and are unique to the coastal plain and found primarily in North and South Carolina. There are other areas subject to flooding that are not depicted on the flood hazard maps. There is no inventory of wetlands.

C. Historic Resources

Several factors were critical to the founding of Aiken in the 1830's and to the shaping of its subsequent development into a prosperous town of about 25,000.

1. The Earliest Years: The Influence of Malaria

It was not until nearly 50 years after Aiken was founded that the role of the mosquito in transmitting malaria was discovered. Malaria had been commonly believed to be caused by swamp air. After 1790, the plantations of the South Carolina low country became increasingly unhealthful during the warm months because of malaria which caused planter families to begin regular migrations and to establish settlements in the South Carolina sandhills.

Most planters left their plantations in the hands of their overseers around May and returned around November. Some went to towns like Charleston and Beaufort. Others went inland or roamed to distant places, like Newport, Rhode Island, or Europe. The fact that many planter families became confirmed travelers seeking recreation probably later aided Aiken in becoming known outside of South Carolina as a resort. The notion that the sand hill region was a good place to avoid malaria was evident in Robert Mills' 1825 atlas, which stated: “The air here is remarkably salubrious, and the water pure and pleasant. Taking the whole year round, there is no country more healthy; the summers are very free from bilious, and the winters from inflammatory diseases.”

2. The Founding of the Town: The Railroad, The Plan, and Graniteville

a) The Railroad and the Plan. Mills' 1825 atlas depicted sparse settlement in the area where Aiken is which then fell in the Barnwell and Edgefield districts about midway between the two county seats. The districts contained only a few villages, the three largest being Barnwell with about 120 people, Edgefield, about 300, and Hamburg, about 1,200 people. Hamburg was a new and rapidly growing town across the Savannah River from Augusta. The construction of a railroad from Charleston to Hamburg was conceived as a means of lifting Charleston out of an economic recession by diverting freight traffic to Charleston from Savannah.

Had it not been for this South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company project, which, when completed, was the longest railroad in the world and twice as long as any in America, Aiken probably would not have been planned. The first plan for old Aiken is said to have been drawn by engineers working on the railroad project, one of whom married the daughter of William W. Williams who, in 1832 promised to give the S.C. Canal and Railroad Co. half of the part of his land that was to be divided into lots for a town. The engineers, Andrew Alfred Dexter, and his assistant, Cyril Pascalis, are credited with the plan for the city which is characterized by blocks measuring

300' x 600' and street rights-of-way that are 150' wide. Aiken was named for William Aiken, one of the key figures in the pioneering railroad project. An old plat for the town, kept at the Aiken County Historical Museum, shows that the train ran through the city along the center of Railroad Avenue (now Park Avenue) until it reached Laurens Street where the tracks curved to the west down to a stationary engine built to lower cars over an inclined plane. No land other than the street rights-of-way appears to have been set aside for public buildings or squares although land was given for schools and churches.

In September 1833, when The Charleston Courier announced that the Charleston and Hamburg Rail Road would soon be ready to carry passengers and freight from Charleston to Aiken, it pointed out the potential for a health and pleasure resort:

> ……we congratulate our citizens on the prospect of having a fashionable watering place in our own State, and by the aid of the Rail Road almost in the immediate vicinity of our city, which will render unnecessary the large annual migrations to the North, which have now all become too common.

This article mentioned that the inclined plane could be seen located roughly where Highland Park Drive now intersects with Highland Park Terrace. Entering Aiken from the west, the slope was too steep for locomotives to pull a train without help which the inclined plane provided. A stationary engine at the top of the slope with a cable and a crank raised and lowered the railroad cars. The inclined plane proved to be expensive to operate, so, in 1850, a contract was made to grade a route to eliminate it. Aiken's impressive railroad cut was part of this effort and was completed in less than two years for $125,000 using slave labor.

On December 19, 1835, Aiken received its charter of incorporation. Eight years after being incorporated and ten years after the completion of the railroad, Aiken was described in Simm's Geography of South Carolina as "a place of considerable and increasing importance." Simms also said that Aiken possessed " . . . a number of fine dwelling-houses, several churches, several excellently kept taverns, and is particularly famous for its Coker Spring, a fountain of delicious water, which is equally cold and unfailing.

b. Graniteville Company. In the mid 1840's, the Graniteville Manufacturing Company was developed by William Gregg. In 1847, Gregg built a home known as “Kalmia” on Kalmia Hill; it became his permanent home in 1854 and burned in 1920. Several other prominent Charlestonians followed to create a small settlement called Kalmia village where Gregg established what is believed to have been the first large peach orchard in the upcountry of

South Carolina; peaches were sent from the Kalmia railroad station to northern destinations.

In 1849, Aiken's town council received a census report for the village, which was found to have a total population of 683, of which about 56% were white, about 35% slaves, and about 9% free African-Americans.

3. The Ante-Bellum Period: Transition from a Summer to a Winter Resort

Being a summer resort from the beginning, several hotels were built during the town's first decade. However, many of Aiken's early summer visitors, especially the planter families, had their own houses or stayed in the homes of friends.

Around 1845, an effort was made to make the northern public aware of Aiken's good climate, and the reputation of Aiken as a health resort gradually spread. Articles appeared in professional publications, such as an 1851 issue of The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, which said:

> On account of its high elevation, the atmosphere is light and dry… Moreover, it is filled with the effluvia of the pine, which certainly does not detract from its balmy and soothing character. . . . The advantages of Aiken, as a place for northern invalids in winter, consists in the following points: -- its ease of access and its proximity to a metropolis; its sheltered location; its light, balmy air, and dry soil; and its suitable and comparatively even temperature; and, finally, its complete inland climate.

As a result of such information and of promotional efforts, Aiken had begun to attract winter visitors from the north and the British dominions before the War Between the States.

4. The War Between the States

Aiken felt the effects of the War Between the States, but it was not until the end that it experienced any combat. There was a skirmish in February of 1865, part of which occurred in the center of town; there was shelling but little damage. In 1866, Aiken's town council passed a resolution appointing a committee of prominent citizens to adopt measures to encourage immigration. They circulated a detailed report pointing out what were thought to be the advantages of Aiken to attract settlers including the unsurpassed salubrity of climate as attested by the celebrity it already enjoys as a resort for invalids.

5. The Reconstruction Period

There was considerable unrest in the area around Aiken after the war and prior to the end of Reconstruction, particularly in 1876, when riots occurred at Hamburg and Ellenton. Two major changes affected Aiken during Reconstruction.

a) Health Resort to Sports Colony

The change of Aiken from a mecca for invalids to a sports center for wealthy Northerners was gradual. Exercise in the open air was considered to be essential to restoring an invalid's strength, and Aiken's relatively mild winter weather made it possible for people to engage in a wide variety of outdoor activities.

Although many individuals contributed to Aiken becoming a well-known resort, Louise Eustis Hitchcock and her relatives are considered by some to have been a key factor in attracting wealthy northerners enthusiastic about horses and outdoor activities. During the 1870's, the sickly, orphaned girl, who was less than ten years old, first came to the winter resort with her aunt Celestine Eustis. After her marriage to Thomas Hitchcock in 1891, she continued to come to Aiken, and the house they called "Mon Repos" became their winter home.

In 1897, William C. Whitney bought two houses close to the Hitchcock's winter cottage; before his death in 1904, Whitney added to his house, "Joye Cottage", which was one of his ten estates. Before 1900, Whitney and F.R. and Thomas Hitchcock are said to have bought over 8,000 acres of land near their winter cottages for the enjoyment of their families and friends. Thomas Hitchcock stocked the area with game, and W.C. Whitney had Whitney Drive, originally a bicycle path, constructed before 1899. The Aiken Drag was established in the early 1900's, and lines for the drag hunt were cut through the area which is known as Hitchcock Woods. Now about 2,000 acres, the Woods are laced with bridle and walking paths, and Aiken has grown around this great legacy of the Hitchcocks.

b) Creation of Aiken County

A boon to Aiken was the act passed in 1871 creating Aiken County. The new County Commission selected the Gregg property adjoining the railroad for the courthouse in the same city block as the railroad depot and close to the point designated as the center of town on an 1869 plat of Aiken. The concept probably was to have a central location for the courthouse with space for a square adjacent to the railroad depot. However, the County abandoned the site and the current courthouse was built in the street right-of-way a few blocks to the west. It was completed in the 1880's, altered in the 1930's as a WPA project, then remodeled again in the 1980's.

6. The Late 1800's and Early 1900's

The last part of the 19th century brought more growth and changes. In 1889, it was estimated that Aiken had 2,200 permanent residents and that, at the height of the winter season, the population swelled to 5,000. An article written around 1887 reported that "Park Avenue and some others are now being graded and laid out artistically with a view to having in the centers a series of gardens containing rare shrubs and flowers." This was probably the beginning of Aiken's parkways. It is likely that practical concerns, like sanitation and being able to turn teams of animals without backing up, had originally led to the choice of wide street rights-of-way

rather than a concern about being able to develop the landscaped medians that currently characterize old Aiken.

The first town hall, which had been in the middle of Laurens Street (the town plan apparently did not set aside lots for government buildings), was picked up and moved to the present site of the Municipal Building in 1884. (The location of the town hall was later changed again before it was reestablished at its present site.) The principal business areas of the town were concentrated around Laurens Street and Richland Avenue ("uptown") and Park Avenue from York to Union Streets, including the railroad depot ("downtown"). Like Aiken's post-1950 strip developments along Whiskey Road and Richland Avenue, these appear to have sprung up as a result of factors favorable to commerce, including traffic and visibility.

By the late 1800's Aiken had several schools and churches. The Aiken Institute was built in 1891 on the site of the Aiken Academy. Aiken's best-known institution for educating African-Americans, the Schofield Normal and Industrial School, continued to grow in the location acquired in 1870.

Polo was introduced to Aiken in 1882, six years after the sport was introduced in America, and, in 1889, the Aiken Polo Club joined the United States Polo Association as its tenth member. The sport was quite popular with Aiken's winter residents, as were nearly all equestrian activities, around which the social life of the winter colony revolved. By the 1930's, there were numerous polo fields in the area south of South Boundary Avenue. Whitney Field, the Powderhouse Polo Fields, and Winthrop Field are still used. Other fields were developed for other horse-related uses: the Aiken Mile Track about 1936 for training standardbreds, the Aiken Training Track in 1941 for training flat racers, and Clark Field, the current steeplechase track, in the 1940's.

Aiken as a winter resort was considered to be simple and unpretentious. Although there were hotels, Aiken was considered to have less of the hotel atmosphere than any other resort center in the south and was considered a cottage colony. Nearly one hundred homes were occupied only during the winter and many more leased; the homes ranged from small cottages to large residences with many outbuildings.

In its prime as a winter resort, Aiken had two eighteen-hole golf courses. The first holes of the Palmetto Golf Club, said to be the oldest existing golf course in South Carolina and one of the oldest in America, were laid out in 1892, and its present clubhouse was built around 1902. Aiken's winter colony is also responsible for the court tennis building on Newberry Street, one of about seven or eight such facilities in the United States. Winter residents also built indoor sports facilities on their winter estates.

7. World War II to Present

After World War II, the activities of the winter colony resumed at a less lavish scale. What was left by 1950 was adversely affected by the construction of the Savannah River Plant by the Atomic Energy Commission. Completed in 1952, the facility, now known as the Savannah River Site, has had a lasting impact on Aiken. Many workers

were housed in temporary residences and boarding houses in and around the city during its construction. Since the opening of the plant, new subdivisions, mostly south and west of the city, have been developed, shopping centers built, and school and church facilities expanded.

As with the entire nation, the automobile has profoundly affected Aiken. Development patterns and the design of structures, especially for businesses, have changed in response to the use of automobiles. The automobile was probably a factor in the loss of the trolley line which opened in 1902 and closed in 1929 and which provided transportation linking Aiken with Horse Creek Valley, North Augusta, and Augusta. Aiken has intentionally retained a few unpaved roads in its historic districts, horses are still used occasionally for recreational travel, and an attempt has been made to reestablish public transportation using buses. The commercial center of the City has moved away from downtown and fashionable downtown residential areas have been affected by conflicting uses and competition from new residential developments.

In an effort to preserve its heritage, City Council passed the Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1990 and extensive revisions to it in 1993. Map 3 and Table 3 show the districts and sites that have been designated by City Council to the Aiken Historic Register for protection under the Ordinance.

D. Existing Land Use

Map 4 depicts the general land use for the initial study area, and the following provides an overview. The section for each planning district in Chapter III provides additional detail.

1. Residential.

a) Single-Family Residential. This is the dominant land use in the initial study area. Old Aiken includes some of the more attractive residential neighborhoods as well as a substantial amount of substandard housing. The Hayne Avenue area, Highland Park, and Kalmia Hill are other established residential areas in good condition near Old Aiken. The other dominant residential area on the north side is Crosland Park east of US 1 north of Rutland Drive.

The historic area to the south of Old Aiken contains well-kept homes and large estates many of which were built by winter colonists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Further south are neighborhoods developed in the 1950's and 1960's including Dunbarton Oaks, Aiken Estates, and Conger Woods. To the south and west are the more recent developments including Gem Lakes and those associated with golf courses such as Houndslake and Woodside Plantation which were initiated in the 1970's and 80's respectively. To the east in the Pine Log Road corridor, Robinwood and Gatewood were also developed in the past 15 years. To the west off of Hitchcock Parkway is Foxchase, an equestrian-oriented development bordering Hitchcock Woods. In the 1990's, one of the most successful single-family subdivisions was Sandstone west of Aiken Mall.

Map 3

Historic Districts

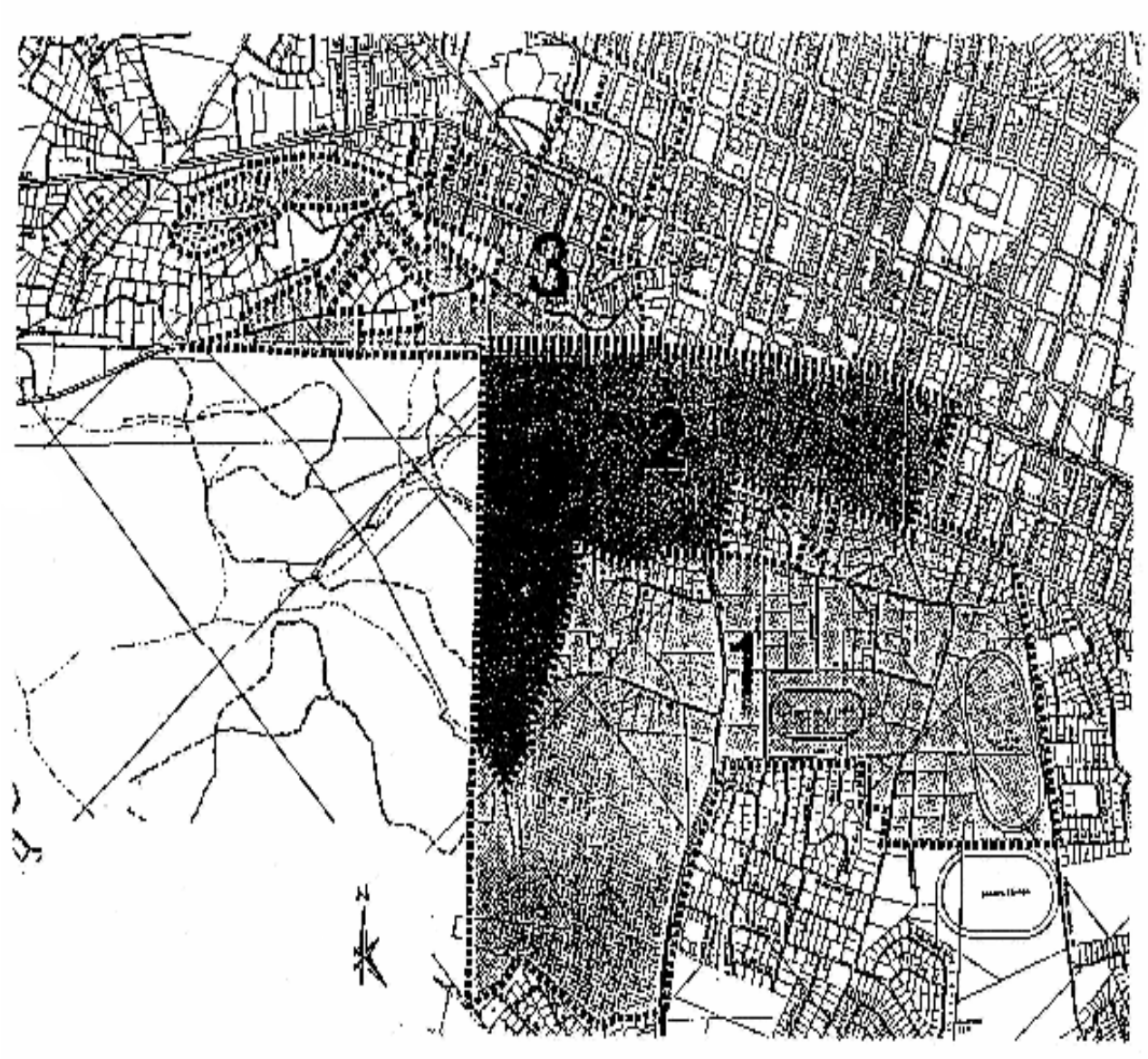
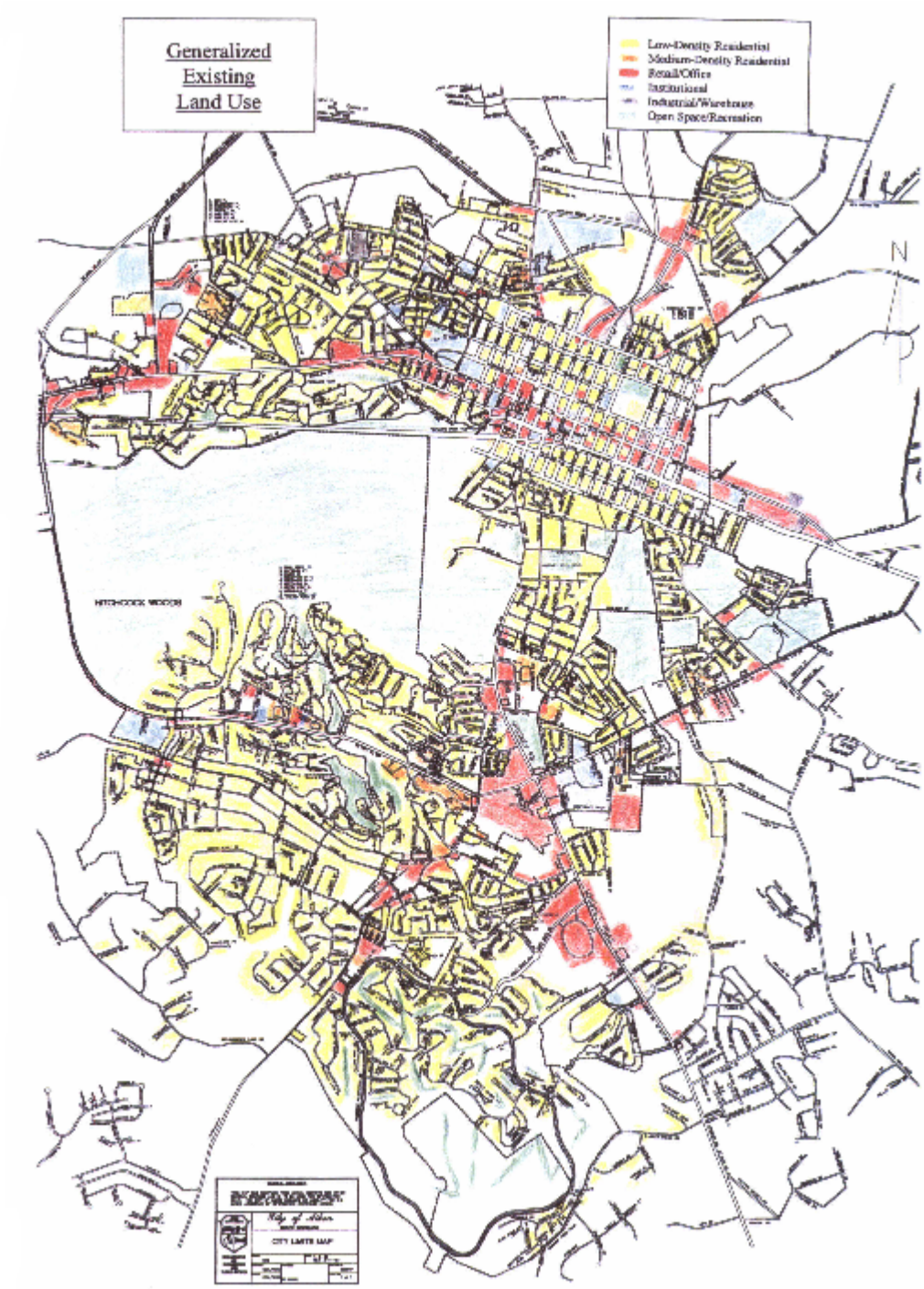


Table 3
Sites and Districts on the Aiken Historic Register

Property Name and Address	Date Designated
Historic District II	3/11/91
Willcox Inn; 100 Colleton Ave., SW	3/11/91
Banksia; 433 & 435 Newberry St., SW	4/08/91
Historic District III	5/13/91
Historic District I	6/10/91
Cushman-Vance House; 623 Park Ave., SW	7/08/91
Whiskey Road right-of-way between South Boundary Ave. & Whitney Dr.	7/08/91
The Squash Court; 463 Whiskey Rd.	9/09/91
Crossways; 450 East Boundary Ave.	10/14/91
Swallow Dip; 357 Chesterfield St., SW	12/09/91
Unpaved roads in Historic Districts I & II	2/08/93
St. Mary Help of Christians Church complex; southwest corner of Park Ave. & York St.	9/13/93
Friendship African Baptist Church complex; southeast corner of Richland Ave. & Kershaw St.	9/12/94
Charlie Hill House; 303 Newberry St., NW	5/08/95
Farmers and Merchants Building; 167 Laurens St.	6/12/95
Legare-Morgan House (No. 10 Downing St.); 241 Laurens St., SW	4/08/96

Map 4

Generalized Existing Land Use



b) **Multifamily Residential.** There are numerous duplexes and some small apartment buildings in Old Aiken and the area immediately surrounding it including public housing complexes such as Hahn Village on Laurens Street north of Hampton Avenue. The growth of the late 1980's saw the development of several large apartment complexes on the south side of Aiken including the Colony, Woodwinds, Churchill Commons, and Gatewood.

2. **Retail.** In addition to the downtown area, the major retail commercial areas are along Whiskey Road from Boardman Road beyond Aiken Mall; along Pine Log Road from Silver Bluff Road eastward to beyond Whiskey Road; along Silver Bluff Road from Pine Log Road south to Centre South shopping center; along Richland Avenue eastward beyond the City limits; on York Street north of Hampton Avenue to just past Rutland Drive; at the intersection of Laurens Street and Hampton Avenue; at Six Points where Vaucluse and Trolley Line Roads intersect; along Richland Avenue west from Waterloo Street almost to Valley Road; along Richland Avenue from near Gregg Avenue westward beyond the City limits; and north along University Parkway.

   Downtown had been the dominant retail area until strong residential growth occurred on the south side in the 1980's which in turn attracted commercial uses. Though the retail "center of gravity" had already shifted decidedly to the south, the development that sealed the dominance of the south side was the opening of Aiken Mall in October of 1989. However, the degree of new commercial development is not a true indicator of the level of increase in commercial activity. While the south side is the center of retail trade in the Aiken area, there is a substantial amount of vacant commercial space caused by businesses moving from existing space further out into new quarters; this trend has resulted in vacancies at Mitchell Plaza, Heritage Square, and Kalmia Plaza.

3. **Offices.** Downtown has the major concentration of offices, but others include the Centennial Office Park with 200,000 square feet of floor area near South Aiken High School, the Centre South Office Park and the Woodside Office Park on Silver Bluff Road, in the Millbrook and Pawnee Drive area, and the medical offices at Aiken Regional Medical Centers. Office uses are also dispersed along Whiskey Road, Pine Log Road, and Richland Avenue.

4. **Industrial/Warehouse.** There are no major industries in the initial study area. A relatively small operation, American Size and Chemical, is located on Marlboro Street. There are a few mini-warehouse businesses along major roads as well as other small warehouses.

5. **Institutional.** Governmental buildings including the Aiken Municipal Building, Aiken County Courthouse, and Aiken County Administration Building are located in Old Aiken as is the Aiken County Library. Several State offices, including the Departments of Social Services and Transportation, are located on Richland Avenue East. Several elementary, middle, and high schools are located throughout the

study area, and the University of South Carolina at Aiken is located on the west side near Aiken Regional Medical Centers. A newly formed college, Rose Hill, is located at the Rose Hill estate on Barnwell Avenue at Greenville Street. Churches are located throughout the area with a notable concentration adjacent to the downtown including St. Thaddeus Episcopal, First Presbyterian, St. John's Methodist, First Baptist, St. Mary's Help of Christians (Catholic), Friendship Baptist Church, and Cumberland AME Church.

6. **Open Space/Recreation.** Numerous parks and recreation facilities are located in the study area (See #9 under "Public Facilities and Services" below). In addition, one of the dominant features is Hitchcock Woods, the large wooded area immediately southwest of downtown within which is an extensive system of trails in a virgin wooded area. The Woods were given "to the people of Aiken" by the Hitchcock family, noted winter colony residents, but only a small portion of the land is in the City, and the entire tract is controlled by the private Hitchcock Foundation.

   To the east of the Woods are the prime historic districts and the horse district. The area includes the Aiken Training Track for thoroughbreds and the Mile Track for standardbreds; the training season runs from October to April. In addition, many residents of the district keep horses which they ride in the Woods. The horse area and the Woods, while constituting a valuable greenbelt contributing heavily to Aiken's special character, also create a barrier separating the downtown area from the south side where most of the growth has taken place in recent years. As Aiken has grown, it has begun to encircle the Woods. While obviously a tremendous asset to Aiken, Hitchcock Woods and its relationship to the rest of the city will continue to be an issue.

   Other significant privately owned open spaces are the Palmetto Golf Course on Berrie Road (one of the earliest courses in America), the Whitney Polo Field, the Winthrop Polo Field, Powderhouse Polo Fields, Ford Conger Field also known as the Steeplechase Track; Highland Park Golf Course on Highland Park Drive; and the Woodside and Houndslake golf courses on the south side.

7. **Vacant/Agricultural.** There are few significant developable tracts in the City limits with one notable exception being a large area zoned R-1A to the west of Southwood subdivision. However, in the unincorporated portion of the initial study area, there are numerous vacant parcels including the Early tract south of the Steeplechase Track; large areas south of East Pine Log Road; between Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads east of Aiken Mall; between Gem Lakes and Richardson's Lake Road; the land northeast of the intersection of Richland Avenue East and Beaufort Street; and in the Lincoln Avenue area. While there is still some land in cultivation within the initial study area, primarily in the eastern portions where the best agricultural land is located, such uses are rapidly disappearing.

E. Transportation

1. **Roads.** The predominant form of transportation has been and will continue to be the private motor vehicle. Aiken's street network is generally well-suited for handling traffic with the most distinguishing feature of Aiken being its grid street pattern laid out in the 1830's within which have developed the landscaped parkways or medians; the many interconnecting streets tends to disperse traffic rather than having it concentrated on just one or two streets. Some of the primary east-west roads both within the grid and elsewhere are Richland Avenue (which is also US 1 and US 78 on certain segments), Hayne Avenue, South Boundary Avenue, Hampton Avenue, Trolley Line Road, Dibble Road, and Vaucluse Road. The main north-south roads are Laurens Street (SC 19), York Street (with the portion north of Richland Avenue being US 1), Whiskey Road, Silver Bluff Road, Beaufort Street, Gregg Avenue, and University Parkway.

   A partial circumferential bypass is formed by Pine Log Road, Hitchcock Parkway, Robert Bell Parkway, University Parkway, and Rutland Drive. The widening of East Pine Log scheduled to begin in 1998 should help the flow of traffic on that stretch, but, because access is not limited, the road will not function well as a bypass. A proposed new section of the bypass in the northeastern quadrant, SC 118, would close the loop; this section, scheduled to be completed in about 2002, would be a limited access road with landscaped medians and bicycle paths. Traffic volumes for certain roads are shown on Table 4.

   One of the primary access problems is the lack of alternatives to Whiskey Road for north-south traffic. Because of the character of the road and its location in the horse/historic area, widening of Whiskey Road has been controversial. With the horse area and its dirt roads to the east and Hitchcock Woods to the west, however, there are no good alternatives. North-south access is an issue that will not go away and may perhaps have to be addressed in the short-term by establishing an effective way for emergency traffic to travel quickly when traffic is congested and in the long-term by some type of efficient mass transit connecting downtown to the south side.

   Another obstacle to access is posed by large developments with private streets such as Woodside Plantation; care should be taken to reserve rights-of-way for public access in such projects.

2. **Bus Service.** Aiken County operates the Best Friend Express bus service over fixed routes in Aiken County including ones to Owens-Corning, Aiken Mall, Citizens Park, and Crosland Park. Ridership has been low since the service began over five years ago. Aiken County also operates a demand response van service which will come to the residence of someone unable to use the Best Friend. Intercity bus service is provided by Southeastern Stages from a station on Barnwell Avenue.

Table 4

Average Daily Traffic for Various Streets
1975, 1987, 1994 and 1995

	1975	1987	1994	1995
East Pine Log Rd. at Powerhouse Rd.	3,400	11,453	16,200	13,900
Whiskey Rd. south of Dougherty Rd.	7,700	12,766	19,100	17,600
Silver Bluff Rd. north of Pine Log Rd.	5,900	4,735	13,300	13,100
Pine Log Rd. between Silver Bluff and Whiskey Rds.	3,200	14,699	20,800	18,100
Silver Bluff Rd. south of Pine Log Rd.	2,000	3,194	10,700	11,100
Whiskey Rd. between Pine Log Rd. and Silver Bluff Rd.	7,600	17,030	16,800	17,000
Whiskey Rd. south of South Boundary Ave.	13,100	17,722	24,000	25,500
Hitchcock Pkwy. at Huntsman Dr.		10,488	15,700	15,200
Richland Ave. east of Hayne Ave.		12,863	14,300	16,600
Richland Ave. east of Sumter St.		7,240	11,000	9,100
South Boundary Ave. west of Newberry St.		8,332	11,700	11,900
Hampton Ave. between Laurens & York Sts.		8,923	10,900	10,000
Banks Mill Rd. at the Mile Track		1,786	3,400	3,100
Rutland Dr. between York & Laurens Sts.		7,532	9,700	10,800
University Pkwy. at the Hospital		4,662	13,100	11,400
Beaufort St. north of Abbeville Ave.		7,367	10,100	8,800
Gregg Ave. at Kalmia Landing		1,831	2,800	2,200

Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation

3. **Taxi Service.** Yellow Cab operates a taxi service in Aiken.

4. **Sidewalks.** While much of Old Aiken has sidewalks, they are generally absent in most other areas of the city. The Department of Engineering/Public Works has a program to rebuild old sidewalks and install new ones. In addition, the bicycle path/walkway plan being prepared by the Pathway Committee would provide new walking areas.

5. **Bicycles.** One of the primary results of the 1994 Strategic Plan was the strong support for making Aiken "bicycle-friendly". Old Aiken is conducive to on-street bicycle riding because it is flat and its grid layout with many interconnecting streets results in dispersed automobile traffic and many streets with low traffic volumes. However, other areas of the city are not so bicycle-friendly because of the narrowness of the streets, high traffic volumes, and rough surfaces. The Pathway Committee has prepared and is continuing to refine a plan for bicycle paths throughout the city including both on-street routes and separated bikeways. Some aspects of the plan have proved controversial and further refinements will be needed. Funding from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) has been secured to construct portions of the system.

6. **Horses.** Horses are used for travel in a large area of the city, primarily for pleasure and recreation. In addition to the stables associated with the training tracks, the horse area immediately south of Old Aiken has numerous stables which house horses kept for riding on the dirt roads in the area and into Hitchcock Woods which has an extensive system of paths and jumps. In addition, horse drawn carriages are frequently seen on downtown streets as well as in the horse area and the Woods.

7. **Railroads.** A primary feature in Aiken is the Norfolk Southern Railroad line which runs east-west through the heart of Old Aiken with its 100-foot right-of-way. The role of this railroad in the history and development of Aiken is noted in the "Historic Resources" section. A spur of this railroad also runs northward in the right-of-way of Union Street to provide service to some kaolin processing plants near Reynolds Pond Road several miles to the north.

F. Public Facilities and Services

1. **Water.**
   a) **Sources.** Aiken has a plentiful water supply with sources from surface water, a spring, and wells; water is readily available to all planning districts. Some 15 million gallons per day (mgd) is available with the highest recorded peak day production demand being 13.3 mgd in 1990 which was matched in May of 1996. The average water demand during peak summer periods is 9 mgd. Each of the five water sources is fed by a different electrical source to reduce the likelihood that all would be inoperative at the same time. In addition, Shiloh Springs has a 1.2 mgd butane gas pump which can replenish storage tanks in the event of a power outage.

Shaw's Creek. The main source is Shaw's Creek just north of the city providing about 8 mgd. A large treatment facility is located at that intake; the facility was constructed in 1953 with an addition and a modernization in 1981 and 1991.

Shiloh Springs. This series of springs near I-20 is the City's oldest source having been used since 1911. Up to 1.7 mgd are treated and pumped into the City's supply.

Pine Log Road Well. First developed in 1965 and then abandoned, the well was reopened in 1980 and expanded in 1989. It consists of two 1,000 gallon per minute (gpm) wells about 900 feet apart drawing water from an aquifer over 200 feet below the surface; capacity is about 2 mgd. Water is treated at the site.

Southwest Treatment Plant. Developed in 1987, this site near the intersection of Silver Bluff and Town Creek Roads consists of two wells and a treatment facility. Each well has capacity of about 1,000 gpm or some 2 mgd.

Mason Branch Reservoir. This reservoir just north of I-20 provides an emergency supply. The storage capacity is 1,254 acre-feet or 407 million gallons.

b) Storage and Distribution. Water from the Shaw's Creek Treatment Facility is pumped to three elevated storage tanks with a total capacity of 2 million gallons: a one-million-gallon storage tank on Chesterfield Street north of Hampton Avenue; a 500,000-gallon tank next to the Aiken Library; and a 500,000-gallon tank on Lloydtown Road. In addition, the water is also pumped to a 600,000-gallon standpipe on Laurens Street south of Rutland Drive. Water is distributed through a modern system of some 300 miles of mains varying in size from one to 20 inches. The City's largest water customer is the Owens-Corning plant which uses 1.0 mgd each day of the year.

2. Sanitary Sewer System.

a) Collection. There are more than 180 miles of sewers varying in size from eight to 36 inches; 21 pumping stations are used where topography does not allow gravity flow. The present gravity system has been extended as far as topography will allow. The system of sewer lines discharges into an interceptor which parallels the Sand River through Hitchcock Woods and eventually to the Horse Creek Valley Treatment Facility; capacity of the interceptor is 8.5 mgd. There are no combined sanitary and storm sewers. Major improvements were made in the 1950's and 1960's with other improvements since. While the system is in good condition and well-maintained, it does experience some infiltration and inflow during periods of high ground water.

b) Treatment. All of the City's effluent is treated at the Horse Creek Valley Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility operated by the Valley Public Service Authority (VPSA), an agency of Aiken County government. The City purchases treatment capacity with charges based on the actual flow. Placed in

operation in 1979, the Facility was the result of a cooperative effort of the City of Aiken, Aiken County, the City of North Augusta, the Graniteville Company, and United Merchants and Manufacturing. Located at the confluence of Horse Creek and the Savannah River, the capacity of the Facility is 20 mgd with the City of Aiken's allocation being 4.413 mgd of which 3.8 mgd is being used.

Until 1988, the City operated a sewage treatment facility at the Verenes Industrial Park off of US 1 near I-20 treating waste from the Park; it was closed when a discharge to the Horse Creek Valley Facility became possible. The 50,000-gallon-per-day facility could be reopened if needed or used as an equalization basin.

3. **Stormwater Management System.** There is an extensive system of pipes to handle stormwater runoff. However, in an effort to improve existing facilities and construct new ones, a Stormwater Management Utility was created in 1992. Each property in the City with an active water or sewer account is billed monthly with the amount dependent on the impervious area; a property that does not have an active utility account is billed semi-annually. The fee is used to maintain and construct detention or retention ponds, ditches, structures, and pipes.

   Significant projects undertaken in recent years are the wetlands projects at Hopelands Gardens and Schofield Middle School. The Hopelands project consists of a series of ponds which retain runoff from the Whiskey Road basin, allow much of the particulates to settle out and be absorbed by trees and other plantings, and then release the water at reduced energy level. Aside from being aesthetically pleasing, the ponds have helped to reduce erosion in Hitchcock Woods. A similar project at Schofield Middle School has not only resulted in better stormwater management but is being used by students to study wetlands ecology.

4. **Solid Waste Management System.**
   a) **Garbage.** Household garbage is collected once weekly from the backyard and is taken to the Aiken County Landfill near Langley. Commercial wastes are collected from dumpsters and taken to the Aiken County Landfill.

   b) **Trash.** Trash from residences, including limbs, leaves, and similar yard waste, is collected at least once a week at the curb.

   c) **Recyclables.** The recycling program began in 1989, the first in South Carolina. Glass, plastic, metal, paper, cardboard, and magazines are collected weekly at the curb. These commingled materials, plus cardboard, paperboard, and magazines collected from other sources, are delivered to the regional recycling facility in North Augusta with whom the City has an agreement.

5. **Police Protection and Fire Suppression.** The City of Aiken combined its police and fire protection services into a single Public Safety Department in 1977; officers serve in both police and fire protection capacities. There are four stations:
   - the Public Safety headquarters on Laurens Street opened in 1975;
   - Station #2 on Silver Bluff Road near Whiskey Road remodeled from a fire station in 1981 and remodeled again in 1997;
   - Station #3 on Richland Avenue west of Gregg Avenue completed in 1989; and
   - Station #4 on Silver Bluff Road near Woodside Plantation also completed in 1989.

   Major steps have also been taken in "community policing" including the PACT Team, bicycle patrols, and a horse patrol. As a result of the excellent service provided by the Public Safety Department, the City was given a Class 2 fire rating in 1982, the first in South Carolina. Continuing improvements since then have allowed the City to keep the Class 2 rating.

6. **Emergency Medical Services.** The Aiken County Emergency Medical Services and the Aiken County Rescue Squad provide emergency medical service.

7. **Disaster Preparedness.** The City has prepared an Emergency Operations Plan which sets forth policies and procedures governing the City's response in the event of a disaster including coordination with Aiken County, the State and federal governments, and other emergency service providers.

8. **Schools.**
   a) **Elementary and Secondary.**
      i) **Public.**
      Aiken High School on Rutland Drive
      South Aiken High School on East Pine Log Road
      Schofield Middle School on Kershaw Street
      Kennedy Middle on East Pine Log Road
      Wire Road Middle School
      North Aiken Elementary on Rutland Drive
      Millbrook Elementary on East Pine Log
      Aiken Elementary off of Hitchcock Parkway
      Chukker Creek Elementary on Chukker Creek Road
      Pinecrest on Pinecrest Avenue

      ii) **Private.**
      Aiken Preparatory School on Barnwell Avenue
      Mashburn School on Richland Avenue West
      Mead Hall on Greenville Street
      Saint Mary's School on York Street
      South Aiken Baptist on Silver Bluff Road at Dougherty Road

b) Colleges and Universities.
University of South Carolina at Aiken on University Parkway
Rose Hill College on Barnwell Avenue and Laurens Street

9. Parks.

a) Parkways. The parkways or landscaped medians in most of the streets in Old Aiken are the dominant park use. The streets in Old Aiken generally have 150-foot rights-of-way; the parkways apparently were not intended as part of the design but came into being as the traffic lanes became defined and were paved. While expensive for the City to maintain, the parkways are Aiken's most distinguishing characteristic and a great asset because of the pleasant atmosphere they create.

b) Virginia Acres. This 46-acre multi-use park and recreation complex is located on the east side of Whiskey Road just north of East Pine Log Road. Formerly a residential subdivision developed during the inception of the Savannah River Plant, the City acquired the site in the early 1970's. Virginia Acres is the site of the H. Odell Weeks Activity Center which was recently enlarged and incorporates gymnasiums and numerous meeting rooms as well as the main administrative offices for the Department of Parks and Recreation. Also at the site is a one-mile walking track, tennis complex, lighted soccer field, general purpose fields, a large playground, picnic shelters, open areas, and a building leased to the Aiken Community Playhouse. Efforts by the Aiken County Open Land Trust are in progress to raise funds to acquire a 14-acre site to the north known as the Woodward Tract; City Council has pledged $60,000 over the next three years to assist the Land Trust in purchasing the property which would then be deeded to the City. The 14-acre tract could be added to another 10 acres controlled by the City, a parcel which consists primarily of a retention pond which would serve as a lake and the focal point for a passive recreation area including walking trails.

c) Hopelands Gardens/Rye Patch. Hopelands Gardens is located on the site of an estate that was donated to the City and includes formal gardens, walking trails, lakes, a bandshell, and the Thoroughbred Hall of Fame. The adjacent Rye Patch complex, also on an estate given to the City, is occupied by a house now used as a meeting facility, several out-buildings, and a formal rose garden. Hopelands/Rye Patch is also the site of a wetlands pond project which cleans pollutants from water draining from Whiskey Road and also provides a series of ponds for the enhancement of the complex.

d) Smith-Hazel Recreation Center. Located on Kershaw Street south of Hampton Avenue, this is the primary park and recreation facility on the north side of Aiken. In addition to a gymnasium and meeting rooms in the main building, the site includes tennis courts and the City's only public swimming pool. Just to the east is the wetlands pond area on property owned by the Aiken County School Board adjacent to Schofield Middle School; though

technically not a part of the Smith-Hazel Recreation Center, the area complements it by providing ballfields as well as serving as a wetlands environmental learning laboratory. A PACT Team unit of the Public Safety Department is also stationed at the Center.

e) Citizens Park. This 125-acre recreation facility on the north side of East Pine Log Road west of Banks Mill Road includes a new softball complex which attracts regional and national tournaments, soccer fields, and youth baseball fields. A PACT Team unit of the Department of Public Safety is also stationed at the Park.

f) Kalmia Park. A neighborhood park of about 1.25 acres, Kalmia includes two tennis courts, a basketball court, picnic shelter, playground, and open play area.

g) Kennedy Kolony Park. This is a heavily used neighborhood park of about one-half acre that includes a basketball court and playground.

h) Eustis Park. An older park of some six acres, Eustis Park is important because of its location near low-income neighborhoods and to the Tri-Development Center including apartments occupied by its mentally and physically challenged clients. The Park includes a basketball court, playground, and open play areas and is being upgraded through a four-part program of improvements being funded by Community Development Block Grant Entitlement funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

i) Crosland Park Playground. Located on Aldrich Street at U.S. 1 (York Street), this playground occupies only a small part of a City-owned lot of about one-half acre.

j) Aiken County Library Playground. Although located on land owned by the County, the City constructed and maintains a playground on the southern end of the site of the Aiken County Public Library.

k) Gyles Park. Gyles Park is located on the north side of Park Avenue east of Union Street on land owned by the Norfolk Southern Railroad. The park is heavily treed and contains a playground and open play areas.

l) Farmers' Market. This facility is located in the parkway on Williamsburg Street south of Richland Avenue. Though primarily intended as a place for Aiken County farmers to sell their produce, the Market's role is being expanded somewhat to allow the sale of crafts. Repainting and other physical improvements have made the Market more of an asset to the neighborhood.

10. **Libraries and Museums.** The Aiken County Public Library has been located in a portion of the Aiken Institute building since 1989 when it was renovated for that purpose. The Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina at Aiken is the other library in the study area. As for museums, in addition to the Thoroughbred Hall of Fame at Hopelands Gardens, the other major facility is the Aiken County Historical Museum located in the Banksia estate on Newberry Street south of South Boundary Avenue.

11. **Electricity.** The primary provider within the City limits is the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company regulated by the South Carolina Public Service Commission. Much of the area is served by the Aiken Electric Cooperative, Inc., which is regulated by the Rural Electrification Administration in the United States Department of Agriculture.

12. **Natural Gas.** Natural gas is provided by South Carolina Electric and Gas Company. Two major high-pressure transmission lines cross the area, one at the western boundary near the Robert Bell Parkway, and the other running parallel to Hitchcock Parkway and Pine Log Road; the lines cross near the intersection of Hitchcock Parkway and Dibble Road where a substation is located.

13. **Telephone.** Service is provided by the Bellsouth Company.

14. **Cable Television.** Service is provided by Intermedia.

15. **Internet and Intranet Access.** In addition to national commercial providers, citizens have access to the Internet through "aiken.net", an on-line service maintained by SCESCAPE, an Aiken-based graphics and computer company. Also through SCESCAPE, citizens have access to an "intranet", a community network providing local e-mail, community bulletin board, and information on local businesses.

G. Demographics

1. Population.

a) Recent Trends

i) Growth

As seen on Table 5 and Graph 1, Aiken underwent slow but steady growth from its inception until the early 1950's; since then, there have been two major growth spurts. The first came during the 1950's as a result of the impact of the construction and opening of the Savannah River Plant with population increasing 58.7% between 1950 and 1960.

After the initial boom, population increase slowed until the late 1980's when growth accelerated because of another increase in hiring at the Savannah River Plant but also because of the number of retirees moving to Aiken. The DuPont Company, which had operated the Plant for the U.S. Department of Energy since it opened in 1954, had initiated the jump in

employment, and it was accelerated by Westinghouse which took over operation of the Savannah River "Site" in 1989. Aiken's population increased from 14,978 in 1980 to 20,386 in 1990, a 36.1% increase. Growth has slowed in the 1990's due first to the hiring slowdown at SRS followed most recently by major layoffs by Westinghouse and its subcontractors. The 1996 population estimate for the City is shown on Table 5. Table 6 shows births, deaths and in-migration and reveals that population growth has come largely from people moving to the city, not from natural increase.

ii) Race

Table 7 and Graph 2 show that the percentage of Aiken's population that is non-white declined from 1980 to 1990 because the vast majority of new residents in areas on the south side annexed during that decade were white. The vast majority of non-white residents live in an east-west band to the north and east of downtown.

iii) Age and Sex

Tables 8 and 9 and Graph 3 show population data by age and sex for Aiken and Aiken County for 1980 and 1990. The number of residents age 65 and over increased dramatically between 1980 and 1990 primarily due to the large number of former SRS workers reaching retirement age as well as other retirees moving to the city.

iv) Household Size and Population Density

Table 10 shows that the average number of persons per household has decreased steadily since 1970; among other factors, this decrease is due to couples having fewer children and an increase in the number of retirees living in Aiken. Graph 4 shows how the population density of Aiken has decreased since 1970, probably a result of the annexation of tracts on which large-lot subdivisions and commercial development occurred.

b) Projections

Population projections are provided in this Plan more as food for thought than as a prediction of things to come. As stated in the Introduction, for land use and transportation issues, the Plan assumes build-out and maximum population density. It is not the intent of the Plan to predict when population increases will occur or when build-out will be reached. The projections are not based on computer modeling or any other scientific approach but represent reasonable estimates.

Obviously, the mission of the Savannah River Site will be a prime factor in determining the pace of population growth. On Table 11, population projections through 2010 are presented based on two different assumptions:

Table 5

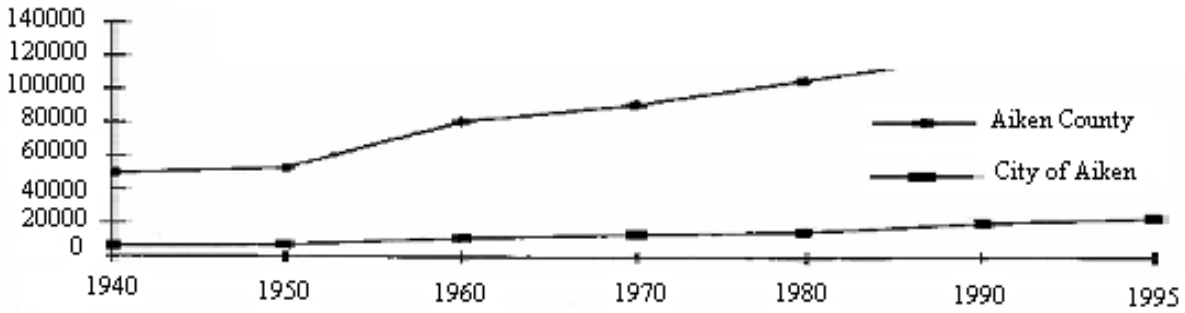
Population and Growth Trends
City of Aiken and Aiken County
1940-1990

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1994	1996
City of Aiken	6,168	7,083	11,243	13,436	14,978	20,386	24,929	25,000
Aiken County	49,916	53,137	81,038	91,023	105,625	20,940	31,900	135,198
Aiken as Percentage of County	12.3	13.3	13.9	14.8	14.2	16.8	18.9	19.1
Ten-Year Growth Rate (City of Aiken)		14.8	58.7	19.5	11.4	36.1	13.5 (5 years)	

Sources: U.S. Department of commerce, bureau of Census, Census of Population 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990
South Carolina Statistical Abstract, 1995

GRAPH 1

POPULATION and GROWTH TRENDS
CITY OF AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1940 - 1995



Source: U.S. Department of commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1940-1990; Department of Planning and community Development, City of Aiken 1995.

(1) no new major mission but continued cleanup including spent fuel management through the operation of such facilities as the Defense Waste Processing Facility but with no additional jobs; and

(2) a major new mission such as the construction of a linear accelerator for the production of tritium plus other activities involving plutonium stabilization and replacement of plutonium cores in weapons resulting in the maximum number of jobs.

There is little developable land in the City limits, so significant population increase will have to occur through annexations. It is difficult to estimate the extent of annexations in coming years especially in light of the unpredictable actions by the South Carolina legislature which could further restrict a city's already limited ability to annex land. For the purposes of making population projections, it is assumed that the area of the City will continue to expand at the same rate as it has since 1990.

2. **Income.** Income statistics for 1980 and 1990 are presented on Tables 12 and 13. The low-income households are concentrated in the area immediately north and east of downtown.

3. **Education.** Statistics on educational levels are provided in Table 14.

TABLE 6

POPULATION and MIGRATION TRENDS
CITY OF AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1980 - 1994

	1980	1985	1990	1994
Population				
Aiken County	105,625	113,622	120,940	131,900
City of Aiken	14,978	17,080	20,386	24.929
Births				
Aiken County	1,689	1,837	2,030	1,895
City of Aiken	244	272	409	381
Deaths				
Aiken County	851	1,009	1,099	1,230
City of Aiken	198	230	272	337
Natural Increase				
Aiken County	837	828	931	N/A
City of Aiken	46	42	137	
Net Migration				
Aiken County	904	894	N/A	N/A
City of Aiken	366	378		

SOURCE: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Vital and Morbidity Statistics, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993.
U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census
Aiken Department of Planning and Community Development.

TABLE 7

RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION
CITY OF AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1980 - 1990

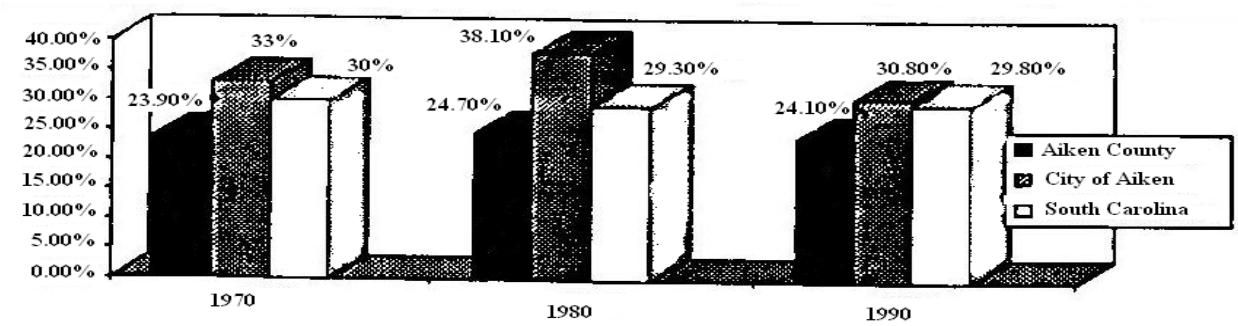
Race	City of Aiken				Aiken County			
	1980		1990		1980		1990	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
White	9,161	61.2	13,519	68.0	78,965	74.8	90,743	75.0
Black	5,718	38.2	6,132	30.8	26,152	24.8	29,100	24.0
Other	99	0.6	221	1.2	508	0.4	1,097	1.0
Total	14,978	100	19,832*	100	105,625	100	120,940	100

SOURCE: U.S. Department of commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1070, 1980, 1990

* The final Census total for 1990 was 20,386; however, a revised breakdown by race was not provided.

GRAPH 2

POPULATION by RACE
BLACK PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
City of Aiken, Aiken County, and South Carolina
1970 - 1990



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1970, 1980, 1990
Halliburton NUS, Socioeconomic Characteristics of Selected Counties and Communities Adjacent to the Savannah river Site, 1992

Table 8
Population

POPULATION
By Age for City of Aiken and Aiken County
1980

Age		City of Aiken		Aiken County
Under 5		1,031		8,105
5-9 years		1,098		8,737
10-14 years		1,180		9,223
15-24 years		2,452		18,967
25-34 years		2,106		16,440
35-44 years		1,509		12,142
45-54 years		1,571		11,748
55-64		1,756		10,240
Over 65 years		2,275		10,023
Total		14,978		105,625
Median Age		32.8		29.5

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1980

Table 9

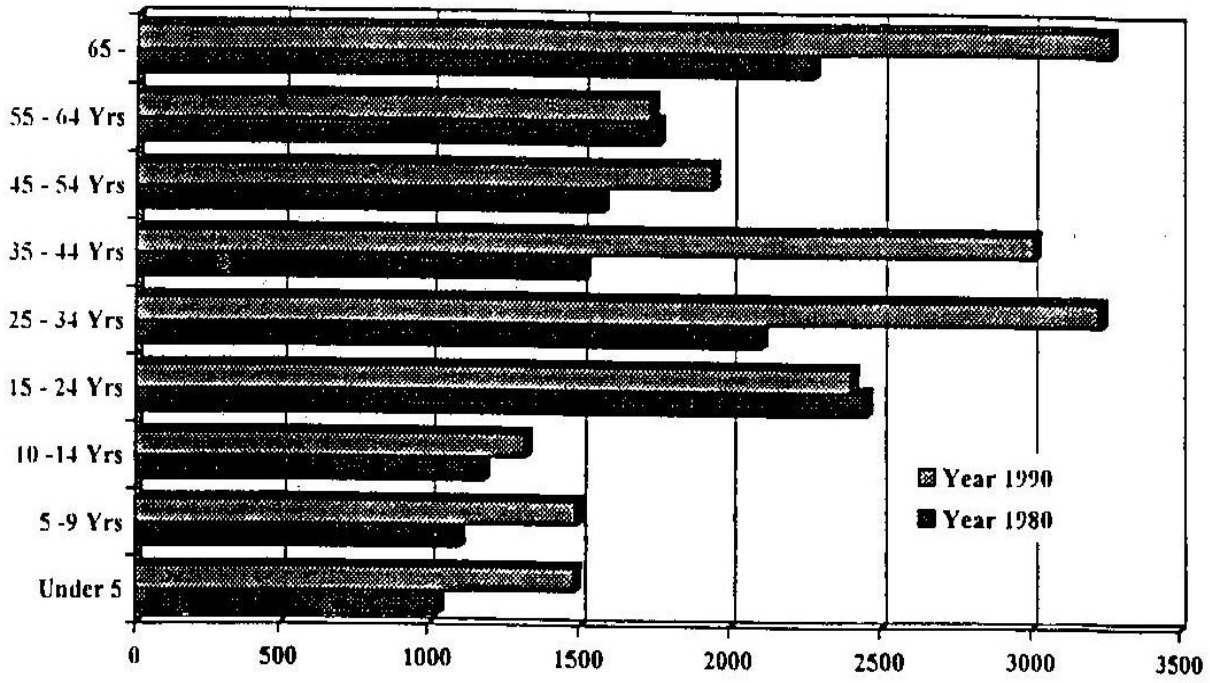
POPULATION
By Age and Sex
For City of Aiken and Aiken County
1990

AGE	City of Aiken			Aiken County		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Under 5 years			1,484	4,655	4,393	9,029
5 – 9 years			1,490	4,771	4,632	9,403
10-14 years	670	651	1,321	4,709	4,502	9,211
15-24 years	1,169	1,239	2,408	8,681	8,655	17,336
25-34 years	1,561		3,233	9,896	10,403	20,299
35-44 years	1,447	1,564	3,011	8,899	9,349	27,969
45-54 years	941	1,000	1,941	6,142	6,375	12,517
55-64 years	782	953	1,735	5,249	5,852	11,101
Over 65 years	1,230	2,039	3,269	5,613	8,183	13,796
TOTAL			19,892	58,596	62,344	120,940

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1990

Graph 3

POPULATION and AGE DISTRIBUTION
City of Aiken
1980 & 1990



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990

Source: City of Aiken Department of Public Safety 1995
Department of planning and Community Development, City of Aiken 1995

Table 10

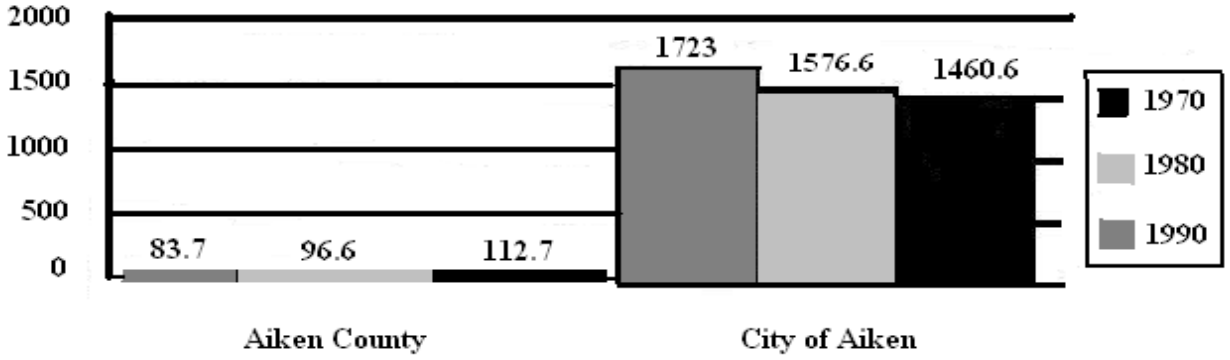
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION
City of Aiken and Aiken County
1970 – 1990
(Persons Per Household)

	1970	1980	1990
City of Aiken	3.06	2.56	2.48
Aiken County	3.35	2.9	2.66

Source: U.S. Census, Census of Population, 1970, 1980, 1990;
S.C. Division of Research and Statistical Services.

Graph 4

Population Density
(Persons Per Square Mile)
City of Aiken and Aiken County
1970 – 1990



Source: Bureau of the Census, 1983a, 1982a, 1982b, 1972a, 1990b, 1990d
Halliburton NUS, Socioeconomic Characteristics of Selected Counties and Communities Adjacent to the Savannah River Site, 1992

Table 11

POPULATION PROJECTIONS
CITY of AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1990 - 2010

	Without New Mission*	With Linear Accelerator Development and Other Missions **
City of Aiken		
1995	25,000	25,000
2000	26,700	27,600
2005	28,400	29,300
2010	30,100	31,000
Aiken County		
1995	132,000	132,000
2000	139,000	139,170
2005	146,900	147,150
2010	153,000	153,300

Source: U. S. Department of Energy
U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1990
State Data Center, Division of Research and Statistical Services

* Assumes no new mission is given to the Savannah River Site but that current activities continue as well as spent fuel management (minimum number of jobs).

** Assumes linear accelerator for the production of tritium is constructed at the Savannah River site and other activities are added, including plutonium stabilization and replacing plutonium cores in nuclear weapons (maximum number of jobs).

Note: Both projections assume an underlying population increase based on the average annual numerical increase from 1970 – 1990 of 340 per year in the City and 1,400 in the entire County.

TABLE 12

INCOME LEVELS
for
CITY OF AIKEN, AIKEN COUNTY, and SOUTH CAROLINA
1980, 1990

Area	Median Household 1980	Median Household 1990	Per Capita 1980	Per Capita 1990
City of Aiken	$26,345	$33,273	$13,679	$15,619
Aiken County	$29,371	$29,994	$11,691	$13,127
South Carolina	$26,995	$26,256	$10,767	$11,897

Sources: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics South Carolina, 1980, 1990

Halliburton NUS, Socioeconomic Characteristics of Selected Counties and Communities Adjacent to the Savannah River Site, 1992.

Table 13

INCOME LEVELS
For
CITY of AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1990

	Median Family	Per Capita Black	Per Capita White	Per Capita (total population)	Median Household (total population)
City of Aiken	$40,370	$7,276	$19,486	$15,619	$33,273
Aiken County		$7,453	$14,938	$13,127	$29,994

Source: Census Tape STF3A, 1990, S.C. State Data Center, Division of Research and Statistical Services

Table 14

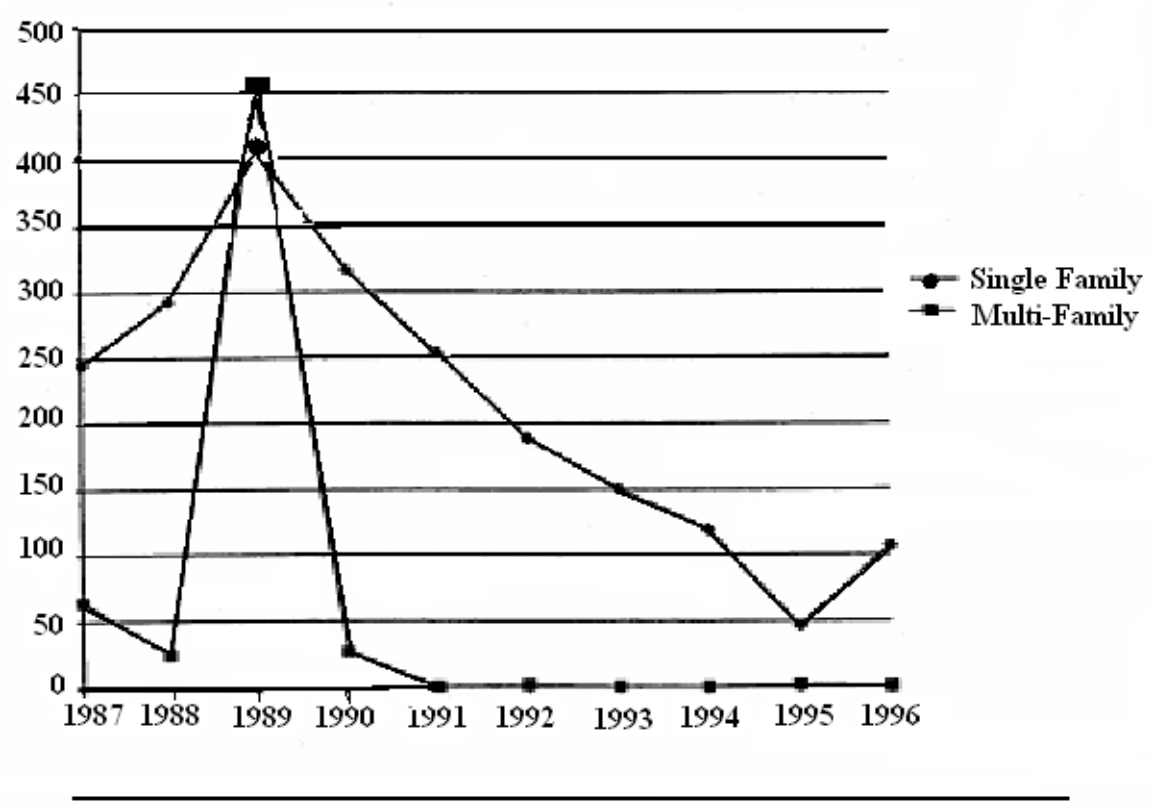
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
BY RACE
For Persons Over 25
(Percentage)
CITY of AIKEN and AIKEN COUNTY
1990

Educational Level	City of Aiken (percentage of City residents by race over 25)			Aiken County (percentage of County residents by race over 25)	
	White	Black		White	Black
Less than 9th Grade	4.2	25.5		10.1	23.2
High School Graduate	20.9	26.0		32.4	30.4
College Graduate	48.9	12.9		26.0	11.5
POPULATION TOTALS (persons over 25)	9,669	3,462		59,775	15,790

Source: U.S. Department of commerce, Bureau of the Census
State Data Center, Division of Research and Statistical Services.

Graph 5

Residential Building Permits
New Construction City of Aiken
1987-1996



Source: Department of Public Safety, City of Aiken

H. Housing

1. **Recent Trends.** The information on residential building permits in Graph 5 documents the boom in single-family and multifamily dwelling units in the late 1980's and early 1990's stimulated by the increase in hiring at the Savannah River Site; essentially all of this residential construction occurred south of Boardman Road because of the location of SRS to the south of town. Further evidence of the growth is that, according to the Census Bureau, 30.9% of the housing in Aiken in 1990 (2639 units) was built between 1980 and 1990.

   With the layoffs at SRS in recent years, the development of detached single-family dwellings on individual lots has dropped dramatically, and there is a large supply of houses on the market. The construction of apartments came to a standstill about 1992 and has not resumed.

   The predominant types of housing which have been constructed in the past three or four years are patio homes (single-family dwellings, sometimes connected, on small lots), and "congregate care" facilities. The patio homes appeal both to retirees and to younger people seeking affordable housing. The congregate care facilities such as Summit Place on Silver Bluff Road, new Cumberland Village on South Carolina 421, and the Trinity Lutheran complex at the northwest corner of Laurens Street and Barnwell Avenue will provide housing for senior citizens.

   Manufactured housing, formerly called "mobile homes", continues to grow in importance. Such units are not allowed in the City except in the R-4 zone, and Camellia Trailer Park is the only site in that category. However, City Council has agreed to extend City services to some manufactured home subdivisions and parks in the unincorporated area.

   Table 15 provides information on the numbers, value, and condition of housing for 1980 and 1990.

2. **Projections.** Barring a significant new mission for SRS or the arrival of some major new employers, the construction of detached single-family houses will remain at a slow pace for the next few years. It will take some time for the current surplus of housing on the market to be absorbed. Apartment construction will also be stagnant. Because of Aiken's appeal to retirees, the market for patio homes and congregate care facilities should continue fairly strong. There will continue to be manufactured homes being located in parks and subdivisions in the unincorporated area seeking City services, and there will be increasing pressure for relaxation of restrictions on manufactured units inside the city.

   The boom of the late 1980's has given way to a significant slowdown. However, because of Aiken's distinctive qualities and the fact that it has matured to a point where it can begin to stand on its own apart from SRS, the long-term prospects for recovery are bright. By the turn of the century, the housing market should stabilize and residential development should resume.

Table 15

General Housing Characteristics
City of Aiken
1980 and 1990

	1980	1990
Total Number of Housing Units	6173	8543
Occupied Units Number	5760	7969
Lacking Complete Plumbing for Exclusive Use of Occupants	101 (1.75%)	less than1%
Owner-Occupied Units		
Number	3623 (62.9%)	5128 (64.3%)
Persons Per Unit	2.33	2.54
Median Value	$40,600	$82,900
Renter-Occupied Units		
Number	2134 (37%)	2621 (32.9%)
Persons Per Unit		2.38
Median Rent	$127	$320

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 1980 and 1990, US Department of Commerce

I. Economic Base

The economic base of a city provides the foundation for its existence and has a strong impact on how it grows. How citizens earn a living is the most important criterion in determining where they reside which in turn controls where businesses locate to serve the population. While a city can try to guide growth through the construction of roads or the installation of utilities, with the exception of major natural features, it is the location of major employment centers that is the strongest determinant of urban form. This section provides an overview of how Aiken area citizens earn a living including the major employers.

1. Employment

a) Recent Trends

Textile mills, most notably the Graniteville Company (now Avondale Mills), were the dominant employers prior to the opening of the Savannah River Plant in the 1950s which has been the major player since. Owens-Corning Fiberglas opened in 1960 and other industries have moved in since with many locating at the Verenes Industrial Park on US 1 near I-20. As a result, the economy has become more diversified as the role of SRS has begun to decline. Table 16 presents a listing of employment by category, and Table 17 provides a listing of the major employers; the list includes employers outside of the initial study area to give the most complete picture.

Three components of the Aiken economy deserve a closer look: the Savannah River Site, the horse-related businesses, and retirees.

i) Savannah River Site. Any discussion about the economy of the Aiken area must begin with the Savannah River Site. Operated by the United States Department of Energy primarily to produce material for nuclear weapons, SRS has been the engine which has driven the local economy and has attracted large numbers of highly paid and well-educated scientists and other professionals from around the nation as well as provided substantial employment for thousands of others. While SRS has certainly benefited the area economically, it has also created a somewhat artificial employment and wage base that is as unstable as it has been lucrative. A strong case can also be made that the presence of SRS has made it difficult to attract new industries because of their reluctance to compete with the high wage scales at the Site.

No reactor has operated since 1988, and the decreased demand for nuclear materials brought about by a lessening of tensions between world powers has led to lower federal funding for the Site. The resulting layoffs by Westinghouse and its subcontractors have caused the employment total to drop from a high of some 26,000 in 1992 to 14,000 in early 1997; the total should be less than 12,000 by the end of the decade without a new mission. Though solid documentation is not readily available, it is certain that the job cuts have had a significant impact on Aiken's economy.

Table 16

Industry of Employed Persons
Age 16 and Over
City of Aiken
1990

		Number	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing		165	1.9
Mining		44	0.5
Construction		682	7.8
Manufacturing		1.1691	25.0
Transportation		133	1.5
Commercial and Other Public Utilities		469	5.4
Wholesale Trade		177	2.0
Retail Trade		1,154	13.3
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate		409	4.7
Business, Repair Services		333	3.8
Personal Services		242	2.8
Entertainment and Recreation Services		149	1.7
Professional and Related Services			
Health Services	654		
Educational Services	844		
Other Professional Service	656	2064	23.8
Public Administration		499	5.7
Total		8,689	

Source: 1990 Census, Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce

Table 17

Major Employers
Aiken Area
(as of 10/31/96)

Company	Service or Product	Employees
Savannah River Site	Materials for National Defense	15,856*
Avondale Mills (formerly Graniteville Company)	Textiles	3,600
Owens-Corning Fiberglas	Glass Fiber	1,230
Kimberly-Clark	Tissue Products	1,100
Automatic Switch Co.	Aluminum Valves	450
R.E. Phelon, Inc. for Mowers	Flywheels and Ignitions Systems	400
Beaulieu of America, Inc.	Carpet Yarns	380
SmithKline Beecham	Proprietary Drugs	330
Amoco Foam Products	Plastic Food Service Plates	300
Ohio Brass Harvey Hubbell	High-Voltage Insulators and Arrestors	276
United Defense, L.P	Machine Parts; Track Vehicles	238
Gorham Bronze	Bronze Markers	150
Beloit-Manhattan, Inc	Roll Coverings for Paper and Textile Industry	145
Pepperidge Farm, Inc.	Bread	144
Carlisle Tire & Wheel	Rims and Tires for Riding Mowers	160

* Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC) including Bechtel, 13,638 employees; Department of Energy (DOE), 560; DOE subcontractors, 299; WSRC subcontractors, 267; Wackenhut, 737; Savannah River Ecology Lab, 200; U.S. Forestry Service, 89; and U.S. Corps of Engineers, 66.

ii) Horse-Related Businesses. Another unusual aspect of the Aiken economy is the horse-related businesses. The primary contributors to the economy are full-time horse-training operations which revolve around the Aiken Training Track where thoroughbreds are trained and the Aiken Mile Track (City-owned from 1988 until 1997) where standardbreds are trained. There are other operations involved in breeding, stabling polo horses, and training for show. Part-time operations relate mainly to the keeping of horses for pleasure. A major horse-related event every spring, the Aiken Triple Crown, which involves thoroughbred, standardbred, and steeplechase racing on successive weekends, is a major draw for tourists. A study by Clemson University in 1987 showed that equine operations generated about $16.2 million in local income annually in Aiken County, and that amount has almost certainly grown since. However, if the horse-related businesses are to remain a significant aspect of the economy and continue to contribute to the character of the area, the environment in which they flourish will have to be protected as Aiken grows.

iii) Retirees. From the coastal residents of the 1800's who came to get some relief from oppressive summers, to "winter colony" people fleeing cold northern winters, Aiken has attracted those seeking a pleasant retreat; in recent years, the area has become even more attractive to retirees. The trend was accelerated in the 1990's as Westinghouse offered early retirement packages to employees as it sought to reduce its work force in response to decreased funding for SRS; many accepting the package decided to remain in the area. Another major impact came from media publicity about the area including a 1994 Money magazine article which ranked Aiken among the top ten retirement locations in America. In addition to single-family units being occupied by retirees, complexes such as Cumberland Village and Trinity Lutheran will provide congregate housing for such people.

b) Projections

It would seem that SRS cannot absorb more large job reductions without affecting basic maintenance and environmental clean-up activities though smaller layoffs are likely to continue for several years. It remains to be seen whether the Site will land a new major mission, but chances are that it will because of existing facilities and expertise available as well as the favorable climate of public opinion toward the Site in the area. As can be seen by the new SKF plant at Aiken County's Sage Mill Industrial Park on Bettis Academy Road north of I-20 and the planned Bridgestone/Firestone tire plant to be adjacent to Sage Mill, The area will attract new industries, but it will not be easy to do so because essentially every other city and county in the nation is trying to do exactly the same. Aiken is at a disadvantage because it is somewhat "off the beaten path" and does not have good name recognition nationally. One of the keys to success for the area in attracting new employers will be the character of Aiken, the qualities that make it different and special, that make it something other than just another small Southern town. Aiken's greatest selling tool is its parkways, an Old Aiken with

genuine character, a revitalized downtown, the historic districts, the horse element, Hitchcock Woods, and trees. These special characteristics must be protected and enhanced; efforts must continue to upgrade the entrances into town, not only the areas where there are junkyards, but also in other stretches where development is unattractive. A city with unique character and attention to detail in creating a pleasant environment for citizens and visitors is what will impress potential investors and those looking for places to locate new plants or make other types of investments.

2. **Labor Force**
   Labor force information is presented on Table 18.

3. **Commercial**
   Information on retail sales is presented on Table 19. A graph depicting the dollar value of commercial building permits issued in recent years is provided on Graph 6; the burst of development activity in the late 1980's is evident.

J. Summary of Trends and Key Issues

The following is a brief summary of some of the major issues that will affect the growth of Aiken over the next 20 years.

1. **Moderate Growth Rate.** At least as compared to the late 1980's and early 1990's, the growth rate of the Aiken area will be relatively low. After a somewhat stagnant period resulting from events at SRS, as the year 2000 approaches, economic activity will increase as a result of Aiken achieving its own "critical mass" giving it the ability to stand on its own apart from the big Department of Energy facility. However, the growth will be steady but not rapid which will be positive in that it will provide more of an opportunity to prepare for the development and adjust to it as it occurs.

2. **Need for Diversification.** The end of the dominance of SRS in the local economy, while painful in the short run, will be a long-term blessing if new jobs can fill the void because the employment base and wage scales will take on a more normal character less subject to the whims of decision-makers in Washington. There will be a continuing need to broaden the economic base by attracting new employers with the greatest selling point in that effort being the distinctiveness of Aiken.

3. **Support for Existing Employers.** In the race to attract new employers, those businesses already providing jobs should not be overlooked.

4. **Increasing Number of Retirees.** Aiken's role as a retirement haven will grow. These new residents should be welcomed and encouraged to become involved in the community because the wealth of talent and experience they have will be a valuable resource.

5. **Growth Toward the North.** There will be a noticeable shift in growth to the north because of the downsizing of SRS and because new major employers will tend to locate in that area because of the proximity of I-20 and the Aiken Municipal Airport, the availability of utilities, the cheaper land, and the location of industrial parks. New housing will develop in the area in response followed by commercial uses.

6. **Protection of Character.** The qualities that set Aiken apart will need to be protected and enhanced both to keep its quality-of-life high but also as an economic development marketing tool. The most important part of this effort will be the protection and enhancement of Old Aiken.

Table 18

Labor Force
City of Aiken
1980 and 1990

	1980	1990
Persons 16 years and over	11,459	15,300
Male	5,186	8,347
Female	6,273	6,953
Labor force	6,657	9,143
Male	3,714	5,590
Female	2,943	3,553
Percent of civilian labor force unemployed	5.5	5.0

Source: Census of Population and Housing, Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce

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Table 19

Gross and Net Taxable Sales
Aiken County and Its Municipalities
1996

	Gross Sales	Net Taxable Sales
Aiken	$307,924,942	$254,826,557
Burnettown	***	***
Jackson	6,163,112	3,680,163
Monetta	***	***
New Ellenton	5,815,494	4,131,564
North Augusta	238,840,472	161,200,472
Perry	***	***
Salley	648,981	454,475
Wagener	12,404,554	7,765,988
Windsor	***	***
Unincorporated Areas	1,118,784,723	390,683,849
Aiken County Total	$1,757,400,257	$824,481,181

Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue

Graph 6

CITY OF AIKEN
DOLLAR VALUE OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION

1987 – 1995
(In Thousands)

Source: City of Aiken Department of Public Safety 1995
Department of Planning and Community Development, City of Aiken 1995

III.
Land Use and Transportation Plan

A. Overview III-1

B. General Goals and Objectives III-2

C. The Plan by District III-12
1. Old Aiken III-13
2. North Aiken III-14
3. Northwest Aiken III-20
4. Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill III-27
5. West Aiken III-34
6. East Aiken III-41
7. Horse/Hitchcock Woods III-48
8. Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road III-58
9. Houndslake III-66
10. East Pine Log Road III-73
11. Southwest Aiken III-81
12. River Bluff/Sandstone III-87
13. Woodside/Aiken Mall III-93
14. Southeast Aiken III-100
15. Chukker Creek/ Hunters Glen III-105
16. Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road III-111

III. Land Use and Transportation Plan

A. Overview

This chapter contains recommendations regarding land use and transportation for the study area which covers the land within the Aiken City limits and the area to the south within which the City provides water and/or sanitary sewer service. Eventually, the scope of the Plan will be enlarged to include other outlying areas to the north within which the City provides services. The chapter is divided into three sections.

1) The first section presents "General Goals and Objectives" that are applicable to the entire initial study area; they are generally not repeated for each planning district.

2) The second section presents "The Plan by District". Included for each district is an overview intended to provide a brief, general understanding of the character of the district and relevant issues. Also presented are the goals and objectives specific to each district that are not generally applicable to the entire study area and a map depicting future land use and transportation recommendations.

Most of the terms used to describe various land use categories are self-explanatory. However, the following terms are defined as follows:

- **Low-Density Residential:** A residential use allowed by the single-family zoning classification which allows the maximum density.

- **Medium-Density Residential:** A residential use allowed by the multifamily zoning classification which allows the lowest density.

- **High-Density Residential:** A residential use allowed by the multifamily zoning classification which allows the highest density.

- **Low-Intensity Commercial:** Limited-scale professional and retail uses intended to serve as a transition between more intense commercial uses and residential areas.

- **Intense Retail Commercial:** Uses generally located along major roads providing a broad range of retail goods and services to people from throughout the City.

- **Traditional Neighborhood Concept:** An approach to City planning which promotes characteristics of older neighborhoods in the United States including a grid street layout with narrow pavement widths, sidewalks, public spaces such as parks and village greens, shallow building setbacks, front porches, accessory apartments, and appropriate commercial uses within walking distance.

B. General Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

1.1 Rezone suitable areas to residential categories from other categories that allow more intense uses. There are some areas zoned for non-residential purposes that would be better used residentially. In recent years, areas on Hayne Avenue and Newberry Street have been rezoned to single-family residential from zoning categories allowing more intense uses. Other parts of the City should be evaluated to see if such "downzoning" is appropriate.

1.2 Prevent the encroachment of inappropriate uses into existing neighborhoods. The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated to make sure that it affords adequate protection such as landscaped buffers to protect residential areas from incompatible uses.

1.3 Encourage the development of "traditional neighborhoods" which allow smaller lots, reduced building setbacks, narrower streets, controlled dead-ends, more interconnecting streets, and, where appropriate, more mixed uses. Nationally, there has been a move away from zoning laws and engineering standards that have resulted in impersonal, automobile-oriented suburban residential areas and toward more flexible regulations that allow neighborhoods to be created at a more human scale. The concept calls for development that has simple architectural guidelines, appropriate commercial development nearby, is oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists, has narrower streets, more interconnecting streets and controlled dead-ends, a mixture of housing types, and street trees along the curb. To a large degree, the qualities describe Old Aiken. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations may be needed in order to allow such development. The regulations should assure that on-street parking does not interfere with traffic flow on narrow streets.

1.4 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow property in the City to be rezoned Planned Residential except in sensitive areas such as the Historic District or Horse District. The Zoning Ordinance now allows only newly annexed property to be zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD). The Ordinance should be amended to allow the rezoning of property already in the City to PUD because the category provides a developer flexibility and the opportunity for creativity in design while giving City Council complete control over the project through the concept plan which it must approve. A proposal to rezone property to PUD would be subject to public hearings before the Planning Commission as well as City Council. Clear standards would be stated in the Ordinance to make it clear when PUD zoning is appropriate and when it is not. City Council

can vote to provide protection to a neighborhood and allow a PUD to be 100% residential.

1.5 **Amend the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to encourage preservation and creation of significant open spaces in residential subdivisions by allowing residential lots to be clustered.** The Zoning Ordinance requires lots to be of a certain minimum size; such an approach can result in a large amount of unusable open space. Development regulations should be amended to allow subdivisions with smaller lots so that usable common open space can be created but with the same dwelling unit density as a standard subdivision.

1.6 **Amend the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations so that single-family subdivisions protect trees and increase protection of residential from commercial development.** Protecting mature trees increases property values and lowers utility costs for single-family homes. Development regulations should be amended to protect mature trees during the subdivision and construction of new single-family development. Single-family neighborhoods should be strengthened by increased buffering from commercial uses/zones. Regulations should also be amended to increase commercial buffering for single-family developments.

1.7 **Develop policies and regulations on where manufactured housing may be located.** Manufactured housing, formerly called mobile homes, is an increasingly important part of the housing market. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance and the policy on extending City services to unincorporated areas need to be clarified as they relate to manufactured housing.

1.8 **Avoid constructing large public housing complexes or concentrating public housing within one area of the City**. Public housing complexes or concentrations can become a blight on neighborhoods. Housing for low-income citizens should be scattered throughout the City.

1.9 **Non-residential zoning districts should be evaluated.** There is often a tendency for commercial zoning districts to expand into residential areas. Such rezoning requests which would allow the expansion of commercial nodes identified in the Comprehensive Plan should only be approved where there is evidence that the need for commercial use of the land exists based on: the amount of existing vacant commercial land and/or market studies; whether the property is suitable for commercial development; if the change is compatible with surrounding zoning, conforming uses and character of the neighborhoods; and whether the generation of vehicular traffic would not exceed the carrying capacity of roads.

1.10 **Conduct periodic assessments of housing conditions.** Assessments are needed to (1) locate substandard housing which can be rehabilitated through City programs and (2) determine needed public improvements

beginning with areas containing substandard housing. A continuing effort should be made to focus on those areas which need to be upgraded.

1.11 **Implement public improvements in those neighborhoods with substandard housing.** Streetscape improvements such as improved lighting, landscaping, and sidewalks as well as improvements to sanitary and storm sewers can help stabilize a neighborhood and prevent further decline or perhaps even stimulate investment in housing. Substandard neighborhoods should be given top priority in the implementation of public improvements.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

2.1 **Encourage commercial uses clustered in nodes instead of dispersed in strips along roads. Define areas where major commercial development will be allowed and avoid annexing, rezoning, or providing utilities to unincorporated land which would allow commercial development outside of the carefully defined areas.** Strip commercial development along roads is generally unsightly, creates safety and traffic problems for motor vehicles because of the excessive number of curb cuts created, is usually hazardous for pedestrians, and often introduces inappropriate commercial uses too close to residential neighborhoods. Where appropriate, commercial uses should be clustered into well-defined nodes which are readily accessible to residential areas by both vehicles and pedestrians. This goal does not apply to the Whiskey Road corridor which extends from Pine Log Road to Talatha Church Road.

2.2 **Development along the Whiskey Road corridor can be Planned Residential or Planned Commercial and should be required to meet a high level of design; however, the provisions of Planned Commercial should be amended to make it a more effective tool in controlling such development.** The commercial development pattern established along much of the Whiskey Road corridor should be allowed to expand throughout its length. However, every effort should be made to assure that the development is of the highest quality and design. Therefore, any property that is rezoned or annexed should be zoned Planned Residential or Planned Commercial, and any land receiving City services should have to comply with the requirements of those zones.

The Planned Commercial zone gives the developer flexibility in layout and design, and also allows mixed uses by potentially permitting up to 50% of the area of a project to be residential. However, in exchange for this flexibility, the zone also requires that a concept plan for a development be approved by City Council, and, through this concept

plan, Council can set standards for the project at whatever level of detail it desires. However, changes to the Planned Commercial category are needed to make it as effective as possible in controlling development in the Whiskey Road corridor:

- increase the open space required from the current 20% to 25%;
- require a traffic impact study which evaluates traffic issues not only directly involving the site but also the impact to the Whiskey Road carrying capacity with the results of the study potentially affecting the intensity of the development;
- establish basic architectural guidelines to assure that the appearance of the development enhances the corridor;
- eliminate the requirement that multifamily residential be allowed only through the granting of a Special Exception by the Board of Zoning Appeals; and
- allow the open space to be 20% for lots less than five acres.

2.3 Promote the development of attractive commercial areas that encourage the development of new businesses. The City should encourage the development of commercial areas that are properly related to residential areas and that promote the creation of small businesses.

2.4 Develop strong incentives to encourage property owners not to abandon buildings. The City should develop a series of incentives with owners of empty/soon-to-be empty properties to encourage occupancy or demolition. The City may want to find other means to discourage property from being left vacant for extended periods of time, not maintained, or a threat to public safety.

2.5 Facilitate the reuse of abandoned service stations. Efforts should continue to develop innovative approaches to eliminate such sites so that the land can be used for other purposes.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

3.1 Evaluate land zoned Light Industrial and Industrial to determine if it is an appropriate designation. There is a large amount of land zoned to allow industrial use some of which, because of its size and surrounding uses, should be zoned for other purposes.

3.2 Identify and protect land suitable for industrial use. Any land that is ideally suited for industrial use because of topography, access to transportation, and availability of utilities, should be zoned properly for its protection from being lost to other development.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives

4.1 Coordination between the City, County and DOT is vital to achieve a coherent set of guidelines and regulations for development and subsequent traffic impacts. Entry roads into Aiken, including but not limited to Whiskey Road, York Street, Richland Avenue, and Highway 19/Laurens Street fall within the jurisdiction of both the City and the County. Seventy percent of Whiskey Road, from South Boundary to Talatha Church Road, is within County jurisdiction. Guiding development in these areas is complicated by this mix of City/County jurisdictions, State maintenance of the roads, and the ability of large commercial property owners to develop without using municipal services.

4.2 Discourage strip commercial development and promote the clustering of such uses at appropriate locations. Both the City's Strategic Plan and the 1989 Comprehensive Plan established the policy of allowing commercial development in nodes or clusters rather than being spread out along major roads. Such strip development is not only unsightly, but it reduces the ability of highways to carry traffic and creates safety problems for motorists because of the turning movements it generates. This goal does not apply to the Whiskey Road corridor.

4.3 Consider making no road improvements which would harm visual character. The construction of a new road, road widening, addition of a turn lane, or other changes designed to improve the flow of traffic should consider its effect on the character of the city. The movement of motor vehicles should not be the only factor in determining when road projects should be constructed.

4.4 Consider landscaped medians where feasible. The most distinguishing feature of Aiken is its landscaped parkways or medians. Medians should be considered on existing major roads at entrances into Aiken. However, access to existing businesses and the impact of medians on the development of new businesses should be considered in making the decision.

4.5 Prepare and implement streetscape plans for major roads. Just as major streetscape work has been done in some areas of Aiken, other major roads in Aiken also should be studied to see what improvements could be done to enhance their appearance. Consistent landscaping themes, improved streetlights, and sidewalks/pathways may be in order, not just for the major entrances into town, but for other arterials and even some connector streets. The recommendations in the Whiskey Road Corridor Study adopted by City Council should be followed where possible and serve as a model for other major streets.

4.6 **Adopt tighter regulations to control curb cuts.** The State Department of Transportation has instituted somewhat stricter regulations on the location of curb cuts, but the City should consider the adoption of its own rules to prevent the location of an excessive number of driveways along major roads which can impede the flow of traffic and cause safety problems.

4.7 **Do not annex or provide utilities to land along major roads which would result in the creation of an excessive number of access points.** While an ordinance controlling curb cuts would apply within the City limits, other controls would be needed in unincorporated areas. Aiken County has an ordinance regulating driveways, but it may be necessary to require that land along major roads receiving City services comply with any curb cut ordinance adopted by the City.

4.8 **Consider regulations which will reduce paving in commercial development by limiting the number of parking spaces and allowing uses to share parking.** Consideration should be given to limiting the number of such spaces that can be provided to prevent excess pavement. Provisions should be adopted to allow parking for uses to be shared.

4.9 **Encourage innovative placement of new shops that would create a more attractive streetscape than parking lots.** The typical layout of most retail commercial projects is to place the parking near the street. Incentives should be developed to encourage the location of buildings and sidewalks close to the street with parking in the rear.

4.10 **Landscaping should be considered at major highway intersections.** At the corners of most major intersections, there is right-of-way or are sight easements in which the State Department of Transportation would allow low landscaping. Consideration should be given to planting shrubbery or even flowers at such intersections. Obviously, such plantings would require a significant commitment of money and manpower, but the impact on the city's appearance would be worth it.

4.11 **Where economically feasible, establish an on-going program to place utility wires underground.** Wiring should be underground to reduce visual clutter. Affected utility customers should be notified of the proposed action and its cost before a final decision is made.

4.12 **Provide attractive vehicular directional signage and work with State and federal authorities to improve the appearance of highway signs.** Official signs providing route numbers and other directional information create clutter and are often difficult to decipher. Directional signs which look better and are easier to read are needed.

4.13 **Consider establishing public art or other landmarks at appropriate locations to create a "sense of place."** Appropriate public art at strategic locations could add to the character of Aiken, but great care and expertise will be needed in selection and placement of the pieces.

4.14 **Establish the boundary of Aiken and use landmarks, landscaping, or other means to identify it.** Rather than allowing Aiken to merge into other developed areas, a clear boundary defining its edge should be established along major roads.

4.15 **Acquire conservation or scenic easements where appropriate and financially feasible to create or maintain an attractive appearance and establish greenways, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and protect wildlife habitat.** Easements or other means should be used in which landscaping can be installed, greenways with bicycle and walking paths established, and areas of environmental value and wildlife habitat protected. New roads should include easements such as the proposed Whiskey-Silver Bluff connector.

4.16 **Attempt to develop incentives which will encourage unincorporated land along major corridors to come into the City with the goal of eventually having them comply with tree and sign regulations.** There are several areas along major roads which function as part of the City but are unincorporated on which there are commercial uses that are out of character with the rest of Aiken. Study should be given to the development of incentives to encourage such areas to come into the City.

4.17 **Consult a traffic engineer about investigating the use of roundabouts as an alternative to traffic signals to improve traffic flow.** Study the feasibility of roundabouts in Aiken as an alternative for improved traffic flow. A traffic engineer with experience in studying replacement of existing intersections with roundabouts should be consulted.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives

5.1 **Establish a process to review the design of significant public improvements.** A citizens committee appointed by City Council or City Council itself should review the design of projects proposed by the City including new structures, signs, streetscape improvements, or public art.

5.2 **Require new projects outside of the City but receiving City services to comply with ordinances and design standards.** The policy governing the provision of City services to unincorporated areas which requires compliance with ordinances controlling signs and landscaping should continue and be expanded to include other requirements where appropriate including standards set forth in plans such as the Whiskey Road Corridor Study adopted by City Council which should serve as a model for other streets.

5.3 **Identify, protect, and preserve historic sites and structures.** Most sites and structures of historic value have been documented to some

degree, but additional work may be needed to be sure none are overlooked. All such sites and structures should be evaluated for protection under the City's historic preservation ordinance though the degree of such protection and the approval process for proposed work may vary according to the significance of the structure and its location.

5.4 **Encourage developing a set of architectural minimum design standards to apply to all new multifamily residential and commercial properties not governed by the Historic Preservation Ordinance or within the Horse/Hitchcock Woods District.** The intent is to maintain a minimum quality of appearance and construction that will not detract in the long term from the desirable characteristics of the City of Aiken**.**

Goal 6 **Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.**

Objectives

6.1 **Make needed street improvements including resurfacing and the addition of turn lanes.** The Department of Engineering/Public Works should continue its systematic tracking of needed resurfacing projects including priority rankings. State funding for resurfacing is decreasing, so more local funding will be needed. Improvements to facilitate traffic flow such as adding turn lanes should be implemented.

6.2 **Amend the Land Development Regulations to relax the standards for new streets.** The standards for new streets requires an excessive amount of pavement width which makes neighborhoods more automobile-oriented and less attractive and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. There may be other standards which can be relaxed. In allowing narrower streets, the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists should be a primary factor.

6.3 **Promote more interconnecting streets and limit the number of dead-end streets through amending the Land Development Regulations and placing conditions on approval of annexations, subdivisions, and City services to promote more interconnecting streets and, if necessary, limit the number of dead-end streets.** Dead-end streets with cul-de-sacs are attractive to homebuyers because they limit the number of automobiles that use the road. However, an excessive number of dead-end streets can result in traffic being funneled onto a few congested roads resulting in high volumes of traffic and an inefficient circulation system. The Regulations should require a sufficient number of interconnecting streets to give motorists more alternative routes and reduce traffic volumes while permitting a reasonable number of dead-end streets. The Land Development Regulations should be amended to require stub-outs to vacant land to be paved up to the property line, not just provide a right-of-way, but care should be taken before connecting residential and commercial areas. Conditions should be placed on approval of annexations, subdivisions, and City services to require interconnecting roads.

6.4 **Do not annex or provide City services to land on which a large development would be built which would create an obstacle to public access unless an easement or some other guarantee can be provided that right-of-way for a future public road will be available**. Large developments with private streets can create an obstacle to creation of adequate connecting streets; land on which such a project is proposed should not be annexed or provided City services unless an easement or some other guarantee can be provided that right-of-way for a future public road will be available.

6.5 **Continue to make improvements to existing sidewalks and provide new ones where needed.** Walking in Aiken should be encouraged by the provision of adequate sidewalks/ pathways.

6.6 **Evaluate whether "traffic calming" measures are needed, and, if so, implement them.** The concept of "traffic calming" is to make physical changes to a road which discourages speeding and increases safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, raised, decorative crosswalks made of brick or other material different from typical paving has been used effectively to reduce speeding. Other techniques may be feasible.

6.7 **Encourage existing and proposed commercial developments to have connecting driveways to reduce the need to enter and exit main roads.** Commercial developments have their own driveways providing access, but they rarely are connected which forces traffic back onto the main road. More connecting driveways are needed between commercial uses, especially shopping centers, to allow easier access between uses.

Goal 7 **Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.**

Objectives

7.1 **Evaluate the need for a pathway system.** Aiken should be an excellent place for riding bicycles as an alternative to the automobile as well as for recreation. The bikeway plan proposed by the Pathway Committee should be implemented with changes needed as necessary, and the system should be expanded in the coming years. Consider amending the Land Development Regulations to require either construction of bikeways/pathways or the granting of easements for their construction by the City. In addition, bike racks should be located strategically.

7.2 **Prepare a master park plan/regional open space plan.** A thorough assessment of the need for park and recreation areas should be conducted. The emphasis should be on locating potential park sites outside of the City limits with the goal of establishing a network of such areas possibly connected by bicycle/walking trails and greenways. Another topic for consideration is the creation of a City/County Parks Authority which could create a regional system of parks and recreation

areas with a funding mechanism to assure that costs are reasonably shared by all residents benefiting. Partnerships with local industry should be pursued to provide recreation opportunities.

7.3 **Investigate the use of regional retention ponds serving multiple properties to be focal points for parks.** Instead of each development having its own unsightly detention pond, it would be more efficient if larger retention ponds serving a larger area could be used. Not only would developments have more usable land, but the ponds could serve as the focal points for parks and recreation areas.

7.4 **Encourage large projects to provide usable land for recreation as a condition of annexation or of receiving City services.** Where appropriate, new developments should be encouraged to provide land for usable recreation areas.

7.5 **Maintain a partnership with the Aiken County Open Land Trust, the Whitney Trust, the Hitchcock Foundation, and other organizations to promote the preservation of a network of open spaces available to the public.** The Land Trust is an important vehicle for the protection of open space, and the City should cooperate with that and similar organizations as much as possible.

7.6 **Investigate ways to protect agricultural land.** While it is inevitable that growth will result in the loss of some agricultural land, the protection of such land is a worthy goal both as a means for providing another form of open space and for the preservation of land that can be cultivated.

C. The Plan By District

This section presents the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan by planning district. The study area has been divided into numerous districts so that each can be examined more closely and specific goals and objectives tailored for each. The districts included cover the area within the City limits and unincorporated areas to the south; eventually, planning districts involving more outlying areas will be added to the list of Maps.

The previous section, "General Goals and Objectives," presented information applicable to the entire study area. Within each planning district section, goals and objectives which relate only to that district are presented. The numbering of the goals and objectives for each planning district is a continuation of the numbering for the General Goals and Objectives.

Old Aiken

Planning District

The original section for Old Aiken has been replaced by the Old Aiken Master Plan adopted April 25, 2005. The Goals and Objectives in the original Old Aiken Chapter changed in the Old Aiken Master Plan. However, please note that the numbering for the Goals and Objectives in subsequent chapters for the various planning districts has not changed.

North Aiken

Planning District

Overview of North Aiken

Physical Characteristics

The North Aiken planning district is essentially flat except for some rolling hills in the Crosland Park area. The land drains to the east toward the Edisto River. There are some wetlands in the area of Wire Road north of Rutland Drive as well as along the railroad north of York Street.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. There are residential neighborhoods in the southern part of the district which are an extension of the neighborhoods in Old Aiken; a considerable percentage of the dwellings in these areas are substandard. The dominant residential area is Crosland Park, a subdivision of smaller homes built in the 1950's to accommodate workers at the Savannah River Plant. Some new moderate-priced single-family dwellings have been built at Chesterfield North (Chesterfield Avenue and Columbia Drive). Camellia Trailer Park has been purchased by the City of Aiken and has been subdivided for single-family homes. Northward outside of the City, many dwellings are scattered and include manufactured units.

Medium-Density. One apartment complex is located on the east side of York Street at Aldrich Street and another slightly further north on the west side of York.

Retail. Retail uses are located along York Street (US 1) from Hampton Avenue to Aldrich Street with the primary concentration around York Street - Rutland Drive intersection. Three supermarkets in the planning district are the Winn-Dixie located in the Northside Plaza shopping center at York Street and Rutland Drive, the Food Lion at Wire Road and Rutland Drive, and the new Bi-Lo west of York Street, across from Crosland Park. Other retail uses are scattered further northward along US 1, along Hampton Avenue, and on Laurens Street (SC 19).

Industrial. Summit Business Park extends from Rutland Drive just east of the CSX Railroad and extends northward to Reynolds Pond Road.

Institutional. There are several significant institutional uses in the area including Aiken High School, North Aiken Elementary School, the new Wire Road Middle School, the Mattie C. Hall Nursing Home, the City of Aiken Public Works Center, the Aiken City Public Works Administration Building, and the Strom Thurmond Vocational Rehabilitation Center. The Aiken County Detention Center is moving to the new facility on Wire Road.

Vacant. There are significant tracts of undeveloped land. Two of these tracts are close to Old Aiken: the area east of Teague Street and north of Columbia Drive, and the area east of York Street south of Columbia Drive. The large tract across Rutland Drive from Aiken High School is also a strategically located undeveloped area.

Other. The area is divided by the CSX Railroad line that serves kaolin processing plants to the north and terminates in the area of Reynolds Pond Road. SC Highway 19 and US Highway 1, and the SC 118 By-Pass are located in this district. A portion of the new section of SC 118 By-Pass now under construction is also located in the district.

The Future of North Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area, including North Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to North Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

Because of its strategic location adjacent to Old Aiken and on the north side where growth should accelerate in the coming years, North Aiken may experience significant pressures for change. The Food Lion at the Wire Road-Rutland Drive intersection and the new Bi-Lo could be an indication that there could be greater interest by developers in commercial projects; while redevelopment of existing commercial properties would provide a lift to the area, expansion of commercial districts into residential areas should not be allowed. Existing residential areas should be protected and efforts made to upgrade substandard housing and neighborhoods. The need for a major new recreation facility should be evaluated. Light industrial and warehouse uses may be appropriate in some areas, but they should be carefully located and heavily buffered.

Small-Town Character

The residential areas near Old Aiken have the character of a small town, and these areas should be protected and substandard dwellings and neighborhoods upgraded. New residential projects should be developed with the same traditional neighborhood qualities (see definition on page III-1). Medium-density may be appropriate on in-fill sites. The likely increase in growth on the north side could increase pressure on residential areas for land use changes, but these pressures should be resisted and the residential areas protected.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Uses

Because of the major roads through the area and the acceleration in growth on the north side of Aiken, there could be significant pressures for development of non-residential uses. Care will have to be taken in land use decisions to protect residential areas. Major commercial uses should be confined to the York Street corridor and the area of Rutland Drive east of York. Restrictions on home occupations should be relaxed. Light industrial and warehouse uses may be appropriate near the railroad through the district, but they will have to be located carefully and buffered substantially.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations, while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

Streetscape plans should be prepared and implemented for York Street, Laurens Street, Hampton Avenue, Rutland Drive, and the new section of the SC 118 By-Pass; improving the appearance of York and Laurens Streets is especially important since they are the major entrances into town from I-20.

Goal 4 Make the road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Balanced Transportation System

Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The pathway plan designates the use of existing roads for bicycles in the area, but there should be continuing study of constructing separate paths; there will be a separated bicycle path on the new section of the By-Pass. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.19 Make improvements to the intersections of Hampton Avenue with Laurens Street and York Street both to improve traffic flow and their appearance. These busy intersections are primary entrances into Old Aiken and should reflect the character of that district, as well as be an asset to North Aiken.

6.20 Work with the State Department of Transportation to assure that the widening of Rutland Drive at U.S. 1 will be designed to accommodate pedestrians. The intersection will be changed dramatically, and City staff should continue working with the State to be sure that the intersection will be safe for pedestrians.

6.21 If the railroad is ever abandoned, efforts should be made to acquire the right-of-way for use in the bicycle/pedestrian pathway system. The railroad will apparently continue to be used for some time, but the City should be prepared to acquire the right-of-way if it is abandoned.

Recreational Opportunities

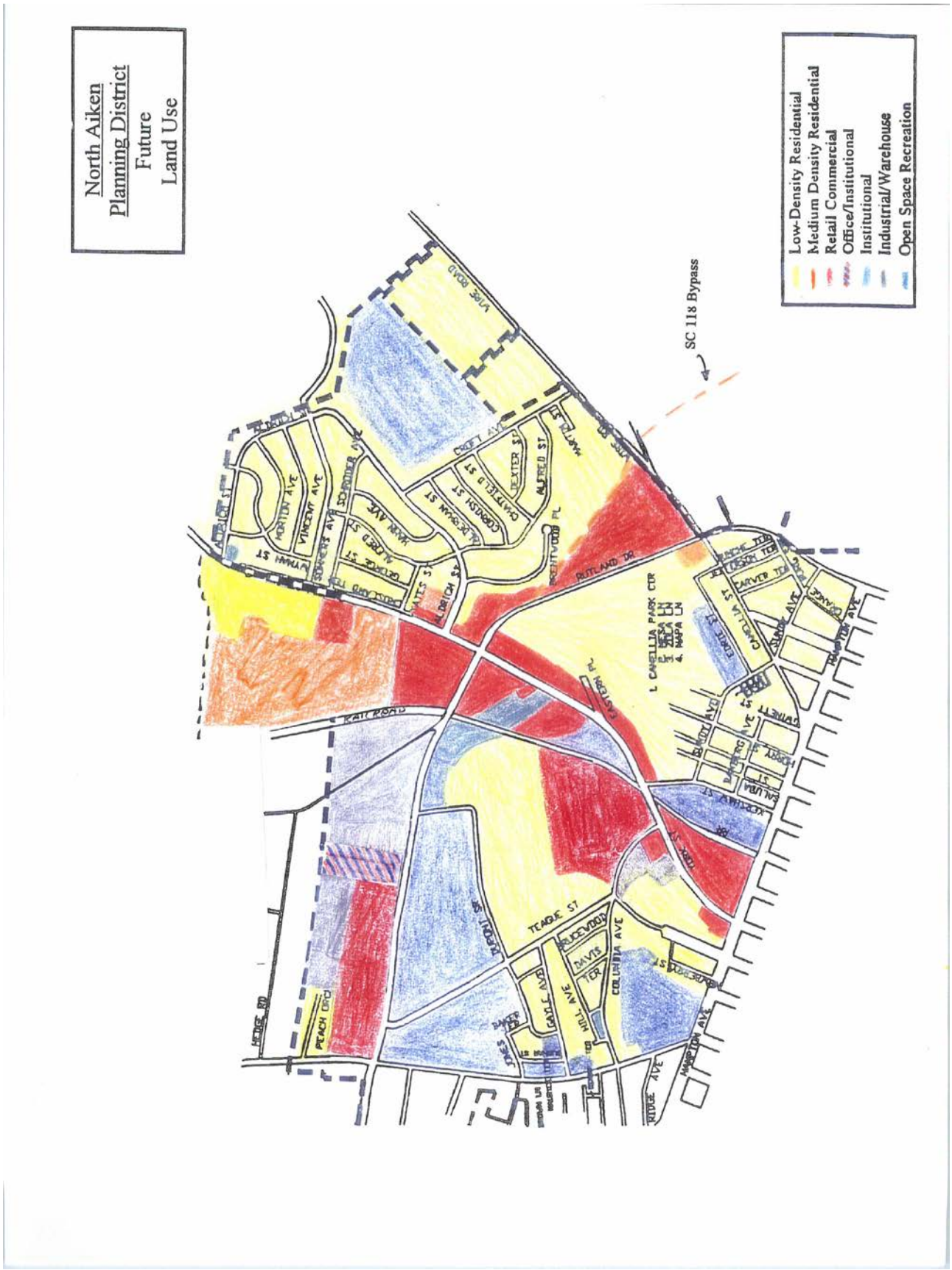
There may be a need for a major park/recreational facility on the north side though the Plan does not identify a specific location. The master park and recreation plan would identify the exact nature of the park but it should be comparable to Virginia Acres. The bicycle path system should serve the area as much as possible. The master park and recreation plan to be prepared should also evaluate the need for neighborhood parks/ playgrounds and perhaps the acquisition of wetlands for regional retention ponds and passive recreation.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.9 Study the feasibility of developing a major park and recreation facility in the North Aiken planning district. The north side may need a facility similar to Virginia Acres Park.


North Aiken
Planning District
Future
Land Use
Low-Density Residential
Medium Density Residential
Retail Commercial
Office/Institutional
Institutional
Industrial/Warehouse
Open Space Recreation
SC 118 Bypass
RAILROAD
TEAGUE ST
COLUMBIA AVE
HAMPTON AVE
RUTLAND DR
PEACH ORD
HENDE RD
L CAMELLIA PARK CTR

III. C. 3

Northwest Aiken

Planning District

Overview of Northwest Aiken

Physical Characteristics

The Northwest Aiken planning district is on the edge of the plateau on which Old Aiken is located. The land is flat along the Laurens Street, Hampton Avenue, and Lloydtown Road corridors, but the District is bisected by a ravine running from just north of the Washington Circle area across Lincoln Avenue. The areas nearest Old Aiken are urbanized while there is a considerable amount of vacant land outside of the City limits.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Single-Family. Single-family residential homes on small lots comprise about two-thirds of the district. The neighborhoods between Laurens Street and Pinecrest School generally contain older housing much of which is substandard rental units; there are also numerous overgrown vacant lots. The same can be said for the housing immediately west of Morgan Street, most notably the Toole Hill neighborhood. Further west along the Hampton Avenue corridor, there is a considerable amount of substandard housing, and the area also includes many manufactured homes on individual lots as well as in small manufactured housing parks outside of the City. The residential areas west of Pinecrest School including the Washington Circle area extending to Redd Street are well-kept and attractive with high rates of owner-occupancy; these areas serve as a stabilizing influence on the district. Likewise, many of the neighborhoods north of Vaucluse Road from Church Street to Edisto Drive are stable and well-kept. The Lincoln Avenue area has some well-maintained houses, but also includes others that have a marginal appearance.

Multifamily. As for multifamily residential, Hahn Village and Cushman Arms Apartments, two public housing projects operated by the Aiken Housing Authority, are located on Laurens Street. The neighborhoods immediately surrounding these complexes include some duplexes. A small apartment complex for the chronically mentally ill operated by the Tri-Development Center is located on Church Street adjacent to Eustis Park. Another apartment complex, Glen Arbor, was completed in 2002.

Commercial. Convenience stores are located at the intersections of Laurens Street with Hampton Avenue and Rutland Drive. The Six Points area is perhaps the most significant commercial area, but it has vacant buildings and a generally run-down appearance. Small commercial uses oriented to surrounding neighborhoods are located intermittently along Hampton Avenue between Laurens Street and Six Points; while some of these uses appear healthy, others do not, and there are some dilapidated commercial structures. A substantial commercial building formerly occupied by a grocery store is located on Vaucluse Road at Pickens Avenue.

Industrial/Warehouse. An area just east of Six Points contains several such uses, including the Intermedia cable television facility with several satellite dish antennae

and a tall standard antenna; a mini-warehouse facility; and an aluminum siding business. Other smaller uses with a light industrial character are on Harden Drive.

Institutional. There is a concentration of institutional uses in the area bounded by Richland Avenue, Morgan Street, Edgefield Avenue, and Vaucluse Road. The uses include the Aiken County administration complex, the Tri-Development Center, the Council on Aging, Helping Hands shelter for children, the former main offices of the Aiken County School District which are still in use, and the new Windham House assisted living facility. Other uses in Northwest Aiken include a health clinic at Hahn Village, Pinecrest School, four churches, and at least one cemetery.

Park/Open Space. Eustis Park south of Edgefield Avenue is the dominant use in this category. An older facility which has been decreased in size over the years with portions converted to other uses, the Park has been upgraded by the City using Community Development Block Grant funds. The Kennedy Kolony playground at Redd Street and Tennessee Avenue is a heavily used facility which has also been upgraded in recent years.

Vacant. Within the City limits, there is a band of largely undeveloped land that extends from just west of Laurens Street north of Cushman Drive southward to Arbutus Hills Drive. An extension of this same band runs further west into the unincorporated area south of Lincoln Avenue to Lloydtown Road. That portion of the planning district located outside of the City limits is mostly vacant.

Roads. The major roads are Laurens Street (SC 19), Vaucluse Road, and Hampton Avenue. A portion of University Parkway (SC 118) touches the northeast corner of the district. The street pattern is irregular and there are several dirt roads, as well as a few platted which have not been developed.

The Future of Northwest Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Northwest Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Northwest Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The Northwest Aiken planning district is an important area because it is adjacent to Old Aiken, is bounded by the two major thoroughfares of Laurens Street and Vaucluse Road, and is bisected by one of the most important corridors in Aiken, Hampton Avenue. While Northwest Aiken has many plusses, it is obviously faced with many challenges. There are stable neighborhoods, but there is a great deal of dilapidated housing and many blighted areas which will require innovative programs to address. Commercial uses will need to be carefully controlled to allow them to be convenient to low-income residents who do not have access to automobiles while not adversely affecting neighborhoods.

Much needs to be done to improve the appearance of the area along major streets as well as within residential areas. To make the area more attractive as a place to live, more parks may be needed.

Small-Town Character

Much of the district developed prior to the influence of the automobile and therefore has the character of a small-town. Most of the area is occupied by single-family residential neighborhoods, and these should be protected to help keep the area stable and because their proximity to Old Aiken helps to maintain the viability of that area. Duplexes and low-density multifamily residences will also continue to be a dominant factor in the area.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Uses

While the single-family residential character should be protected and reinforced, the area should contain an appropriate mixture of uses. Garage apartments should be allowed in the single-family residential area as well as limited home occupations. Traditional zoning has resulted in a strict separation of different land uses.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4 and in other planning district chapters.)

2.12 Reduce the amount of land zoned for commercial use along Laurens Street, limit commercial development along Hampton Avenue, and do not allow commercial uses along Vaucluse Road. Laurens Street should have a largely residential character except for commercial nodes at Hampton Avenue and Rutland Drive. Hampton Avenue has some land zoned for commercial use within the City limits, but most of the land is zoned residential in both the City and the County; the land on either side of Hampton Avenue should be used for low-density residential except for nodes of commercial at Laurens Street and at Six Points. Vaucluse Road has commercial uses scattered along its length, but except at the existing building containing the print shop at Pickens Street, the only commercial uses should be at Six Points and at Richland Avenue.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

Some of the major road corridors are unattractive and deserve special attention. Laurens Street, a primary entrance into Old Aiken, needs streetscape improvements as do several other streets.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System

Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9.

Recreational Opportunities

Additional recreational opportunities may be needed for residents of Northwest Aiken to strengthen the area's appeal for residents and enhance its small-town neighborhood character.

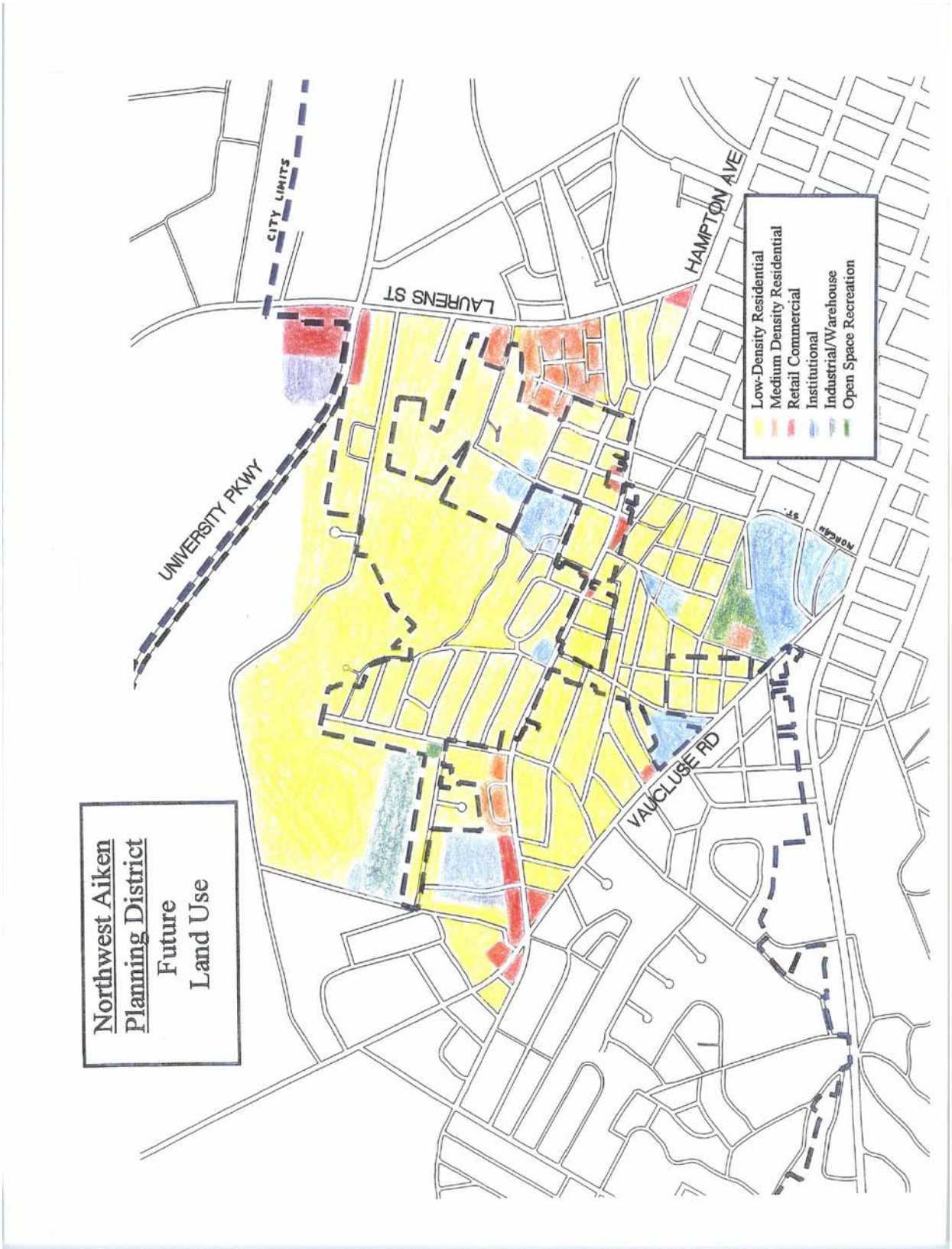
Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.10 **Investigate the creation of a park north of Redd Street.** Eustis Park is a valuable resource which was recently enhanced. More parkland may be needed to serve the large number of residents of the District many of whom need a recreation area within walking distance. The vacant land north of Redd Street may be a good location, and the park could perhaps tie into the Kennedy Kolony playground and be primarily for passive recreation.

Future Land Use Map for Northwest Aiken



III. C. 4

Hayne Avenue / Kalmia Hill

Planning District

Overview of Hayne Avenue / Kalmia Hill

Physical Characteristics

Unlike the adjacent Old Aiken study area which rests upon a broad flat ridge, the Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill planning district is characterized by undulating land which generally drains toward Edisto Avenue and Rollingwood Road and into Hitchcock Woods. In contrast with the grid of wide streets in Old Aiken, many of the streets in this study area are narrow and winding.

Existing Land Use

Residential. With the exceptions of the commercial strips along Richland Avenue between Lancaster Street and Valley Road, the Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill planning district is almost entirely low-density residential. The narrow, maze-like roads, dead-end streets, and sloping land that characterize the Highland Park, Kalmia Hill, and Westcliff neighborhoods make it unlikely that there will be pressure for the existing land use pattern to change except along Gregg Avenue, a straight street flanked by relatively level ground and with easy access to the hospital complex; the residential properties that have direct access onto Richland Avenue; the homes on Vaucluse Road; and, to a lesser degree, those on Trolley Line Road.

Commercial.

Retail. Richland Avenue from Waterloo Street west almost to Valley Road is one of the major commercial corridors in Aiken. In addition to the individual freestanding restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, and service businesses, the area also includes Kalmia Plaza shopping center which contains a supermarket and small department store. This shopping center has declined in importance since the growth of the south side but is an important service to the surrounding residential neighborhood. One large tenant space is vacant. A positive sign is the major expansion of the Food Lion grocery store into vacant commercial space at Kalmia Plaza.

Office. The Hayne Avenue area near the Aiken County office complex contains offices and related commercial uses resulting primarily from its proximity to the Aiken County Hospital which, from the mid-1930's until around 1976, was located in the brick building that now houses County administrative offices. Because of the relocation of the Hospital and the survival of historic residential structures, which are attractive to those preferring to live close to the downtown, the Hayne Avenue area has gradually decreased in importance as an office/ commercial area though the proximity of the downtown area and the Richland Avenue commercial strip continues to generate some demand for office/ commercial uses. Rezonings of large sections of the Hayne Avenue area from Professional back to residential categories in recent years have reinforced the residential character of the area.

Institutional. There are no significant free-standing institutional uses although some Aiken County government offices are located at Kalmia Plaza.

Park/Open Space. The Aiken Golf Club, the Westcliff pool (private) and Kalmia Park (City of Aiken) are all located south of Richland Avenue in the neighborhood that also benefits from the closeness of Hitchcock Woods. The undeveloped open space is scattered and unprotected; the largest and most visible vacant tracts are located at Gregg Avenue and Richland Avenue on the top of Kalmia Hill and at the intersection of Valley Road and Edisto Avenue.

Roads. The main roads in the study area are Richland Avenue, Dibble Road, Hayne Avenue, Vaucluse Road, Trolley Line Road and Gregg Avenue. Of these, Richland Avenue carries the most traffic and is a significant entry into the City. The commercial areas along Richland Avenue appear cluttered and inharmonious because their site design, structures, and signs visually competing for the attention of motorists; this is inconsistent with the Old Aiken character. Although the street pattern in the Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill district promotes stability in land use patterns, much of it is not conducive to use by pedestrians and bicyclists, and the low-density development does not lend itself to a successful public transportation system.

The Future of Hayne Avenue / Kalmia Hill

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Hayne Avenue/ Kalmia Hill. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The planning district is largely developed and its land use pattern generally set. The greatest asset is the established residential areas which are among the best in the Aiken area and have little substandard housing, but additional recreation opportunities may be needed in the Kalmia Hill area north of Richland Avenue. The Hayne Avenue corridor is delicately balanced and will require continuing attention to strengthen its residential character. Intense commercial uses should not be allowed to expand. The Richland Avenue corridor must be protected and its appearance enhanced since it is the primary entrance into Aiken from Augusta.

Small-Town Character

The predominant single-family residential character of the Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill planning district should be protected, not only because the neighborhoods are some of the most stable and attractive in Aiken, but also because their proximity to Old Aiken helps to maintain the viability of that area. There should be no further expansion of commercial uses since there is a sufficient supply of land zoned for such uses along Richland Avenue and in the downtown. The Hayne Avenue corridor is of particular

importance; commercial uses, including office buildings, should not be allowed to spread, and, where possible, should be gradually phased out. To help maintain the attractiveness of the district for residential use, existing open space, especially the Aiken Golf Club, should be preserved, and the possibility of new parks, which are especially needed in the neighborhoods north of Richland Avenue, should be evaluated. An effort should be made to create more of a "traditional neighborhood" atmosphere where appropriate.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

1.16 **Strengthen the single-family residential character of the Hayne Avenue corridor.** There has been a recent trend toward re-establishing the residential character of Hayne Avenue including the rezoning of property back to single-family. Efforts should continue in this direction.

Appropriate Mixture of Uses
There is more than enough land zoned to allow commercial uses along the Richland Avenue corridor as well as some along Hayne Avenue, and rezonings to allow more should not be approved. The expansion of intense commercial uses should be restricted.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Appropriate Design
While the residential areas of Hayne Avenue/Kalmia Hill are attractive, the Richland Avenue corridor is not. Though certainly better than that portion of the highway west of Gregg Avenue, the stretch of Richland east of Valley Road is unappealing as a result of signs, overhead wires, expansive paving, the lack of trees, and several unattractive buildings, and has a character totally inconsistent with that of Old Aiken. The feasibility of standards for the appearance of public improvements and private development along Richland Avenue and along other major roads in the study area should be evaluated. Hayne Avenue should also be considered a major entrance, and there are other roads deserving of attention.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6 and in other planning district chapters.)

4.19 **Consider constructing a landscaped median and other landscaping along Richland Avenue from Valley Drive westward to Gregg Highway.** Because Richland Avenue is the primary entrance into Aiken, it should take on more of the character of Old Aiken with its parkways. There is room for a landscaped median, but cut-throughs would have to be provided to allow for reasonable turning movements for access to existing businesses; construction of the median may not be feasible in some areas because of the amount of development.

4.20 **Maintain the residential character of land along both sides of Richland Avenue from Valley Road to Gregg Avenue.** This portion of road is the most attractive entrance into Aiken and was preserved from commercial encroachment when property along the north side was annexed through an election in 1989. Single-family residential zoning must be preserved in this corridor.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The automobile must be accommodated, and interconnecting streets should be encouraged to provide multiple alternatives rather than forcing traffic onto a few major arteries. Though the winding streets of the district create a pleasant atmosphere, they are not always conducive to walking or bicycling. There should be steps taken to make it easier to use means other than the automobile for short trips as well as for recreation.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9.

Recreational Opportunities

Though Hitchcock Woods is a great asset for passive recreation, more convenient sites for both passive and active recreation are needed north of Richland Avenue.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

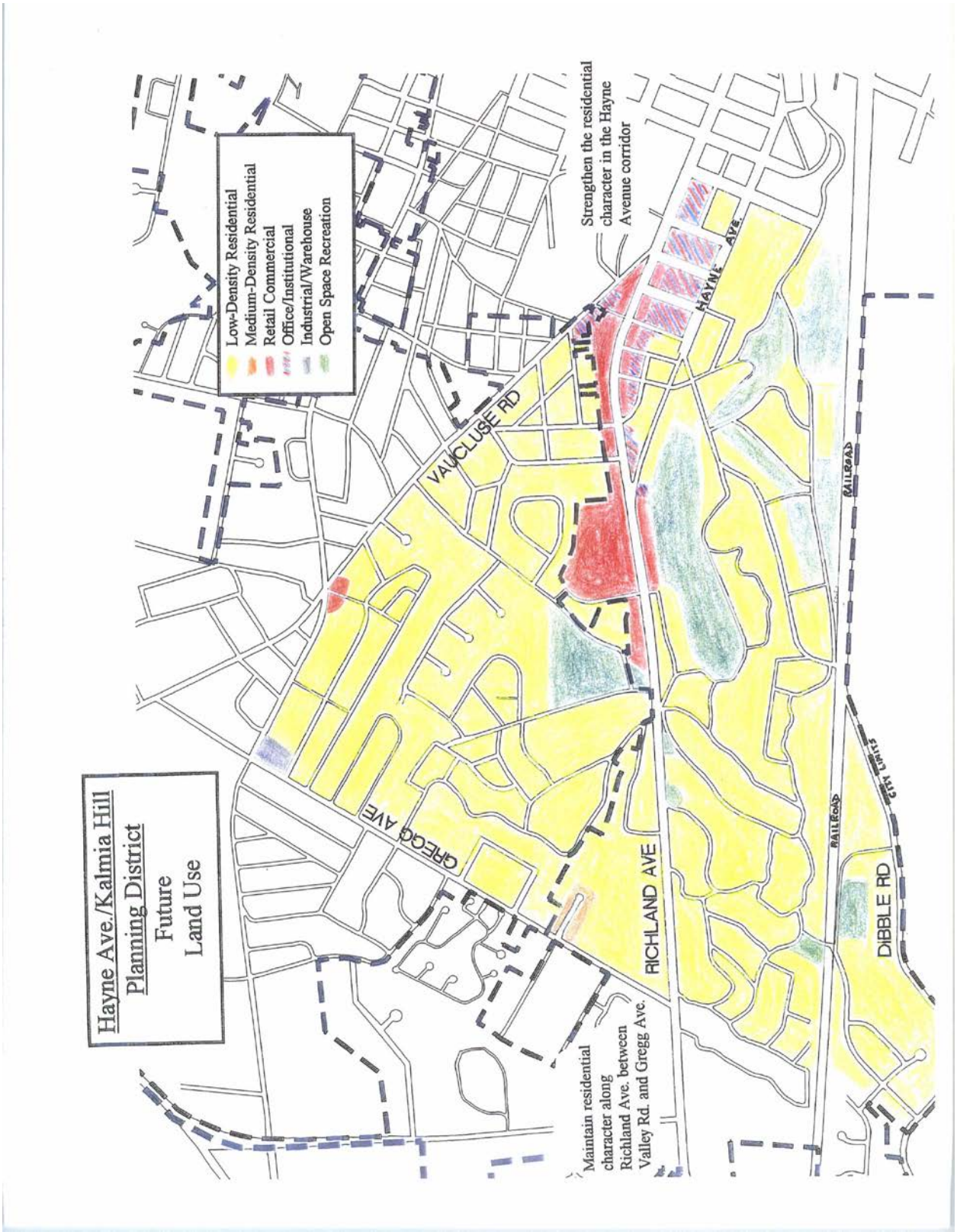
Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.11 **Preserve Aiken Golf Club.** The course is an asset that must be preserved both for its historic value and as a stabilizing influence for the neighborhood.

7.12 **Investigate possible sites for parks/recreation areas north of Richland Avenue.** More park land is needed north of Richland Avenue. One possible location is the vacant tract between Valley Road and Edisto Drive.

Future Land Use Map of Hayne Avenue / Kalmia Hill



III. C. 5

West Aiken

Planning
District

Overview of West Aiken

Physical Characteristics

From the crest of Kalmia Hill at Gregg Avenue, the land slopes away to the west rather sharply. There are no significant streams, but there is one lake within the University Estates subdivision. An abandoned kaolin mine or borrow pit is located between Richland Avenue and the Norfolk Southern railroad line. There is a large wetlands area north of Dibble Road east of Hitchcock Parkway, a small wetlands behind the Burger King at Richland Avenue West and Gregg Highway, and a storm water pond southwest of Swan Antiques.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. One such area is west of Gregg Avenue and north of Hudson Drive in an area of typical suburban single-family homes. Another concentration of low-density residential is in the Pickens Place/Augustus Drive area; Pickens Place is the newest residential subdivision in the district and has some of the characteristics of a traditional neighborhood (see definition on page III-1). A third area is University Estates, an older subdivision in which most of the lots are vacant. The area between the railroad and the commercial development on Richland Avenue contains several single-family homes of various quality. The last major concentration is in the Westcliff subdivision south of the railroad, which is almost 30 years old.

Medium-Density. Begun in the mid-1980's, Kalmia Landing on Gregg Avenue is a planned unit development which contains an apartment building and patio homes. The other major medium-density development is Cumberland Village, a new retirement complex on Hitchcock Parkway at SC 421, which includes an assisted-living apartment building, duplexes, and a nursing home. Pepper Hill nursing home is located on Augustus Drive, and Shadow Oaks assisted-living facility at Gregg Avenue.

Commercial.

Retail. Retail commercial uses are concentrated in the Richland Avenue West and University Parkway corridors. Richland Avenue West includes a variety of such uses, and there are some vacant structures such as the former K-Mart store, which was used briefly as a training center by Westinghouse Savannah River Company. Another retail commercial cluster on Richland Avenue is at its intersection with Robert Bell Parkway. The University Parkway corridor includes the Market Place shopping center and some other retail uses.

Office. The most significant office uses are located behind the Aiken Regional Medical Centers on Medical Park Drive. Other offices are found in the Richland Avenue corridor; some are located in converted houses.

Institutional. The University of South Carolina at Aiken (USCA) and the Aiken Regional Medical Centers across University Parkway from USCA are the primary uses, with the two institutions forming a major node of activity in the region. Another developing institutional node of significance is located between Gregg Highway and Richland Avenue; the Aiken Center for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and the Aiken/Barnwell Mental Health Center each recently completed headquarters facilities. Aiken Public Safety Station #3 is on Richland Avenue just west of Gregg Avenue.

Park/Open Space. There is no public parkland. The walking track at the Medical Centers is the most active recreation area available to the public.

Industrial/Warehouse. The only land in this category is the high-pressure natural gas transmission line at the western edge of the district.

Vacant. USCA owns vacant land planned for future use by the school. There is a substantial vacant tract immediately north of the Aiken Regional Medical Centers that was annexed in 2002. The University Estates residential subdivision, though platted, is largely vacant. Much of the land between Richland Avenue and the Norfolk Southern railroad is empty. The other major vacant land is south of the railroad in an area of wetlands and an adjacent tract to the east occupied by an abandoned City of Aiken sewage treatment plant.

Roads. Richland Avenue (U.S. 1), also known as the Aiken-Augusta Highway or the Jefferson Davis Highway, is the major road. Hitchcock Parkway and Robert Bell Parkway, which constitute portions of a soon-to-be completed ring road around Aiken, are at the western boundary of the district. University Parkway, Gregg Avenue, Gregg Highway, and Trolley Line Road are other major roads.

Railroad. The Norfolk Southern rail line runs through the district parallel to Richland Avenue.

The Future of West Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including West Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to West Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The presence and planned future expansions of USCA and the Medical Centers will ensure that the district will be a center of activity in the region. Commercial uses should cluster on Richland Avenue at its intersections with University Parkway and Robert Bell Parkway to serve much of the surrounding area including Graniteville; underutilized land and empty structures can accommodate additional businesses. The Richland Avenue

corridor must be protected and its appearance enhanced, since it is the primary entrance into Aiken from Augusta. A new parkway providing a more direct connection to I-20 entering Aiken somewhere in the district may be considered.

Small-Town Character

The dominance of USC-Aiken and the Aiken Regional Medical Centers as well as significant commercial development will make it difficult to promote the feel of a small-town. Though not a dominant use, the low-density residential areas of the West Aiken planning district should be protected. There should be no further expansion of commercial uses since there is a sufficient supply of land zoned for such uses. An effort should be made to create more of a "traditional neighborhood" atmosphere where appropriate (see definition on page III-1); the University Estates subdivision, in which most of the lots are vacant, might present an opportunity for such an approach.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture Of Uses

There is more than enough land zoned General Business and Office, and there are several vacant commercial buildings; annexation of land to be zoned commercial should only be done where there is a clearly demonstrated need. There should be two primary nodes of retail commercial use, both along Richland Avenue: one at the University Parkway intersection and the other at the Robert Bell Parkway intersection. There should be strict limitations on intense commercial uses. Warehouse and light industrial uses may be located along the railroad.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

Richland Avenue is the primary entrance into Aiken but is generally unappealing as a result of the signs, overhead wires, the lack of trees, and unattractive buildings; this "front door" to Aiken should set the tone for what visitors will find in the heart of town. Standards for the appearance of public improvements and private development along Richland Avenue and along other major roads in the study area should be established.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6 and in other planning district chapters.)

4.21 **Construct a landscaped median along Richland Avenue.** Because Richland Avenue is the primary entrance into Aiken, it should take on more of the character of Old Aiken with its parkways. There is room for a landscaped median, but cut-throughs would have to be provided to allow for reasonable turning movements for access to existing businesses.

4.22 **Begin to work with the State Department of Transportation now to incorporate landscaping in medians and other parts of Hitchcock and Robert Bell Parkways.** Even though the widening of these two roads is many years away, the City should make it clear that landscaped medians and other plantings should be an integral part of future improvements. The roads should both become true parkways.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System

Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters).

6.22 **Work with the State Department of Transportation on including separated bicycle paths as part of the widening of Hitchcock Parkway.** City staff has informed State officials of the interest in including bicycle paths and should continue to stress including paths in the design.

6.23 **Evaluate the need for a parkway connecting with the planning district which would provide a more direct connection between Aiken and Interstate 20.** A more direct route is needed from Aiken to I-20. In addition to improving the flow of traffic, a true parkway with landscaped median and other attractive design features could become the primary entrance into the city. Because of the time involved in securing State and federal funds to build roads, consideration should be given to making the parkway a toll road to accelerate its construction.

Recreational Opportunities

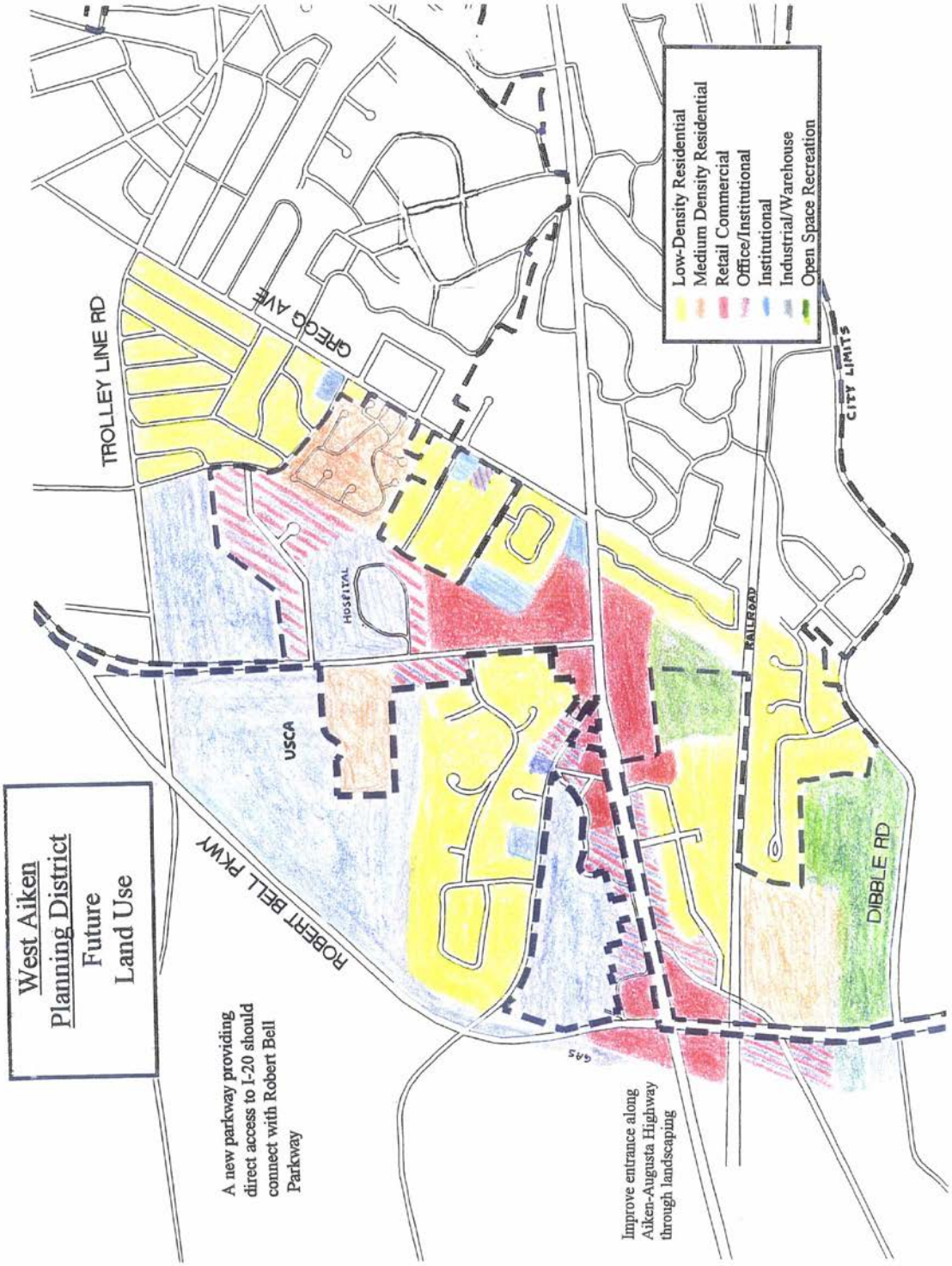
Hitchcock Woods is close enough to meet the need for passive recreation, but where possible, more parkland for active recreation should be provided. Possible locations are within University Estates. The wetlands north of Dibble Road and the adjacent abandoned City sewage treatment plant may also offer recreation opportunities including providing a connection for a bike path between Dibble Road and points to the west.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of West Aiken



III. C. 6

East Aiken

Planning
District

Overview of East Aiken

Physical Characteristics

The East Aiken planning district is flat and has some of the only remaining good agricultural soil in the initial planning district. Drainage from the area is into the Edisto River. There are some wetlands in the northern part of the district near the closed City landfill.

Existing Land Use.

Residential

Low-Density. The main concentration of residential is south of the railroad in areas that contain a substantial amount of substandard housing occupied by a large number of low-income citizens. The only other low-density residential uses are scattered in the area north of Richland Avenue including Willow Run Road and Pine Hill Drive.

Medium-Density. There are public housing units in two locations south of the railroad.

Commercial.

Retail. There are extensive retail uses along Richland Avenue interspersed with other uses. The strip commercial development is unsightly because of the signs, overhead wires, and lack of trees and presents a poor entrance into Old Aiken.

Office. There has been significant office building development on the east side of Beaufort Street north of Richland Avenue in recent years most of which is leased to State agencies.

Institutional. The district contains a concentration of State agencies located along the south side of Richland Avenue including the Department of Transportation (DOT) motor vehicles office, the DOT District Engineer's office, the Department of Social Services, and the Employment Security Commission. On the east side of Beaufort Street north of Richland Avenue are the offices of the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the State Patrol.

Park/Open Space. There is no park or open space land in the district.

Industrial/Warehouse. The Ohio Brass/Hubbell Plant and the AB Beverage distribution center and warehouse on Richland Avenue are the major uses in this category.

Vacant. Except for the development along Richland Avenue and Beaufort Street, most of the land in the district is undeveloped. Only a concrete plant and scattered single-family dwellings are located in the remainder of the area.

Roads. Richland Avenue, Park Avenue, and Beaufort Street are the major roads.

Railroads. The Norfolk Southern Railroad line runs next to Park Avenue.

The Future of East Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including East Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to East Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and in previous planning districts.

Overview

Because of the amount of undeveloped land, the East Aiken planning district has the most options of any district in the initial study area. The strip retail character of Richland Avenue should be phased out with most of the corridor between that street and Park Avenue being used for office or institutional uses. Retail commercial should be limited to Richland Avenue west of Beaufort and near the intersection of Old Wagener Road. The new section of the SC 118 By-Pass will obviously shape the future of the district. East Aiken will be primarily residential with some commercial uses.

Small-Town Character

There is little about the district that has the character of a small town; there is a rapid transition from the intense commercial/industrial development along Richland Avenue and portions of Beaufort Street to the essentially rural character immediately to the northeast. The only areas with a small-town atmosphere are the substandard residential areas south of the railroad developed before the influence of the automobile; this area should be protected and enhanced. Steps should be taken to make the district more consistent with the small-town character of Old Aiken including establishing a parkway in the 150'-wide right-of-way of Beaufort Street, and possibly extending the grid/parkway system into the undeveloped area. There are opportunities to create residential areas with the traditional small-town character on the large areas of vacant land north of Richland Avenue.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

1.17 **Try to establish the grid street system of Old Aiken including parkways in the undeveloped area.** The most distinguishing characteristic of Aiken is the parkways and one-way pairs of streets. There is no other place where the existing grid system can be expanded except to the east. Efforts should be made to establish the grid street system in the area with the first step being the creation of a parkway on Beaufort Street, which has a 150-foot right-of-way.

Appropriate Mixture of Uses

Retail uses should be confined to the area around the intersection of Richland Avenue East and Old Wagener Road with office/institutional uses from there westward along the Richland Avenue/Park Avenue corridor with retail uses phased out in that area. There should be strict limitations on retail uses. The new residential development that occurs north of Richland Avenue should be protected from the proposed business park. There are areas zoned industrial that are better suited for another use.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5 and in other planning district chapters.)

3.5 **Develop a business park/industrial park in the western half of the district to attract employers to provide jobs for nearby residents, especially low-income citizens.** The proposed business park would tie into the Old Aiken area and provide employment within walking distance of many low-income citizens. The park would help to stimulate the economy of Old Aiken. It should have a design and layout that will relate to Old Aiken, be a visual asset to the area, and incorporate a park/recreation area.

3.6 **Evaluate the areas zoned industrial to see if the designation is appropriate.** There appears to be too much land zoned for industrial that should be rezoned to a more appropriate category

Appropriate Design

Richland Avenue is the primary entrance into Aiken from the east but is generally unappealing because of signs, overhead wires, the lack of trees, and unattractive buildings; this important corridor should set the tone for what visitors will find in the heart of town. Streetscape plans are needed for Richland and Park Avenues and Beaufort Street, and the proposed SC 118 By-Pass should be a true parkway with a landscaped median.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6 and in other planning district chapters.)

4.24 **Evaluate the feasibility of a landscaped median along Richland Avenue from Old Wagener Road westward.** Because Richland Avenue is the primary entrance into Aiken, it should take on more of the character of Old Aiken with its parkways. Installation of a median would be a challenge because of the number of curb cuts along the road, but as much of the paved turn lane as possible should be removed and replaced by a landscaped median.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to ensure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. Pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists should eventually be expanded into the area; there is an opportunity to incorporate separate pathways into the design of the business park and new residential development as well as on the new section of the SC 118 By-Pass. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.24 **The SC 118 By-Pass should incorporate a separate pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.** The State has agreed to incorporate a separate pathway into the design for the By-Pass.

6.25 **The pathway system for pedestrians and bicyclists should be expanded into the district as it is annexed.** Most of the district is outside of the City limits, but, as land is annexed, the pathway system should eventually be expanded into the area.

Recreational Opportunities

Except for a small park at Hampton and Beaufort Street, there are no parks or recreation areas in the district, but there are opportunities to create them at the proposed business park or incorporated with new residential development.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.11 **The proposed business park should incorporate a park/recreation area.** The property involved includes the closed City landfill and some nearby wetlands which could be used for a park to serve surrounding residents.

Future Land Use Map of East Aiken

Create a landscaped parkway on Beaufort Street and try to extend the grid street and parkway system of Old Aiken into the undeveloped areas of the district.

III. C. 7

Horse / Hitchcock Woods

Planning District

Overview of Horse / Hitchcock Woods

Physical Characteristics

The area to the east of Whiskey Road is quite flat, and most of its stormwater flows into Wise Hollow, with some going into Hitchcock Woods or into depressions. To the west of Whiskey Road, the land in the study area is hilly and drains into Sand River.

Existing Land Use.

Residential.

Low-Density. The residential properties generally range from large homes on several-acre lots with paddocks to ranch houses on quarter-acre lots. There are large winter colony estates mixed with some smaller homes in the area north of Knox Avenue and Palmetto Golf Course. The dwellings south of Knox Avenue and east of Powderhouse Road generally were built since 1950 and are on lots of less than one-half acre.

Medium-Density. There are no uses in this category.

Commercial.

Retail. There are no uses in this category except for the Track Kitchen restaurant on Mead Avenue.

Office. There are no significant uses in this category.

Horse-Related Facilities. The horse-related facilities include four tracks (Whitney Track, McGhee's Mile Track, Aiken Training Track, and Clark Field), stables associated with the tracks, and three polo fields (Whitney, Winthrop, and Powderhouse).

Institutional. The primary such use is the Aiken County Museum in the Banksia estate on the west side of Newberry Street south of South Boundary Avenue. There is also a Christian Science Church on the west side of Whiskey Road south of South Boundary Avenue.

Park/Open Space. The primary public open spaces are Hopelands Gardens and Rye Patch between Dupree Place and Berrie Road on the west side of Whiskey Road, and the Mile Track (formerly owned by the City) on Banks Mill Road. Otherwise, the open space, recreation, and horse facilities are privately owned. The Whitney Trust (established in 1901) oversees the Palmetto Golf Club; the Whitney polo field, race track and barns; and the Powderhouse Polo Fields. The Trust is not bound to maintain these properties in their current form, and it has in the past sold some of its property. The major open space, not only in the planning district but in the region, is Hitchcock Woods, which is privately owned but open to the public. The Hitchcock Foundation was established in 1939 by Thomas Hitchcock who donated about 1,200 acres to be protected and maintained for recreational use by the people of Aiken. The

Hitchcock Foundation has since bought additional property and is working on acquiring most of the adjacent 750 acres owned by the Aiken Preparatory School. The Green Boundary Club, a private club in a former winter colony dwelling on a large tract, is located on the east side of Whiskey Road north of Knox Avenue. Another private club, Fermata, is on the west side of Whiskey Road south of Berrie Road.

Industrial/Warehouse. The only uses in this category are storage facilities associated with the tracks and stables.

Vacant. The most notable vacant property is known as the "Early tract" south of Clark Field west of Powderhouse Road; there have been several annexation requests denied by City Council in recent years because of the proposed dwelling-unit density.

Roads. The two-lane portion of Whiskey Road, the principal north-south corridor through the City, bisects the district. Other roads that are used by automobiles to travel between the south side and Old Aiken are Two Notch Road, a portion of which is unpaved to accommodate horses using the Aiken Training Track; Powderhouse Road, which has a narrow 40-foot right-of-way; and Banks Mill Road, which runs by McGhee's Mile Track. Many of the roads feeding into Whiskey Road from the west are dead-end streets. The other major road is South Boundary Avenue which forms the northern edge of the district.

The Future of The Horse / Hitchcock Woods Area

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Horse/Hitchcock Woods; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Horse/Hitchcock Woods. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

With the exception of the parkway system in Old Aiken immediately to its north, the Horse-Training/Hitchcock Woods area makes the greatest contribution to the character of the city. The Aiken Training Track, McGhee's Mile Track, Steeplechase track and polo fields not only contribute substantially to the local economy, but add a vitality, flavor, and personality that are tremendous assets; private ownership of horses for pleasure-riding is also of great importance. The area is also of great historic significance. In addition, the value of Hitchcock Woods cannot be overstated; while of great importance to those who ride horses, this large urban forest will be of increasing value as a refuge for all citizens as the city encircles it. All of these assets must be protected. Much of the study area has been designated for protection under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance and is zoned either RS-15, RSS, or the Horse District (HD) zone. None of the current land use controls would prevent subdivision and development that would irreversibly alter the character of the area and could undermine the City's horse industry which needs large, undivided tracts of land and limits on vehicular traffic which the unpaved roads in the

area help to provide. Efforts should be made to protect this open character. Also important to many existing and potential property owners in the area is safe access for horses across Whiskey Road to Hitchcock Woods. No commercial uses should be allowed except those which are horse-related, but the restrictions on home occupations should be relaxed.

Low-Density Residential and Open Character

The district should be predominantly detached single-family residential on large lots although single apartment units should be allowed in conjunction with single-family dwellings. New residential development may be appropriate in certain areas that do not affect the horse-training area or significantly reduce the open character of the district. The horse-training facilities should remain as well as the stables and paddocks owned by those who keep horses for pleasure.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

1.18 **Consider incentives for developers of open tracts to cluster the residential units and maintain large areas of common open space.** There are large tracts of land in the study area which will be increasingly attractive for development. In October of 1996, City Council approved an increase in the minimum lot size in R-1S (now RSS) from one to three acres to help keep the density of development low. Other approaches should be considered to assure that the open character of the area is maintained.

1.19 **If tracts of open land cannot be preserved, they should be zoned to be sure that the resulting development will have the maximum amount of open land.** If the Steeplechase Track is annexed and nearby polo fields cannot be preserved, they should be zoned Horse District. The large tract south of the Steeplechase Track on Powderhouse Road should be considered for RS-15 zoning if annexed. If the Palmetto Golf Club is proposed for development, it should be rezoned from RS-15 to RSS.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses

Except for home occupations, retail or office uses will generally be inappropriate in the district. Accessory apartments should be allowed but not medium-density residential uses unless through a cluster provision requiring the preservation of open space. Warehouse uses associated with horse-training should be permitted, but not industrial uses.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4 and in other planning district chapters.)

2.13 **Do not allow commercial encroachment north of Boardman Road**. Boardman is a logical boundary between the historic area to the north and the commercial area to the south.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
The road corridors generally are attractive, but streetscape plans should be implemented for the major roads.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
The area developed prior to the influence of the automobile, and the unpaved roads discourage such traffic. The pathway system should serve the area where appropriate and where the impact on horses will be insignificant.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9.

Recreational Opportunities
The horse-related activities and the availability of Hitchcock Woods as well as nearby Hopelands Gardens and Virginia Acres Park are primary sources of recreation in the district, but the master park and recreation plan may identify other needs.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.12 Protect and enhance Hopelands Gardens and Rye Patch. In addition to their value as open space, Hopelands Gardens and Rye Patch will be a stabilizing influence on the area as the inevitable pressures from growth continue. Proposed changes to Hopelands and Rye Patch must be carefully evaluated with final decisions not being made until adequate input is sought.

Horses
The horse-training businesses and facilities must be protected because of their importance to the character of the city and the local economy. Of at least equal importance, however, is the contribution that horse-training, polo, pleasure-riding, and carriage-driving make to the quality-of-life in Aiken. There is a clear choice in the matter: either a conscious effort is made to protect the horse-training businesses by restricting the intensity of development nearby and discouraging automobile traffic through the area, or no special protection is provided. Much care must be given to the type and intensity of development allowed so that the horse-training businesses and facilities are not adversely affected. Two major steps were taken in October of 1996 when City Council approved amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to (1) create the Horse District zoning classification designed for the horse-training businesses and tracks and (2) increase the minimum lot size in the R-1S (now RSS) zone from one to three acres to help keep the density of future development low.

Goal 12 Protect the horse-training businesses and polo fields as well as horses ridden for pleasure.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

12.1 **Reject any proposed rezoning that would result in an inappropriate intensity of activity that would adversely affect the horse district.** The City should be sure that no inappropriate uses are allowed through zoning that permits intense development.

12.2 **Do not annex with inappropriate zoning, and, where annexation does occur, attach any conditions necessary to assure that subsequent development will be as compatible as possible.** Annexation should be viewed as an opportunity to have maximum control over development to protect the area.

12.3 **Avoid the widening of any roads in the district.** The character of the roads is important as is the need to keep traffic volumes from increasing.

12.4 **Do not allow the paving of any unpaved roads.** The unpaved roads are important to the character of the area as well as for the protection of the horses.

12.5 **Maintain the ability of those on horseback to easily and safely cross Whiskey Road.** Those citizens living on the east side of Whiskey Road who own horses and ride in Hitchcock Woods must be able to cross Whiskey Road.

Historic Character
The historic qualities of the district contribute greatly to Aiken's character; almost all of that portion within the City limits has been designated to the Aiken Historic Register for protection under the Historic Preservation Ordinance and to the National Register of Historic Places. Protection of these areas is essential including the large open spaces.

Goal 13 Protect the historic character of the district.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

13.1 **Evaluate historic sites to be sure that all of those worthy of protection are considered for inclusion on the Aiken Historic**

Register. Most of the sites of historic value have been documented to some degree, but additional work is needed to be sure that none are overlooked.

13.2 **Create a task force to develop methods for the protection of privately held open spaces such as Palmetto Golf Course and the polo fields.** Privately owned tracts will need special attention including incentives and cooperative agreements.

Protect Whiskey Road

The portion of whiskey Road through the area is the most important stretch of road in Aiken because of its value as a traffic artery connecting Old Aiken and the growth areas to the south and because of its scenic and historic value. The right-of-way has been individually designated to the Aiken Historic Register. There will be increasing pressure for changes to the road to accommodate more vehicles, and a clear choice will have to be made between allowing such changes which would drastically alter its character or keeping the road essentially the way it is. Whiskey Road is both an important traffic artery and an integral part of the historic character of the area.

Goal 14 Protect the character of Whiskey Road.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

14.1 Avoid the widening of Whiskey Road unless required for public safety. It is important that strong efforts be made to protect the character of Whiskey Road because it is such an integral part of Aiken's history and provides such an attractive entryway into Old Aiken. Widening of the road should only be done as an absolute last resort motivated primarily by public safety concerns, particularly the movement of emergency vehicles during peak traffic. Should public safety become a major issue, minor remedial changes to the road to facilitate the movement of traffic should be tried before consideration is given to widening.

14.2 Implement a streetscape plan for Whiskey Road. While the Whiskey Road corridor is generally attractive, there may be ways to make it even more of an asset.

Hitchcock Woods

Hitchcock Woods is obviously a priceless asset that should be protected, valuable for historic reasons as well as for its current use. As the City grows around it, the Woods will increase in importance, and should be available for the enjoyment of all area

residents and visitors. Improved access and greater use by a cross-section of people is inevitable and justified, but great care will have to be taken to protect the essential character of the Woods. The balance between protection and use must be carefully maintained. In any proposed change, the consideration of those who use the Woods on horseback and horse-drawn carriage must be preeminent. The impact of stormwater will also have to be monitored so that the Woods are not adversely affected.

Goal 15 Protect the integrity of Hitchcock Woods while improving its accessibility.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

15.1 Discourage the encroachment of inappropriate development or roads that would threaten the integrity of the Woods. Development regulations and conditions on annexations should be used to protect the Woods.

15.2 Work with the Hitchcock Foundation to protect and improve the entrances to the Woods including creation of a more direct and clearly marked entrance into the Woods from the downtown area. The entrances should be more visible and inviting.

Future Land Use Map of Horse - Hitchcock

Whiskey Road / Pine Log Road

Planning District

Overview of Whiskey Road / Pine Log Road

Physical Characteristics

The Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road planning district is on the edge of a plateau with the terrain sloping away significantly to the west into the Sandhill region. The district is largely developed with the primary undeveloped tract being the area around the Carolina Bay north of Virginia Acres Park.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. Areas of detached single-family dwellings are limited to the Dogwood Road/Woodward Street area on the northern edge; the neighborhood known as Silver Bluff Estates built in the 1950's between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads north of Silver Bluff Commons shopping center; houses along the west side of Silver Bluff Road between Kerr Drive and Magnolia Drive; Bonnieview Estates, a subdivision built in the 1950's; and a few dwellings in the Hamilton Drive/Nielson Road area north of Dougherty Road.

Medium-Density. The major developments in this category are Colony Apartments and Churchill Commons adjacent to Centennial Office Park; both opened in the early 1990's.

Commercial.

Retail. There are major retail commercial uses along both Whiskey and Pine Log Roads. Several shopping centers are located in the area: Mitchell shopping center which opened in the 1960's; Heritage Square, Village at Whiskey, and Rich Plaza in the 1970's; Hitchcock Plaza in the late 1980's; and Foodmax Village and Silver Bluff Commons in the early 1990's. A new Wal-Mart store opened in 1994 with the food store added in 1995.

On the west side of Whiskey Road south of Pine Log, in addition to Wal-Mart, there is a strip shopping center and restaurants. On the east side is the Rich Plaza strip shopping center at the corner of Whiskey and East Pine Log Roads, and other nearby lots include fast-food restaurants, a motel, a muffler shop, and a boat dealer; except for that portion near Pine Log, most of the frontage on the east side of Whiskey Road is outside of the City. One area in transition is Dougherty Road, which has several residences but has clearly shifted in character to include small shops and services.

Some of the older shopping centers have significant vacancies as a result of the construction of new centers which have attracted the tenants southward. For example, Mitchell Shopping Center was the original site of Wal-Mart, which later moved to a larger space at the newer Heritage Square before building its own store farther south on the west side of Whiskey Road south of Millbrook Drive. Heritage Square has undergone a significant change in recent years: The J.B.

White department store became a Dillard's store, but Dillard's and Lenscrafters moved to Aiken Mall, and a new Home Depot now occupies the site formerly occupied by the Wal-Mart and a Food Lion. At the Village at Whiskey, the Winn-Dixie grocery store closed in early 1996 but has been replaced by Staple's. Foodmax Village also closed in 1996 but it is now fully occupied.

Office. The dominant office facility in the district, and one of the major ones in the region, is the Centennial Office Park east of South Aiken High School. Built in the early 1990's to house employees of Westinghouse Savannah River Company, the four buildings, totaling 200,000 square feet of floor space, were largely vacant due to layoffs at SRS and the consolidation of some offices at the Site, but occupancy is full as a result of the new UPS center, SCANA, as well as SRS-related offices. In addition, some office uses are found along Whiskey Road. There is a concentration of office buildings in the Millbrook Drive/Fabian Drive area with other office buildings scattered throughout the area.

Institutional. The major institutional uses are South Aiken High School, the National Guard Armory, Millbrook Baptist Church, South Aiken Presbyterian Church, South Aiken Baptist Church, and the City of Aiken Public Safety Station #2.

Park/Open Space. The primary open space is Virginia Acres Park which includes the Odell Weeks Recreation Center. Located on a former single-family residential subdivision developed during the construction of the Savannah River Site, the Park has become a focal point of the area south of Old Aiken and is used both for active recreation and as a gathering place. Virginia Acres functions in a manner not unlike a "Boston Commons" or "Central Park" for south Aiken. Proposed improvements to Virginia Acres park include additional tennis courts and a skateboard court.

Industrial/Warehouse. There are no such uses in the district.

Vacant. The most significant tracts are north of Virginia Acres Park on an undeveloped portion of the Woodward Tract; a Carolina Bay is located there. The Aiken County Open Land Trust has deeded to the City a 14-acre tract as a passive recreation area. Combined with the acquisition of an adjacent tract, a total of 24 acres could be added as a recreation area tied into Virginia Acres. Other significant tracts in the City are on the west side of Silver Bluff Road north of Oriole Street (zoned to allow retail) and land adjacent to the Centennial Office Park (zoned to allow offices).

Roads. As the name of the planning district implies, the major roads are Whiskey Road and Pine Log Road, and the intersection of these two thoroughfares is the busiest in the Aiken area. Whiskey Road is the only suitable route from south Aiken into Old Aiken and has become increasingly crowded. Silver Bluff Road is

the other major street; four-lane for most of its length, it narrows to two lanes from Silver Bluff Commons north to Whiskey Road. Two Notch Road is important because it provides a north-south alternative to Whiskey Road but does lead into the horse- training area. Dougherty Road is also an important thoroughfare; a two-lane road with increasing traffic, it is the only east-west road connecting Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads until one reaches Anderson Pond Road, an unpaved road four miles to the south. Concern about the congestion and aesthetics of Whiskey Road have led to two studies: the W*hiskey Road Traffic Corridor Study* by ARCADIS, completed in April of 2001 and the *Whiskey Road Corridor Study* by LDR International, adopted by City Council in November of 2001.

The Future of Whiskey Road / Pine Log Road

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Whiskey Road/Pine Log Road; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Whiskey Road / Pine Log Road. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The planning district is largely developed and its land use pattern generally set. The Whiskey Road and Pine Log Road area, along with the Aiken Mall area, is the most significant commercial concentration in the Aiken region; the area has assumed the role of the dominant retail district from the downtown. However, steps should be taken to prevent an increase of vacant commercial space, particularly those spaces referred to as "big boxes." Aside from economic issues, the primary concern should be improving the appearance of the area so that it is more consistent with the overall character of Aiken; streetscape plans are needed for the major roads to beautify the area to create a less "suburban" atmosphere and a stronger sense of place. The land north of Virginia Acres Park on the Woodward tract should be acquired by the City and made a passive recreation area.

Small-Town Character

The nature of the development in the district may prevent it from taking on the character of a small town, but steps should be taken in that direction. Expansion of commercial areas should be restricted. What residential neighborhoods there are should be protected, and additional residential uses, perhaps medium-density, should be encouraged on in-fill sites near the existing commercial areas connected by pathways for pedestrians and bicycles. Streetscape improvements are needed to give the area a more human scale and improve the appearance.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

1.19 Identify sites that could be developed for housing near existing commercial uses. The district needs to become less automobile-oriented; more people should live in the area close to the commercial areas, and there should be pathways for pedestrians and bicycles to interconnect the various uses.

1.20 Do not widen Silver Bluff Road between Whiskey Road and Silver Bluff Commons shopping center. Widening this stretch of road will generate more traffic and adversely affect the residential neighborhoods on either side of the road. However, intersection improvements might be needed.

Appropriate Mixture Of Land Uses
There is no need to expand the amount of land used for intense commercial purposes though low-intensity commercial uses may be suitable along Silver Bluff Road between Whiskey and Pine Log Roads as well as along Dougherty Road, and strict design standards should be adopted to ensure that these uses do not adversely affect residential neighborhoods. New residential areas should be established on the few areas available for such use.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objective
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
The appearance of the district must be improved to be more consistent with the character of Aiken. The streetscape plan proposed for Whiskey Road in the Whiskey Road Corridor Study should be implemented. A streetscape plan for Pine Log Road is also needed and should be implemented in the near future, and other opportunities to make the area more attractive should be sought.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
The automobile has dominated most of the development of the area, and movement within it is not friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists; steps are needed to provide more balance.

Public transportation should receive continuing attention especially to provide an alternative connection between the area and Old Aiken, which will become more important as Whiskey Road traffic increases. Road improvements and the creation of interconnecting streets will need to be made. Connecting driveways between parking lots at shopping centers should also be encouraged to keep traffic from having to get onto the main roads.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.26 Improve Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads. Because traffic will increase on Dougherty Road, major changes are needed to maximize its capacity. In addition to the impending intersection improvements at Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads, a study prepared by a traffic engineer is needed to determine the feasibility of widening, realigning with West Pine Log Road, and limiting curb cuts. Whatever changes are implemented, the result should be an attractive landscaped boulevard with streetscape improvements as well as pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists.

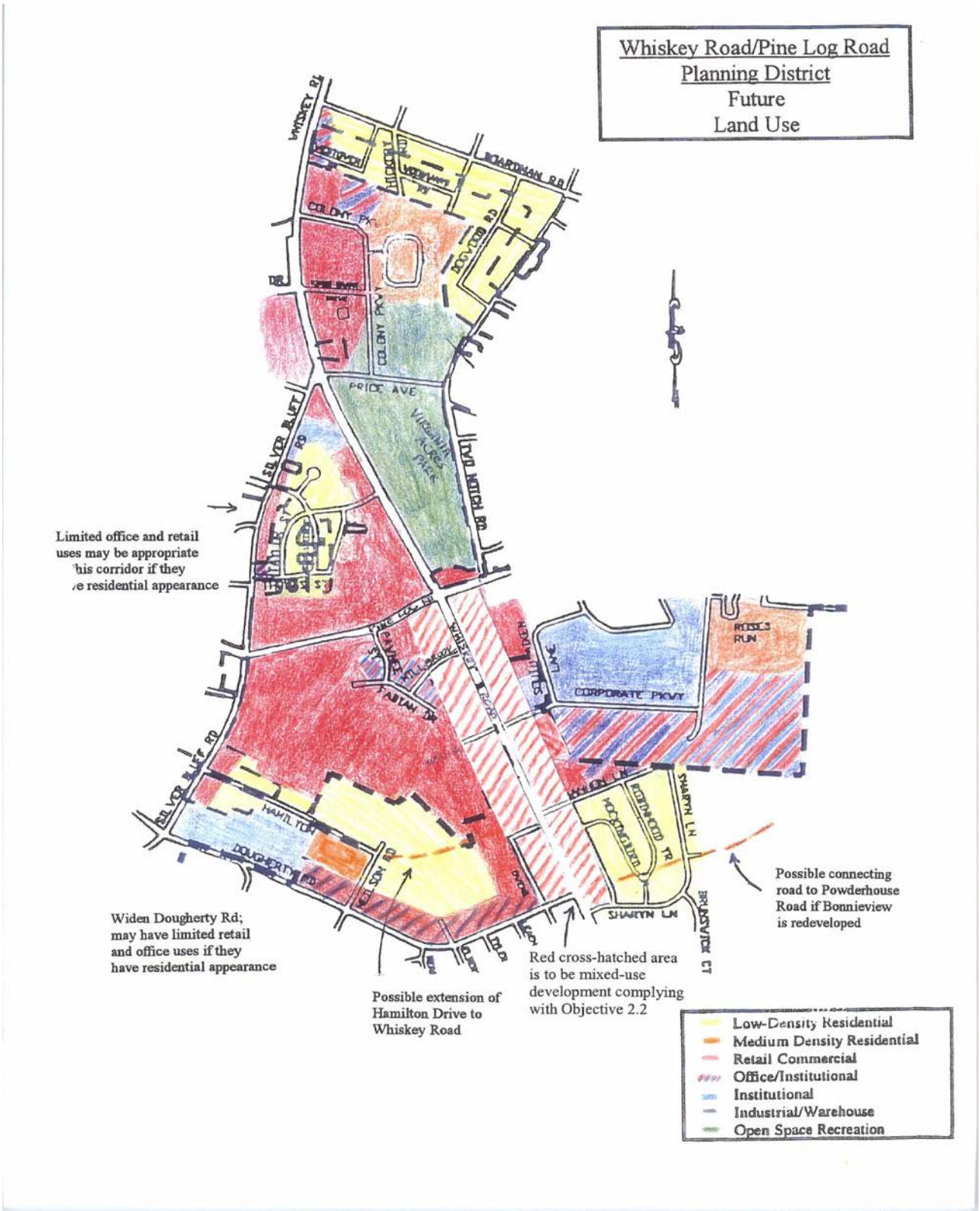
6.27 Construct road connections from Dougherty Road to nearby commercial areas to reduce traffic on Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads. There should be an evaluation of the feasibility of roads connecting Dougherty Road to nearby commercial uses and, if possible, the roads should be constructed. Such connections would include improvements to and extension of Neilson Drive to the rear of Wal-Mart, and a driveway parallel to and west of Whiskey Road connecting to the driveway into the Publix shopping center.

6.28 Consider extending Hamilton Drive eastward to Whiskey Road to provide an alternative for Dougherty Road. Only a short stretch of new road would be needed to make the connection though the intersection created at Whiskey Road might be too close to Dougherty Road to allow a traffic signal. Attempts should be made to include a bicycle path.

6.29 If Bonnieview Estates is redeveloped, acquire right-of-way for a road to connect Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads. A road is needed to provide an alternate to East Pine Log Road for travel between Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads. Ideally, the new road would align with Dougherty Road. A study is needed to determine the best route for such a road.

6.30 Investigate the feasibility of a mass transit line connecting the area with Old Aiken for implementation over the next 20 years. It is apparent that the lack of adequate highway connections between Old Aiken and the south side will be a continuing problem that will only get worse as the area grows. Widening the roads between the two parts of town should be avoided because to do so could destroy much of what makes Aiken special. An alternative method of travel such as mass transit should be studied; though it could be at least 20 years before such an alternative would be implemented, thought should be given to it in the near future.

Future Land Use Map of Whiskey Road – Pine Log Road



III. C. 9

Houndslake

Planning
District

Overview of Houndslake

Physical Characteristics

The Houndslake planning district is on rolling terrain which slopes to the west toward the Savannah River. Much of the land is on what used to be a portion of Hitchcock Woods. There are a few lakes which have been constructed in conjunction with the Houndslake development.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. This is the predominant land use. Aiken Estates and Conger Woods, located immediately south of the Palmetto Golf Course and Hitchcock Woods, were the first single-family residential projects in the district having been built in the 1960's; the neighborhoods south of Williams Drive were also built during that period. The Houndslake development began to take shape in the early 1970's oriented toward what became a total of 27 holes of golf; much of the course remains outside of the City creating a rather pronounced gap in the City limits. Hickory Ridge is another single-family detached subdivision developed in the late 1980's. One of the major residential developments is Foxchase, outside of the City, which is an equestrian-oriented, large-lot project located adjacent to Hitchcock Woods.

Medium-Density. There are several developments including Parkway South condominiums built in the early 1980's; Woodwinds, Fairway Ridge and Bluff Manor apartments developed in the 1980's; and Bluff Pointe and the Bunkers condominiums were also built in the 1980's. Trotter's Run apartments are a recent development constructed in 2001.

Commercial.

Retail. There are some commercial uses along the west side of Silver Bluff Road and a small strip center at the southeast corner of the intersection of Hitchcock Parkway and Huntsman Drive. Though not occupied by retail uses, large undeveloped areas of Houndslake along Houndslake Drive are zoned General Business though they are located in the middle of the essentially residential/golf course development.

Office. In addition to a few offices scattered along Silver Bluff Road, the major offices are at the Halliburton-NUS building on Trail Ridge Road north of Hitchcock Parkway and at a small office park on Varden Drive. There is a real estate office located on Houndslake Drive.

Institutional. In addition to the First Christian Church and the Bethlehem Lutheran Church at the eastern edge of the district is the Grace Presbyterian Church next to Fairway Ridge apartments and the St. Paul's Lutheran Church recently built at Trail Ridge Road and Hitchcock Parkway. The other major institutional use is Aiken Elementary School at the western edge of the planning district.

Park/Open Space. There are no significant public parks or open spaces. The dominant open space is the golf course at Houndslake, which is private.

Industrial/Warehouse. There are no uses in this category.

Vacant. There are essentially no significant vacant tracts.

Roads. Hitchcock Parkway is the most significant road. A two-lane road which serves as a portion of the "By-Pass" or the partially completed circumferential route around Aiken, the Parkway has a 100-foot right-of-way and can be widened, but the current schedule does not call for such an improvement until after 2005. Pine Log Road, another significant east-west route, forms the southern boundary of the district. Silver Bluff Road, the eastern boundary of the district, is a significant north-south road.

Utility Rights-of-Way. There is a major utility right-of-way or easement running east-west through the middle of the district which is occupied by a South Carolina Electric and Gas primary electric transmission line and a high-pressure natural gas transmission line.

The Future of Houndslake

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Houndslake; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Houndslake. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The land use pattern for the district is essentially set. The dominant land use will continue to be low-density residential with a few areas of medium-density residential. Intense commercial uses will remain in the Silver Bluff Road corridor and at the small node at Hitchcock Parkway and Huntsman Drive; a small portion of Pine Log Road across from Centre South shopping center will have offices, but that Road should not be allowed to develop for retail commercial except at the intersection at Howlandville Road to the west of the study area where another node of commercial would be appropriate. Hitchcock Parkway should be widened sooner than scheduled and should be a true parkway with a landscaped median and bicycle paths.

Small-Town Character

The residential areas close to Silver Bluff Road have somewhat of a traditional neighborhood feel, but, because most of the rest of the district has developed recently and is automobile-oriented with winding streets, large lots, and dispersed character, it will be difficult to create more of the atmosphere of a small town.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses
There are few areas of commercial use in the district though the primary commercial district of Aiken is easily accessible by car. There is nowhere that intense commercial development would be appropriate. There will be a small node of commercial at the Hitchcock Parkway-Huntsman Drive intersection and a major cluster of commercial immediately outside the western boundary at the intersection of Pine Log and Howlandville Roads. Intense commercial uses should not be allowed in the Silver Bluff Road corridor between Whiskey Road and Silver Bluff Commons shopping center; however, limited office and retail uses may be appropriate with strict design standards to assure a residential appearance. There should be strict limitations on intense commercial uses, the restrictions on home occupations were eased in 1999.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objective
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4 and in other planning district chapters.)

2.14 Evaluate whether the land zoned General Business along Houndslake Drive and between Hitchcock Parkway and Varden Drive should be changed to another category. It is questionable that there should be such a large area zoned GB in that area.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
Streetscape plans are needed for Silver Bluff and Pine Log Roads as well as Hitchcock Parkway.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.30 Widen Hitchcock Parkway to be a true parkway with a landscaped median and landscaping along the sides and incorporating a pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists. The parkway has a 100-foot right-of-way which will easily accommodate the proposed improvements, and the City has already informed the State Department of Transportation about the need for the medians and pathways. Traffic volumes will increase as will the need for an alternative to Whiskey Road, so the improvements should be moved up in the schedule. No additional access points should be allowed so the traffic-carrying capacity of the Parkway will be maximized.

6.31 Investigate the use of the SCE&G right-of-way for use as a pathway. This large right-of-way running east-west through the district may be a good place for a pathway.

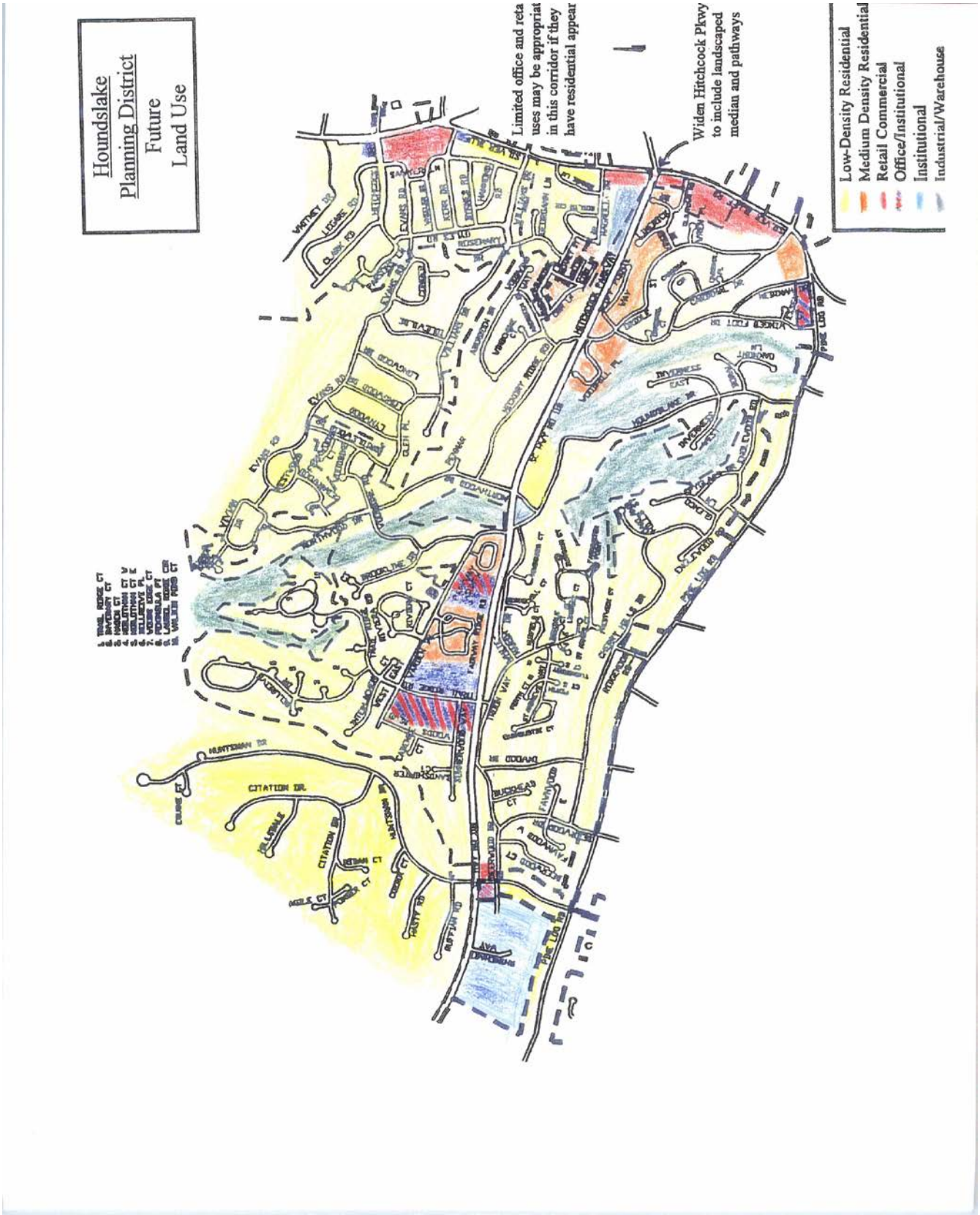
Recreational Opportunities
Hitchcock Woods is adjacent to the district, and the Houndslake golf course and tennis courts are in the middle of it though they are private. There may be a need for small parks or playgrounds.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of Houndslake



East Pine Log Road

Planning District

Overview of East Pine Log

Physical Characteristics

The East Pine Log Road planning district is located on flat terrain. There is relatively good agricultural land south of East Pine Log Road. Drainage is to the east toward the Edisto River.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. About one-half of the district is used for this purpose. Some of the subdivisions developed in the 1950's and 1960's include Dunbarton Oaks, Virginia Acres, Ward Circle, and Governor Aiken Park. The Woodlands, Robinwood, and Gatewood were begun in the 1980's. Mallard Lake, a development initiated in 1994 and adjacent to Robinwood, is now nearly completed with townhouse development.

Medium-Density. Carriage Run condominiums on Two Notch Road were converted from apartments. Gatewood Apartments adjacent to the Gatewood subdivision, were developed in the 1980's. Churchill Commons and Oxford Trace, both south of East Pine Log Road, were built in the late 1980's. Greenbriar Apartments on Nancy Lane is an older apartment complex.

Commercial.

Retail. Retail commercial uses are primarily on the south side of East Pine Log Road. There are clusters around Powderhouse Road and Banks Mill Road and several retail uses on the north side of East Pine Log opposite Bolton Court up to Banks Mill. Some of the land in this area is still undeveloped.

Office. The only significant office building is the Security Federal operations center near Gatewood Drive.

Institutional. Kennedy Middle School and Millbrook Elementary School are located on opposite sides of East Pine Log Road at its western end. Millbrook Baptist Church is located to the west of Kennedy Middle School and a Mormon church to the east.

Park/Open Space. The dominant use in this category is Citizens Park at the eastern end of East Pine Log Road which includes two softball complexes, soccer fields, and recent renovations to the adjacent, older baseball and softball fields.

Industrial/Warehouse. The Rieter plant on Powderhouse Road is the primary use. There is a mini-warehouse complex on the west side of Powderhouse Road south of East Pine Log Road. There is also a major electrical substation for South Carolina Electric and Gas on the south side of East Pine Log Road near Churchill Commons apartments.

Vacant. There is a vacant tract south of the Rieter plant and vacant land on both sides of East Pine Log Road between Gatewood Apartments and Banks Mill Road.

Utilities. A major electric transmission line follows the East Pine Log Road corridor. A telecommunications tower is located at Bolton Court, and the City of Aiken has a well and water storage facility east of Douglas Drive.

Roads. As the name of the district implies, East Pine Log is the major road; it has been widened to have two lanes in each direction and a center turn lane. A pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists is on the north side of the road. East Pine Log has also been realigned at its eastern end to tie into the northeast section of the SC 118 By-Pass now under construction. The other major roads are Two Notch, Powderhouse, and Banks Mill, all of which run northward through the horse-training area.

The Future of East Pine Log

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including East Pine Log; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to East Pine Log. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The East Pine Log planning district will continue to have a diversity of land uses. About one-half of the area will be low-density residential with the strong anchors of the schools at the western end and Citizens Park at the eastern end and a mixture of uses in between. The road should form a dividing line with a strong residential and recreational character on the north adjacent to the horse area and some intense commercial and even light industrial uses on the south side especially in the Powderhouse/Banks Mill Road area. Because East Pine Log Road has a paved center turn lane, there is no room for landscaping in the street right-of-way, and a major electric transmission line alongside it, it will be difficult to make the corridor attractive, but every effort should be made to do so.

Small-Town Character

Because East Pine Log Road is a major thoroughfare that will become even more heavily traveled after its widening, it will be difficult to create the atmosphere of a small town in the district. However, the pathway along the north side of the road could become a unifying factor for the entire corridor by establishing a strong pedestrian/bicyclist connection between the schools at one end and Citizens Park at the other with a variety of uses in between and residential areas nearby. There is little vacant land suitable for residential use on which new development oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists could occur.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2 and in other planning district chapters.)

1.20 Residential development should be encouraged south of Old Powderhouse Road and should be buffered from the commercial area with landscaping. Old Powderhouse Road should provide the boundary between commercial development fronting on East Pine Log Road and residential development to the south. To protect the residential development, substantial landscaped buffers should be provided along Old Powderhouse.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses
East Pine Log will have as great a diversity of uses as any planning district. To the east of Powderhouse Road, additional retail commercial development should be allowed along the south side of East Pine Log Road between Powderhouse and Banks Mill Roads, with light industrial/warehouse uses behind that. The road frontage on the north side adjacent to the residential areas should have office/institutional uses except at the corner of East Pine Log and Banks Mill Roads. To the west of Powderhouse Road, the north side of East Pine Log should be residential and institutional (with the exception of the Rieter plant property) while the south side should be largely residential except for some office uses in front of Robinwood subdivision. Restrictions on home occupations should be relaxed.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objective
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4 and in other planning district chapters.)

2.15 Allow low-intensity commercial uses across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park. The mixed-use area east of Banks Mill Road opposite Citizen Park should be allowed to develop as a low-intensity commercial area to serve residents and users of the sports complex. Such development will eventually create a need for
2.16 pedestrian safety measures such as a regulated crosswalk across East Pine Log Road. Efforts must be made to ensure safety while facilitating traffic flow.

2.16 Multifamily residential should be allowed at the eastern end of East Pine Log Road. Development of the triangle formed by the new section of the realigned East Pine Log Road, U.S. Highway

78, and the new By-Pass should be allowed to develop as multifamily residential. Planned Commercial development should also be allowed. However, because this is one of the entrances into the City, care should be taken to maintain an aesthetic appearance. Development in this area rather than immediately adjacent to the By-Pass is preferable because of greater flexibility for developing access points and because of lower impact on traffic flow on the By-Pass.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

A streetscape plan is needed for East Pine Log Road though it will be difficult to improve the appearance of the street. At a minimum, the intersections with the roads leading into the horse area should be landscaped.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System

Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented. Where possible, interconnecting roads should be built. The widening of East Pine Log Road was completed in 2002; a pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists was part of the project.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in the other planning district chapters.)

6.32 Ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists along East Pine Log Road. On the north side of East Pine Log Road, the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists should be ensured by minimizing curb cuts and encouraging shared parking for businesses.

6.33 Do not widen Two Notch, Powderhouse, or Banks Mill Roads except to provide turn lanes at the intersections with East Pine Log Road. These roads lead into the horse area, so widening which could encourage increased traffic should not be allowed. However, the addition of turn lanes at the intersections with East Pine Log Road may be needed to improve traffic flow.

6.34 Construct a connecting road generally parallel to and south of East Pine Log Road from Powderhouse Road easterly to Banks Mill Road or further to the east if warranted by anticipated future development. The route should provide connections, where feasible, to existing roadways and private driveways. Future development in this planning district should be designed to facilitate access to this anticipated road. A second objective of the connecting road is to help define the commercial area along East Pine Log Road as the narrow strip adjacent to the road. The strip created by the connectors should be close enough to East Pine Log Road to discourage large retail developments from locating adjacent to the thoroughfare. This provision is not intended to prohibit retail development on property fronting on Powderhouse Road located in the adjoining planning district.

Recreational Opportunities

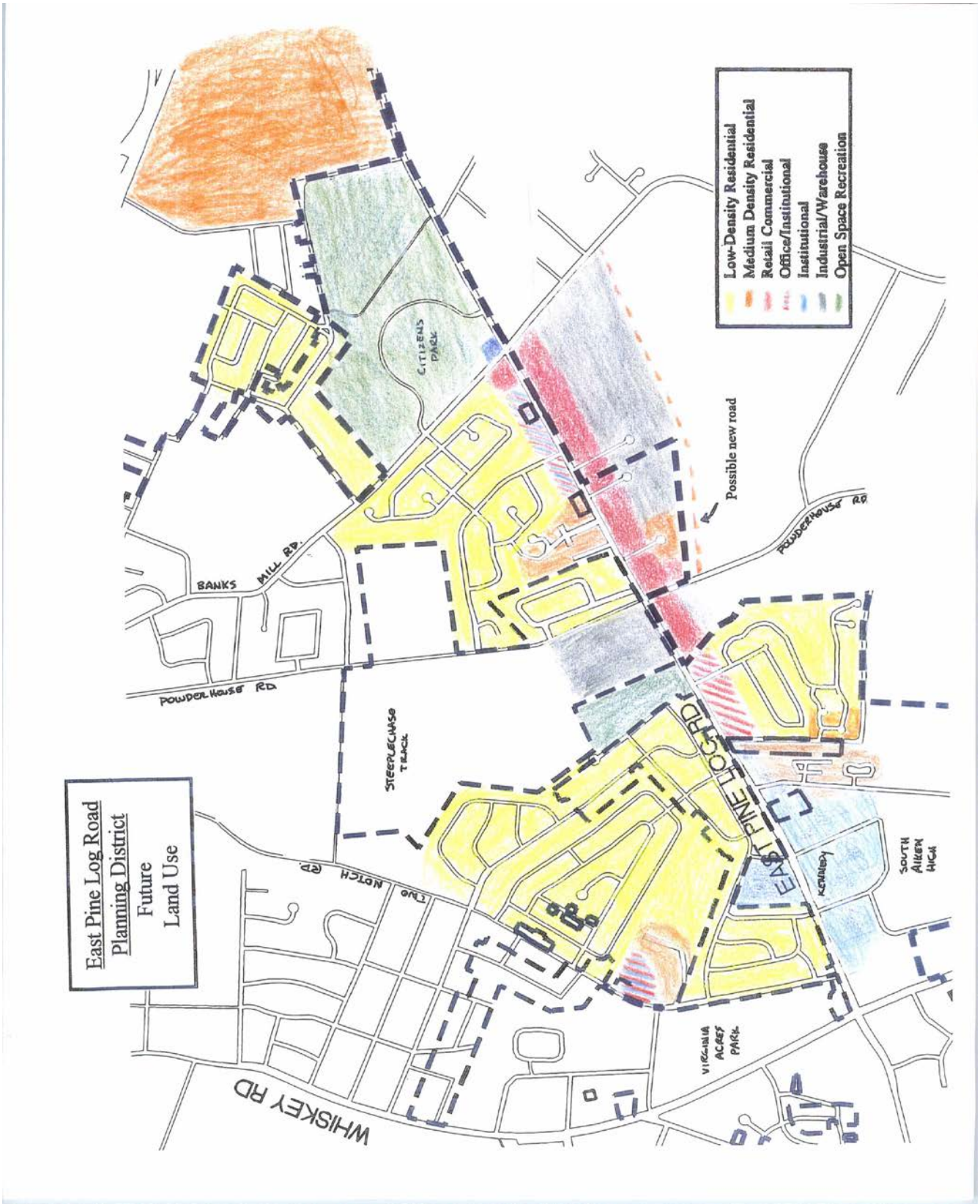
With Virginia Acres Park at one end of the district and Citizens Park at the other, there does not appear to be a significant need for recreation areas. However, the district should be evaluated as part of the master recreation plan to determine if that is the case. If additional parkland is needed, the property on which the City well is located just west of Powderhouse Road is a possible location.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of East Pine Log



III. C. 11

Southwest Aiken

Planning District

Overview of Southwest Aiken

Physical Characteristics

The terrain of the Southwest Aiken planning district is gently rolling and slopes to the west toward the Savannah River. There are several man-made lakes in the Gem Lakes residential subdivision. Most of the district is outside of the City.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. This is by far the dominant land use. The Gem Lakes residential subdivision developed in the 1970's and 80's occupies at least half of the district and is located outside of the City. Gem Lakes residents receive City water but have their own sewage treatment plant which has a limited life, so the residents will either have to upgrade their system or eventually tie onto City sewer. Other major developments, both on the southwestern border of Gem Lakes, are Southwood, which is in the City, and Huntcliff off of Richardson's Lake Road which is not in the City.

Medium-Density. There are no residential uses in this category.

Commercial.

Retail. The primary uses in this category are at Centre South shopping center in the northeastern corner of the district near the intersection of Pine Log and Silver Bluff Roads. A strip center built in the late 1980's, Centre South has been successful because of its proximity to the large residential areas in Gem Lakes, Woodside Plantation, and Houndslake, and because it serves outlying areas to the southwest. There are some other commercial uses near Centre South including a convenience store and a new bank.

Office. The only office buildings in the district, and one of the dominant office facilities in the Aiken region, is the Centre South Executive Park on Silver Bluff Road next to Centre South shopping center. There are two large office buildings, a couple of smaller office buildings, an assisted-living facility, and a bank. The Executive Park serves as a transition between the retail commercial uses to the north and the residential areas to the south.

Institutional. The Town Creek Baptist Church building on Town Creek Road is the major use in this category. A City of Aiken well and treatment facility is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Silver Bluff and Town Creek Roads.

Park/Open Space. Aside from the lakes and private recreation area associated with Gem Lakes, there is no public park or open space.

Industrial/Warehouse. There are no uses in this category.

Vacant. Another major vacant tract is a large area annexed in the late 1980's south of Southwood subdivision and zoned single-family residential. The area west of Silver Bluff Road south of the Savannah Drive area and extending toward Richardson's Lake Road is vacant and outside of the City.

Roads. The boundaries of the district are formed by three major roads: Silver Bluff, Pine Log, and a portion of Richardson's Lake Road. Another significant route is Town Creek Road, which connects Silver Bluff and Pine Log Roads.

The Future of Southwest Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Southwest Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Southwest Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The land use pattern is set for much of the district; it will continue to primarily be a place for low-density residential development. However, there is a significant amount of vacant land on which future residential development could be done in a more "traditional neighborhood" style, and medium-density residential development may also be appropriate in certain areas, especially near the intersection of Silver Bluff Road and Richardson's Lake Road. Intense retail commercial development should be concentrated in the Centre South area and not allowed to expand beyond that. Another node of intense commercial retail uses should be allowed to develop outside of the district at the intersection of Howlandville and Pine Log Roads. Streetscape plans are needed for Pine Log and Silver Bluff Roads.

Other than the previously approved Woodside Phase III commercial development, intense retail commercial development should be concentrated in the Centre South area of Silver Bluff Road. The portion of the Silver Bluff Road corridor between Centre South and Richardson's Lake Road should be retained as residential, agricultural, or campus-type complexes with significant open space lands. No further retail commercial development should take place in this area.

The portion of the Silver Bluff Road corridor between Richardson's Lake Road and Anderson's Pond Road should be primarily retained for residential and agricultural uses. Any retail commercial development should be small in scale and designed to serve the needs of nearby residents rather than to attract customers from other areas. Strip commercial development is discouraged in this area and retail uses should be clustered into well-designed, architecturally attractive complexes accessible to residential areas by both pedestrians and vehicles and designed to limit adverse traffic impact.

Small-Town Character

The district has the characteristics of typical suburban, automobile-oriented development; while it is not likely that it could take on the atmosphere of a small-town neighborhood, steps should be taken to make it more friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists especially by creating better access from residential areas to shopping and work. Perhaps some of the vacant tracts can be developed with the character of a more traditional neighborhood that is less automobile-oriented.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses
Retail commercial uses should not be allowed to expand in the planning district but should be concentrated in the Centre South shopping center area and at a commercial node outside of the district at the intersection of Pine Log and Howlandville Roads.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objective
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
Streetscape plans should be prepared and implemented for Silver Bluff and Pine Log Roads.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.35 Widen Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads. Because traffic will increase on Dougherty Road, major changes are needed to maximize its capacity. In addition to the impending intersection improvements at Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads, a study prepared by a traffic engineer is needed to determine the feasibility of widening, realigning with West Pine Log Road, and limiting curb cuts. Whatever changes are implemented, the result should be an attractive landscaped boulevard.

Recreational Opportunities

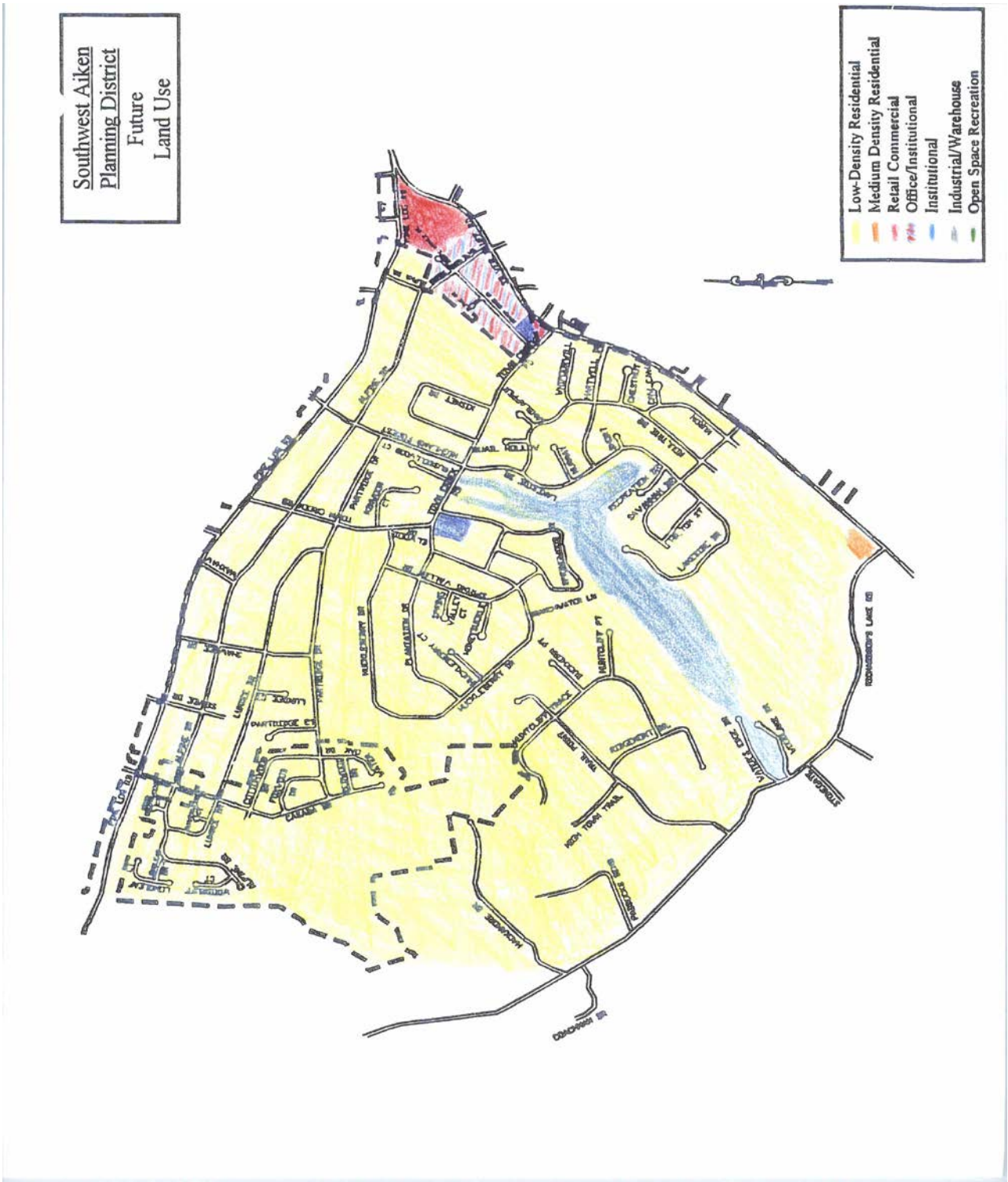
The Gem Lakes recreational area provides park/open space land for residents of that development. For that reason, and because most of the single-family dwellings are on large lots, there does not appear to be an immediate need for parks in the district.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of Southwest Aiken



River Bluff / Sandstone

Planning District

Overview of River Bluff / Sandstone

Physical Characteristics

The River Bluff / Sandstone planning district has gently rolling sand hills. Drainage flows westward toward the Savannah River.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. The single-family neighborhoods south of Dougherty Road in the Murrah and Spalding Drive areas are the oldest in the district having been developed in the 1950s. Hidden Haven, a subdivision occupied by manufactured homes, was developed beginning in the 1960's and was annexed in 1993 at the request of the residents who needed a reliable water supply; more manufactured units have been placed in the subdivision with several vacant lots remaining. River Bluff was developed in the 1970's and 1980's about the same time as the smaller Indian Creek development immediately to the west. Sandstone, one of the most successful residential projects of the 1990's in Aiken, has benefited from its proximity to Aiken Mall and other commercial areas along Whiskey Road.

Medium-Density. Steeplechase Apartments on Silver Bluff Road is the only apartment complex in the district. There are some attached townhomes in Sandstone as well as in the new Melrose Place project off of Silver Bluff Road north of Woodside Executive Office Park.

Commercial.

Retail. There are limited uses along Silver Bluff Road including South Towne Square, an attractive strip shopping center that has not been able to retain occupants. There is a mixture of uses along Dougherty Road including some retail.

Office. There are small office buildings along Silver Bluff Road adjacent to River Bluff and other offices scattered along Dougherty Road. South Towne Square has also had office occupancy.

Institutional. The only use in this category is the Knights of Columbus building on Spalding Drive.

Park/Open Space. There are no parks or open spaces in the district.

Industrial/Warehouse. There are no uses in this category in the district.

Vacant. The only largely vacant tract is between Silver Bluff Road and Spalding Drive just south of Dougherty Road that is occupied by a house.

Roads. Silver Bluff and Dougherty Roads are the principal thoroughfares. One drawback to the road system is the lack of interconnecting streets; for example, to get from Sandstone to River Bluff which is adjacent, one must travel down East Gate Drive to Whiskey Road, turn onto Dougherty Road and then Silver Bluff Road, and finally into River Bluff.

The Future of River Bluff / Sandstone

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including River Bluff / Sandstone; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to River Bluff / Sandstone. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The district will remain predominantly single-family residential with limited commercial uses. The primary area of change will be Dougherty Road which should not become a strip of intense commercial development but should be an area of limited mixed uses with design standards to prevent adverse impact to neighboring residential areas and to protect its increasing role as a thoroughfare. Because Dougherty Road is the only thoroughfare connecting Whiskey Road and Silver Bluff Roads between Pine Log and Anderson Pond Roads, its traffic-carrying capacity should be maximized; in addition to upcoming intersection improvements at Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads, the feasibility of realigning and widening Dougherty should be studied, and, if appropriate, implemented. In addition, major changes to Dougherty Road will result in opportunities for significant changes in land use patterns in the entire corridor.

Small-Town Character

As is the case for most of the development on the south side, River Bluff/Sandstone has a suburban character and is oriented to the automobile; steps should be taken to make the area more friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists with an emphasis on providing access from residential areas to shopping and workplaces. It will be difficult to create the feel of a small town in the district.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses

There is no need to increase the amount of intense commercial activity because of the proximity of the district to the major retail areas of Aiken. Dougherty Road can become a mixed use corridor with limited retail and office uses with design standards to prevent it from having a strip commercial character.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
Streetscape plans are needed for Silver Bluff and Dougherty Roads.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to ensure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.35 Improve Dougherty Road to serve as a good alternate to Pine Log Road for traffic between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads. Because traffic will increase on Dougherty Road, major changes are needed to maximize its capacity. In addition to the impending intersection improvements at Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads, a study prepared by a traffic engineer is needed to determine the feasibility of widening, realigning with West Pine Log Road, and limiting curb cuts. Whatever changes are implemented, the result should be an attractive landscaped boulevard with streetscape improvements as well as pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Recreational Opportunities

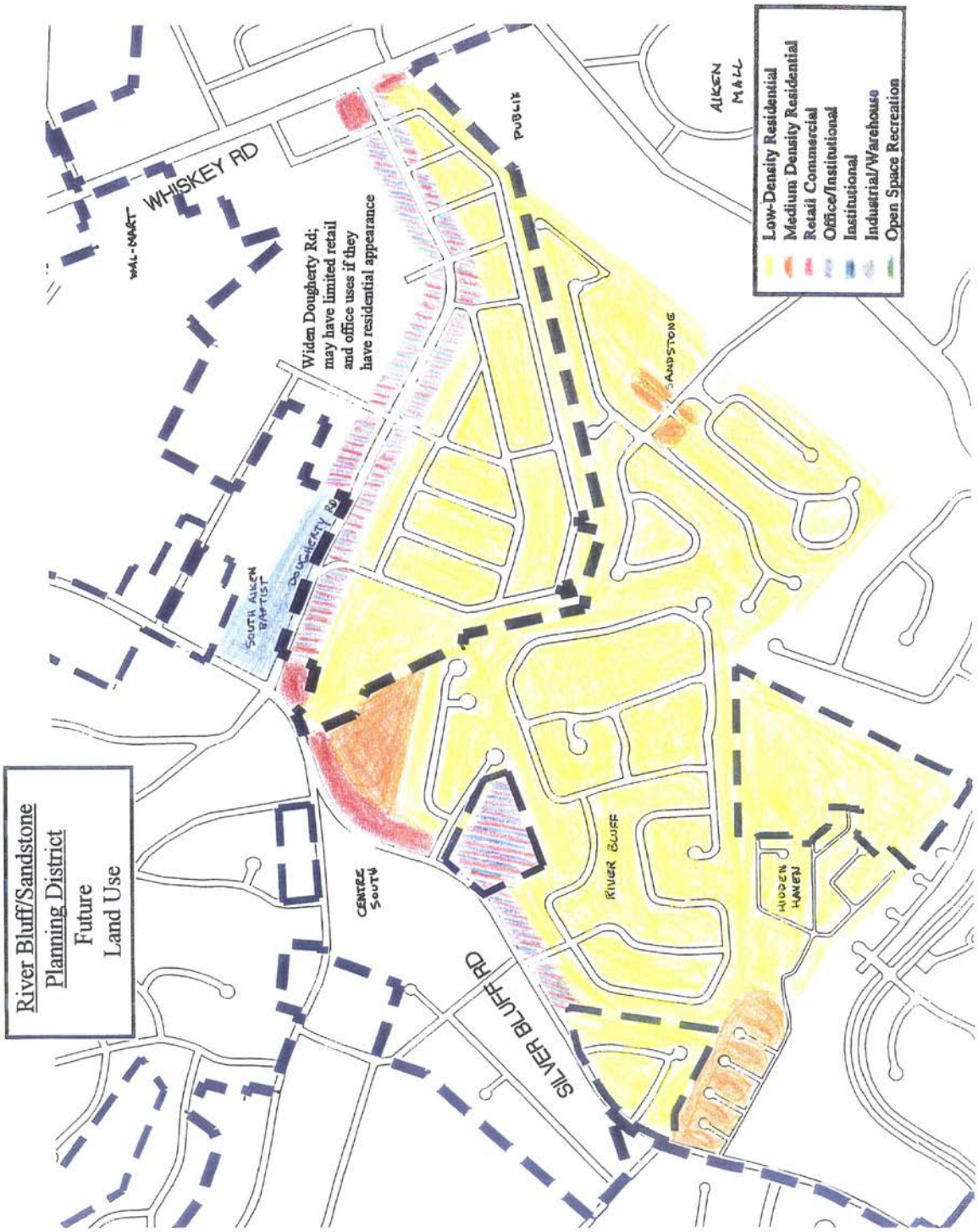
The park master plan will evaluate the need for park and recreation areas in the district.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of River Bluff/Sandstone



Woodside / Aiken Mall

Planning District

Overview of Woodside / Aiken Mall

Physical Characteristics

The Woodside / Aiken Mall planning district has gently rolling, sandy hills and slopes to the west. The eastern boundary of the district, Whiskey Road, is also the edge of a drainage basin; water on the east side of the road flows into the Edisto River, but rain falling in the district flows into the Savannah River.

Existing Land Use

Residential.

Low-Density. The Woodside / Aiken Mall area has been the primary location for residential development in the past decade, and the dominant land use is detached, single-family dwellings on large lots. Woodside Plantation, a large planned unit development the first portion of which was annexed in 1985, is the major residential project and is oriented around three 18-hole golf courses; Phase I is largely complete with Phase II nearing buildout; Phase III was annexed in July of 2001 and the golf course is complete though construction of dwelling units is just beginning. Woodside's streets are private, and, because the development is so large, the lack of public access causes problems for travel from east to west. Other significant single-family developments include Stratford Hall and Plantation South, both in the City, and the dwellings along Brookhaven Drive. Spring Stone, a new large-lot development with detached single-family dwellings to the south and west of Stratford Hall, is in the early stages of development.

Medium-Density. Woodside Plantation includes some patio homes and townhouses and the Eden Gardens congregate care living facility on Silver Bluff Road.

Commercial.

Retail. Aiken Mall, an enclosed mall of some 250,000 square feet that opened in 1989, is the dominant retail use in the district, including Allendale, Barnwell, Bamberg, and Edgefield Counties. The Mall has gained some new tenants including Dillard's. There are restaurants and a bank occupying out-parcels along Whiskey Road, and a strip shopping center including a Publix grocery store opened in 1995 immediately to the north also fronted by restaurants on out-parcels along Whiskey Road. Aiken Mall and the associated development has become the retail center of the Aiken region. In addition, Aiken Exchange, a shopping center including a Target and other stores as well as other businesses on out-parcels on the Whiskey Road frontage, opened in 2001. Plans for Phase III of Woodside Plantation include retail uses near a proposed entrance from Silver Bluff Road across from Richardson's Lake Road.

Office. The Woodside Executive Office Park on Silver Bluff Road is the largest office complex; it had been occupied primarily by employees of Westinghouse and its subcontractors, but now has a diverse tenant base. The only other area of

office uses is along Whiskey Road in the Brookhaven Drive area. One large office building formerly occupied by Westinghouse is now headquarters for Aiken County School District. Phase III of Woodside Plantation includes plans for some office buildings near a proposed entrance from Silver Bluff Road across from Richardson's Lake Road.

Institutional. The Chukker Creek Elementary School on Chukker Creek Road near an entrance to Woodside Plantation and the City of Aiken Public Safety Station Number 4 are the main uses.

Park/Open Space. There are no public parks or open spaces. The golf courses at Woodside Plantation are the dominant open spaces, but they are private.

Industrial/Warehouse. There is no land used for such purposes.

Vacant. There are other vacant tracts to the rear of Aiken Mall along East Gate Drive, between Stratford Hall and Whiskey Road, and on the Whiskey Road frontage in the Brookhaven Drive area.

Roads. The major public roads are Whiskey and Silver Bluff which form the eastern and western boundaries of the district and East Gate Drive which provides access to Aiken Mall from Whiskey Road. The private road system of Woodside Plantation, especially Woodside Plantation Drive, is also important.

The Future of Woodside / Aiken Mall

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Woodside / Aiken Mall; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Woodside / Aiken Mall. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The land use pattern for much of the area is set. Development along the Whiskey Road frontage should be consistent with Objective 2.2 of the General Goals and Objectives. Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads will become increasingly busy, and the proposed connector between the two immediately south of Woodside Plantation should be developed to improve east-west access; a study to select the best route for the road was completed in 2003. New curb cuts should be restricted along Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads to prevent unnecessary deterioration of their ability to carry traffic.

Small-Town Character

Because the district developed with an orientation to the automobile, it has more of a suburban character than that of a small town. While the area will not be like Old Aiken, efforts should be made to make the neighborhoods more "traditional." Opportunities

should also be taken to make the area less automobile-oriented with more pedestrian and bicycle access from residential areas to shopping.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture Of Land Uses
Mixed-use development should be encouraged, especially along the Whiskey Road frontage.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
Whiskey Road is a primary entrance into Aiken but is often unappealing because of signs, overhead wires, a lack of trees, and unattractive buildings, especially those areas outside of the City; special efforts or incentives should be developed to try to encourage unincorporated land along major roads to come into the City so that tree and sign regulations will eventually have an impact. Standards for the appearance of public improvements and private development along Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads should be established through the creation of overlay districts for the road corridors implementing the recommendations of the Whiskey Road Corridor Study adopted by City Council in November of 2001.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System

The development in the district is automobile-oriented and typical of suburban development. Steps should be taken to make the area more oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists, especially from residential to commercial areas. There is a strong need for a connecting road between Silver Bluff and Whiskey Roads since there is not one from Dougherty Road south to Anderson Pond Road four miles away; a study to select the best route for the road was completed in 2003.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.36 Construct a limited access parkway with a landscaped median and bicycle paths to connect Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads. A more direct connection is needed between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads south of Dougherty Road. A study to select the best route for the road was completed in 2003; the right-of-way should be secured as soon as possible thereafter and construction should begin as soon as funding can be obtained.

6.37 If feasible, widen Silver Bluff Road from Town Creek Road to the point at which it would intersect with the proposed road between Silver Bluff and Whiskey Roads, including improvements at the intersection with Richardson's Lake Road. Improvements would also be needed at the intersection of Silver Bluff and Richardson's Lake Roads, including turn lanes and a traffic signal or other solutions as proposed through a traffic study.

Recreational Opportunities

There is not a need for a large recreation complex in the area because of the residential development on large lots, the recreational amenities within Woodside Plantation, and the proximity of Virginia Acres Park. However, there may be a need for smaller playgrounds

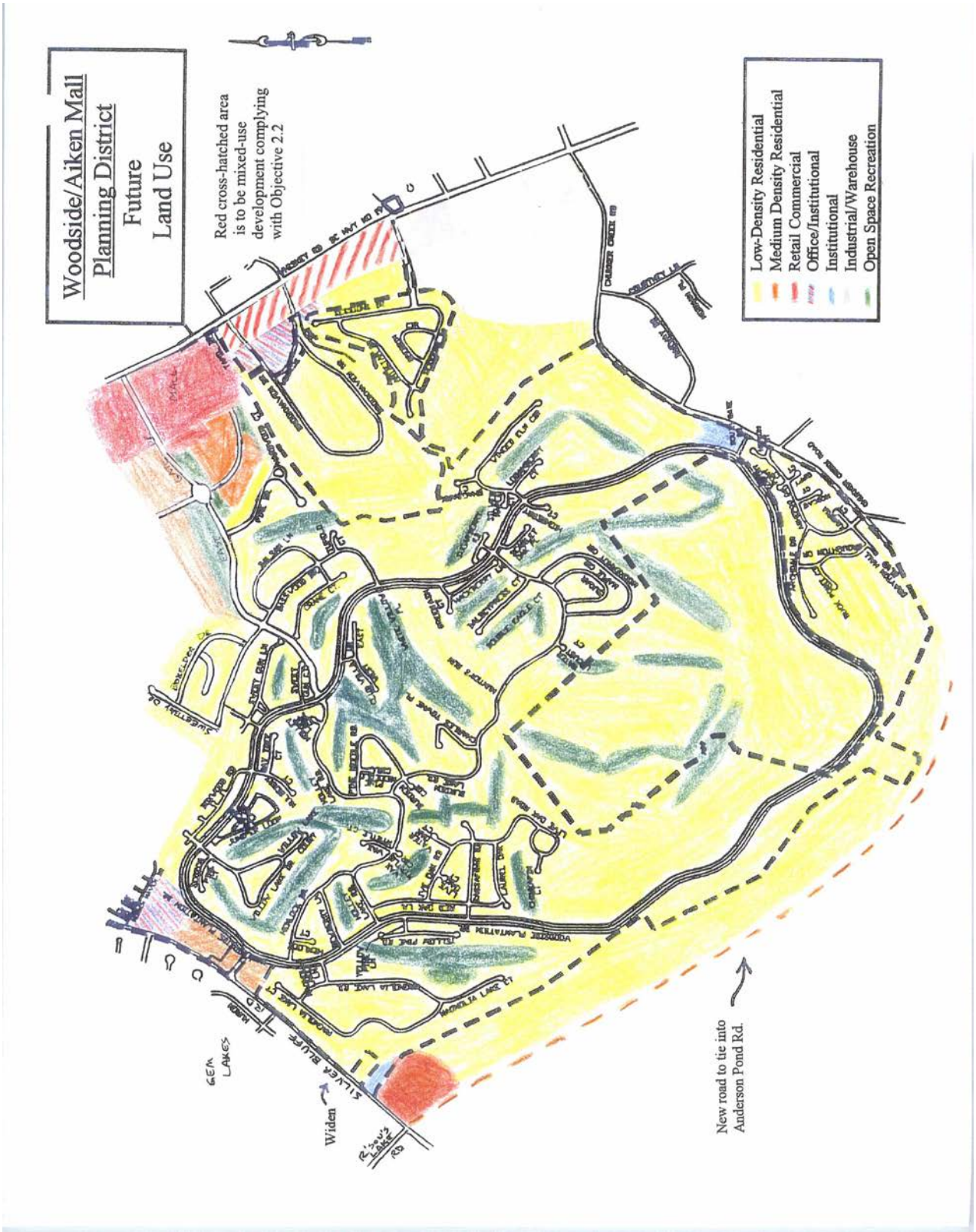
or other uses identified by the park master plan to be prepared, and the pathway system should eventually serve the district.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of Woodside – Mall



Southeast Aiken

Planning District

Overview of Southeast Aiken

Physical Characteristics

The Southeast Aiken planning district is mostly flat with some relatively good agricultural soil. Drainage is toward the west into the Edisto River. There is a major drainage area in the Wise Hollow basin that begins south of Bonnieview Estates and runs southward. The vast majority of the district is outside of the City limits.

Existing Land Use

Residential. Residential development in the district was limited during the burst of growth during the late 1980's and early 1990's; most of the growth took place to the west of Whiskey Road.

Low-Density. The most significant single-family subdivision is Elmwood Park the entrance to which is south of the Lowe's store. There are other single-family dwellings along Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads and scattered throughout the district.

Medium-Density. There are no major uses in this category.

Commercial.

Retail There are extensive retail uses located along Whiskey Road especially across from Aiken Mall the most significant of which is the Lowe's store; a large vacant building formerly occupied by Lowe's sits immediately to the south. There are convenience stores at the intersection of Whiskey and Powderhouse Roads.

Office. There are a few small offices along Whiskey Road.

Institutional. There is one church on Whiskey Road at Crestwood Drive.

Park/Open Space. There are no public parks or open spaces.

Vacant. Much of the central portion of the district is vacant as is a large tract near the southern tip, all of which is outside of the City.

Roads. The district is bounded by three major routes: Whiskey, East Pine Log, and Powderhouse Roads.

The Future of Southeast Aiken

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Southeast Aiken; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically Southeast Aiken. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

Southeast Aiken should see significant growth because of the amount of vacant land and the availability of utilities. There are opportunities for creative residential development using the "traditional neighborhood" approach and for medium-density housing. There should be an extensive system of pathways to connect residential development to the commercial areas and to the proposed pathway system along East Pine Log Road and further north. Commercial development should be consistent with Objective 2.2 of the General Goals and Objectives.

Small-Town Character

The varied land uses along Whiskey Road do not create the character of a small town, but, because so much of the district is vacant land, there are opportunities to create neighborhoods that are less automobile-oriented and are friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses

Retail commercial uses should be restricted to the Whiskey Road corridor though perhaps some limited retail or office uses could be incorporated into new development on some of the vacant land. Commercial development should be consistent with Objective 2.2 of the General Goals and Objectives.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

The streetscape plan proposed by the Whiskey Road Corridor Study adopted by City Council in November of 2001 should be implemented. Another streetscape plan should be prepared for Powderhouse Road and implemented in the near future.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System

Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9.

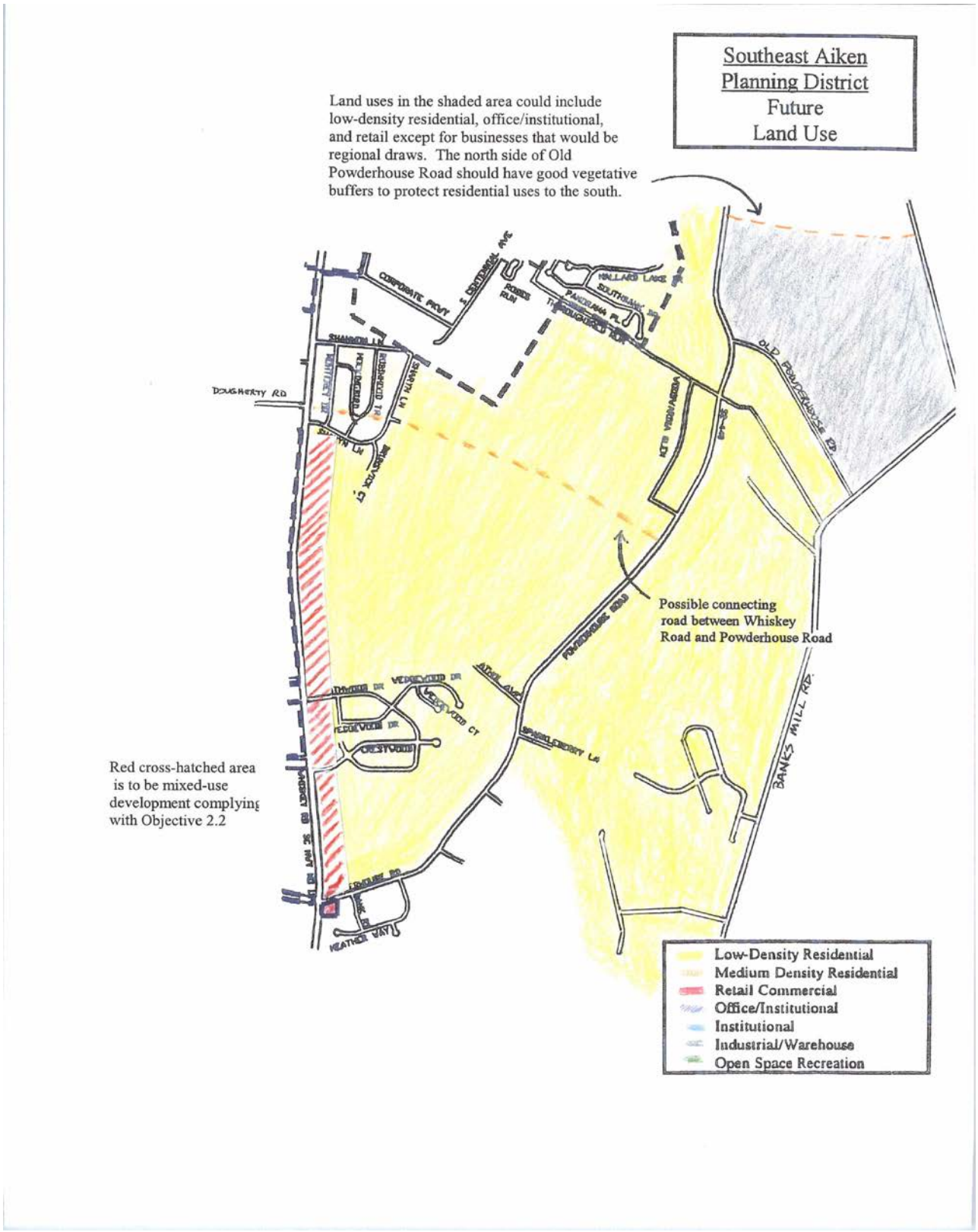
Recreational Opportunities

Virginia Acres is a regional asset to this area, but smaller parks could be incorporated in or near residential development.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of Southeast Aiken



III. C. 15

Chukker Creek / Hunters Glen

Planning District

Overview of Chukker Creek / Hunters Glen

Physical Characteristics

The Chukker Creek/Hunter's Glen Planning District is located in a flat or gently sloping region straddling both sides of Whiskey Road. There is at least one lake west of Whiskey Road and several minor streams. Areas of poor drainage may be found west of Whiskey Road.

Existing Land Use

Streets. Two major north/south connector roads are Whiskey Road (Highway 19) and Powderhouse Road. Chukker Creek Road provides east/west access on the west side of Whiskey Road, as does Citadel Drive on the east side. The majority of roads west of Whiskey Road are unpaved.

Residential. Single-family residential is the predominant land use to the east of Whiskey Road. Exeter, College Acres, and Hunters Glen subdivisions are established neighborhoods. South Meadows subdivision is under development with single-family homes and some medium-density townhouses with commercial uses along the Whiskey Road frontage. Directly across Whiskey Road, South Winds has been approved for City utility service for a project to include single-family residential, and there will also be commercial development along the Whiskey frontage. Large lots with scattered single-family homes and equestrian uses are found west of Whiskey Road.

Commercial. Commercial uses along Whiskey Road are intermixed with vacant and residential development. A new hotel is planned at the southeast corner of the intersection of Whiskey and Hunters Glen Roads. Small professional offices and retail are anticipated to develop on both sides of Whiskey Road just north of Talatha Church Road as part of the South Meadows and South Winds projects.

Institutional. Chukker Creek Elementary School is located on Chukker Creek Road.

The Future of Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Chukker Creek/Hunters Glen. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The district will continue primarily to be a place for low-density residential development. However, there is a significant amount of vacant land on which future residential development could be done in a more "traditional neighborhood" style, and medium-density residential development may also be appropriate in certain areas, especially in the Whiskey Road corridor. The proposed road to connect Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads

will probably affect the district; the routing study to be completed in early 2003 will recommend a primary route.

Small-Town Character

The district has the characteristics of typical suburban, automobile-oriented development; while it is not likely that it could take on the atmosphere of a small-town neighborhood, steps should be taken to make it more friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially by creating better access from residential areas to shopping and work. Perhaps some of the vacant tracts can be developed with the character of a more traditional neighborhood that is less automobile-oriented.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses

Projects containing a mixture of uses should be encouraged in the Whiskey Road corridor. Such projects should be allowed elsewhere but the location of any non-residential uses should be carefully controlled to prevent strip commercial development or the inappropriate encroachment of such uses into residential areas.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design

Streetscape improvements proposed by the Whiskey Road Corridor Study should be implemented for Whiskey Road.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

6.36 Construct a limited access parkway with a landscaped median and bicycle paths to connect Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads**. A more direct connection is needed between Whiskey and Silver Bluff Roads south of Dougherty Road. A study to select the best route for the road was completed in 2003; the right-of-way should be secured as soon as possible thereafter, and construction should begin as soon as funding can be obtained.**

6.37 Where feasible, connectors from Banks Mill Road to the west should be constructed. **Ideally, a road connecting Banks Mill and Whiskey Roads between Citadel Drive and Talatha Church Road should be built, but development now in progress may prevent it. However, there may be opportunities to connect Banks Mill Road to Talatha Church to provide some alternate routes such as a connection between Outaways Road and Wesson Drive.**

Recreational Opportunities
There is essentially no public park or recreation land in the district, and steps should be taken to provide it.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-10.

Future Land Use Map of Chukker Creek-Hunters Glen

III. C. 16

Banks Mill Road/ Toolebeck Road

Planning District

Overview of
Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road

Physical Characteristics

The Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road Planning District is located between Banks Mill Road and U.S. 78, with East Pine Log Road as the northern boundary and Old Dibble Road as the approximate southern boundary. The terrain is relatively flat and open in the northwestern half becoming more rolling and wooded in the southeastern portion. A wetlands area that could be a Carolina Bay is located in the center of this District. Various small streams and ponds are scattered throughout. Large tracts of vacant land can be found. Due to its size and location, this district includes a wide variety of land uses, but it is clearly dominated by open space and single-family detached residential.

Existing Land Use

Streets. Paved roads are limited to primary roads defining the perimeter of the District, dead-end roads in the Pine Log commercial area, Toolebeck Road, and roads in housing subdivisions. Old Dibble Road, Toolebeck Road, Banks Mill Road, U.S. 78 and East Pine Log Road are the primary roads that are paved. There are few interior roads.

Residential. Except for vacant land with a rural character, detached single-family residential is the dominant land use. Two neighborhoods of manufactured homes can be found: Country Squire is a neatly maintained cluster of old and new manufactured homes with possibly up to 100 spaces across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park, and a manufactured home subdivision of about 30 homes placed on permanent foundations is located on Amanda Court. Two multifamily developments are Kellogg Park duplexes and Landview Terrace Apartments. While single-family, stick-built homes are scattered throughout the district, major subdivisions include Deodar Plantation, Fox Run, Fox Haven, Hopeland Farms, Quail Hollow, The Vale, Vale Estates, and Braeloch.

Commercial/Industrial. Commercial and light industrial uses are concentrated along East Pine Log and Toolebeck Roads and Woodward Drive. These include manufacturing, wholesale distribution, retail, contractor services, and professional services.

Institutional. There are several churches including Mount Harris and Cedar Creek. Mount Anna Church has a small cemetery.

Park/Open Space. There are no publicly owned parks or open spaces though Citizens Park is just to the north across East Pine Log Road. Privately owned, low-intensity uses include numerous farms and equestrian ranches at the south end of the district, cotton fields, and vacant land.

Railroad. The Norfolk Southern railroad line runs along the northern boundary between U.S. 78 (Charleston Highway) and Woodward Drive.

The Future of
Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road

Note: The "General Goals and Objectives" beginning on page III-2 apply to the entire study area including Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road; the objectives included here are in addition to those and relate specifically to Banks Mill Road/Toolebeck Road. The numbering of the objectives is a continuation of the numbering of the General Goals and Objectives and the previous planning districts.

Overview

The district will continue to primarily be a place for low-density residential development. However, there is a significant amount of vacant land on which future residential development could be done in a more "traditional neighborhood" style, and medium-density residential development may also be appropriate in certain areas.

Small-Town Character

Some of the district has the characteristics of typical suburban, automobile-oriented development; while it is not likely that it could take on the atmosphere of a small-town neighborhood, steps should be taken to make it more friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists especially by creating better access from residential areas to shopping and work. Perhaps some of the vacant tracts can be developed with the character of a more traditional neighborhood that is less automobile-oriented.

Goal 1 Protect residential areas and promote the creation of appropriate new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-2.

Appropriate Mixture of Land Uses

Retail commercial uses will be needed in some areas in the district. While most such uses will be of a small scale, given the large size of the district and the fact that it is largely undeveloped, there may be an appropriate location for a larger retail node to serve future residents. However, such commercial development should be located so that they do not adversely affect residential neighborhoods.

Goal 2 Promote appropriate commercial uses in defined areas while encouraging mixed uses in new residential development.

Objectives

See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-4.

2.15 Allow low-intensity commercial uses across East Pine Log Road from Citizens Park. **The mixed-use area east of Banks Mill Road opposite Citizens Park should be allowed to develop as a**

low-intensity commercial area to serve residents and users of the sports complex. Such development will eventually create a need for pedestrian safety measures such as a regulated crosswalk across East Pine Log Road. Efforts must be made to ensure safety while facilitating traffic flow.

Goal 3 Restrict industrial/warehouse uses to appropriate locations while allowing adequate room set aside exclusively for such uses.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-5.

Appropriate Design
Streetscape plans should be prepared and implemented for East Pine Log Road and eventually Banks Mill Road.

Goal 4 Make major road corridors as attractive and functional as possible.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-6.

Goal 5 Require the appropriate design of public and private structures and other improvements.

Objectives
See "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-8.

Balanced Transportation System
The district is largely undeveloped but will see steady growth; now is the time to plan for a network of roads. Steps should be taken to assure that the impact of the automobile on the area is minimized and that walking and bicycling are emphasized. The feasibility of public transportation should be regularly evaluated and, if appropriate, implemented.

Goal 6 Promote a transportation system which will accommodate but minimize the impact of the automobile, promote public transportation, and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Objectives
(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters).

6.38 Identify the rights-of-way for at least two east-west roads to connect Banks Mill Road and Woodward Drive and at least one north-south road to connect Old Dibble Road and Banks Mill Road. **The district is largely undeveloped, so now is the time to**

plan for the right-of-way for a network of roads which may not be built for many years.

Recreational Opportunities

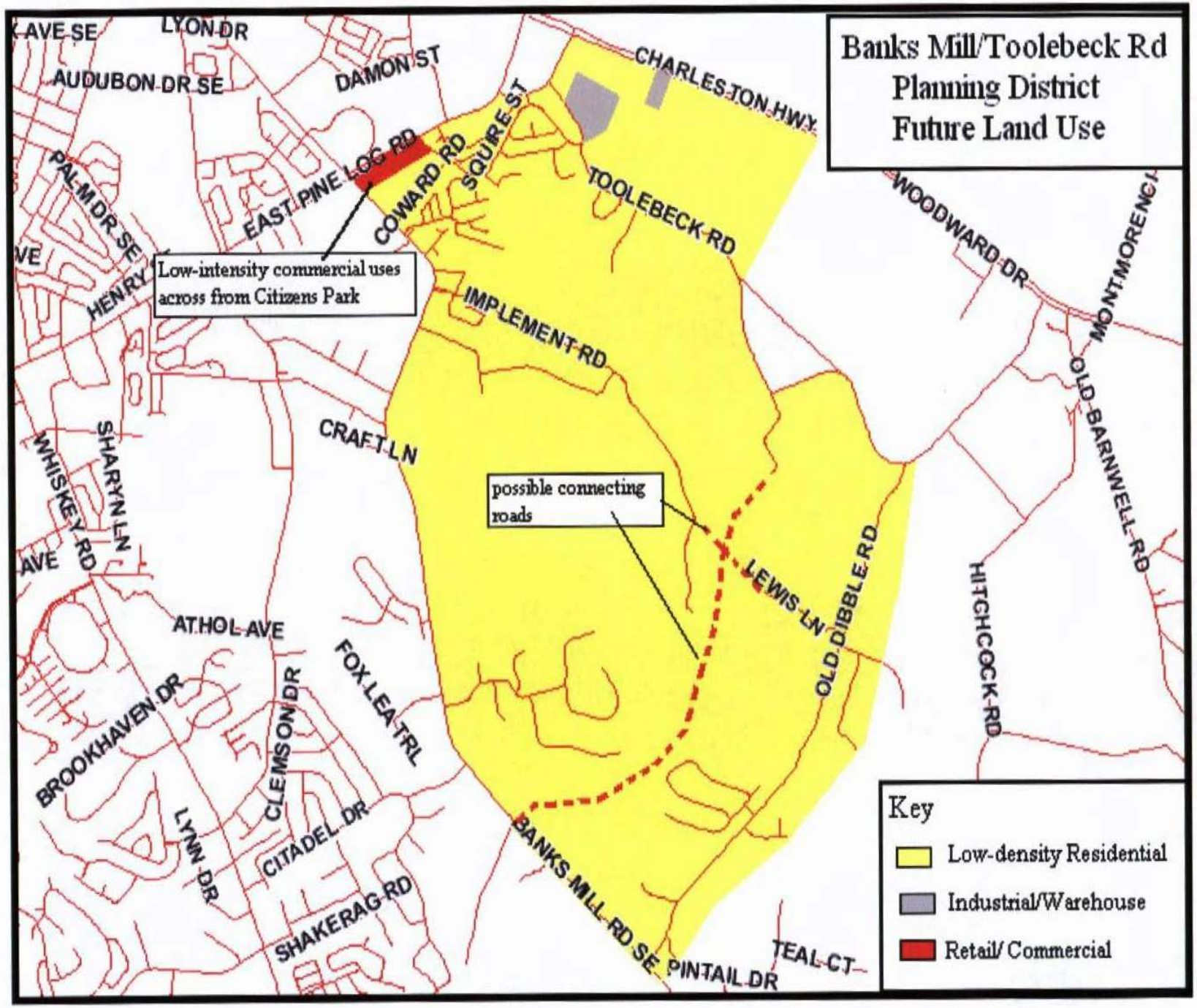
There is essentially no public park or recreation land in the district, and steps should be taken to provide it. One possible location for such uses would be between Toolebeck Road and Woodward Drive which is almost entirely vacant and is criss-crossed with various utility lines.

Goal 7 Improve existing recreational opportunities, create new ones, and protect open space.

Objectives

(Note: Previous objectives are in "General Goals and Objectives" on page III-9 and in other planning district chapters.)

7.13 Large areas of open space should be preserved in the area north of Toolebeck Road. Much of the area north of Toolebeck Road consists of land well-suited for agriculture. Development on this land should be restricted so that much of it is preserved as open space. One method of preserving the land would be for the owners to grant conservation easements to a land trust which would allow them to realize a tax benefit. Any residential development that is allowed should use the "conservation subdivision" approach of clustering units so that large open spaces can be preserved.


Banks Mill/Toolebeck Rd
Planning District
Future Land Use
Low-intensity commercial uses across from Citizens Park
possible connecting roads
Key
Low-density Residential
Industrial/Warehouse
Retail/ Commercial
LYON DR
AUDUBON DR SE
DAMON ST
CHARLESTON HWY
SQUIRE ST
EAST PINE LOG RD
COWARD RD
TOOLEBECK RD
WOODWARD DR
MONTMORENCI
PALM DR SE
HENRY
IMPLEMENT RD
OLD BARNWELL RD
CRAFT LN
SHARYN LN
WHISKEY RD
LEWIS LN
OLD DIBBLE RD
HITCHCOCK RD
ATHOL AVE
FOX LEA TRL
BROOKHAVEN DR
CLEMSON DR
LYNN DR
CITADEL DR
SHAKERAG RD
BANKS MILL RD SE
PINTAIL DR
TEAL CT

IV.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

1. **Policies IV-1**
2. **Development Regulations IV-4**

IV. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

1. POLICIES

a. Planning Process

Amending the Plan. The Plan may be amended by a vote of City Council after having received a recommendation from the Planning Commission with public hearings being held by each body.

Review of the Plan. The Planning Commission must review the Plan at least every five years, and, if appropriate, recommend amendments to City Council after a public hearing.

Complete Revision of the Plan. The Plan must be completely updated at least every 10 years.

b. Land Use

Protection of Residential Areas. Residential areas should be protected from encroachment by intense commercial and other inappropriate uses; where such uses are adjacent to residential areas, substantial buffers should be required to minimize the impact. While there should be a study of ways to make development regulations more flexible to allow limited office and even retail uses to be mixed with residential uses in new development, such approaches should only be adopted if there are guarantees that the residential areas will not be adversely affected. Where possible, land zoned for non-residential uses should be rezoned for residential use; in addition, residential uses should be allowed in all non-residential zoning districts except for industrial.

Promotion of Appropriate New Residential Development. As an alternative to the automobile-oriented, suburban style of development, developers should be encouraged to create residential projects that are more like "traditional neighborhoods" which are more oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists; allow smaller lots and reduced building setbacks; have narrower streets and more interconnecting streets with fewer dead-ends; and allow an appropriate mixture of uses. Medium-density residential should be encouraged in appropriate areas, especially on in-fill lots near downtown. Public housing should not be in large complexes or concentrated in one area.

Clustered Commercial Development. Commercial development should be clustered in nodes at or near major intersections rather than along highways. Such scattered strip development is unsightly, creates problems for motor vehicle traffic because of the excessive number of curb cuts created, and tends to introduce commercial uses close to residential neighborhoods.

Limited Expansion of Non-Residential Zoning Districts. There should be a continuing effort to counter the tendency for non-residential zoning districts which allow intense or large-scale retail or office uses to expand into residential areas. Proposals which would allow the expansion of commercial nodes defined in this Plan should only be approved where there is overwhelming evidence that the need for commercial use of the land exists and where the change would not significantly weaken the integrity of residential neighborhoods. Incentives should be created so that developers are encouraged to renovate buildings or redevelop existing projects rather than building further away from town.

Proper Location of Industrial/Warehouse Uses. Land for industrial and warehouse uses should be provided in appropriate locations that will not adversely affect residential neighborhoods or the character of Aiken. Buffers should be required to protect adjacent uses.

c. Transportation

Roads. Street improvements including resurfacing, turn lanes, and new roads should be made where appropriate but not at the expense of the visual character of Aiken.

Development Oriented to Pedestrians and Bicyclists. While the automobile must be accommodated, there is no reason that it has to dictate the design of all development. There should be strong incentives to promote new development that will be oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Discourage Strip Commercial Development. To maximize the carrying capacity of roads, intense or large-scale commercial development in a strip manner along such thoroughfares should be prevented; such development should be clustered in defined nodes with carefully planned traffic access to them. Driveways between existing parking lots should be encouraged to minimize the amount of traffic that must use highways.

Curb Cuts. Curb cuts should be limited so that the ability of a road to carry traffic is not excessively impeded and the safety of motorists is not adversely affected.

Dead-End Streets. While dead-end streets will probably continue to be popular in residential development, sufficient interconnecting streets should be required to provide several alternate routes for traffic so that it is not funneled onto a few major streets.

Obstacles to Interconnecting Streets. No land should be annexed or City services provided to a tract on which a large project with private streets would be constructed which would create an obstacle to public access or severely limit the potential for interconnecting streets unless an easement or some other guarantee can be provided that right-of-way for a future public road will be available.

Sidewalks/Pathways. Existing sidewalks should be repaired where needed and new ones installed to facilitate walking.

Bicycles. The bicycle pathway plan prepared by the Pathway Committee should be implemented with changes made where appropriate, and the system should be expanded with eventual links made to other systems.

Highway Signage. Efforts should be made to work with State and Federal officials to reduce the clutter of highway directional signs.

Traffic Calming. Consideration should be given to introducing measures to calm or slow traffic in certain areas to improve traffic safety and the livability of residential areas.

Public Transportation. Continue to promote the creation of cost-effective public transportation.

d. Urban Design

Attractive Road Corridors. The rights-of-way of major road corridors should have streetscape plans prepared and implemented so that they are as attractive as possible to include landscaping and, where appropriate, decorative streetlights. Landscaping should be installed at major highway intersections.

Landscaped Medians and Intersections. The most distinguishing feature of Aiken is its landscaped medians. Continuing efforts should be made to reestablish medians where they once were in Old Aiken or create new ones, to introduce them onto existing major roads elsewhere, and to include them in new highway projects. In addition, where feasible, easements should be secured at major highway intersections in which low plantings can be placed.

Design Standards. Consideration should be given to the adoption of design standards for structures on major roads outside of but leading to historic districts to assure that the design is not totally out of character with those districts.

Underground Utility Wires. The pilot program to place existing wiring underground should be expanded and become an established practice with those areas where wires are most visible or where mature trees are endangered addressed first.

Public Art. Consideration should be given to placing appropriate public art or other landmarks in strategic locations to create a “sense of place”. A process will be needed to exercise great care in the selection of the pieces to assure that they are compatible with the character of Aiken.

Conservation Easements. Easements can be acquired to preserve an historic site or an attractive view, or in which landscaping can be installed.

Define City Boundaries. By using landscaping or landmarks along major roads, the boundary of Aiken should be established to keep it from merging into other development.

Development Receiving Services. Projects in the unincorporated area receiving City services should comply with applicable ordinances and standards.

e. Annexation

No annexations should take place which would violate any of the policies in the adopted Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan. Efforts should continue to eliminate confusing City boundaries. Incentives should be used to encourage annexation.

f. Provision of City Services to Unincorporated Areas

Because there have been some changes in recent years, the Policy should be studied to be sure that it reflects City Council's intent. Some clarification is probably needed. Services should not be provided to any use or project which would violate any of the policies in the adopted Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan.

2. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

a. General

Unified Development Ordinance. Regulations dealing with land use and development are found in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Tree Protection and Landscaping Ordinance, Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, and other ordinances scattered throughout the City Code. The feasibility of combining these regulations into a unified development ordinance to simplify their use should be evaluated.

Site/Landscape Plan Review and Permitting. Continuing efforts are needed to streamline the plan review and permitting process so that it is as convenient as possible for applicants.

b. Zoning Ordinance and Map

Rezoning to Residential. There may be land zoned for non-residential use that would be more suitable for residential. If so, the land should be rezoned to strengthen the residential character of Aiken.

Allow Residential in Non-Residential Districts. To maximize the potential for residential development and to promote the appropriate mixture of uses, residential uses should be allowed by right in all zones except for industrial.

Study the Feasibility of Allowing Limited Office and Commercial Uses in Residential Zones. There has been a trend away from the strict separation of uses and toward trying to have more of a mixture of uses primarily in an attempt to decrease reliance on the automobile for all work and shopping trips. Consideration should be given to including provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to allow low-intensity office and commercial uses in appropriate places in new residential development with special approval by City Council. Each such use would have to adhere to strict design standards. However, if such provisions cannot assure adequate protection for residential areas, the approach should not be used.

Traditional Neighborhood Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance should allow residential development which is different from the typical suburban-style subdivision which has been so dominant since World War II. The regulations should allow and even encourage developments with smaller lots, reduced building setbacks, accessory apartments, narrower streets, fewer dead-ends and more interconnecting streets, street trees, and bicycle paths and, where appropriate, low-intensity commercial and office uses. Such changes will allow the creation of neighborhoods which are less automobile-oriented and designed at a more human scale.

Clustering. The minimum lot sizes required by Zoning Ordinances can result in a great deal of unusable open space. The regulations should allow developments to have smaller single-family lots clustered with the condition that the land that would have been a part of each lot is combined into usable open space that is available to all residents of the project; the dwelling unit density would be about the same as under the conventional zoning except that consideration should be given to a density bonus for using clustering. Clustering also reduces the costs to the developer by reducing the amount spent on running utilities and constructing roads.

Communications Towers. Regulations to control wireless communications antennas and structures have been adopted, but revisions may be needed periodically to address changes in technology.

Commercial Uses Near the Street. Much commercial development, especially shopping centers, has parking near the street with buildings set far back. Incentives should be developed to encourage the location of new buildings near the street at such shopping centers with parking to the rear less visible from the street to create a more “neighborhood” feel with a human scale.

Industrial Zones. Light Industrial and Industrial zoning categories should be evaluated to be sure that they are up-to-date. In addition, the land zoned for industrial use should be evaluated to assure that there is not a surplus. It should be determined whether there is land not zoned for industrial use that should be.

Curb Cuts. Although the South Carolina Department of Transportation has tightened its rules on curb cuts, the City should evaluate whether stricter provisions are needed to prevent excessive or poorly located driveways which can impede the flow of traffic and cause safety problems.

Historic Preservation. The Historic Preservation Ordinance has worked well. Significant refinements were made in 1993, and the regulations should be periodically evaluated and changes made as needed.

c. Land Development Regulations

Complete Review. The Land Development Regulations should be reviewed thoroughly to assess what changes are needed and possibly incorporated into a Unified Development Ordinance with other land development ordinances.

Fewer Dead-Ends and More Interconnecting Streets. While dead-end streets will probably continue to be popular in residential development, sufficient interconnecting streets should be required in new development and incorporated in existing development to provide several alternate routes for traffic so that it is not funneled onto a few major streets.

Road Standards. Design standards should be studied to see if changes are needed. If appropriate, traffic calming measures should be incorporated.

Regional Retention Ponds. Where feasible, regional retention ponds should be used to handle stormwater runoff instead of individual projects having their own unsightly detention ponds. Such retention ponds could serve as focal points for parks and recreation areas similar to the Carolina Bay north of Virginia Acres Park.

Park and Recreation Land. Consideration should be given to requiring the dedication of land to be used for parks or recreation areas in new residential subdivisions.

Bikeways/Pathways. The Regulations should be amended to require either the construction of bikeways/pathways in new developments or the dedication of easements for such purpose.