PARKERS FERRY COMMUNITY PLAN

*A **collaborative planning effort** to preserve the cultural and natural resources of the historic Parkers Ferry community*

Adopted December 15, 2016

CHARLESTON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

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1. Plan Overview

Charleston County as a whole is currently experiencing unprecedented growth. Areas long defined as rural are increasingly being subjected to development pressure as this growth continues. This is especially true of the westernmost reaches of the County, an area that is currently characterized by large undeveloped tracts of land and small, historic rural communities, some of which are Parkers Ferry, Wiltown, Jericho, Osborne, and Adams Run.

Historically, many small neighborhood businesses existed in the Parkers Ferry Community. There are very few neighborhood businesses existing today partially due to current zoning regulations that prohibit them; however, the community wants to see small neighborhood businesses and employment opportunities established in the area.

U.S. Post Office, Adams Run, SC (July 2016)

Over the past decade, WestRock (formerly MeadWestvaco) completed a master planned development for approximately 14,500 acres of land in the western part of Charleston County (known as the Spring Grove Development). As part of this effort, a community meeting was held in December 2012 at the Wiltown Community Center. At this meeting, representatives from WestRock presented the proposed plans for the Spring Grove Development, which included large amounts of residential, commercial, and industrial uses (to be developed over a fifty-year timeframe). Local residents at the meeting were concerned about the development's potential negative impacts on the existing communities; however, they also viewed the development as an opportunity to bring more services and employment to the area.

As a result of these issues, County Council Member Anna Johnson coordinated with area residents and the Charleston County Zoning and Planning Department to embark on a planning process to establish a community plan for the Parkers Ferry area.

When contemplating the Parkers Ferry Community Plan (the Plan) initially, a few of the primary objectives identified by the community were to preserve and enhance the cultural and community heritage of the area and provide flexibility in zoning regulations to allow for a more efficient rural land use pattern that would allow new development to occur in similar ways as it had historically in the community.
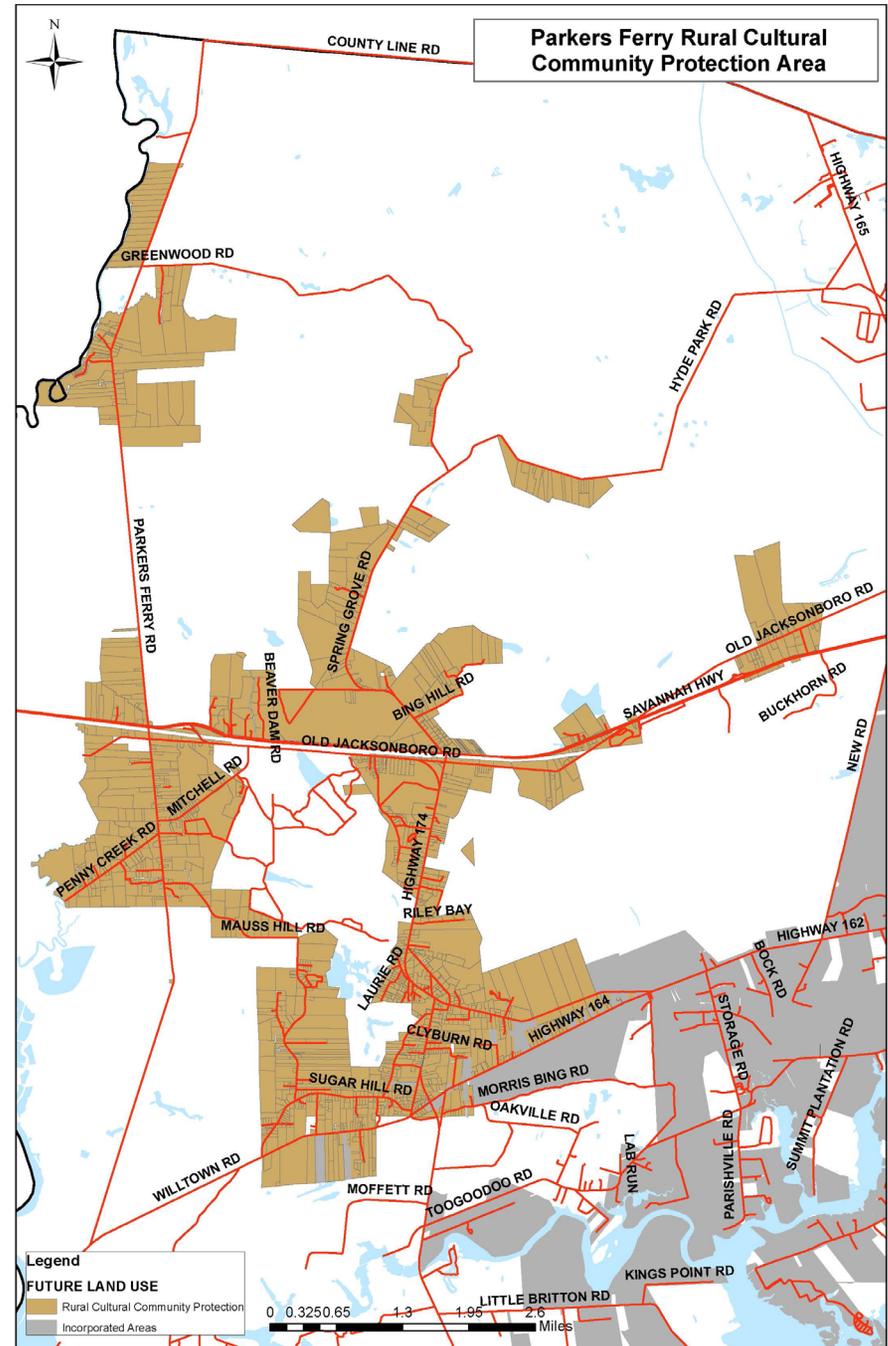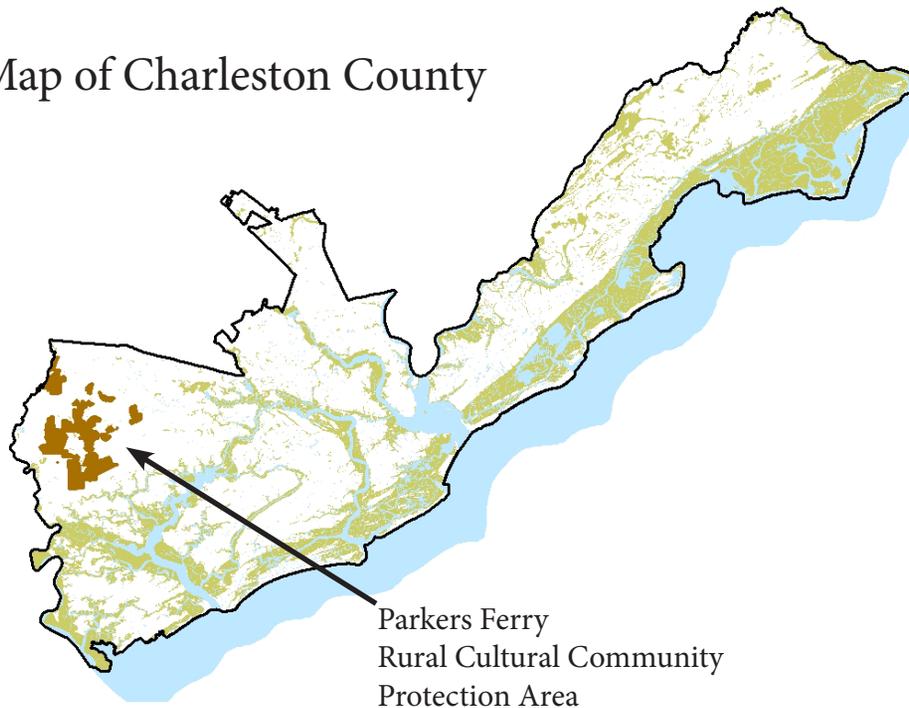

Wiltown Community Center, Adams Run, SC (July 2016)

The Community Plan Area

During a community workshop in February 2013, residents of the community, Charleston County representatives, and other stakeholders worked together to identify the community boundaries. The community plan area was ultimately defined by a focus on settlement areas and pockets of small lots, purposefully excluding properties in conservation easements and large forestry and timber company land holdings (see the project area maps below and at right).

Map of Charleston County

Parkers Ferry
Rural Cultural Community
Protection Area

Parkers Ferry Rural Cultural Community Protection Area

Legend
FUTURE LAND USE
Rural Cultural Community Protection
Incorporated Areas

0 0.325 0.65   1.3   1.95   2.6
Miles

Adopted December 15, 2016

2. The Planning Process

The Plan is the culmination of an extended project timeline that can be described in three distinct phases (as shown below). Phase 1 of the project included three community meetings held in 2013 to identify the needs and visions of the community and discuss potential solutions. These meetings coincided with the Five-Year Review of the Charleston County Comprehensive Plan. In early 2015, Charleston County Council adopted the Comprehensive Plan Review, and it included a new future land use category called Rural Cultural Community Protection which was a result of the 2013 Parkers Ferry community meetings. Phase 2 of the project began once the Comprehensive Plan Review had been adopted, as these changes set the stage for creating the Plan and subsequent zoning ordinance changes. The focus of Phase 2 was on the development and adoption of the Plan and Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR) amendments addressing the needs of the community. Phase 3 is the process of implementing the strategies included in the Plan, and this phase begins once County Council adopts the Plan. Each phase of the planning process is further described in the following pages.
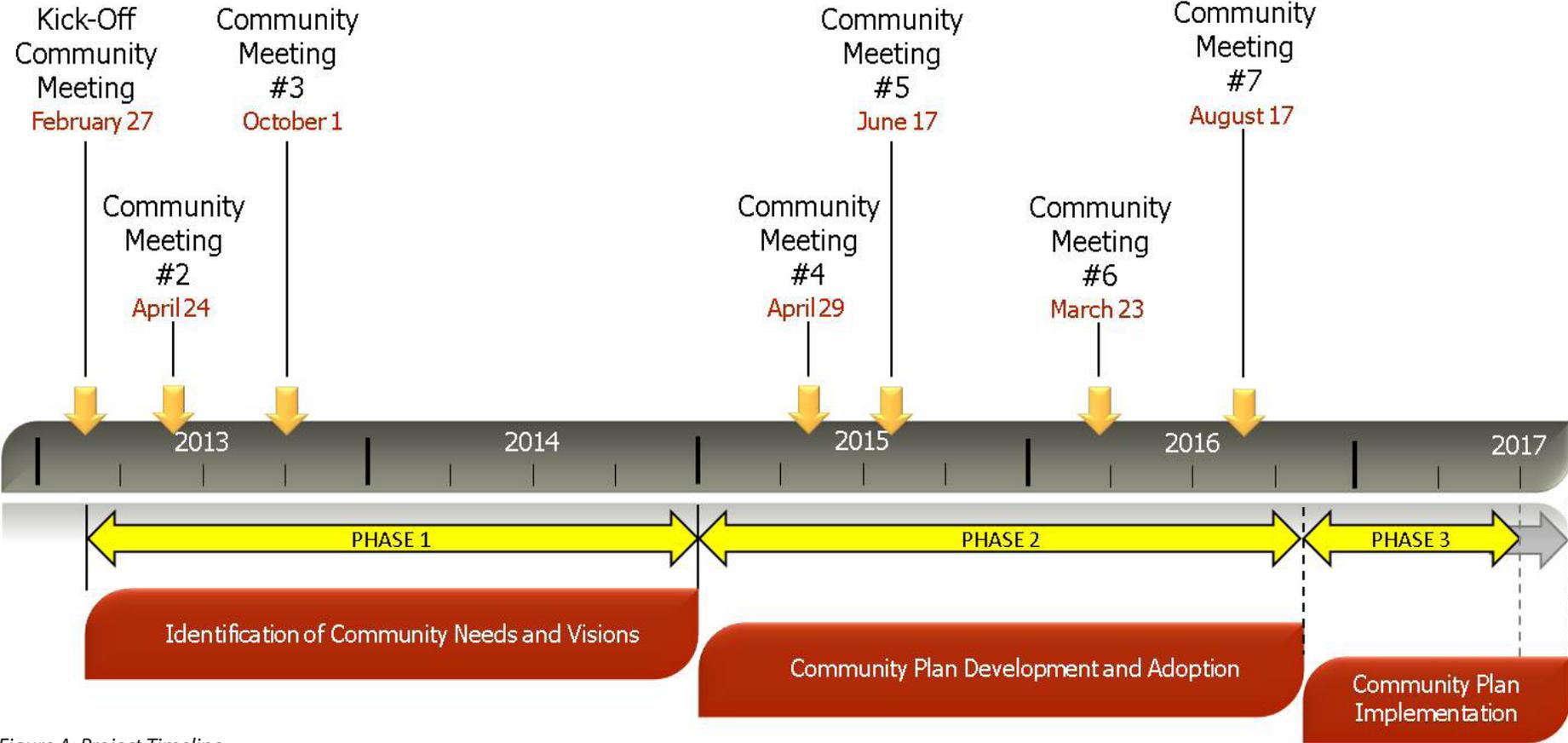
Kick-Off Community Meeting
February 27

Community Meeting #2
April 24

Community Meeting #3
October 1

Community Meeting #4
April 29

Community Meeting #5
June 17

Community Meeting #6
March 23

Community Meeting #7
August 17

2013   2014   2015   2016   2017

PHASE 1   PHASE 2   PHASE 3

Identification of Community Needs and Visions

Community Plan Development and Adoption

Community Plan Implementation

Figure A: Project Timeline

Phase 1 - Identification of Community Needs and Visions

The Plan began in 2013 with a series of three community meetings. During the first meeting in February, County Planning staff worked with community residents to identify geographic community boundaries and complete a community needs survey. The second meeting, held in April, included a discussion of the community needs survey results, emphasizing potential solutions, and also further refinement of the community boundaries. The complete results of the community needs survey are provided in Appendix A.

In October 2013, planning staff met with the community again to discuss solutions to the community needs identified in the previous meetings. At that time, staff also proposed a new future land use designation, Rural Cultural Community Protection, and educated the community about the Comprehensive Plan process to implement this new future land use designation that would set the groundwork for establishing customized zoning in the Parkers Ferry area to meet the needs of the residents.

Concurrent with these 2013 community meetings was the Five-Year Review of the Charleston County Comprehensive Plan. One primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan Review was to update the future land use designations to reflect current demographic trends and community needs and desires. As a result of the meetings with the Parkers Ferry community, the new future land use designation, Rural Cultural Community Protection, was adopted by Charleston County Council as part of the Five-Year Review in January 2015. The Review also identified the Parkers Ferry Community Plan as a priority planning project, with the goal of implementing the new future land use designation by creating an overlay zoning district that is customized to meet the needs of the community.

Parkers Ferry Community Meeting, February 27, 2013

Early in the planning process, three Focus Areas were identified to address the community's issues, concerns and vision:

1. Preservation of the Cultural Heritage of the Community;

2. Increased flexibility to subdivide and develop property; and

3. Improved access to public services and employment/training opportunities.

Phase 2 - Community Plan Development and Adoption

Parkers Ferry Community meetings resumed after County Council's adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Review. In 2015, meetings were held in April and June. The primary task during the April meeting was a review and update of the list of community needs and desires, and a discussion on how the creation of a community plan can address these needs. Each community need fell under one of five broad categories:

- Planning and zoning;
- Employment and economic development;
- Public services;
- Public facilities; and
- Community needs.

During the June 2015 meeting, planning staff gathered feedback from the community regarding the types and locations of uses (residential, office, business, etc.) desired within the community, as well as subdivision options. This feedback was critical for understanding the planning and zoning needs. Representatives from the Charleston County Public Works Department also attended the meeting to give updates on road and drainage projects in the community.

In March 2016, a community meeting was held to provide updates on County projects in the area administered by the Public Works and Transportation Development Departments (see Figure B). Planning updates included information on the recently approved Spring Grove Development and proposed zoning solutions, which included a discussion of a new overlay zoning district.

In August 2016, another community meeting was held to present the Plan to the residents and gather feedback. *(Note: the plan adoption process, which will require a recommendation of approval by the planning commission, at least one public hearing, and adoption by county council will be incorporated upon final approval.)*
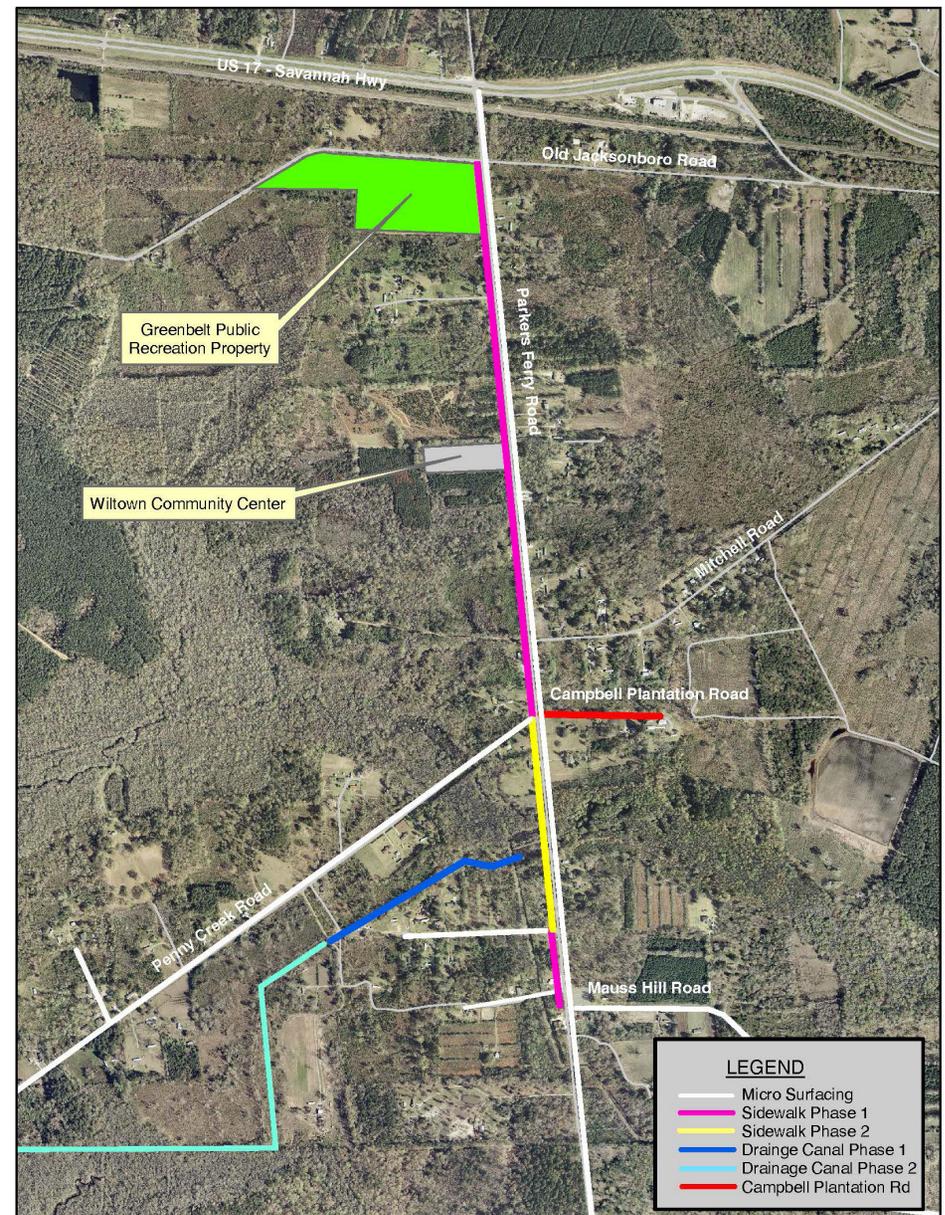

*Figure B: Public Works and Transportation Development Projects, 2016*

Phase 3 - Community Plan Implementation

Once the Parkers Ferry Community Plan is adopted by County Council, the next step is to implement the strategies contained in the Plan. The strategies included on pages 9 and 10 were developed in coordination with area residents to address the issues identified in the Community Needs Survey and assist the community in achieving its vision for the future.

The first strategies are to evaluate and update the Community Plan on a consistent basis and work with the community to develop amendments to the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR) to address the planning and zoning needs of the community. Once the ZLDR is amended, the remaining strategies should be prioritized and the community should engage the appropriate parties to address those strategies.

Draft - August 17, 2016
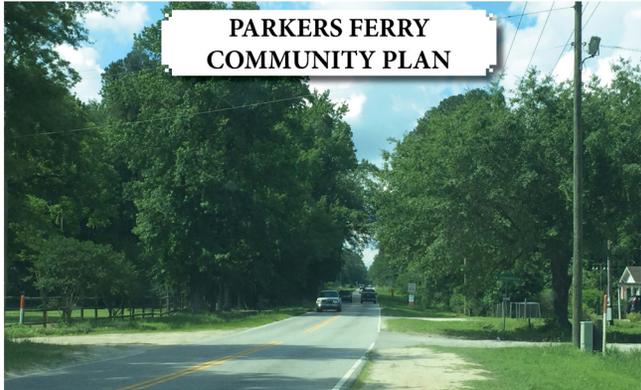
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CHARLESTON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston County

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Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)

Adopted November 20, 2001 (Ordinance # 1202) as amended

Comprehensive Plan
Guiding the future for a lasting Lowcountry.

ADOPTED BY CHARLESTON COUNTY COUNCIL
November 18, 2008
Ordinance No. 1567 as amended

Adopted December 15, 2016

3. Plan Implementation Strategies

Listed below are the recommended implementation strategies to address the issues identified by the community and achieve their vision for the area.

1. **Evaluate and update the Community Plan, as needed, with community input.**

2. **Planning and Zoning Strategies** to allow more flexibility to subdivide property; allow commercial uses and preserve natural and cultural resources.

   Strategy 2.1: Adopt amendments to the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR), including but not limited to an overlay zoning district, as applicable (a draft overlay zoning district map is included on page 11).
   Strategy 2.2: Monitor and evaluate the updated zoning ordinance and amend as needed.

3. **Employment and Economic Development Strategies** to increase employment opportunities for local residents; encourage local retail and personal services; and improve educational and/or workforce training opportunities to build a local employment base.

   Strategy 3.1: Investigate methods to incentivize new development or redevelopment in identified commercial nodes.
   Strategy 3.2: Identify and pursue grant opportunities that encourage economic investment in the area.
   Strategy 3.3: Collaborate with SCWorks, Trident Technical College, and local satellite campuses to expand educational and workforce training programs in the area.
   Strategy 3.4: Coordinate with the Charleston County Procurement Department, SCORE, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and similar organizations to find ways to support entrepreneurs and small businesses establishing in the community.
   Strategy 3.5: Explore options for establishing a business incubator to support local entrepreneurs and small business start-ups.

4. **Public Works and Transportation Strategies** to address drainage issues; road and ditch maintenance; and improved transportation options.

   Strategy 4.1: Explore the possibility and need of a drainage study of the Parkers Ferry Community Plan area, including implementing any strategies recommended for drainage improvements in the area.
   Strategy 4.2: Work with TriCounty Link in their review of the rural transit system.
   Strategy 4.3: Coordinate with Charleston County Transportion Development Department, Charleston County Public Works Department, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to receive updates on Parkers Ferry Area projects.
   Strategy 4.4: Investigate potential funding sources such as the Rural Transportation Alternatives Program (RTAP) grants for future public works and transportation projects.
   Strategy 4.5: Coordinate with Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) regarding the Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Plan Update to continue expanding transportation and recreational options for residents.

5. **Public Service Strategies** to improve public safety services; address inadequate well and septic systems; increase public community facilities (parks, libraries, schools, recreational facilities, etc.); and improve street lighting.

> Strategy 5.1: Pursue funding opportunities to improve the 21-acre property purchased by the Wiltown Improvement Organization using Greenbelt funds (located near the intersection of Old Jacksonboro Road and Parkers Ferry Road).
> Strategy 5.2: Invite government agencies to the Wiltown Community Center to discuss expansion of services in the area (e.g., Charleston County School District; Charleston County Public Library; Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission; Charleston County Sheriff's Office; etc.).
> Strategy 5.3: Explore opportunities for street beautification such as additional street lights.
> Strategy 5.4: Coordinate with South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and Charleston County Community Services Department to assist citizens with maintaining and upgrading well and septic systems.

6. **Community Specific Strategies** addressing housing affordability and Heirs' property preservation; improving services for senior citizens and youth; implementing community-driven crime watch programs; and mitigating potential tax implications from the Spring Grove Development.
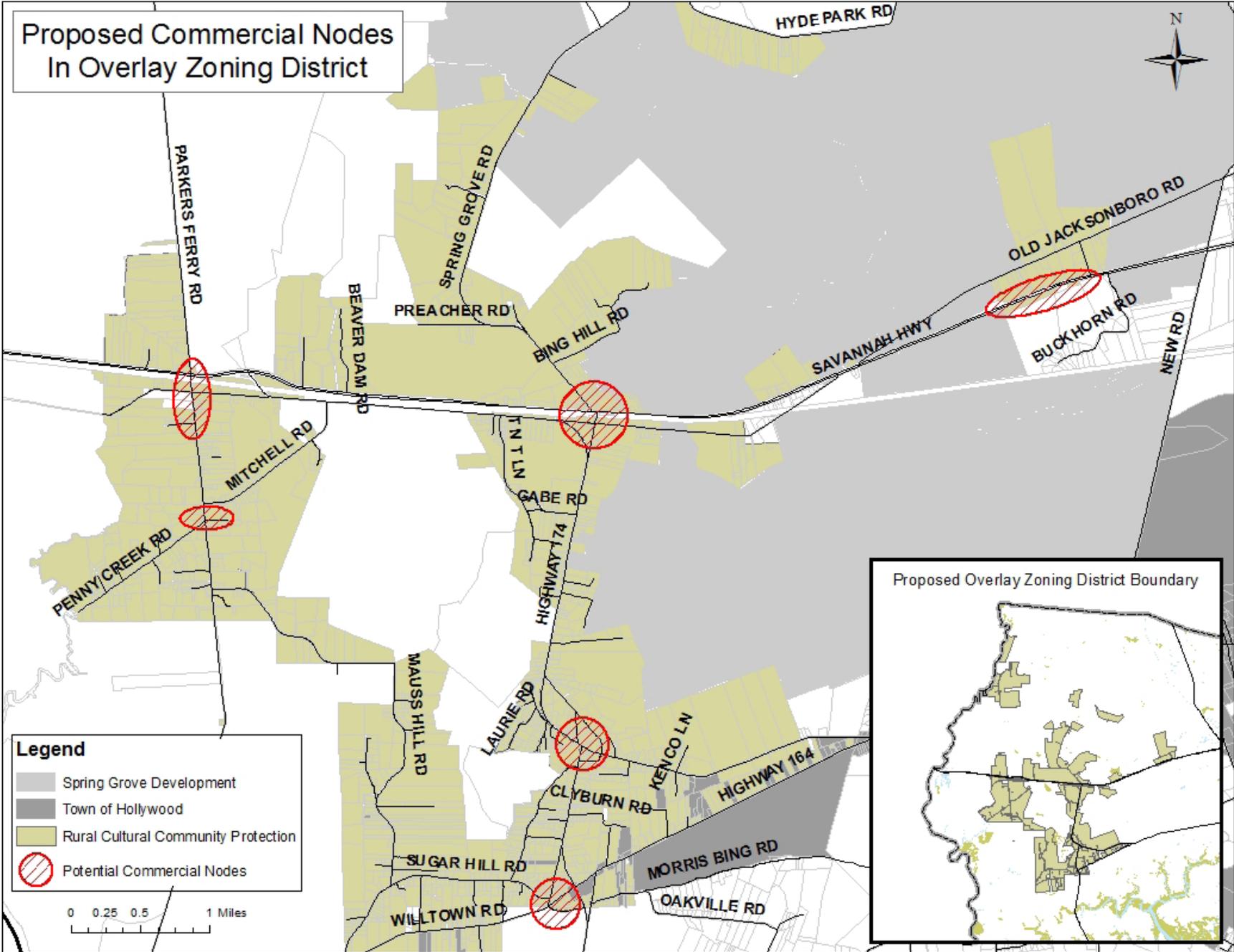
> Strategy 6.1: Coordinate with Trident Habitat for Humanity, SC Community Loan Fund, and similar organizations to address housing affordability and rehabilitation of existing housing.
> Strategy 6.2: Coordinate with roadway beautification organizations such as Palmetto Pride/Adopt-a-Highway and SC Scenic Byway.
> Strategy 6.3: Explore partnerships with local non-profits such as Lowcountry Local First, Charleston County School District Office of Adult Education/High School Diploma and GED Program, Charleston Area Senior Citizens (CASC), Inc., and Lowcountry Senior Center to expand services for residents, particularly senior citizens and area youth.
> Strategy 6.4: Continue building a relationship with The Center for Heirs' Property Preservation to educate area residents on the issue.

Proposed Commercial Nodes In Overlay Zoning District

Legend
Spring Grove Development
Town of Hollywood
Rural Cultural Community Protection
Potential Commercial Nodes

0   0.25 0.5   1 Miles

Proposed Overlay Zoning District Boundary

Appendix A -Community Needs Survey Results

At the February 2013 community meeting, a community needs survey was distributed to meeting attendees. All 53 attendees completed the survey. The results have been summarized on the following pages.

Questionnaire Results	Parkers Ferry Community Meeting (February 2013)

Total number of meeting attendees:	53
Total number of completed questionnaires:	53
Completion rate:	100%

Note: Respondents often selected more than one answer, resulting in over 100% of responses.

Question 1: What community do you represent?*		No. of responses
Parkers Ferry	64.2%	34
Adams Run/Wiltown	35.9%	19
Osborne	9.4%	5

53 citizens responded to this question.

Question 2: How long have you lived in this community?*		No. of responses
41+ years	52.8%	28
0-5 years	13.2%	7
21-30 years	13.2%	7
11-20 years	7.5%	4
31-40 years	7.5%	4
6-10 years	5.7%	3
Average length of time based on responses:		36 years

53 citizens responded to this question.

Question 3: What do you think is most important about your community?*		No. of responses
History and culture	82.6%	38
Community character	34.8%	16
Other responses:		

- Potential for development, parks/recreation, public services
- Small town (country appeal), peacefulness of country-settings
- Hunting, fishing, church, community
- Environment and playgrounds
- Family
- Small family-oriented area
- Natural resources/wildlife

46 citizens responded to this question.

Appendix A -Community Needs Survey Results

Question 4: What issues are you most concerned about regarding your community?*		No. of responses
Road and drainage issues	84.6%	44
Ability to subdivide property	78.9%	41
Access to public services	77.0%	40
Access to retail services	75.0%	39
Access to medical services	73.1%	38
Land ownership and heirs' property issues	69.2%	36
Lack of water and sewer service	67.3%	35
Local employment opportunities	59.6%	31

Other responses:
- Faster internet service
- DHEC rules and regulations regarding well/septic tanks, soil testing
- Additional mobile homes (Charleston County rules and regulations)
- Increase historic settlement patterns
- History
- Lack of community involvement
- Lack of drainage from property
- Difficult to get property approval to build home
- Taxes
- Fire house
- Hang out places
- Ditch drainage
- Environment
- More streetlights on all roads to churches

52 citizens responded to this question.

Question 5: What would you like to see occur in your community in the future?*		No. of responses
Public services such as parks, libraries, etc.	83.0%	44
Medical facilities	77.4%	41
General stores	71.7%	38
Gas stations, banks, etc.	67.9%	36
Day care facilities	54.7%	29
Farmers' markets	41.5%	22
Agriculture/forestry	20.8%	11
No change; community remains as is	7.6%	4

Other responses:
- Police station
- Water & sewer
- Public transportation (bus system)
- Senior citizen center
- Open up more along Hwy 17 for commercial development
- Fire station
- Streetlights
- Post office
- Jobs
- Educational facilities
- Recreational facilities
- Special events
- Environmental management (litter control, ditch maintenance, etc.)
- Community meeting with DHEC
- Playground for kids

53 citizens responded to this question.

Question 6: Would you like to see more employment opportunities in your community?*		No. of responses
Yes	96.2%	50
No	3.9%	2

52 citizens responded to this question.

Appendix A -Community Needs Survey Results

Question 7: If yes, what types of employment opportunities would you prefer?*		No. of responses
Professional services	71.7%	33
Trades	63.0%	29
Light manufacturing	56.5%	26
Technology	54.4%	25
Retail	54.4%	25
Hospitality and tourism	30.4%	14
Agriculture and forestry	23.9%	11
Other responses: - Social lounge - General store - Gas station		

46 citizens responded to this question.

Question 8: What planning solutions do you think would be most beneficial to your community?*		No. of responses
Village-style development based on historic settlement patterns	51.1%	24
Regulations that promote the establishment of services and employment opportunities for local residents	74.5%	35
Other responses: - Water and sewer services - Public transportation - One-stop/general center/a combination of stores, movie theater, gas station, etc., fast food or restaurant, central location		

47 citizens responded to this question.

Question 9: Additional comments and questions*

Please find grants so we can get water and sewer into the Parkers Ferry area, if not the sewer, please help us with the water system
I would like to see a safe playground equipped with sports activities for children, swings, basketball court, swimming pools, etc.
Why don't we have internet service yet?
Better maintenance of highway, grass cutting, ditch grass cutting, last 4-5 years ditch cutting has stopped
Zoning, internet, cable services, etc. Soil testing, putting septic system in, rules, etc.
I would like to have a copy of this
Get East Edisto going ASAP
How do you plan to achieve these goals that are being suggested? Yes, I think Parkers Ferry is wonderful, but we do need more resources here. I remember when we had three stores on Hwy 17. Yes, I would like a copy of presentation.
I would like to have a copy of the presentation along with the maps.
Folks out here need jobs, put PowerPoint online
I want to know more about heirs' property issues
I'd like a copy of the maps
Please give me the ability to subdivide your property for more than 80 acres and 2 years
Please give the ability to subdivide your other property
Desire a hard copy of map
When things come, will taxes go up? I would like to have a copy, will you send me contact information?
Social lounge, special events, somewhere to have social club gathering. I would like to have a copy of the two maps at this meeting.
We need a change in the zoning law. It will give the community more right to their land.
Can we start a litter group or club that goes around picking up trash?
About trading, will you please send the information so I can take to my church? Will you please send me a copy of the map? Mail anything that you have contact information.
The zoning of the area changed
I would like to see our community zoned so that businesses may become a part of our community. In its present state as zoned, we are unable to open or bring any new businesses to the area. I would like to open up my own health agency, but I would have to do it in another area.
I would like to see the 21 acres of land the community has acquired developed into a recreational park. More activities for our youth.
Septic tank system
Septic tank system
Will taxes go up with all the changes that will be made?
What about a 24 hour gas station with a McDonald's with grocery store? Caution light at 17S and Parkers Ferry Road. At night it's so dark.
I would like to see more of the tax dollars working for the community.
I would like the community to grow but without the cost of taxes increasing. Most people can't pay the taxes they have now. And to add water and sewer bills to it will not help the community. Yes, I would like a copy of this map and presentation. Soil testing land that's no good won't pass DHEC.
I want to see these issues brought up and walk on in the not too distant future by County Council.

30 citizens provided additional comments and questions.

Appendix B - List of Community Needs

The following community needs were identified by the public during community meetings and as a result of the Community Needs Survey:

Planning, Zoning and Subdivision

- Preservation of the cultural heritage of the community
- Increased flexibility to subdivide and develop property
- Continue agriculture and forestry uses
- Protection of natural resources

Scenic View on Parkers Ferry Road

Grace Chapel Baptist Church, Adams Run, SC

L. Jay's Barbershop and Convenience Store (Closed), Adams Run, SC

BJ's 99 Cent Store (Closed), Adams Run, SC

Employment and Economic Development

- Allow retail services such as general stores, gas stations, restaurants, banks, pharmacies, farmers' markets, social lounges, special events, etc.
- Medical and hospital services
- More local employment opportunities:
  - Find ways to encourage economic development to increase local tax base
  - Emphasize hiring locally (a % of new hires should be from the community and training programs should be offered)
  - Recruit manufacturing businesses to the community
  - Support the establishment of more local businesses
- Explore grant opportunities for rural communities

Appendix B - List of Community Needs

The following community needs were identified by the public during community meetings and as a result of the Community Needs Survey:

Public Services

- Increased police patrols to reduce crime
- Improved roads and drainage, including maintenance and sidewalks
  - More street lights
  - Drainage Maintenance including Penny Creek drainage
  - Future meeting with Public Works
- Improved technology (cell, internet, power, natural gas, etc.)
- Improved public transportation
- Police/Fire/EMS station

Parkers Ferry Road Improvements

Wiltown Community Center, Adams Run, SC (July 2016)

Public Facilities

- Community recreation center/senior's center
- Schools/training centers/educational programs
- Library
- Post office
- Improved drinking water quality
- Septic tank maintenance assistance

Minnie Hughes Elementary School, Hollywood, SC

Appendix B - List of Community Needs

The following community needs were identified by the public during community meetings and as a result of the Community Needs Survey:

General Community Needs

- Homes that are affordable to community residents
  - Consider Habitat for Humanity as an opportunity
- Resolutions for land ownership and Heirs' property issues
- Protection against potential impacts of the Spring Grove Development such as increasing property taxes and traffic
- Consider tax/financial impacts of improvements/changes in the community on property owners

Residence on Sugar Hill Road

Residence on SC 174

Residence on Parkers Ferry Road