



# A GRASSROOTS EFFORT

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**INITIAL WORK, STATEMENTS, AND FINDINGS OF  
THE IMAGINE GREENVILLE CITIZEN COMMITTEES**

**September 18, 2008**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Goals and Objectives

The full detail of each element's goals and objectives is included in the following pages. However, for the sake of quick reference, the following statements are provided to give a brief summary of this document's content. In no way do these statement represent the full meaning or intent of the information provided; they merely serve an illustrative purpose.

The core premise of the **Community Facilities** element is that solutions must be given to meet the future infrastructure needs of the County; these solutions must provide better coordination, efficiency, sustainable practices, transparency, and adequate tools for implementation. Likewise, these solutions must provide a more equitable distribution of the costs of public service to current and future residents.

The central message of the **Cultural Resources** element is that the County's needs and potential for its cultural resources outstretch the current capacity for proper action. Furthermore, there is a need for central coordination amongst the various independent groups who provide stewardship to these resources. Thus, a new entity—or an existing entity with an enlarged role—should take the charge in providing better service to these resources and, thus, to the County.

The **Economic Development** element states a specific need for more direct action from the County with regard to the local economy. Investments (by way of policy and administration) should be made to develop a more sustainable market that realizes its full potential, reduces lost opportunities, and provides strong support to the many businesses and industries that rely on the County for quality service.

The common thread within the **Housing** element is that action should be made to provide a more sustainable, equitable, affordable, and varied stock of housing within the County. Likewise, efforts should be made to provide greater benefits to residents that extend beyond the means of basic shelter; amenities such as transportation and open space should be the rule rather than exception.

Essential to the **Land Use and Transportation** element is a need for drastic change in the methods and approaches to land use and transportation planning conducted by the County; this change should include aggressive public awareness and education campaigns, sustainability measures, multi-modal approaches, as well as better tools for implementation and enforcement.

The fundamental conclusion of the **Natural Resources** element is that aggressive measures must be taken to protect the most valuable and vulnerable resources in Greenville County. Included amongst these resources are the air, threatened habitat, water, trees, and agriculture. More specifically, the intent of this element is to provide solutions to a variety of issues that stretch beyond typical regulation—providing instead the much-needed incentives and rewards for responsible action rather than baseline requirements that grant no such positive reinforcement.

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## Introduction

### *What is Imagine Greenville?*

It is a comprehensive plan, a community vision, and a public awareness effort that has already involved thousands of citizens to date. Imagine Greenville is also the foremost opportunity for citizens to discuss and decide on a future that best fits their needs; more importantly, it is the chance for these same residents to decide the steps and methods for making that future a reality. This is specifically expressed by the results of our citizen committee meetings. Contained within this document is an underlying message that will last—in some form or other—for the remainder of this endeavor and many more years to come.

### *What is this document?*

While not the plan, exactly, this document is the product of several months' hard work from our citizen committees. Comprising over a hundred citizens from across the county, these volunteers gave of their time and energy to form the foundation of the Imagine Greenville effort. Their thoughts, ideas, discoveries, and debates are all embodied in this document and form the breadth of our focus, which is accordingly comprehensive. From air quality to traffic congestion, affordable housing to improved intergovernmental coordination, all possible topics mentioned in our community meetings have been addressed and given a solution of some sort—direct or likewise—for the specific purpose of making a better future for Greenville County. And while the Imagine Greenville effort will continue for several months ahead, this document serves as a record of the citizen committee's contribution and a snapshot of the general discussion as it has developed thus far.

### *How did the committees come about their results?*

The product put forth in this document is a result of a rigorous development process undertaken by each committee. This process, designed to emulate a classroom environment, required members to do individual research, take field trips, complete homework assignments, and engage in critical group discussions. Therefore, both the facilitators and the members of each committee feel confident with the contents of this document as it has been created from careful thoughts, analysis, and exhaustive group review.

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# Community Facilities

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## Community Facilities

### Definition

Community Facilities accounts for the variety of public services and infrastructure that helps maintain the quality of life and daily functions of the County. These facilities include, but are not limited to, water treatment and distribution, sewer and wastewater, fire protection, emergency medical services, education facilities and libraries.

### Challenges

- Ensuring adequate future service
- Multiple autonomous entities (i.e. fragmented government)
- Lack of coordination between entities
- Private development follows public investment

### **Theme 1: Efficiency & Coordination of Services**

#### Goal

Ensure adequate public facilities and services are provided in a coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective manner that maximizes existing facilities and supports future land use planning objectives.

#### Objectives

- Clearly define the term “infill development” and provide incentives that encourage infill development and redevelopment in locations that are accessible to existing adequate community facilities.
- Coordinate plans of the various public entities and set priorities for the acquisition of land and the development of public facilities, so as to minimize public costs.
- In the spirit of coordination envisioned in Objective #2, seek opportunities for shared use of compatible public facilities operated by municipalities, schools, state agencies, and special purpose districts.
- Assess the feasibility of combining agencies and/or special purpose districts in order to reduce costs and increase efficiency of services.
- Work with the School District to establish adequate level of service standards for public schools. Standards should be adopted by the County and be used to ensure adequate school facility capacity prior to development approval.

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## Community Facilities

### **Theme 2: Environmental Sustainability**

#### Goal

Ensure that the location, development, and operation of community facilities, including buildings, vehicles, and other equipment, are accomplished in a safe, sustainable, and environmentally responsible manner.

#### Objectives

- Increase and encourage reuse of existing empty buildings instead of clearing land for new community facilities.
- Encourage all community facilities and government entities to adopt environmentally sustainable “green” policies that promote water and energy conservation and minimize impacts on natural resources including air, water, soils.
- Design and locate community facilities, including maintenance operations, in areas so that they will have the greatest positive impact on residential neighborhoods, communities, and the environment.

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## Community Facilities

### **Theme 3: Accessibility and Availability of Information**

#### Goal

Ensure that current information about community facilities is readily available and that processes surrounding community facilities planning are transparent and governed by the interests of all members of the Greenville community.

#### Objectives

- Create an easily accessible single location on the County's website where citizens can access timely information regarding future needs and scheduled improvements to community facilities.
- Make geographic information, specifically information on the availability of utilities and school attendance boundaries, more easily accessible and available to the public through the internet.

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## Community Facilities

### **Theme 4: Meeting Future Needs**

#### Goal

Ensure that community facilities and the services they provide are available to meet the future needs of county residents.

#### Objectives

- Work with the Greenville County Recreation District to provide both active and passive recreation opportunities for all segments of the population.
- Reduce emergency response times to meet or exceed national averages by hiring additional Sheriff's deputies, and exploring the effectiveness and feasibility regional Sheriff's Office substations.
- Examine more equitable ways of funding future community facilities needs required to serve new development.
- Improve and enhance the Greenville County Library System focusing on innovative technology, and developing a larger and more active client base, particularly within currently underserved segments of the population.

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## Community Facilities

### **Recommended Methods of Implementation**

- Develop and adopt new ordinances as necessary.
- Adequate public facility ordinance requiring that adequate public facilities are available or investment in public facilities is made prior to the approval of new development.
- Impact fee ordinance that links development fees to infrastructure costs associated with each development.
- Amend existing zoning and land development ordinances. Zoning and land development regulations should be used as tools to implement the adopted comprehensive plan county wide.
- Effectively and consistently enforce existing ordinances and regulations.

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## Community Facilities

### **Other General Goals & Recommendations**

The Citizens Committee made several other recommendations that were not directly related to the County's community facilities. These recommendations are more general in nature and may be more appropriately included in other elements of the plan. Staff has included these general recommendations in this section.

- Examine the pros and cons of changing County Council representation to include several at large seats that would represent the interests of the entire county.
- Reduce residential sprawl.
- Continue to improve stormwater management efforts to prevent flooding and improve water quality of area streams.
- Improve air quality to meet or exceed new EPA standards by 2012.
- Provide incentives that encourage the use of renewable energy for homes and businesses.
- Encourage gray water reuse in homes and businesses through incentives and building code revisions.

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## Cultural Resources

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## Cultural Resources

### Definition

Cultural resources include any natural or man-made entities, events, traditions, or activities that relate to the past, present, or future of the community and are socially significant. These resources are a major factor in determining the community's identity and are instrumental in attracting new growth, interest, and opportunities in the area.

### Challenges

- Lack of a comprehensive strategic plan and vision
- Lack of coordination amongst various cultural resource groups (list examples)
- Lack of comprehensive sources for information
- Lack of focus, on county's behalf, beyond historic preservation
- Lack of funding
- Lack of staff resources

### **Theme 1: Better Action, Better Organization**

#### Goal

To increase the awareness, importance, marketability, and accessibility of our Cultural Resources to all residents of, and visitors to, Greenville County

#### Objective

- Appoint an existing, successful cultural entity with an expanded mission, or create a new entity, with the duty of enabling existing and future cultural resource groups in their mission within the framework of the Imagine Greenville plan. This group will also provide:
  - Dedicated leadership
  - Accountability
  - Definitive focus to needs of entire county
  - Central coordination for various organizations

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## Cultural Resources

### Critical Actions of the Entity

Create a comprehensive plan for cultural resources to meet the needs of all residents. This plan will achieve the following:

- Create an inventory of resources that includes all possible entities and traditions that fall within the definition and are socially-significant
- Develop a method by which additional resources could be added to the inventory and designated significant
- Provide assistance to municipalities for developing policies for preservation
- Develop partnerships among the public, private, and historic preservation groups to maximize fund-raising capabilities
- Improve the awareness and diversity of cultural resource offerings
- Utilize cultural resources to define the identity of the community
- Position cultural resources as a primary marketing tool for area
- Conduct continual market research
- Increase the availability of affordable events

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# Economic Development

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## Economic Development

### Definition

Economic Development refers to the various characteristics of the local economy as they relate to growth and development. Facets such as labor, industry, employment, and fiscal impact are all focal points of this element.

### Challenges

- A lack of dedicated economic development staff to serve the County
- No single-point source of information for small businesses
- A limited ability to provide incentives to small businesses and industry
- A limited supply of large industrial tracts ready for development
- No comprehensive inventory of available sites for redevelopment
- A lack of infrastructure available to serve industrial development

### **Theme 1: Investment from the County**

#### Goal

Target county investment and regulatory polices for economic development

#### Objectives

- Define the economic development objectives and related strategies of Greenville County. Invite all municipalities within Greenville County to participate in the formulation of those objectives and strategies.
- Encourage locally-owned businesses, with a special emphasis on economic opportunities in areas of the County that traditionally have been underserved.
- Encourage recruitment of businesses and industries that are environmentally and economically sustainable
- Increase the level of resources committed by the County to achieving its economic development objectives. Increase funding levels, including establishment of an Economic Development Investment Fund (if feasible) for priority economic development projects that require a financial boost to “get them over the finish line,” with periodic review of this commitment by County Council
- Publish an annual or biennial report detailing the progress of ongoing economic development projects.

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## Economic Development

### **Theme 2: Incentives to support projects**

#### Goal

Based upon the County's economic development objectives, provide incentives to support priority economic development projects.

#### Objectives

- More flexible code requirements for desirable infill projects, such as parking and building setbacks that match the local context
- Expedited development review and approval processes for key projects that help implement the County's economic development objectives
- Consistent with South Carolina law, loans, tax abatements, and fee waivers
- Reasonable, business-friendly interpretations of the Greenville County Land Development Regulations and Zoning Ordinance to avoid hindering key projects that help implement the County's economic development objectives
- Extension of physical infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) for key projects that help implement the County's economic development objectives
- Modify Greenville County Land Development Regulations and Zoning Ordinance to facilitate desired types of development (e.g., adaptive reuse of historic development or infill development that may be constrained by inappropriate code provisions)
- Direct financial incentives (e.g., use of the proposed Economic Development Investment Fund)

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## Economic Development

### **Theme 3: A customer-friendly environment**

#### Goal

Promote a customer-friendly environment within County government related to economic development

#### Objectives

- Create a “one-stop shop” to provide assistance to individuals and businesses who approach the County on economic development matters, for example:
  - Information and resources on economic development issues (e.g., available incentive programs)
  - Assistance in navigating city permitting and approval processes
  - Referrals to agencies that can provide more in-depth assistance and resources on particular issues (e.g., starting a small business)
  - Creation of market packages providing relevant development and demographic data and maps
- Create an appeals process to the Department Head and County Administrator for the resolution of permitting issues within a short time-frame.

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## Economic Development

### **Theme 4: Supportive policies and regulations**

#### Goal

Ensure that County land use policies and regulations support and accommodate economic development.

#### Objectives

- Ensure that adequate and appropriate land is zoned and has infrastructure available for the various stages of business development (sites for small business start-ups/incubators, existing businesses needing to expand, larger businesses seeking to locate in Greenville County, etc.).
- Develop and maintain an inventory of available economic development sites, ranging from infill opportunities to sites suitable for corporate/research park development.
- Identify brownfield sites and underutilized/abandoned properties and buildings, pursue funding, and expedite opportunities for development.
- Assure the above efforts include sites in underserved areas that could benefit from economic development.

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## Economic Development

### **Theme 5: Partnerships for progress**

#### Goal

Build partnerships with other entities on economic development issues.

#### Objectives

- Continue to provide funding to agencies/organizations involved in promoting economic development in the County. Work with these agencies to set specific goals to address the County's economic development objectives (e.g., increasing locally-owned businesses).
- Encourage development of a small-business incubator program
- Promote economic development through public/private partnerships to include government, economic development agencies, educational and health care institutions, and businesses. Build on existing partnerships and initiatives in this effort.
  - Adult education/worker training (e.g., building on current efforts by Greenville Technical College)
  - Small business development
  - University-related research and development opportunities with Furman University and Clemson University
  - Retention of young persons (i.e., college graduates) in the community (e.g., sponsoring job matching and career placement programs to make young persons aware of the opportunities)

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# Housing

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## Housing

### Definition

This element focuses on the provision, quality, and accessibility of housing in Greenville County. Of particular concern is the location of housing, the need for it to be of equitable quality, and the desire to maintain affordability however possible. All types of housing, from single-family homes to apartment complexes, are included in this element.

### Challenges

- Affordability
- Equitable opportunities
- Lack of variety for different needs
- Lack of pedestrian features
- Location, distance from work
- Negative impacts on infrastructure

### **Theme 1: Sustainable development**

#### Goal

Stimulate sustainable development through feasible, practical solutions that can provide immediate change

#### Objectives

- Reduce minimum parking lot requirements and encourage shared parking.
- Review applicable codes and ordinances to ensure that they don't discourage the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings.
- Strengthen the County's tree ordinance in order to preserve larger mature trees and discontinue the practice of clear cutting.
- Review and revise applicable regulations to ensure building practices are environmentally friendly, and use land efficiently.
- Revise the County's Land Development Regulations to incorporate sustainable design standards as options or requirements.
- Revise the County stormwater fee structure to discount projects that employ sustainable or low impact design standards.

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## Housing

Objectives for Theme 1 continued ...

- Use the Stormwater Enterprise Fund to develop and implement sustainable development demonstration projects.
- Amend the County's Land Development Regulations to require all subdivisions, when applicable, to cluster their housing to conserve natural resources and encourage the preservation of useable green space.
- Conduct a feasibility study of the application of impact fees for County Services.
- Provide development incentives for meeting or exceeding design standards as well as for LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certified developers and development.
- Identify appropriate land use regulations that will ensure compatible development adjacent to watersheds, recreation areas, and endangered animal and plant habitats.

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## Housing

### **Theme 2: Infill development**

#### Goal

Promote infill development with incentive-based approaches that make the action more marketable and feasible for developers

#### Objectives

- Conduct a study to identify the most practical incentives (financial, greater density, etc.) to encourage infill development.
- Promote infill development design options which ensure compatibility and connectivity with existing surrounding residential development.
- Develop an incentive program to rebuild and revitalize older residential areas.
- Promote public-private partnerships to provide the needed infrastructure and economic development incentives for infill revitalization.
- Inventory and identify potential residential or mixed use infill development.
- Study the feasibility of implementing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to encourage higher density residential development in the urbanized area while preserving open green space in the more rural areas of the County.
- Study the practicality of establishing some type of Urban Growth Boundary.
- Create Public-Private partnerships to facilitate funding for infill development.
- Consider the mitigation of noise and traffic impacts when evaluating infill development projects.
- Incorporate vehicular and pedestrian connectivity into infill projects.

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## Housing

### **Theme 3: Range of housing options**

#### Goal

Facilitate the development of a range of housing options to meet the needs of the diverse range of families and individuals in Greenville County

#### Objectives

- Encourage residential neighborhoods to have both a mix of housing types, lot sizes, and housing prices.
- Encourage private/not for profit organization partnerships to develop affordable housing.
- Support and enhance existing programs, organizations, and funding mechanisms in order to provide housing for special needs and elderly housing.
- Create a consortium of all groups involved in housing to meet and discuss future housing needs in the County.
- Review redevelopment/retrofitting opportunities of vacant appropriate commercial and industrial structures for housing.
- Provide quality affordable rental opportunities.
- Investigate opportunities to provide housing and social services for the homeless.
- Preserve and encourage quality housing options that are affordable across the spectrum of housing incomes.

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## Housing

### **Theme 4: Transportation Improvements**

#### Goal

Improve the quality and quantity of transportation options to better serve our communities and neighborhoods

#### Objectives

- Amend the County's Land Development Regulations to require sidewalks and bikeways in all new subdivisions.
- Promote walkable and well-designed residential developments that include an interconnecting street system and reasonable access to public transportation.
- Promote, encourage, and seek Public/Private funding agreements to expand, improve, and support the existing public transportation system.
- Conduct a study to identify potential users and locations of park and ride facilities.
- Concentrate higher density residential development along future rail trails and greenways.
- Provide incentives to locate low to moderate income housing neighborhoods near public transportation and social services.
- Provide financial incentives to businesses that adopt carpooling or that provide transportation to employees.
- Consider requiring a traffic impact analysis as a part of the rezoning process for large scale developments.

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## Housing

### **Theme 5: Residential Corridors**

#### Goal

Identify land use corridors for residential and mixed use development in order to provide more sustainable, vibrant communities with a variety of transportation and housing options

#### Objectives

- Target areas where future residential and mixed use development will occur and plan for the installation of adequate infrastructure to support it.
- Study the possibility and options of providing zoning or other land use or design related measures county-wide.
- Inventory vacant or marginally used land that could provide additional residential development.
- Adopt and implement area plans by citizens as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

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# Land Use and Transportation

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## Land Use and Transportation

### Definition

This element addresses all aspects of development as it deals with the use of land, the travel activities and infrastructure between those uses, the design of construction, the pattern of the built environment, and the impacts of continued growth.

### Challenges

- Unsuitable development
- Congestion and air quality
- Few options for travel
- Sprawling patterns of growth
- High cost of growth for citizens
- The lack of awareness and knowledge on the various issues

### **Theme 1: Multi-Modal Transportation**

#### Goal

Develop an integrated transportation system that ensures accessibility, safe and efficient movement and connectivity through all parts of the county and accommodates a range of transportation choices such as public, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular.

#### Objectives

- Create a Comprehensive, County-Wide Transit Plan by May 2010 to achieve the overall goal of an integrated transportation system in Greenville County by addressing the following tasks:
  - A detailed accounting of the real cost of our current automobile infrastructure and the land use pattern, including expansion of water, sewer, electricity, new roads, new schools, public services and the effect on auto emissions levels, public health, and subsequent threat to federal highway funding.
  - A comparison of these costs to the real cost of alternative choices such as Rapid Bus Transit and Walkable Community Development.

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## Land Use and Transportation

Objectives from Theme 1 continued ...

- An integration of public transit routes, pedestrian and bicycle paths, greenways and roadways with appropriate land use patterns throughout the county.
- A feasibility study of a Rapid Bus backbone to anchor neighborhood bus routes and to provide fast and efficient transit service to important hubs.
- A consideration for the future conversion of this transit backbone to light rail service.
- A design standard for transit-oriented development
- Identification of nodes for future transit stops and recommend appropriate mixed-use zoning for these public transportation hubs.
- A study of safety improvements for bike and pedestrian routes from neighborhoods to schools, shopping, workplace, transit and public destinations.
- Identification of appropriate arterial roads for conversion to tree lined boulevards
- A congestion management strategy for existing roads and highways
- A connection strategy for air and rail transportation services for both passengers and freight
- Inclusion of a task force formed by local stakeholders such as municipal officials, county council members, and major employers, along with government public work and recreation departments, Greenville County planning staff, interest groups, social service groups, and private citizens. This Task Force will guide the planning process and later serve to review and encourage implementation of the CTP.

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## Land Use and Transportation

Objectives from Theme 1 continued ...

- Support sustainable transportation plans currently being implemented by increasing funding and priority of currently-scheduled bike lane construction in current transportation plans
- Provide new regulations for the site review process that benefit the transportation network by requiring road connectivity between neighboring/existing development, along with sufficient right-of-way to allow sidewalks and sufficient shoulders to allow cars to safely pass bikes.
- Improve road improvement designs to provide additional features for non-auto users, such as extended shoulders for non-auto travel.
- Utilize partnerships between municipalities and Greenville County in order to improve current transit ridership, service expansion, and service reliability.

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## Land Use and Transportation

### Theme 2: Education

#### Goal

Educate County leaders, residents, and developers on the benefits of responsible growth, livable and sustainable development

#### Objectives

- Create a communications position and advertising budget tasked to increase visibility, public awareness, and accessibility for all involvement opportunities, while enlisting community organizations, educational institutions, and civic institutions in the development of further educational programs for the community, such as:
  - A quarterly workshop series to tour the county and provide free, intensive educational sessions to the public— for adults, youth, and educators.
  - A continuing education program to provide incentives to Council and Commission to attend these workshops.
  - Recruit major media outlets to conduct series of reports on a yearly basis focusing on local planning and transportation issues.
  - Improve the department’s web presence to include interactive educational materials for the community.
- Recruit sponsors and local leaders to become spokespersons on the various issues the department deals with.
- Contact state officials with proposals or requests to improve the current driver’s safety tests so that more emphasis is given to safety protocols involving the “sharing of the road” between automobiles, cyclists, and pedestrians

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## Land Use and Transportation

### **Theme 3: A Sustainable Land Use Pattern**

#### Goal

Implement sustainable growth and efficient use of land through coordinated, quality development, redevelopment, protection of natural and agricultural areas, and an overall more transit-oriented land use pattern in order to ensure quality of life for Greenville County current and future residents.

#### Objectives

- Develop a county land use master plan that better utilizes existing infrastructure and preserves natural resources by identifying suitable areas for development and planning those areas for a variety of uses that promote walkable communities, context-sensitive design, and avoids conventional development patterns commonly termed as “sprawl”.
- Revise county development regulations to allow and promote mixed-use development, high density, open space preservation, connectivity, green building, and low-impact development practices.
- Develop incentive programs to expedite the reuse of all abandoned properties, and encourages the redevelopment of economically blighted areas.
- Create more opportunities for the redevelopment of vacant non-residential properties through the development of accessible public information and promotional programs.
- Pursue the adoption of a unified development ordinance for both County and municipal entities that achieves consistency and cohesion between city and county development.

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## Land Use and Transportation

### Theme 4: Share Costs

#### Goal

Institute programs requiring new development to pay more of the cost to provide new roads, infrastructure, community facilities and services rather than creating undue costs of such development on the existing tax base.

#### Objectives

- Assess the monetary cost of existing development (development that does not meet the standards of Theme Four) as it affects Air and Water Quality, Infrastructure, and Public Services in order to understand the relationship between the built environment and the County's economy, and the cost of County services and infrastructure.
- Develop a program to further assess the monetary cost of new development proposals, as experienced by the community. Such a program should institute costs and benefits according to the assessment provided by comprehensive analysis and should levy an appropriate fee to offset such costs and should also propose alternative proposals to allow proper development that avoids paying for such impacts.
- Ensure that this program, and its associated fee structure, is predictable, logical, and reasonable by making it accessible and usable by the public.
- Explore other opportunities to cover the cost of development impacts, such as public/private partnerships and new tax funds, when the revenues of the proposed program fall short of the cost of providing adequate public service, infrastructure, and protection of natural resources.

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## Land Use and Transportation

### **Theme 5: Enforcement**

#### Goal

Create a consistently-enforced county-wide plan for accommodating new growth that emphasizes redevelopment and well-planned density while preserving and protecting natural resources.

#### Objectives

- Strengthen the Imagine Greenville effort so that its plan (and all plans associated to it) requires a supermajority (9 of 12) vote from County Council prior to granting decisions that go against its recommendations and principles.
- Create an implementation committee comprised of citizens, stakeholders, and appointed officials (Planning Commission) to meet on a quarterly basis to review the progress of the planning effort and ensure that all actions take place in accordance to the principles of this comprehensive plan.

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# Natural Resources

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## Natural Resources

### Definition

Natural resources regards the broad components of the natural environment and the need for protection of its resources.

### Challenges

- Unidentified critical resources
- Lack of education
- Need for incentives
- Lack of regulation and enforcement
- Limited personnel for administration
- Insufficient technologies and methods

### **Theme 1: Sustainability**

#### Goal

Become a national innovator in sustainable planning and development concepts that promote healthy ecosystems, sustainable but affordable development, conservation of resources and vibrant economic growth.

#### Objectives

- Create a Natural Resources/Sustainable Development Coordinator position in a relevant department with Countywide jurisdiction
- Provide funding for adequate enforcement of existing and future codes, regulations, programs related to preservation of Natural Resources
- Provide education programs and required funding to attain the goals and objectives of Natural Resource preservation
- Create incentives to replace and recycle old, inefficient technologies and promote the use of more sustainable methods
- Create public/private partnership that will aid in adequately preserving Natural Resources
- Explore and invest in renewable energy sources.
- Follow the lead of other Counties and improve the County's recycling rate to 50% by 2013

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## Natural Resources

### Theme 2: Air Quality

#### Goal

Maintain all aspects the county's air quality by incorporating state-of-the-art air pollution control along with community awareness, responsible land use, and traffic planning that minimizes congestion and encourages alternatives to the use of the automobile.

#### Objectives

- Maintain attainment within EPA air quality standards
- Promote better air quality through carpooling and other proven methods of traffic and congestion reduction.
- Create a method for developing well balanced, interconnected, systems of street networks that reduce driving times and congestion
- Encourage \*green building practices
- Discourage open burning of residential trash, debris, and lawn material
- Adopt an ordinance to decrease light pollution
- Explore various methods of controlling and decreasing auto emissions
- Require future sidewalk connectivity, and retrofit where necessary
- Encourage a countywide bike and pedestrian system
- Work toward creation of a light rail system
- Expand existing mass transit system to be more inclusive, efficient, and reliable
- Give pedestrian access the same importance as auto access

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## Natural Resources

### **Theme 3: Water Quality and Supply**

#### Goal

Ensure a continuing supply of clean drinking water and the improvement of our natural water bodies by protecting sensitive watershed areas using proactive water conservation measures, as well as reducing pollution and runoff, and protecting riparian buffers.

#### Objectives

- Encourage a change in rate structure to decrease water usage
- Create Requirements for riparian buffer protection based on the requirements of successful protection programs in other areas
- Develop grey water re-use practices and incentivize rainwater collection systems
- Encourage and incentivize pervious paving materials
- Adopt ordinances and regulations that prevent development or clearing of floodplains and steep slopes
- Promote green building that decreases impervious surfaces and utilizes low impact design.
- Restore disturbed native \*riparian habitat and floodplains countywide
- Regulate new development to use existing methods and new technologies to prevent erosion of soils and siltification of streams.

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## Natural Resources

### **Theme 4: Land, Soils, and Agriculture**

#### Goal

Understand the unique characteristics of each of our county's rural communities and conserve the rural character of these areas and their agriculture, and forestry heritage by promoting orderly growth and development in the County

#### Objectives

- Create specific design related overlays to address building setback, signage, and lighting, to protect the rural character of the Highway 11 Scenic Byway and other significant areas
- Enable the use of Transfer of Development Rights and create an effective method for their use in Greenville County
- Expand recycling facilities, capacity, and access to minimize the use of rural lands for landfills
- Educate and encourage rural landowners and farmers on the use of Transfer of Development Rights and other methods of land preservation
- Create incentives for continuing agricultural use of existing farms and rural lands and promote sustainable practices on these lands
- Encourage and incentivize the re-use of abandoned commercial and industrial properties or the conversion back to their natural state

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## Natural Resources

### Theme 5: Trees and Open Space

#### Goal

Promote the preservation and enhancement of the County's open space, recreational resources, viewsheds and tree canopy by increasing requirements, management, planning and land use techniques.

#### Objectives

- Hire a County Arborist to administer the tree ordinance and other items related to the health of the County's vegetation
- Amend and enhance the tree ordinance to protect mature trees and require increased landscaping in public and private development
- Register heritage trees in urbanized areas and keep a running inventory for their protection
- Preserve trees in new development through land development regulations
- Invest in beautifying public spaces, roads, gateways, and other highly visible areas
- Amend parking lot landscaping requirements to require less parking and more trees and landscaping
- Create low-impact design incentives
- Identify and protect important \*viewsheds and special places in the County by effectively planning for growth that compliments these assets
- Enforce the tree ordinance and increase the overall tree canopy in developed areas as deemed attainable by the Arborist
- Develop and maintain a countywide system of interconnected greenways

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## Natural Resources

### **Theme 5: Species and Sensitive Habitat**

#### Goal

Identify critical species and habitats and protect and maintain a diversity of all species and habitat types.

#### Objectives

- Inventory and designate critical areas and sensitive species for protection in Greenville County
- Ensure that greenways and other \*passive recreation uses connect to and incorporate, where possible, sensitive areas and habitats, such as fish and wildlife conservation areas.
- Provide funding for and maintain conservation education programs.
- Preserve and restore sensitive habitats across the County.

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## Definition of Terms

**green building** – building methods that conserve resources and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

**multi-modal** - two or more modes of operation; as related to transportation it implies more than one method of travel, such as walking, biking, and/or driving.

**passive recreation** – less intensive outdoor activities which require minimum development and are suitable for preserving natural resources. These may include, but are not limited to hiking, biking, photography, hunting, horseback riding, non-motorized boating, etc.

**riparian** – of or related to the banks of a river, stream, or natural course of water.

**sustainable development** - development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**viewshed** - the landscape or topographic features that are visible from a specific point, especially those having aesthetic value.



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