

CHESTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2005 - 2025

Prepared by
Chester County Planning Commission
Chester, South Carolina

Planning Commission Staff provided
by
Catawba Regional Council of Governments

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Chester County Planning Commission
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INTRODUCTION

This plan reflects the past, present and future of Chester County. Contained within is an assessment of past and current population, economic and land use conditions along with a Land Use Plan which provides a blueprint for growth over the next twenty years. Due to the continued economic revitalization the county is experiencing and the potential for even greater growth, the future looks promising. In order to maximize the benefits of this expected growth, local government must have a vision of how the county should grow. This plan is the initial statement of that vision.

Chester County is located in the north-central part of South Carolina within the Piedmont Region of the state. It has an advantageous location being situated between two of the largest metropolitan areas in the region, Charlotte, NC and Columbia, SC. Direct access to both of these metropolitan areas is provided by Interstate 77 which passes through the eastern part of the county near the Town of Richburg. In addition to I-77, the county also has an excellent network of federal and state highways which provide access to neighboring municipalities such as Rock Hill and to other major metropolitan areas in the state. This road network is supported by the Norfolk Southern CXS and Lancaster and Chester Railroads along with the Chester County Airport which provides general aviation services.

The economy in the county has long been based on the textile manufacturing industry, and this is still true today. However, since the 1980s a major effort was made to diversify the economic base. This effort, which is continuing, has led to the recruitment of other major manufacturing and distribution facilities primarily in the Richburg area.

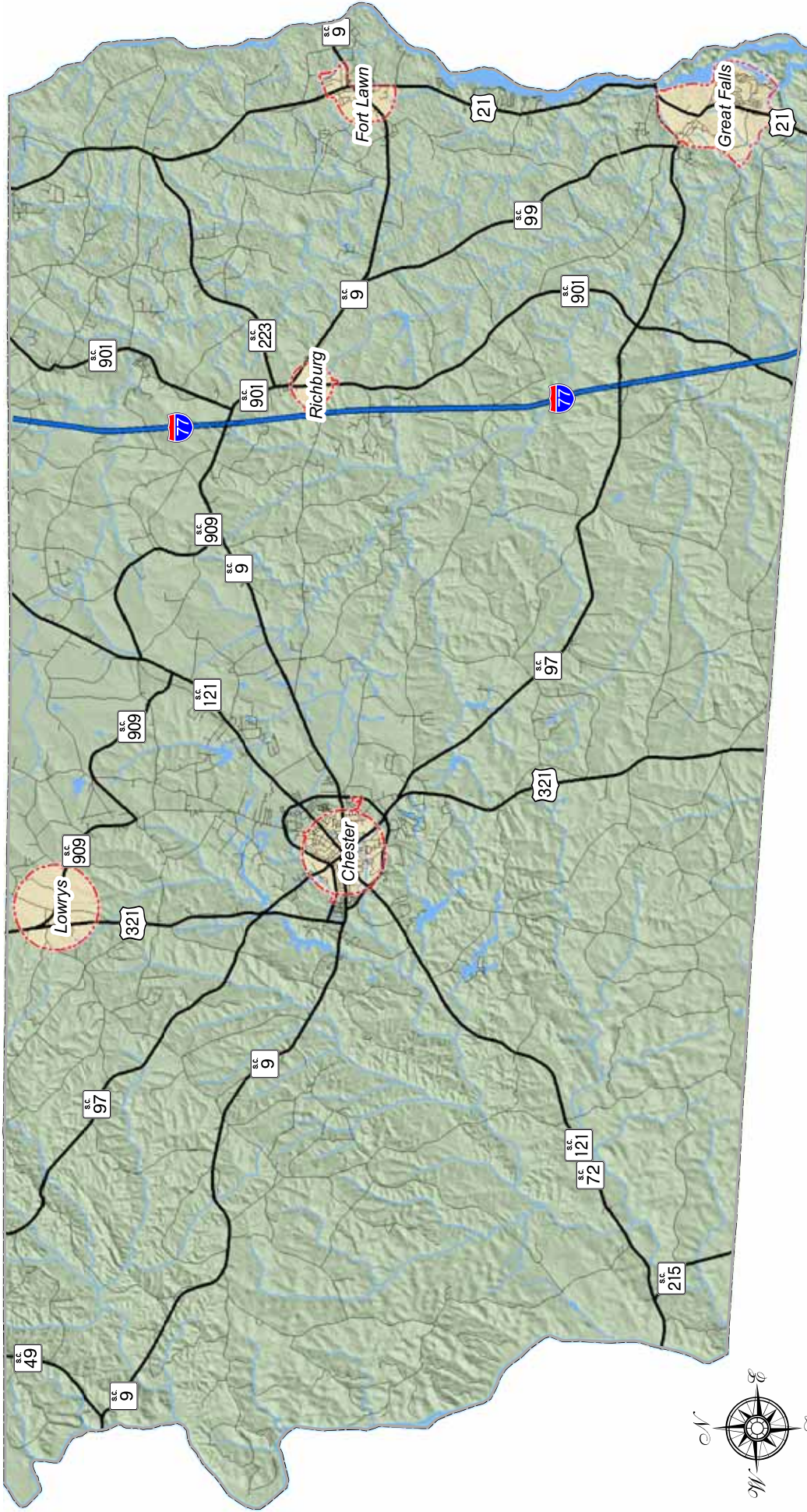
The county offers a variety of natural attractions including two state parks, two rivers, several medium sized lakes and a substantial part of the Sumter National Forest. The Rocky Shoals Spider Lily which blooms in early June in the shoals of the Catawba River at Lansford Canal State Park is an example of the rare and beautiful sights in the county.

The topography of the county, being consistent with a piedmont region, is comprised of gently rolling hills and level plains with elevations ranging from approximately 300 to 700 feet above sea level. The climate in the county is mild with distinct seasons and average temperatures ranging from 42 degrees in January to 78 degrees in July. The annual average temperature is 61 degrees. Average monthly rain fall varies from 3.1 inches to 4.77 inches with 3.91 inches being the annual average.






The county has a total surface area of 585.48 square miles of which 5.26 square miles represent surface water area. The surface water area is located primarily in the Catawba and Broad rivers along with the county's lakes.

Chester County is entering a time of great change. Over the twenty year life of this plan many unattained and previously unachievable goals will be realized. The county is currently on the fringes of one of the fastest growing regions (the Charlotte Metropolitan region) in the country but will in time become part of the main stream of the region due to its accessibility, land availability and quality of life factors (see Map 1).

Great change is coming and the future looks promising.



Legend

-  Interstate
-  US / SC Highways
-  Secondary Roads
-  Water
-  Municipal Boundaries

Map 1 Chester County County Map

Map Produced By:
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Catawba Regional COG disclaims any responsibility for damages or liability that may arise from the use of this map. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.

POPULATION ELEMENT

POPULATION TRENDS

Chester County has experienced positive growth trends over the past several decades. The County's population grew from 30,148 to 32,170 between 1980 and 1990 exhibiting a 6.7 percent increase. For the decade between 1990 and 2000, the population grew an additional 5.9 percent. The 2000 Census reports a county population of 34,068. This relatively stable growth rate is positive. Neighboring counties such as York and Lancaster are growing at a more rapid rate, while Fairfield County experienced modest growth and Union County actually lost population in the decade between 1990 and 2000.

There are ten Census Tracts in the county. The three tracts in and around Chester and the tract which includes Great Falls all lost population in the ten-year period. Tract 208, which includes the Edgemoor and Fort Lawn areas, had the highest rate of growth. This tract grew by almost 31 percent. The northeast section of the County, which includes this tract, is being influenced by growth from the Rock Hill and Lancaster areas. The tracts in the central area of the County, including the areas around Richburg and Lowrys, experienced population growth of around 10 to 15 percent. Other areas grew less than 10 percent.

While the County as a whole has had consistent growth over the past twenty years, some of the municipalities have lost population. Chester, Great Falls, and Lowrys all have a lower population in 2000 than they had in 1980. Chester experienced limited growth between 1980 and 1990, but lost almost 10 percent of its population between 1990 and 2000. The population of Great Falls has declined consistently. Great Falls lost much of its employment base in the early 1980s when the three textile mills in the Town closed. Municipalities in South Carolina have difficulties extending their boundaries because of the state's restrictive annexation laws. While much of the new growth is occurring outside the municipalities, the older areas within the city limits are often declining. Fort Lawn is the only municipality in the County which has experienced consistent growth, increasing by over 83 percent over the twenty year period.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics such as age and race have an influence on the development of a community. This section will review several population characteristics and compare Chester County to other areas.

Trends in the age breakdown of the population in Chester County are similar to those in the region, state, and nation. The median age is gradually increasing as the population ages. The median age in Chester County increased from 33 years in 1990 to 36 years in 2000. The median age in Chester County in 2000 is slightly higher than state and national averages. In South Carolina, the median age was 35.4, and the national median was 35.3. The composition of the age groupings can have implications for human service needs, educational demands, and economic development prospects. In general, the younger age groupings in Chester County make up a smaller percentage of the population in 2000 than in 1990. The largest growth was seen in the 45 to 54 age group. This group increased by 41.7 percent, reflecting the aging of the "baby boom" generation of people born in the decade after World War II. As this generation ages in the next two decades, they will enter their retirement years and will begin to place more demands on the medical and human service systems. The school age population in Chester County increased by only 3.0 percent between 1990 and 2000, reflecting a limited increase in demand for educational facilities.

The racial composition of the population is also important. The Census requests respondents to identify their racial heritage. Persons are classified into several groupings. The white population makes up 59.9 percent of the total. Blacks or African-Americans composed 38.7 percent of the total. American Indians were 0.3 percent of the population, while Asians and others were a very small percentage. For the first time in 2000, the Census reported persons who identified themselves as being of two or more races. In Chester County, 189 people, or 0.5 percent of the total population, identified themselves as having background in two or more races.

While the American Indian, Asian, and other race groups experienced large percentage increases, these groups still represent a relatively small percentage of the total. The white population had the highest growth in absolute numbers between 1990 and 2000, growing by 1,238 persons or 6.4 percent. This has led to a slight increase in the percentage of the population which is identified as white.

The Census also identifies persons of Hispanic background. Hispanics are persons who have a Spanish-speaking background, and can be of any race. In the 2000 Census, 255 persons identified themselves as Hispanic. While this represents only 0.7 percent of the total population, the Hispanic population has increased by 50.8 percent since 1990. Chester County has not experienced the level of growth in the Hispanic population which has occurred in the more urban areas of the Carolinas. However, the increasing Hispanic population will place additional burdens on the educational system and other agencies as they attempt to deal with larger numbers of persons who do not speak English.

A final characteristic which is important is the level of mobility of the population. The 2000 Census reports that only 0.8 percent of the population, or 285 persons, were foreign born. About half of these are now naturalized citizens. Compared to other counties and cities, this is a very small proportion of foreign-born residents. The Census also measures mobility of the population by asking how many persons moved in the five years previous to the census count. In Chester County, 66 percent of the population lived in the same house in 2000 as in 1995. A total of 10,696, or 33.6 percent of the population had moved between 1995 and 2000. Of these, 6,065 had moved within Chester County, while 4,631 moved into Chester from outside the county. Of the 4,631 new residents of Chester County, most were from other counties in South Carolina, but 1,925 moved to the county from another state.

HOUSEHOLDS

The 2000 Census reported that there were 12,880 households in Chester County, an increase of 12.5 percent from 1990. Families composed 72.5 percent of the households, down from 76 percent in 1990. Of the family households, 2,402, or 18.6 percent of total households, were headed by a female householder. Just under half, or 48.8 percent, of the households in the county included a married couple. Non-family households include persons living alone and two or more unrelated people living together. The non-family households accounted for 27.5 percent of the total in 2000.

The average number of persons per household was 2.8 in 1990, and decreased to 2.62 in 2000. This decrease in household size continues a long trend which is also true on the national level.

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

The Census provides levels of education attained by all persons over 25 years of age. In all of Chester County, 67.1 percent of persons 25 and over had a high school degree or higher. This compares to 76.3 percent for South Carolina as a whole. The County trails even further in the percent of college graduates. The 9.6 percent level in the County compares to 20.4 percent in South Carolina. Educational levels for the municipalities are also shown in Table 4. Lowrys and Fort Lawn have higher levels of high school graduates than the County as a whole, and Lowrys has the highest level of college graduates.

INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

The Census Bureau questions respondents about their income levels. The responses are interpreted to give several measures of income. While the rates of inflation tend to make comparisons from one census year to the next difficult, the figures provide an opportunity to compare Chester County with other areas. Three convenient measurements for income levels are

per capita income, median household income, and median family income. In all these measurements, Chester County trails state and national averages.

Per capita income measures the total income of an area divided by the number of residents. In 2000, Chester County had a per capita income of \$14,709, significantly lower than the state and national averages. The gap between Chester County and the state is widening. In 1990, Chester County's per capita income represented 82.4 percent of the state figure. In 2000, the percentage had dropped to 78.3 percent. The median household and median family income figures represent the middle point of all households and families in the County. Again, the County trails state and national levels. The municipalities in the County generally are also lower than state and national averages for all income measurements. The one exception is the Town of Lowrys, which has the highest per capita income in the County, and which actually exceeds both state and national levels in median household and median family income. The 2000 Census reported that 5,157 people in Chester County, or 15.3 percent of the population, fall below the poverty level. This compares to a poverty rate of 14.1 in South Carolina and 12.4 nationally. The 2000 figure represents an improvement from the 16.8 percent level recorded for Chester County in 1990.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
POPULATION ELEMENT**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
Provide a safe, pleasant and environmentally sound living and working environment for the citizens of Chester County.	-To create land development patterns which promote the physical safety and well being of those living and working in the County and which blend with the natural beauty of the County.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission	Ongoing
	-To promote the development of a Technical College in the County to upgrade the job skills of the labor force.	Chester County Council Chester County Chamber of Commerce Chester County School Board York Technical College	2005
	-To promote Chester County as a site for high quality residential development.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission	Ongoing
	-To encourage clustering of new residential development in appropriate areas in order to protect open space and farmland.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission	Ongoing

HOUSING ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element details the existing housing stock in the county and provides information concerning the trends in housing available to the citizens of the county. The primary source of information is the 2000 Census. The Census provides data on housing types and occupancy and also provides limited information on housing quality. Other sources of information on housing will also be developed. Several issues related to housing are of concern. With the gradual increase in housing values, the availability of affordable housing for low and moderate income families is reduced. There are also concerns about the balance between conventional housing and manufactured housing, especially with the rapid increase in the number of manufactured houses during the 1980s and 1990s.

Included within the Housing Element are discussions of the location of the housing stock, the types of housing, the age of the units and their condition, the mix of owners and renters, and affordability of the housing stock. Because a large part of the housing stock of Chester County is located within the municipalities and because the housing market in the county is closely related, most of the discussion in this Element will be on the basis of the county as a whole, even though the Comprehensive Plan does not have jurisdiction within the municipalities.

HOUSING LOCATION

The 2000 Census reported 14,374 housing units within Chester County, an increase of 2,081 units since the 1990 Census. Of this total housing units, 12,880, or 89.6 percent were occupied. A large number of these units were located in the City of Chester and the surrounding urban area and in the other municipalities. Table 1 provides an analysis of the trends in the number of housing units in the municipalities and in the Census County Divisions from 1990 to 2000. These figures show that the number of housing units grew by 16.9 percent between 1990 and 2000 while the population grew by only 5.9 percent. This trend reflects the fact that the number of persons per household is decreasing, consistent with national trends. The number of housing units increased in all of the county's census divisions and also increased in each municipality except for Chester, where there was a very small decrease. The highest rate of growth was in the Landsford and Richburg census divisions.

Table 1

**Housing Unit Growth
1990 - 2000**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Chester County	12,293	14,374	16.9
<u>Municipalities</u>			
City of Chester	2,830	2,774	-1.9
Town of Fort Lawn	263	348	32.3
Town of Great Falls	1,011	1,041	2.9
Town of Lowrys	70	80	20.0
Town of Richburg	122	134	9.8
<u>Census County Divisions</u>			
Chester Division	7,082	7,903	11.6
Chester West Division	1,295	1,521	17.4
Great Falls Division	2,005	2,247	12.1
Landsford Division	1,334	1,950	46.2
Richburg Division	577	753	30.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

HOUSING TYPES

Housing in Chester County is predominantly of the single-family detached type. This includes conventional single family homes. In the 2000 Census, 9,549 homes, or 66.4 percent of the housing units, were in this category. The number of single-family homes in the county increased by only 3.0 percent between 1990 and 2000. Most of the growth in the county's housing stock has been in the area of manufactured homes. These increased from 2,125 in 1990 to 3,835 in 2000, an increase of 80.5 percent. This growth follows an increase of 133.8 percent in manufactured homes in the previous decade. The manufactured housing industry has made significant strides in recent years in the quality and attractiveness of their products. Prior to 1976, these homes were built with no national standards for materials and building techniques. The federal standards, enforced by HUD,

were put into place at that time. The industry now generally refers to all units built before the 1976 standards as mobile homes and units built after that time as manufactured housing. For the purposes of this plan, manufactured homes include single-wide mobile homes built before 1976, single-wide homes built since 1976 to higher standards, and double-wide and multiple section manufactured homes. The rapid growth of manufactured housing in Chester County reflects the strong need for affordable housing for many families. Manufactured homes have increased from 8.5 percent of the housing stock in 1980 to 26.7 percent in 2000. Multi-family units include duplexes, apartments, and condominiums. There are very few condominium units in Chester County. Apartments include public housing, assisted housing, and privately financed projects. The number of multi-family housing units increased slightly from 904 in 1990 to 929 in 2000, a growth rate of 2.7 percent.

In an effort to follow the housing trends in the four years since the 2000 Census was conducted, building permits issued by the Chester County Building Code Department are a helpful tool. Catawba Regional Council of Governments has developed a Building Permit Tracking System which provides a quarterly and yearly analysis of the trends in each jurisdiction in the region. Table 2 lists the number of building permits issued for single family and manufactured housing units from 2000 through September 2003.

During this period, 555 permits have been issued for new manufactured housing units, representing 57.2 percent of all new units. Permits were issued for 391 single family units, or 40.3 percent of the total. A total of 24 multi-family units were permitted during the four-year period, or about 2.5 percent of all new units. An interesting trend appears to be developing in the types of housing being permitted. Although manufactured homes still predominate in the past four years, the number of new permits for manufactured homes has declined each year. In fact, for the first three quarters of 2003, the number of permits for single family homes has exceeded that for manufactured homes. If this pattern holds true for the full year, it will represent the first time in many years that single family homes have been the predominant housing type.

The geographic distribution of housing types shows some interesting patterns. Almost 80 percent of the multi-family housing units are located in and around the City of Chester, with most of the remainder in the Town of Great Falls. These projects tend to cluster around the available water and sewer services and more urban environments. Single-family housing is distributed throughout the county.

Manufactured housing has increased most rapidly in the unincorporated areas of the county, where a broader range of land uses has traditionally been allowed. Only about 15 percent of the manufactured homes are in the municipalities, although the municipalities have about 30.5 percent of all housing units. Table 3 provides the trends from 1990 to 2000 for the location of manufactured homes in the various Census County Divisions of Chester County. These figures show that the most rapid rates of growth of manufactured homes have occurred in the Chester, Landsford, and Richburg census divisions.

Table 2

**Housing Starts
Chester County
2000 - 2003**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Manufactured Housing Units</u>	<u>Single-Family Units</u>	<u>Total*</u>
2000	205	90	297
2001	165	123	288
2002	109	97	228
2003 (through September 30)	<u>76</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>157</u>
Total	555	391	970

* Yearly totals include 24 units of multi-family housing.

Source: Chester County Building and Zoning Department.
Figures include the City of Chester.

Table 3

**Manufactured Housing
1990 - 2000**

<u>County Division</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Chester Division	983	1,782	81.3
Chester West Division	327	553	69.1
Great Falls Division	275	456	65.8
Landsford Division	430	844	96.3
Richburg Division	<u>110</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>81.8</u>
Chester County Totals	2,125	3,835	80.5

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

AGE OF HOUSING

The 2000 Census recorded the age of all housing units, as reported by owners of the properties. Because the growth of the county has been moderate in recent decades, the county's housing stock is relatively old. Of the total 14,374 housing units in the county, 2,052 or 14.3 percent were built prior to 1939. At the state level, only 6.1 percent of the housing stock was built prior to 1939. Table 4 provides a summary of the age of housing in Chester County. The figures for housing units built since 2000 is from the Chester County Building Inspection Office. These figures indicate that the rate of growth in housing units since 2000, if continued for the rest of the decade, would represent about 2,500 new units, slightly less than the decade of the 1990s.

Table 4

**Age of Housing
from 2000 Census**

<u>Period of Construction</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>
Prior to 1939	2,052
1940 - 1959	2,864
1960 - 1969	1,827
1970 - 1979	2,629
1980 - 1989	1,966
1990 - March 2000	3,036

**From Chester County Inspections Reports
Housing Starts**

2000	297
2001	288
2002	228
2003 (through September 30)	157
Total reported by County (2000-2003)	970

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census and Chester County

HOUSING CONDITIONS

Information concerning the structural condition of housing is not available from the U. S. Census reports. However, the Census does report on several areas which relate to the condition of housing. In 2000, it was reported that 107 housing units, or 0.8 percent of the total, lack complete kitchen facilities. In addition, 93 housing units, or 0.7 percent of the total, lack complete plumbing facilities. In both of these measurements, the county has slightly higher levels of units lacking facilities than the state as a whole. The rates also are higher than all surrounding counties except for Fairfield County. The county

has made substantial progress in upgrading the housing stock in recent years, however. The number of housing units lacking complete plumbing declined by almost 24 percent between 1990 and 2000. Another measurement of housing problems from the U. S. Census is overcrowding. The Census defines a household with more than one person per room as being overcrowded. In 1990, the Census reported that 5.8 percent of the households in Chester County had more than one person per room. The percentage declined to 4.4 percent in 2000. This is higher than the state average of 3.3 percent of households.

The Census reports do not provide data on the physical condition of the housing units. In 1989, Catawba Regional Planning Council undertook a land use inventory of the unincorporated areas of Chester County. As part of this inventory, a judgement was made on the structural integrity of each housing unit. Although this method has limitations because it did not involve complete house inspections, it is one of the few sources of information available on housing conditions. Each house was categorized on the basis of its visible exterior condition. Three categories were selected:

Standard: The structure was structurally sound and provided safe and decent housing. The need for minor repairs was disregarded.

Deteriorating: The structure was habitable but some structural defects were visible from an exterior view. These defects might include missing or rotted roof shingles, missing or rotted siding, cracked or missing masonry in chimneys or foundations, sagging roof members or porches, or a lack of enclosed supports for living quarters.

Dilapidated: The structure suffered such serious deficiencies as to be considered beyond repair, considering the cost and the potential value of the house. Defects might include partial collapse of walls, roofs, chimneys, or foundations. Most houses classified as dilapidated were vacant and appeared to be abandoned. However, some were occupied.

Table 5 provides a summary of the findings of this survey. These figures apply only to conventional single family homes and only to the unincorporated areas of the county. The figures are presented by

Census County Division. The survey reported that about 5.6 percent of the single family houses were classed as deteriorating and about 1.1 percent as dilapidated. If complete housing inspections were done, including interior problems, the figures would likely be much higher. The survey, along with the Census measurements of housing conditions, reveal that there are definite problems with the housing stock in the county which need to be addressed to provide adequate housing for all residents.

Table 5

**Housing Conditions
Survey Conducted 1989**

Unincorporated Areas of Chester County

<u>Census County Division</u>	Single-Family Houses		
	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Deteriorating</u>	<u>Dilapidated</u>
Chester Division	2,711	153	27
Chester West Division	888	72	7
Richburg Division	332	16	3
Landsford Division	659	23	16
Great Falls Division	<u>679</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>4</u>
*Total	5,269	297	57

*Unincorporated areas only.

Source: Catawba Regional Council of Governments.

OWNER AND RENTER STATUS OF HOUSING

Traditionally, the United States has had one of the world's highest levels of home ownership. This has been especially true in more rural areas such as Chester County. The 2000 Census reported that, of the total 12,880 occupied housing units in the county, 10,093 or 78.4 percent were owner-occupied. A total of 2,787 units, or 21.6 percent, were renter-occupied. The percentage of home ownership in the county is higher than South Carolina (72.2 percent) and substantially higher than the United States (66.2 percent). During the period between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of owner-occupied units increased slightly in the county. The more urban areas of the county tend to have higher levels of rental housing. The City of Chester in 2000 had a home ownership rate of only 60.4 percent, significantly less than the county as a whole. The patterns of home ownership and rental status are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

**Ownership Patterns
All Housing Units
2000**

	<u>Owner Occupied Units</u>	<u>Renter Occupied Units</u>
<u>Chester County</u>	10,093	2,787
<u>Municipalities</u>		
Chester	1,489	976
Fort Lawn	267	59
Great Falls	632	260
Lowrys	67	9
Richburg	108	14

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The housing market in Chester County provides housing units in a number of price ranges. The 2000 Census provides information on the financial characteristics of housing. There are several limitations in using these numbers. First, because of inflation since the 2000 Census, these figures are somewhat out of date in relation to the present market. In addition, these housing value figures are based on answers provided by the owners and renters of housing themselves and are subject to inaccuracies. Nevertheless, they are an important means of comparing Chester County with other areas. Table 7 provides an analysis of the median value of owner occupied housing. Chester County's median house value in 2000 was \$62,800. This is one of the lowest figures among counties in the region. It compares with values of \$119,600 in York County, \$94,900 in South Carolina, and \$119,600 in the United States. For rental properties, the median contract rent in Chester County in 2000 was \$409 per month. This compares with \$581 in York County, \$510 in South Carolina, and \$602 in the United States. Within Chester County, the median housing values vary considerably, with the highest values being in the Landsford and Richburg Census County Divisions, reflecting the construction of new single-family subdivision homes in those areas.

Table 7

**Median Housing Values and Rents
2000**

	<u>Median Housing Value</u>	<u>Median Contract Rent</u>
Chester County	\$62,800	\$409
County Census Divisions:		
Chester Division	63,700	405
Chester West Division	62,400	395
Great Falls Division	44,600	411
Landsford Division	78,000	468
Richburg Division	99,500	388
Municipalities:		
Chester	62,400	400
Fort Lawn	67,200	456
Great Falls	32,300	415
Lowrys	83,800	525
Richburg	44,600	725
	<u>Median Housing Value</u>	<u>Median Contract Rent</u>
Other Areas:		
York County	\$119,600	\$581
Lancaster County	77,100	427
South Carolina	94,900	510
United States	119,600	602

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 8 provides an analysis of the number of owner-occupied housing units in various value ranges, based on 2000 Census data.

Table 8
Owner-Occupied Housing Units
Housing Values
2000

Housing Units Value	Less than <u>\$50,000</u>	\$50,000 to <u>\$99,999</u>	\$100,000 to <u>\$149,999</u>	Over <u>\$150,000</u>
Chester County	2,145	2,923	731	401
County Census Division:				
Chester Division	1,120	1,799	396	176
Chester West Division	214	244	75	32
Great Falls Division	601	428	53	19
Landsford Division	146	355	131	92
Richburg Division	64	97	76	82
Municipalities:				
Chester	413	659	118	75
Fort Lawn	36	83	18	2
Great Falls	439	133	23	-
Lowrys	10	38	2	-
Richburg	36	20	3	-

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census.

In considering the affordability of housing, the housing values should be compared with income levels to determine what proportion of the population can afford the average house. In Chester County, the median household income of \$32,425 is 51.6 percent of the median housing value. This compares

favorably with York County (37.2 percent), South Carolina (39.0 percent), and the United States (35.1 percent). In theory, a greater percentage of the population of the county should be able to afford housing than in the other areas cited. For those families unable to afford housing on the open market, housing assistance is available from a number of sources. The Chester Housing Authority operates public housing projects in the City of Chester. Several assisted housing projects have been constructed using Farmers Home Administration and other financing. In addition, the Rock Hill Housing Authority operates public housing in the Great Falls area. The City of Chester and Chester County have received grants in recent years to undertake housing rehabilitation projects. These grants were developed using Community Development Block Grant funds and financing from the State Housing Finance and Development Authority. Although these resources are available, a number of families in Chester County lack adequate housing. The increase in the number of manufactured housing units in recent decades is a direct result of the inability of many families to afford any other housing alternative.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
HOUSING ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
Provide suitable land for quality residential development convenient to needed services.	-Identify prime areas for residential growth.	Chester County Planning Commission and County Council	Ongoing
	- Extend needed infrastructure to growth areas to allow for all types of residential development.	Chester Metropolitan/ Chester Sewer District and Chester County Natural Gas Authority	Ongoing
Provide for affordable housing of various types for persons of all income levels.	-To provide incentives to developers to construct different housing types.	Chester County Council and City Councils	Ongoing
	-To track new residential development and population growth in order to determine housing needs.	Chester County Building Official Chester County Planning Commission and Catawba Regional COG	Ongoing
Utilize available government housing improvement programs to rehabilitate existing housing and to provide lower cost new housing.	-Identify and utilize available government housing funds.	Chester County Council, City Councils, Catawba Regional COG	Ongoing
	-Continue rehabilitation of older housing stock.	Chester County Council, City Councils, Catawba Regional COG	Ongoing
Encourage affordable multi-family development.	-Reserve land with needed infrastructure.	Chester County Planning Commission and Chester County Council	2005
	-Provide density incentives to develop multi-family housing.	Chester County Council and City Councils	Ongoing
Require that manufactured homes be set up so they can be taxed as real property.	-Within state guidelines, aggressively pursue taxing mobile homes as real property.	Chester County Tax Assessor Chester County Council	Ongoing

COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Community Facilities Element describes the infrastructure which is in place to support the growth and development of the county. Areas considered include the transportation network, public utilities, solid waste, public safety services, the educational system, cultural facilities, and general government facilities. This element describes essential government services which are necessary for the future development of Chester County. The goals and objectives in this section will reflect improvements in the county's public facilities which are needed to accommodate growth.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Chester County is served by a varied system of highways. Interstate 77 passes through the eastern section of the county on a north-south route, connecting Charlotte and Columbia. I-77 has become a major route for connecting the Midwestern states with the southern coast and Florida. The presence of I-77 has provided improved access to larger urban areas and has encouraged extensive commercial, industrial, and distribution development in the vicinity of the intersection with S. C. 9. There are three interchanges along I-77 in Chester County (S. C. 9, road 56, and S. C. 97) which provide good access to the interstate from the Richburg-Edgemoor, Chester, Fort Lawn, and Great Falls areas.

Interstate 77 carries a heavy traffic load. The most recent figures available from the S. C. Department of Transportation (DOT) are for the year 2002. During the year, average daily traffic volume on Interstate 77 ranged from 30,300 near the Fairfield County line to 34,600 near the York County line. Volumes increased by about one-third between 1994 and 2002. I-77 has an important role to play in the future as both a transportation facility and a major economic development asset.

There are two U. S. highways in the county. U. S. 321 is a north-south route which connects the Gastonia, N. C. area and the Columbia area. It passes through Lowrys and Chester in the center of the county. There is a business route through the center of Chester and a bypass around the south side of the city. Most of the highway is a two-lane facility, but there is a seven-mile

segment of four-lane highway on 321 to the south of Chester, and the bypass around Chester has four lanes. Traffic volumes vary widely on U. S. 321. Volumes of over 8,900 vehicles per day are experienced on the bypass and up to 7,700 on the business route in downtown Chester. Volumes are reduced to near 3,200 vehicles per day at the York County line and about 1,850 at the Fairfield County line. Another north-south route is U. S. 21 which passes through the eastern edge of the county. The function of U. S. 21 as a major traffic route has largely been taken over by I-77, and the road now provides mostly local service. The two-lane facility still provides important service as it connects the Fort Lawn and Great Falls areas with Rock Hill to the north and the Columbia area to the south. Traffic volumes on U. S. 21 range from 2,100 vehicles per day in the Fishing Creek Lake area to 9,700 per day in Great Falls.

Several South Carolina primary routes are located in the county. The most important is S. C. 9. This highway provides the major east-west route across the county. An extensive construction project was completed in mid-2004 to widen S. C. 9 between Chester and the Richburg area. This route now has four lanes from Lancaster to Chester, a distance of over 30 miles. There is also a four-lane section near the Baton Rouge community west of Chester. The route connects Fort Lawn on the eastern side of the county with the Richburg area, then passes through Chester and enters Union County at Lockhart. To the east, the road connects with Lancaster and eventually the Myrtle Beach-Grand Strand area. To the west, it connects with the Spartanburg area. The importance of S. C. 9 has been enhanced by the development of a major interchange at I-77 and the improvements to the route from the Spartanburg area all the way to the coast. Traffic volumes range from a low of 2,600 vehicles per day in the western part of the county to a high of 17,500 around the Chester Bypass. The area around the I-77 interchange has about 10,600 vehicles per day, and the section between Fort Lawn and the Lancaster County line has a volume of 13,200 vehicles per day.

A second east-west route through the county is S.C. 97. It enters the county just above Great Falls, crosses I-77 with an interchange, passes through Chester, and exits the county in the northwest corner. It connects with the Camden area to the east and with the western portions of

York County to the west. Traffic volumes range from 7,400 vehicles per day just east of Chester to 400 per day near the York County line.

South Carolina Route 72/121 is a major state highway passing diagonally through the county. It connects Rock Hill to the northeast with the western part of South Carolina, including the Greenwood area. Traffic counts reach a peak of 6,800 vehicles per day in the Chester area and average between 3,100 and 4,100 through the county. Other state routes in the county include S. C. 909, which connects the Lowrys area to the Richburg area, S. C. 99, which runs north-south from S. C. 9 to the Great Falls area, and S. C. 901, which traverses the county from north to south, generally parallel to I-77. S.C. 901 connects the Edgemoor, Lando, and Richburg areas with the Rock Hill area to the north. Short sections of other state highways pass through the county, including S. C. 49 in the northwest corner of the county, S. C. 215 in the southwest corner, and S. C. 200 through the Great Falls area.

Chester County also is served by an extensive system of local roads, most of which are maintained by S. C. DOT. The county maintains some unpaved roads, and the City of Chester maintains some of the streets within the municipality.

The South Carolina DOT develops a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to guide the construction of new highways and improvements to existing routes. The recently completed widening projects on S. C. 9, which involved a total of 15.17 miles of road improvements, were the major system upgrades planned for Chester County through 2007. There are no additional road projects within the county listed within the STIP plan at this time. The plan is updated yearly, and local governments within the Catawba Region have input into the planning process.

Rail service is provided to the county on three systems. The development of the rail system in the last century was an important element in the industrialization and urbanization of some areas of the county. All the rail service in the county is currently for freight traffic. The CSX system has a major line which traverses the county from northeast to southwest. This line connects the

Monroe, N. C. area with western South Carolina, and passes through Chester. The Norfolk Southern system has a main line which enters the county from the south from Columbia and passes through Chester, connecting it with Rock Hill and Charlotte to the north. This line, completed in 1852, was one of the first in the Piedmont, and led to the development of Chester as a major market town for the agricultural products of the county. A third system is the Lancaster and Chester Railroad, a short line developed originally to provide service to the Springs Industries mills. It now also serves a variety of other industries. This line passes through Fort Lawn and Richburg and terminates in Chester.

General aviation service is provided to the area at the Chester County Airport, located in the north central section of the county just east of the Town of Lowrys. This facility, which was originally constructed during World War II as a training facility, has two active runways of 5,000 feet. The airport has a terminal building, a taxiway, and some lighted runways. The Chester County Airport provides excellent facilities for small aircraft and corporate jets. Other nearby general aviation facilities include Bryant Field in Rock Hill and the Lancaster County Airport, located just east of Fort Lawn across the Catawba River. The Charlotte Douglas International Airport in Charlotte is one of the nation's most active major airports. It provides excellent access from Chester County to flights to all parts of the nation and a number of direct international flights. The Columbia Metropolitan Airport is also a major facility within easy distance.

There is no local public transportation system. A number of human service agencies provide transportation for their clients to services in Chester and Rock Hill. Catawba Regional Council of Governments and the York County Council on Aging are both working together to develop plans for public transportation services.

WATER SUPPLY, TREATMENT AND DISTRIBUTION

Public water service in Chester County is provided by the Chester Metropolitan District, a public service district created in the 1960s to consolidate water supply in the county. The District operates a water treatment facility on the Catawba River just south of the S. C. 9 bridge. This

facility, with a capacity of 7.2 million gallons per day (mgd), has been upgraded several times since its construction and is currently averaging a production of 2.796 mgd in treated water. Treated water is piped along S. C. 9 west to the Chester area. Water distribution is provided to the Fort Lawn, Great Falls, Richburg, Lando, and Chester areas. Service is provided to all major industrial areas and most of the densely developed residential areas. Most of the rural areas of the county, including the western and southern sections, have no public water service. The Chester Metropolitan District had 6,369 water service customers as of April 2004.

SEWAGE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT

Sewage collection and treatment is provided by three systems in Chester County. The Chester Sewer District provides service in the Chester and Richburg-Lando areas and operates three treatment facilities. The Town of Great Falls also operates a treatment facility to serve its collection system, while the Town of Fort Lawn operates a collection system which is served by a Springs Industries treatment plant.

The Chester Sewer District was created to provide sewage collection and treatment in the Chester area. In the 1980s, it expanded its service area to include the sections of the county around Richburg, Lando, and the I-77 S. C. 9 interchange. In the Chester area, the District provides collection services to the city and the nearby built up areas, including residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. This area is served by two sewage treatment facilities. The Sandy River plant, located west of Chester, has a permitted capacity of 2.133 million gallons per day (mgd). The Rocky Creek plant, located east of Chester, has a permitted capacity of 1.36 mgd. Both of these treatment facilities have been improved in recent years to meet increasing water quality standards. The Chester Sewer District had 4,660 customers as of April 2004.

In the 1980s, soon after the construction of I-77, it was realized that public sewage service was needed near the I-77 - S. C. 9 interchange to enhance the development potential of this area. The Town of Richburg also needed public sewage service because of malfunctioning septic tanks, and the S. C. DOT was seeking public service for its planned I-77 rest areas. Through a series of

grants, a collection system was created which provides service to the Town of Richburg, the village of Lando, the rest areas on I-77, and the industrial and commercial areas surrounding Richburg. The Manetta Mills treatment facility, located east of Lando on Fishing Creek, was donated to the Chester Sewer District. This facility has since been upgraded several times and has a permitted capacity of 0.5 mgd. The District is currently developing plans to expand the capacity of this plant to 1.0 mgd to meet the growing demand from industries, business, and residences in the Richburg area.

The Town of Fort Lawn operates a sewage collection system for residents of the town. The sewage is treated by Springs Industries in a nearby industrial treatment facility. Springs has notified the Town that this arrangement will be terminated. The Town of Fort Lawn is assessing various treatment options, including construction of sewer mains to connect the system to an existing public service provider. The Town of Great Falls also operates a collection system for sewage. Service is provided to most of the residents of the town and a few areas outside the town limits. Great Falls also provides service to an area south of the town in Fairfield County. Great Falls has 969 residential and 104 commercial sewer service customers. The town operates a wastewater treatment facility on the Catawba River with a permitted capacity of 1.4 mgd. Because this facility was built to serve large industrial users which no longer exist, the town has excess capacity in its treatment plant.

There is no public sewage service to large areas of the county which are rural in nature or which have a low density of development. As the county continues to develop, investments in new collection lines and expanded treatment capacity will be required.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE

Chester County is provided with natural gas service by the Chester County Natural Gas Authority. The Authority currently provides service to a total of 7,777 customers. These include 6,911 residential, 846 commercial, and 31 industrial customers. Service is available in all four of the county's municipalities, and in large sections of the county, including areas west and north of Chester, in the Edgemoor and Lando areas, and in most of the eastern fringe of the county along

U. S. 21. Service is also available at all three interchanges on I-77 within the county. The system has experienced substantial growth over the past few years, both as the result of new customers in the existing service areas and the aggressive extension of lines to new areas. The Authority has also taken a leadership role in efforts to enhance the economic development opportunities within the county. Executive Director Mike Enoch of the Authority serves as Chairman of the Chester Development Association.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Major changes have occurred in the past few years in the operation of municipal solid waste collection systems as a result of the South Carolina Policy and Management Act of 1991. This act required counties to develop Solid Waste Management Plans, to adopt ambitious goals for waste reduction and recycling, and to change the way they dispose of solid waste. A number of items were banned from landfills, and the standards for landfill operation were significantly strengthened. As a result of the Act, Chester County participated in the development of the Catawba Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. As part of this planning process, Chester County determined that it did not have sufficient volume to justify the operation of a landfill under the new standards. The landfill was closed in the spring of 1994 and replaced with a transfer station. Waste is brought to the transfer station from the county's collection system and by municipalities and private haulers. At the station, the waste is compacted and then hauled to a private landfill in the Columbia area.

The county has shifted its method of solid waste collection to a system of recycling centers, which combine garbage collection with convenient opportunities for recycling. A system of ten recycling centers has been constructed, located in various areas of the county. The recycling centers are manned and provide receptacles for newspaper, aluminum, plastic, glass, used oil, batteries, corrugated paper, and white goods. Recyclables are marketed to various vendors, allowing the county to recoup some of the cost of collection.

The City of Chester and the Town of Great Falls both operate curbside garbage collection services. Chester collects from about 2,400 residences and also provides containers for small

businesses. The Town of Great Falls provides collection services to 886 residences. The solid waste collected in the two communities is taken to the Chester County transfer station for disposal at a private landfill. The municipalities also provide collection of bulky items and yard waste.

FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

The Chester Fire District is a public service district which serves an area in and around the City of Chester. The fire district is supported by a tax mileage approved by County Council. The fire station is located on Columbia Avenue near the center of Chester and has a paid staff.

Chester County also supports a county-wide system of volunteer fire departments. Some of the towns also provide support for the fire departments in their communities. Two departments are located in the western sections of the county, two in the southern section, and additional stations are located in Lowrys, Lando, Richburg, Fort Lawn, and Great Falls. The volunteer fire departments rely to a large extent on the support of local citizens who provide time and financial support for fire protection.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The county operates an ambulance system to provide emergency medical service to all citizens of Chester County. Transport is provided to the Chester County Hospital or larger medical facilities in Rock Hill, Charlotte, or Columbia. There are seven primary ambulances and three back-up vehicles. The ambulance service has three substations, one each in Chester, Richburg, and Great Falls. The system averages approximately 5,000 emergency calls per year. The system also includes a mass casualty response trailer facility. Chester County has an E-911 calling system with enhanced emergency response capability.

The Chester County Hospital is located on S. C. 97 to the east of Chester. This modern facility has been expanded and improved in recent years. The facility has 82 hospital beds and 100 long-term care beds. The hospital board is currently discussing an agreement with a national hospital management company to assume operations of the facility.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

The Chester County government is centered in the Chester County Courthouse, completed in 1855 in downtown Chester on the site of previous courthouse buildings. An addition has made the building accessible to persons with disabilities. The Courthouse houses the judicial functions and county administrative offices. Adjacent to the Courthouse is the War Memorial Building, which houses some county offices and meeting spaces. This building recently underwent a major upgrade. The county has also expanded into the former post office and federal building at the corner of Main Street and Wylie Street. This building now also houses county offices. The Law Enforcement Center on Dawson Drive houses the Sheriff's office and a new county detention facility.

The City of Chester's City Hall was completed in 1891 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Located at the corner of Columbia Avenue and West End, the building originally had an opera house on the upper floor. The city also has a public works office and garage on College Street. There are town halls in Lowrys, Richburg, Fort Lawn, and Great Falls.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Chester County has one public school district which serves the entire county. School facilities are located in Chester, Richburg, and Great Falls. In the Chester area, the Chester Park facility is a modern consolidated education complex on S. C. 9 east which includes primary and intermediate schools as well as a year-round school program. The Chester Middle School is in an adjacent building on McCandless Road. The Chester Senior High School and the district Vocational School are located on the Chester Bypass. The Lewisville Elementary, Middle and High Schools are located in the Richburg area on S. C. 9. In Great Falls, the Elementary School is located on Dearborn Avenue, while the Middle School and High School are located west of the town on Sunset Drive.

Several churches in the county operate private school programs which range from pre-school programs to full K-12 programs.

York Technical College, whose main campus is in Rock Hill, has opened a satellite operation in Chester. A concerted effort is currently underway to raise funds for a permanent building to house this operation. The presence of post-high school technical and vocational training opportunities in Chester will be a positive factor in economic development efforts. York Tech can also offer entry courses to allow students to begin work toward a wide variety of associate degrees. The main campus of York TECH in Rock Hill is within commuting distance so that students can continue their work there. Several additional colleges and universities are located close by. Winthrop University, also in Rock Hill, is a state supported institution with a wide range of graduate and undergraduate programs. Also nearby are the Lancaster and Union campuses of the University of South Carolina. These two-year schools provide associate degree programs and entry into higher levels of the university system. Clinton Junior College in Rock Hill is an accredited two-year school and is conveniently located on the south side of Rock Hill.

LIBRARIES

Chester County operates a public library system which has a main library in downtown Chester, branches in the Great Falls and Richburg areas, and a bookmobile service which visits other areas of the county. The staff of 16 provides a variety of library services to the community. The library maintains records of service levels. The most recent twelve month period for these records ended on June 30, 2003. During 2002/03 fiscal year, the library system had a total circulation of 105,745 items for adults and children. The library provided 232 programs, such as story times and other programs for children and adults. Over 2,400 people attended these programs. In addition, there were over 15,000 uses of the dial-a-story program. For the 1003 summer reading program, 290 children completed their reading logs. The library's meeting rooms provided space for 650 meetings of various public and community groups, with 6,000 in attendance. The main library in Chester was opened in 1985 and provides excellent facilities for the programs. The Richburg branch was completed in the 1990s, while the Great Falls branch is much older. As the county grows, additional facilities may be needed to provide the services to the expanding population.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
GOALS: UTILITIES			
Extension of utility lines to areas targeted for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify prime areas of industrial, commercial, residential growth. -Identify funds available for utility extensions. -Prioritize projects based on costs and benefits. 	Chester County Planning Commission Chester Metropolitan District Chester Co. Natural Gas Auth. Catawba Regional COG Chester County Council	Ongoing
Provide adequate water and sewer treatment capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monitor DHEC permitting requirements. -Monitor capacity utilization to determine future needs. -Secure funding for needed expansions/ improvements. 	Chester Metropolitan District Chester Sewer District SC DHEC Catawba Regional COG	Ongoing
Pursue alternative funding methods for infrastructure improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monitor available federal and state funding sources. -Identify available funding from internal operations and borrowing power. 	Chester Metropolitan District Chester Sewer District Chester County Catawba Regional COG	Ongoing
GOALS: HEALTH CARE			
Identify additional health care services needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Monitor population growth and hospital usage. -Monitor changing health care system requirements. 	Chester County	Ongoing
EMS Service expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Study EMS usage to determine if additional sub-stations are needed. -Upgrade training of EMS personnel. -Maintain adequate vehicles -Expand and upgrade the Chester EMS facility 	Chester County	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing 2010

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
GOAL: HEALTH CARE			
Attract more physicians and expand services.	-Provide information package for potential physicians. -Support continued expansion of services and facilities at the hospital.	Chester County Chester County Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing Ongoing
GOAL: PUBLIC SAFETY			
Adequate staffing for all police departments; community officers' programs.	-Hire additional officers for community policing. -Investigate the potential of consolidation of government services.	Chester County Sheriff's Department Municipal Police Departments Chester County Council	Ongoing
GOAL: PUBLIC EDUCATION			
Support educational enrichment.	-Support the provision of adequate school facilities. -Support adequate funding of public school operations and equipment. -Support the development of enhanced educational standards.	Chester County School Board	Ongoing
GOAL: RECREATION			
Provide improved recreational opportunities for the citizens of Chester County.	-To promote the development of more recreational facilities in the rural areas and community centers in Chester, Great Falls and the Lewisville area.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission Area Municipalities	2005-2010

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
GOAL: RECREATION (continued)	-To promote the development of family oriented recreational facilities such as bowling alleys, skating rinks and community swimming pools.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission Chester County Chamber of Commerce Area Municipalities	Ongoing
GOALS: SOLID WASTE			
Landfill arrangements.	-Study future needs for solid waste disposal. -Consider a regional landfill compact with other counties.	Chester County Catawba Regional COG SC DHEC	Ongoing
Expand recycling program.	-Provide curb-side pickup of recyclables where feasible. -Develop educational program to encourage public participation. -Support continued expansion of sites and hours for Chester County's convenience center system.	Chester County Municipalities Chester County	Ongoing Ongoing
Encourage purchase of recycled products.	-Develop policies and procedures for identifying purchasing opportunities. -Develop joint city-county purchasing program for recycled products.	Chester County and its Municipalities	Ongoing
Alternative use of landfill by-products.	-Undertake feasibility study for by-product use, if appropriate. -Develop plan for potential use options. -Seek funding for implementation.	Chester County Chester County Solid Waste Advisory Council SC DHEC	Ongoing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Element describes the existing economy of Chester County. Information included in this element ranges from a general description of the economic base of the county to an analysis of employment characteristics, industries, and commuting patterns. Chester County has suffered from high unemployment for a number of years. The efforts of local government and economic development officials to develop a more balanced economy and employment pattern are of great importance to the future of the county and its citizens.

ECONOMIC BASE

Chester County's economy was based largely on agriculture until the late 1800s. The development of the textile industry transformed the county's economy and its landscape. Textile mills and villages spread across the landscape in the eastern and central portions of the county, with mill complexes in Chester, Fort Lawn, Great Falls, and Lando. The textile industry provided stable employment for several generations of Chester County residents. Most of the mills continued operating through the Depression, providing a safety net of employment for many. The companies included Springs Industries in Chester and Fort Lawn, J. P. Stevens in Great Falls, and Manetta Mills in Lando. As late as 1960, 89.5 percent of all manufacturing employment in Chester County was in the textile and fabric industry. This level of reliance on one industry was dangerous, and by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the textile industry began a decline which has kept the unemployment rate above state averages for many years.

The need to update century-old facilities and the threat of foreign competition from low-wage countries has led to a major restructuring in the textile industry. The Town of Great Falls was rocked in the early 1980s when all three of its textile mills closed. Mill closings and restructurings continued through the 1990s. By 1990, employment in the textile industry had declined by over 1,100 workers and the industry accounted for 53.1 percent of manufacturing jobs. Employment in textiles continues to decline in the current economic environment.

The changes taking place in the county's economy have led to significant levels of unemployment over the past two decades. Beginning with the recession of the early 1980s, which coincided with the initial declines in the textile industry, Chester County has had significantly higher rates of unemployment than the state average and the surrounding counties. Rates of unemployment since 1980 are shown in Table 9. The unemployment level for December 2003 was 13.3 percent, as reported by the South Carolina Employment Security Commission.

In response to these economic problems, Chester County has made strong efforts to diversify the employment base and to attract new businesses and industries. These efforts have been shared by the County Council, the Chester County Chamber of Commerce, the municipalities, utility providers, and private developers. Recently, a renewed Chester County Economic Development program was created to spearhead the efforts to enhance the economic growth of the county. The efforts of the county are supported by the State Department of Commerce and membership in regional economic development groups. Catawba Regional Council of Governments maintains eligibility for participation in federal economic development grant programs and operates a business loan program. Each of these entities has an important part to play in the process of creating a healthier climate for economic growth. Positive factors include the presence of I-77 in the eastern part of the county; an excellent system of water and sewer service lines, natural gas, rail, and other services; extensive land available and zoned for industrial development; and the county's location near the growing Charlotte-Rock Hill urban areas.

The Chester County Economic Development Office reports that several industries have expanded or created new jobs in recent months. These include Philips Products, Superior Essex, Allvac, Guardian Industries, and OutaKumpa fka Avesta. These industries represent a trend toward greater diversification and employment over a broad range of industries. A healthy diversification of employment will help to prevent major dislocations in the future such as occurred with the decline of the textile industry.

TABLE 9
Unemployment Rates
Chester, Lancaster and York Counties, SC
1980 – 2003

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CHESTER</u>	<u>LANCASTER</u>	<u>YORK</u>	<u>STATE</u>
1980	8.7	7.8	7.4	6.9
1981	10.4	7.3	8.5	8.4
1982	16.7	14.8	11.2	10.8
1983	13.3	12.8	9.4	10.1
1984	13.5	8.4	7.1	7.1
1985	12.5	9.1	6.1	6.8
1986	9.6	8.4	5.2	6.2
1987	8.2	7.1	5.1	5.6
1988	6.9	5.8	3.6	4.5
1989	7.4	5.7	4.5	4.7
1990	9.8	6.1	3.8	4.7
1991	13.4	8.7	5.5	6.2
1992	11.3	9.0	6.0	6.3
1993	12.3	9.2	6.0	7.5
1994	10.5	7.7	5.0	6.3
1995	9.3	5.8	3.6	5.1
1996	10.5	6.5	5.3	6.0
1997	9.1	5.3	4.1	4.5
1998	9.0	4.7	3.7	3.8
1999	9.1	4.2	4.1	4.5
2000	7.1	3.9	3.5	3.7
2001	9.4	5.4	4.5	4.8
2002	12.1	6.7	6.4	5.7
2003	12.8	9.6	7.7	6.4

Source: SC Employment Security Commission.

Note: 2003 figures are preliminary.

Table 10 lists the top fifteen employers in Chester County in early 2004. While Springs Industries, the dominant textile company, still leads the list, there are few textile related companies left, and the major employers represent a diversified grouping of government and industry.

TABLE 10
MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN CHESTER COUNTY
2004

Springs Industries, Inc.
Chester County School District
Chester County Hospital and Nursing Center
F. Schumacher and Company
Willamette Industries, Inc.
Guardian Industries Corporation
Chester County
Owens Corning
Superior Essex
United Contractors, Inc.
Haddon House Food Products, Inc.
Omnova Solutions
Thyssen, Inc.
Philips Products, Inc.
Carolina Cargo

Source: South Carolina Employment Security Commission.

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Employment statistics are available from two sources, the South Carolina Employment Security Commission (SCESC) and the U. S. Bureau of the Census. The Employment Security Commission secures its information directly from employers. It can provide information on employment which is offered by companies located in Chester County. The Census Bureau bases its data on responses by residents of the county. They may be employed within the county or may work outside. Therefore, the Census Bureau data reflect employment by residence, not by the location of the jobs themselves.

Table 11 provides Census Bureau figures for 1990 and 2000 of occupation by industry of persons living in Chester County. The comparisons from 1990 to 2000 help to provide a picture of the changing patterns of the occupations held by county residents.

TABLE 11
Occupation By Industry
Persons 16 Year and Older
Chester County
1990 and 2000

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Employed Persons</u>		<u>Percent Change</u>
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	
Agriculture, forestry, mining	327	198	-39.0
Construction	901	1,169	29.7
Manufacturing	6,082	4,746	-21.9
Wholesale trade	402	655	62.9
Retail trade	1,880	1,494	-20.5
Transportation, utilities	877	763	-13.0
Finance, insurance, real estate	489	407	-16.8
Education, health care, social	1,607	2,313	43.9
Professional and management	383	867	126.4
Arts, entertainment, food service	412	931	125.9
Other services	588	772	31.3
Public administration	<u>365</u>	<u>456</u>	<u>24.9</u>
Total Employed	14,313	14,771	3.2
Percent 16+ in labor force:	63.6	61.3	

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

The occupation by industry figures show significant declines in several sectors, notably manufacturing and trade. Professional and services categories had significant increases. These changes in the occupations of county residents illustrate some of the major trends in the national

economy. The manufacturing sector has lost ground in recent years, as many jobs have gone to lower wage environments and others have been eliminated due to cost-cutting and mechanization. The loss of over 1,300 manufacturing jobs in Chester County during the ten-year period is a continuation of a major restructuring trend. Fortunately, other sectors have increased so that the total number of persons employed increased by 3.2 percent. This is a slower rate of growth than the population growth of the county, resulting in a smaller proportion of the county's population in the labor force in 2000 compared to 1990.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

Chester County residents are increasingly relying on employment opportunities in surrounding counties as they seek to find stable jobs at good salaries. Although this trend increases commuting costs, fuel use, and air pollution as residents drive longer distances, they are willing to undertake the trips to secure better job opportunities. While residents are fortunate that employment centers such as Rock Hill, Charlotte, and Lancaster are nearby, the goal of the county should be to provide more and higher quality jobs at home.

Table 12 illustrates the pattern of commuting over a twenty-year period. Almost half of employed Chester County residents commute to work outside the county. The number of residents working in the county has declined over the twenty-year period. Those finding work in York County more than tripled, and the number working in Mecklenburg County increased almost seven-fold. Commuting into Chester County actually declined from most counties between 1990 and 2000.

TABLE 12
Commuting Patterns
Employed Persons Aged 16 and Over
1980 – 2000

	1980	1990	2000
Working in Chester County:	9,424	9,225	8,114
 Residents Commuting To:			
York County	864	2,166	3,063
Mecklenburg County (NC)	197	814	1,370
Lancaster County	643	891	934
Fairfield County	95	171	210
Union County	234	211	170
 Residents of Other Counties Commuting To Chester County From:			
Lancaster County	1,178	1,481	1,295
York County	559	952	951
Fairfield County	734	585	439
Union County	119	112	216

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 through 2000.

The dispersed pattern of employment is likely to continue expanding as the labor force becomes more mobile. Factors which could influence this trend include the provision of more and higher-paying jobs in Chester County, substantially increased fuel costs, increased traffic congestion in the receiving counties, and implications of potential federal air quality regulations.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
ECONOMIC ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
To encourage the economic development of the County so that employment opportunities are available to all and living standards continue to improve.	-To continue diversification of the employment base.	Chester County Chamber of Commerce, Chester County Council, Chester Development Association	Ongoing
	-To create a positive climate for efforts to attract clean and progressive industries.	Chester County Chamber of Commerce, Chester County Council, Chester County School Board, Chester Development Association	Ongoing
	-To promote the health and expansion of existing business and industry.	Chester County Chamber of Commerce, Chester County Council, Chester Development Association	Ongoing
To support the extension of water, sewer and other utilities to industrial and commercial areas.	-To extend water, sewer and natural gas to the I-77/SR56 and I-77/SC Hwy. 97 interchanges and other areas along I-77 as warranted.	Chester County Council, Chester Metropolitan and Sewer District, Chester County Natural Gas Authority, Chester County Planning Commission, Chester Development Association	Ongoing
	-To look at the feasibility of extending water and sewer into western Chester County.	Chester County Council, Chester Metropolitan District	Ongoing
	-To actively participate in studies of regional wastewater treatment and other water/sewer initiatives in the area.	Chester County Council, Chester Development Association, Chester Metropolitan and Sewer District, Chester County Planning Commission	Ongoing
To pursue the development of a publicly owned industrial park near I-77.	-To locate suitable land for a publicly owned industrial park near I-77 and to develop such a park.	Chester County Council, Chester County Chamber of Commerce, Chester County Planning Commission, Chester Development Association	Ongoing
	-Continue to foster multi-county compacts in order to spur economic development.	Chester County Council, Chester County Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing

NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Natural Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan examines the natural and physical characteristics which might impact the level and density of development. Factors such as slopes, soil characteristics, flood plains, and unique natural areas can have a significant impact on the type of development which is possible. In planning for future growth, it is important to document all these factors so that development can be planned to compliment the natural resources of the county.

GEOLOGY

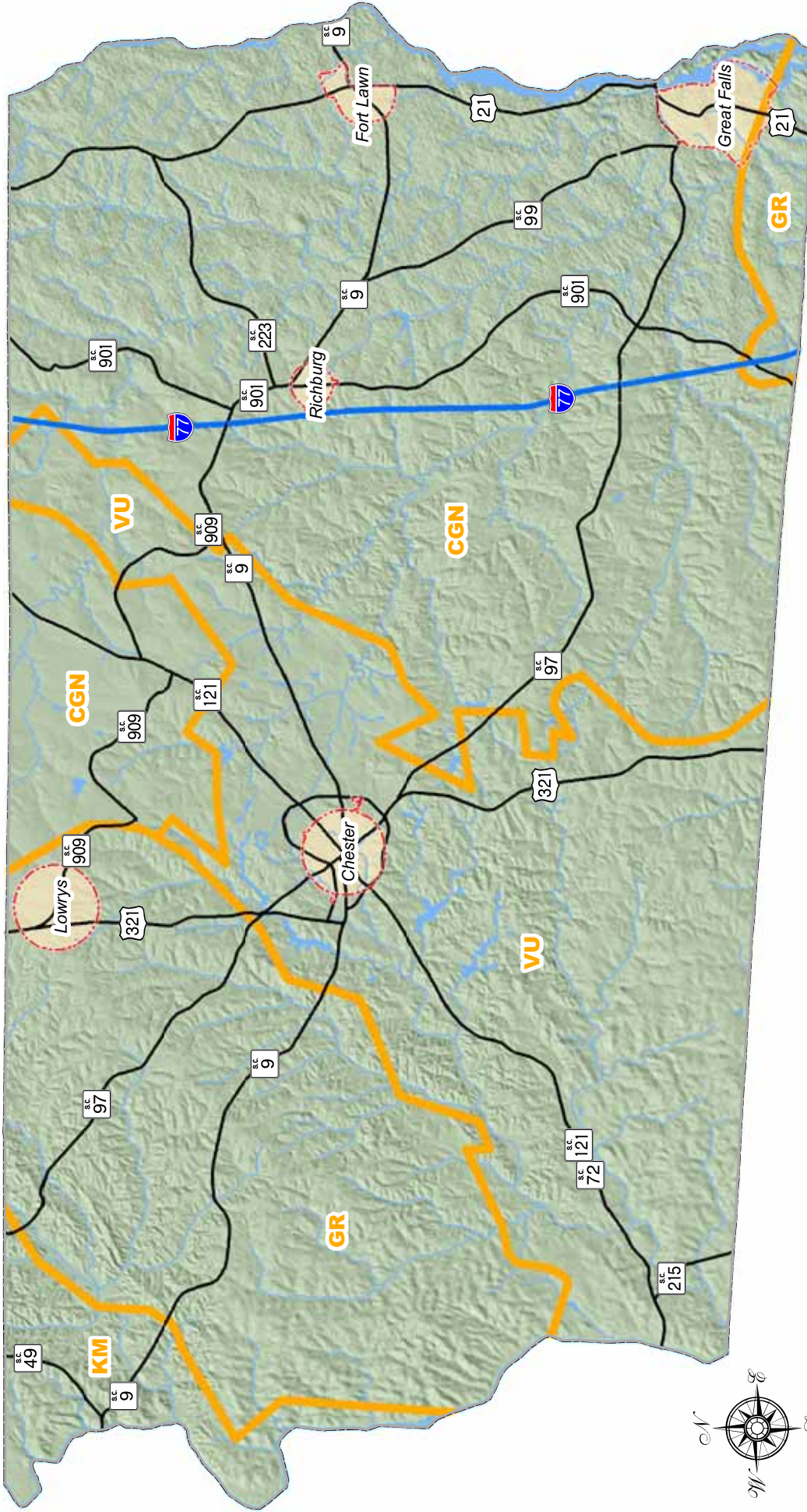
The basic geology of an area is important in determining the types of soils present, the ground water potential and characteristics, and the location of mineral resources. Geologic formations also can have impacts on building foundation needs and the suitability of an area for septic tanks.

All of Chester County is within the Piedmont Geologic Region in which older metamorphosed sedimentary and volcanic rocks are prevalent. The rocks occur in belts delineated on the basis of rock type, grade of metamorphism, and structure. The geologic belts in Chester County are illustrated in Map 2. The general composition of these belts is as follows:







Carolina Slate Belt (CGN): The rock composition of this belt is primarily metamorphosed sedimentary and volcanic rocks with some intrusive rock. In Chester County, it consists of muscovite schist, amphibolite, granite, and alluvium.

Charlotte Belt (VU): The origin of this belt also is of metamorphosed sedimentary and volcanic rock with some intrusive rock. Mica gneiss, granite, and mafic dike swarms are the types of rock common to the Charlotte Belt found in Chester County.

Kings Mountain Belt (KM): Only a very small portion of this belt is found in Chester County. In the northwest corner of the county, hornblende schist is representative of this belt.



Legend

-  Interstate
-  US / SC Highways
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Geologic Belts
-  Water
-  Municipal Boundaries

Map 2 Chester County Geologic Belts

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Granite Belt (GR): This belt consists of gray coarse grained biolite muscovite granite with fine grained marginal facies.

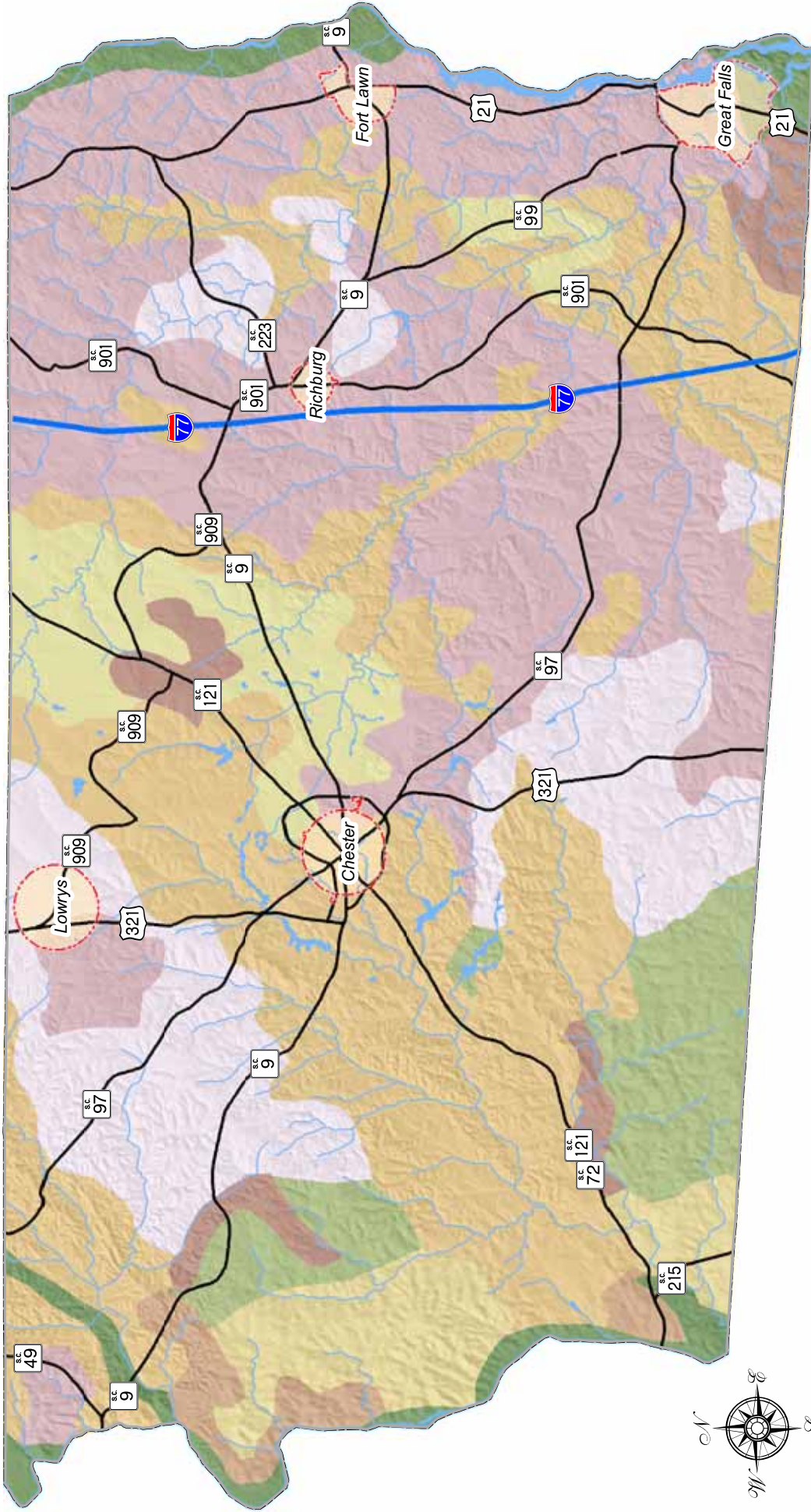
The availability of minerals in Chester County is limited. Extractive industries are limited to the removal of gravel and sand from stream beds and the removal of clay from pits.

SOIL TYPES

The characteristics of soils can have a major impact on land development patterns. Soil conditions in Chester County vary greatly. While posing no problems for development in some areas, soils in other areas have severe limitations for development. Such problems might include a high water table, poor drainage, and poor soil for foundations.

Many soils in Chester County have been altered by human activity over the years. The widespread cultivation of cotton and other crops was a basic element of the economy of the county for many years. Poor farming practices and the slopes in some areas resulted in severe erosion problems. Many areas have deep gullies which were created by abuse of the land. The rich topsoil of many areas has been lost forever.

A Soil Survey of Chester County was published in 1982 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. This survey provides a detailed description of soil types and the limitations they place on various kinds of development activities. Map 3 is a generalized soil map from the Soil Survey. It shows the general areas of soil types. The soil types have been given numbers for easy reference. These numbers correspond to those in Table 14 which provides a summary description of the general soil types, along with some of the limitations experienced with each type.



Legend

- Interstate
- US / SC Highways
- Municipal Boundaries
- Water
- Chewacla-Toccoa
- Wateree-Rion-Helena
- Cecil-Pacolet-Appling
- Madison-Cecil-Hiwassee
- Pacolet-Catawba-Madison
- Mitford-Catawba-Winnsboro
- Mitford-Winnsboro-Mecklenburg
- Mitford-Hiwassee-Madison
- Appling-Rion-Ashlan

Map 3 Chester County Generalized Soils

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Table 13

**General Soil Characteristics
for
Chester County**

<u>Association</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Percent Slope</u>	<u>Foun- dations</u>	<u>Limita- tions Septic Tank</u>	<u>Recre- ation</u>
1. Chewacla-Toccoa	Well-drained to some- what poorly drained, nearly level, loomy soils that are sub- ject to flooding.	2	Severe	Severe	Slight- Severe
2. Iredell-Armenia	Moderately well- drained, gently sloping, moderately deep, clayey soils and poorly drained, nearly level, deep clayey soils that are slightly acid though slightly alkaline in the subsoil.	0-15	Severe	Severe	Moderate- Severe
3. Cecil-Pacolet- Appling	Well-drained, gently sloping to moderately steep, deep, clayey soils that are strongly acid in part of the subsoil.	5-15	Slight- Severe	Moderate- Severe	Slight- Severe
4. Madison-Cecil- Hiwassee	Well-drained, gently sloping to moderately steep, deep, clayey soils that are strongly acid in part of the subsoil.	2-25	Moderate- Severe	Moderate- Severe	Slight- Severe

Table 13 (Continued)

**General Soil Characteristics
for
Chester County**

<u>Association</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Percent Slope</u>	<u>Foun- dations</u>	<u>Limita- tions Septic Tank</u>	<u>Recre- ation</u>
5. Pacolet-Catawba- Madison	Well-drained, gently sloping to moderately steep, deep, clayey soils that are strongly acid in part of the subsoil.	2-35	Slight- Severe	Moderate- Severe	Slight- Severe
6. Mitford-Catawba- Winnsboro	Well-drained, sloping to steep, shallow, loamy soils, and gently sloping to moderately steep, moderately deep to deep, clayey soils that are slightly acid or neutral in the subsoil.	2-45	Slight- Severe	Severe	Slight- Severe
7. Mitford-Winnsboro -Mecklenburg	Well-drained, sloping to steep, moderately deep, loamy soils and gently sloping to moderately steep, deep, clayey soils that are slightly acid or neutral in subsoil.	4-60	Slight- Severe	Severe	Slight- Severe
8. Mitford-Hiwassee -Madison	Well-drained, sloping to steep, moderately steep, deep, clayey soils that are slightly acid or neutral in subsoil.	2-40	Slight- Severe	Moderate- Severe	Slight- Severe

Table 13 (Continued)

**General Soil Characteristics
for
Chester County**

<u>Association</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Percent Slope</u>	<u>Foun-dations</u>	<u>Limita-tions Septic Tank</u>	<u>Recre-ation</u>
9. Appling-Rion-Ashlan	Well-drained, gently sloping to sloping, deep, clayey soils and strongly sloping to steep, moderately deep, loamy soils that are strongly acid in part of the subsoil.	0-25	Slight-Moderate	Moderate	Slight-Moderate
10. Wateree-Rion-Helena	Well-drained, strongly sloping to steep, moderately deep, loamy soils and moderately well-drained, deep, clayey soils that are strongly acid in part of the sub-soil.	5-35	Moderate Severe	Moderate Severe	Slight Severe

Source: "Soil Survey of Chester County, South Carolina," Chester County Soil Conservation Service, 1982.

One of the most important factors for development is the suitability of soil for the placement of septic tanks. Although various agencies have been active in expanding water and sewer lines into as many areas as possible, large portions of Chester County have no utility service. As residential growth occurs in these areas, developers and public officials need to be aware of

soil conditions. The Chester County Health Department is part of the Catawba Health District of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. The Health Department issues permits for the placement of septic tanks. Factors which enter into the issuance of septic tank permits include lot size, proximity to water supplies (wells and bodies of water), and soil conditions which allow the filtration or percolation of septic tank effluent through the soil. The standards for issuance of septic tank permits have been raised consistently in recent years, and it is likely that standards will become more stringent in the future. Subdivisions with small lots will not be allowed to use septic tanks in the future unless soil conditions are very favorable. This trend makes it even more important for those involved in development decisions to be aware of limitations for septic tanks.

Currently, the Stringfellow Subdivision located along S. C. Highways 72/121 to the northeast of Chester is experiencing problems with septic tank failures.

PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

Chester County contains a number of areas which have been set aside for public use. These areas are the result of actions by the federal, state, and local levels of government.

The largest area of public land in Chester County is Sumter National Forest. This Enoree Division of the National Forest includes portions of Union, Laurens, Newberry and Fairfield counties in addition to the extreme western section of Chester County along the Broad River. Although parcels of private land still exist within the National Forest boundary, over 12,000 acres are owned by the U. S. Forest Service. Land within the National Forest is managed for timber production, wildlife protection, and public recreation. The Woods Ferry Recreation Area provides public access and a variety of recreational activities. Because of its size and location, the National Forest is unlikely to experience negative impacts from development.

There are two state parks operated by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism in Chester County. Chester State Park, located southwest of the City of Chester, contains 523 acres and includes a lake. A number of recreational activities are available.

Landsford State Park, on the Catawba River in the northeastern section of the county, is intended to illustrate the historical significance of the area. It contains the remains of the Landsford Canal, which dates to the 1820s. The Park contains 200 acres. The Comprehensive Plan should reflect the fact that development which takes place in areas surrounding these state parks could have negative impacts on the qualities which they seek to preserve. These public lands are shown in Map 4.

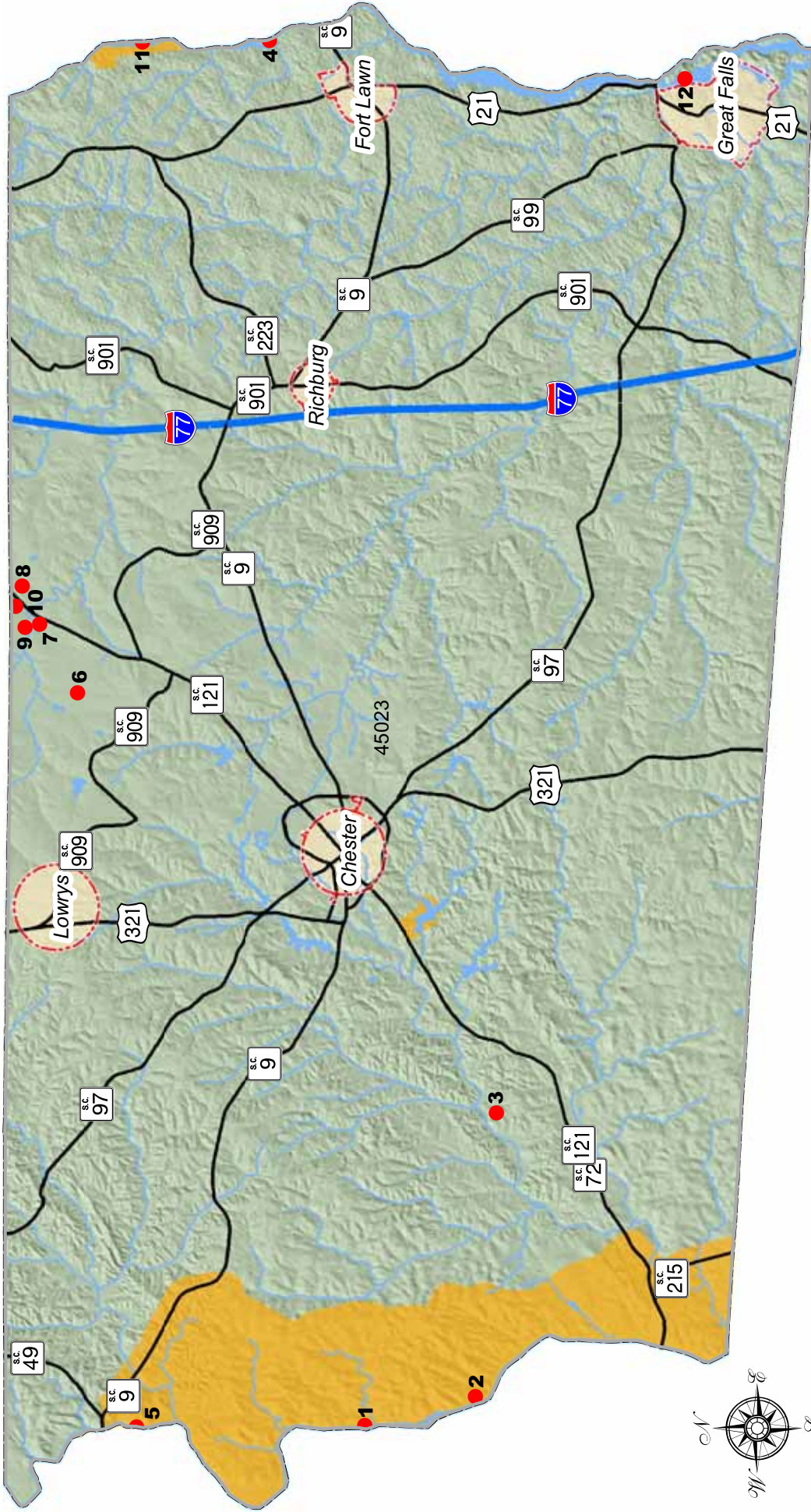
In addition to state and federal lands which are set aside for recreation and public access, local governments in Chester County operate a number of parks, ball fields, and playgrounds. They are located in Chester, Richburg, Great Falls, and Lowrys as well as in the unincorporated areas of the county. The county government is currently establishing a Recreation Commission. This department will attempt to expand the facilities and programs available to the public.

Private recreational facilities also exist in the county. One of the most important is the golf course operated by the Leroy Springs Company, which is generally open to the public.

SLOPE CHARACTERISTICS AND DRAINAGE

Topography and drainage patterns are significant factors in determining the type and location of new development. Consideration of these factors is very important when extending public water and sewer facilities. For instance, developing areas which are currently without public water and sewer should be planned carefully to ensure that needed public services can be provided at reasonable costs.

As previously mentioned, Chester County is located in the Piedmont Region of South Carolina. The topography in the county is predominantly gently sloping with elevations ranging from approximately 300 feet above sea level along the Catawba River to 700 feet above sea level west of the City of Chester.



Map 4
Chester County
 Public Lands
 Natural Resource Sites

Legend

- Interstate
- US / SC Highways
- Municipal Boundaries
- Water
- Public Lands
- Natural Resource Sites

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Generally there are no large portions of the county which have severe limitations due to excessive slopes. However, a more detailed analysis should be conducted on a site-by-site basis to determine any building restrictions which may exist. For general applicability, the following information can be used to determine the type of development applicable to particular slopes:

- 0-8% Slope Can be used for all types of land uses where there is no danger of periodic flooding.
- 9-16% Slope Can be used for residential development and light commercial development.
- 17-24% Slope Can accommodate low density residential development. Not suitable for commercial or industrial development.
- 25% and greater. Not suitable for any type of intense development.

The entire county is located in the Santee-Cooper River Basin. A ridgeline running north-south through the center of the county separates it into two sub-basins. To the east of this ridgeline, water flows into the Catawba River, which forms the eastern border of the county. To the west, water flows to the Broad River, which forms the western border.

PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITAT

Chester County is home to a wide variety of natural habitats for plants and animals. Almost all of the landscape has been altered in some way by agriculture, forestry, or urban development. A large portion of the county currently is covered in forests, although much of this forest cover is composed of pine plantations. These planted areas differ significantly in the diversity of plant and animal life they support in comparison to the native mixed hardwood forest. The Sumter National Forest provides an extensive area of protected land in the western section of the county.

The South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department operates the Heritage Trust Program which identifies and preserves areas of significance for biologic diversity. These

include areas which are habitats for unusual plant or animal species or which represent excellent examples of natural environments. Areas of significant or rare species are shown in Table 15 and Figure 11, based on records on file in the Nongame and Endangered Species Office of the Wildlife Department.

Table 14

**Significant Natural Areas
Chester County**

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Significance</u>
1	Wood Ferry Recreation Area has a recorded population of Bairds' chorus frog (<i>Pseudacris Triseriata</i>).
2	Well-developed Piedmont Bottomland Hardwood Forest along Broad River.
3	A recorded population of <i>Agrimonia pubescens</i> , an herb in the rose family.
4	A colony of Rocky Shoal's Spider Lillies (<i>Hymenocallis Coronaria</i>) in the west channel of the Catawba River at Courtney (Fudge) Island.
5	A colony of Rocky Shoals Spider Lillies in the shoal of the Broad River near Lockhart.
6	A section of Iredell soil with a population of Wild Hyacinth (<i>Caniassia Scilloides</i>) and quillwort (<i>Isoetes Hirginica</i>).
7	A section of Iredell soil with a population of Wild Hyacinth (<i>Camassia Scilloides</i>).
8	A section of Iredell soil with a population of small Skullcap (<i>Scutellaria Parvula</i>).
9	A section of Iredell soil with a population of greyheaded coniflower (<i>Patibida Pinnata</i>), the only known occurrence of this plant in Chester County.
10	A section of Iredell soil with a population of small Skullcap (<i>Scutellaria Parvula</i>) and a rare buttercup (<i>Panunculus Fascicularis</i>), which occurs only on Iredell soil.

Table 14 (Continued)

**Significant Natural Areas
Chester County**

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Significance</u>
11	The shoals in the Catawba River adjacent to and below Landsford State Park contain perhaps the largest population of Rocky Shoals Spider Lilly (<i>Hymenocallis Coronaria</i>) in the State. This plant grows only in the shoals of Piedmont rivers, a habitat which has been reduced by construction of dams.
12	A mixed Mesophytic Forest on Mountain Island, also known as Dearborn Island, in the Catawba River near Great Falls.

Source: Division of Nongame and Endangered Species, Department of Wildlife and Marine Resources.

WATER QUALITY

The availability of good quality water has a major impact on the ability of a county to attract the type of residential, commercial and industrial development needed to provide employment, housing, education, recreation and health care.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is the State agency which monitors water quality and enforces water quality regulations. In order to be able to assess water quality, DHEC developed a Water Classification-Standards System which was last revised statewide in 1992. Essentially, the Classification-Standards System has two primary purposes. The first is to determine the best use of all water bodies in the State. The second is to develop a set of numeric standards to insure that water quality is being preserved. All water bodies in Chester County are classified by DHEC as "FW" or freshwater. Water bodies in this classification can be used for primary contact recreation (swimming), secondary contact recreation (boating) and as a source for drinking water after conventional treatment. These waters also are suitable for the propagation of fish, other fauna, flora, industrial and agricultural uses. To insure that classification standards are being met, DHEC has established a statewide

ambient water quality monitoring system. There are 12 such monitoring stations in the county. At each station a wide variety of water quality parameters are monitored. For purposes of this report, the four parameters analyzed were those for which DHEC has established numeric standards. These four parameters are 1) Fecal Coliform Bacteria; 2) Dissolved Oxygen; 3) PH; and 4) Water Temperature. Individual monitoring stations are designated as either "primary" or "secondary." Water quality is monitored at primary stations once monthly or twelve times a year, while secondary stations are monitored four times a year (generally between the months of May through October). Most of the primary monitoring stations in the county are located on the Broad or Catawba rivers.

Data supplied by DHEC's ambient monitoring system provides a monthly assessment of various water quality parameters and the ability to compare data over time. However, one disadvantage of this system is that single events such as a heavy rainfall frequently occur when no monitoring is being conducted. The runoff caused by heavy rains are primary vehicles for transporting non-point source pollution into water-bodies. These events, which can go unmonitored, have the effect of at least temporarily reducing the quality of water.

Shown below in Table 16 are the numeric standards for the "FW" classification.

Table 15

**Numeric Water Quality Standards
DHEC Classification "FW"**

Parameter

Dissolved oxygen	
mean value*	5mg/l
minimum value	4mg/l
Fecal Coliform	
mean value*	200/100ml
maximum value	400/100ml

Table 15 (Continued)

**Numeric Water Quality Standards
DHEC Classification "FW"**

Parameter

PH	6.0 - 8.5
Water Temperature	Less than 90 degrees F

* The geometric mean of samples taken during 5 consecutive days over a 30 day period.

Source: S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, Water Classification and Standards, 1992.

Data previously collected monitoring stations throughout the county shows that all water bodies monitored were generally meeting the minimum standards of their classification with one exception. Monitorings conducted at station CW-088 showed consistent violations of the standard for fecal coliform bacteria. This station is located in the Grassy Run tributary of Rocky Creek. Fecal coliform bacteria is present in animal or human waste. The consistent appearance of high counts of this bacteria in Grassy Run tributary is probably being caused by the discharge of improperly treated wastewater or debris carried into the creek by storm runoff. In all probability it is a combination of these factors which is contributing to the periodic presence of excessive bacteria levels in the creek. Although CW-088 was the only station showing consistent violations of the fecal coliform standard, most stations showed violations at some point during the monitoring period. Because monitoring only takes place either monthly or during the warm months of the year, there may be no monitoring conducted during times of heavy rains which would provide a better indication of how much pollution was being deposited in area rivers, lakes and streams. It is possible that violations of the fecal coliform standard occur more frequently than recorded simply because water quality monitoring may not be conducted at critical time such as rain events.

In addition to monitoring water quality, DHEC also is responsible for issuing permits to regulate entities who have wastewater discharges. These permits specify how much wastewater can be discharged and what limits the wastewater discharge must meet. There are currently eighteen permitted discharges in Chester County.

Of this number, nine are industrial, five are public water or wastewater facilities, two are other types of public uses, one is commercial and one is a residential mobile home park.

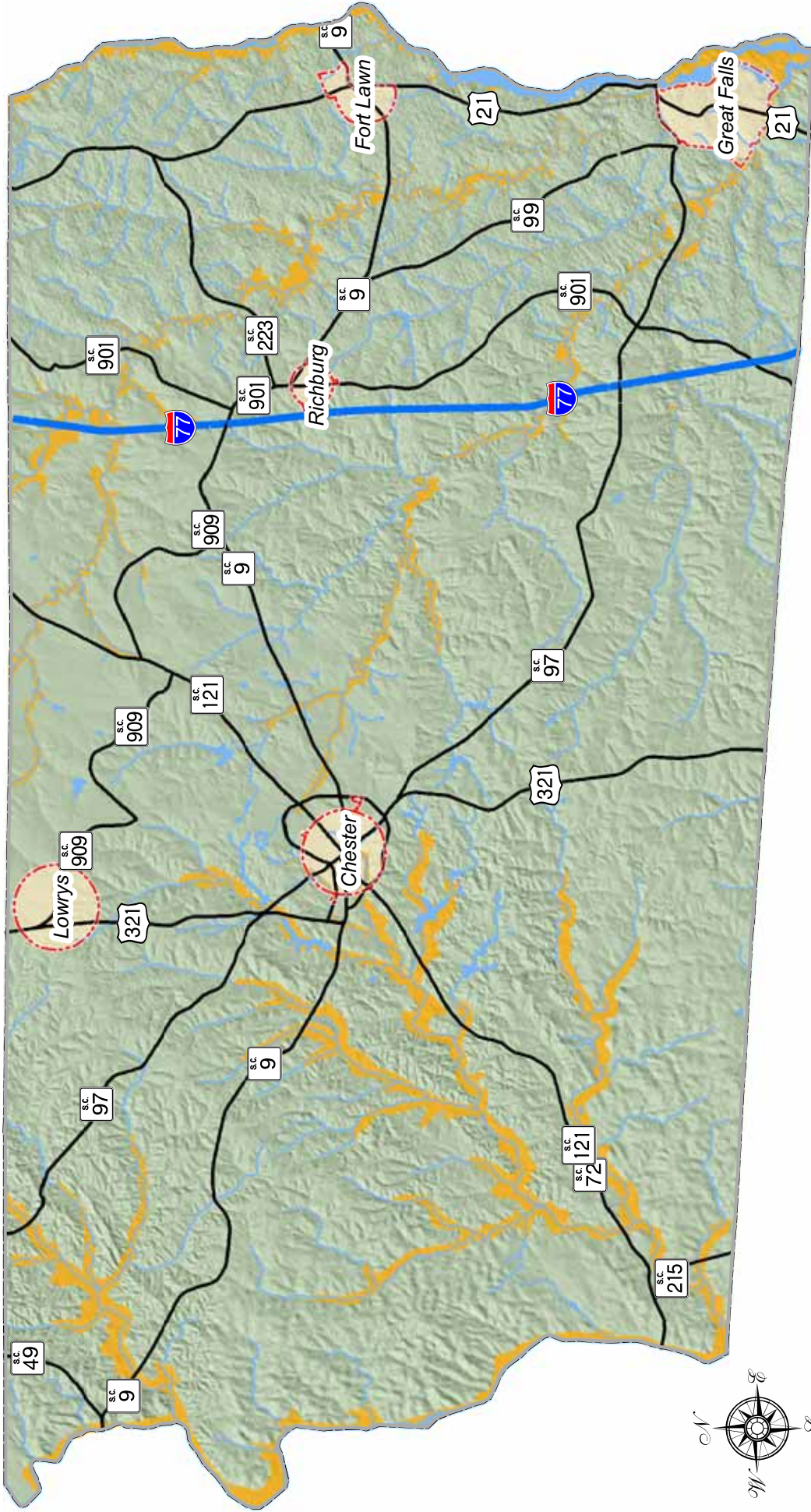
Generally, the ability to preserve water quality is enhanced when the number of discharges is kept to a minimum. In neighboring York and Lancaster counties, growth pressures and lack of countywide sewer infrastructure have created a situation where a number of small package waste treatment facilities have come into operation. These facilities typically serve small residential or commercial uses and do not have a full-time licensed professional monitoring their operation. Because these facilities increase the number of discharges and because their operation is not monitored daily, the probability that improperly treated wastewater is being discharged increases. This type of problem has not occurred in Chester County and is not likely to as long as public water and sewer is expanded to meet demand.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS






Localities in Chester County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Under this program, operated by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, Chester County has been surveyed for flood hazards and maps have been developed which illustrate areas likely to flood at least once every 100 years. These maps have been consolidated into a countywide map, shown in Map 5.

The delineation of flood hazard areas is important for new development. Construction of new structures within flood zones should be closely controlled. They should be flood-proofed, either through elevation above the expected flood height or diking. In addition, structures and dikes placed in the floodplain should not impede the free flow of floodwaters. The low areas along creeks and rivers provide a natural mechanism for handling large volumes of water.

Use of these areas by man should be limited and should take into account these natural functions. Where man has ignored the presence of flood-prone areas, heavy property damage and loss of life can occur. The Comprehensive Plan will recommend a careful observance of floodplain restrictions including a possible overlay zone in the Zoning Ordinance to create a 100 foot non-disturbed vegetative buffer along the Catawba and Broad rivers.



Legend

-  Interstate
-  US / SC Highways
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Water
-  100-Year Flood Plains

Map 5 Chester County 100 Year Flood Plains

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PRIME AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND

It is the policy of federal and state resource agencies to encourage the preservation of important farmland in order to maintain the productive capacity of American agriculture.

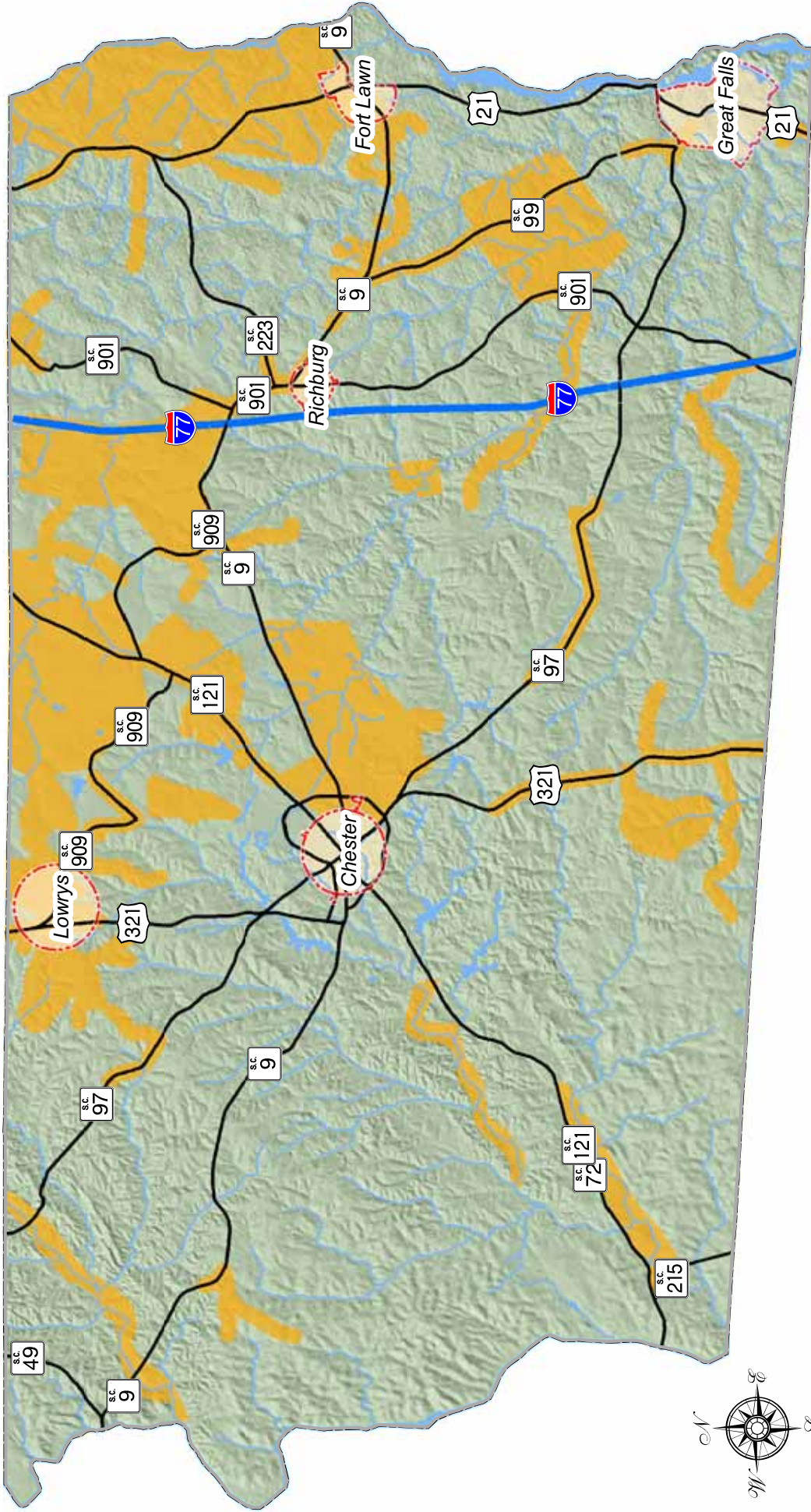
Prime farmland is defined as land which is best suited for producing food, animal food, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops and which has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops economically when treated and managed according to modern farming methods.

The U.S. Soil Conservation Service has developed an inventory of important farm lands in Chester County. The inventory was developed using the information available from the previously published Soil Survey of Chester County. The detailed soil characteristics provide information on soil composition, fertility and moisture. The areas of prime farm land and important farm land are shown in Map 6.

According to the South Carolina Agricultural Statistics Service, there were 410 farms in Chester County in 1993, averaging about 253 acres. Crops which are cultivated to an extensive degree include corn, wheat, and hay. Chester County in 1994 had 19,600 head of cattle, the thirteenth highest total among South Carolina counties. The county ranks high in both beef cattle and milk cows. The importance of farming to the county's economy has declined during this century and the number of farms and acreage devoted to agriculture has gradually declined. The 1990 Census reported that 327 persons aged 16 years and older in Chester County were employed in agriculture, forestry, and mining activities.

Satellite imagery shows the greatest concentration of agricultural land use to be in the north-central section of the county, to the east and west of the Town of Lowrys. Other areas of agriculture and grassland are evident east and south of Chester and in the eastern sections of the county.

Many areas of the nation have identified the preservation of prime farm land as a public priority. This goal is often undertaken by farm land trusts set up by local governments.



Map 6 Chester County Prime Farm Land

Legend

- Interstate
- US / SC Highways
- Municipal Boundaries
- Water
- Prime Farm Land

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Under these arrangements, farmers in rapidly growing areas agree to maintain their property in agricultural use, and they are often given special property tax incentives. In return, they are paid for the development value of the land which they have given up to the trust. The goal of these programs is to maintain prime farm land in production, to provide open space in rapidly growing urban areas, and to preserve family farms.

In addition to prime farm land, large sections of Chester County are used for forest production. Of the 371,341 acres in the county, about 78 percent is in forest. Much of this forested land is actively managed for forest products, mainly pulpwood.

Table 17 provides a description of the types of forest cover and other land use based on satellite imagery. Chester County has over 156,000 acres of mixed forest, 107,800 acres of evergreen forest, and 27,000 acres of deciduous forest. The evergreen forest is largely in planted pines. The greatest concentration of forest land is in the western and southern sections of Chester County. The western areas include a portion of Sumter National Forest. Southern Chester County has a large concentration of land owned by private timber companies. Other sections of the county have largely private individual owners of forest land. In 1992, cash receipts of \$11,125,000 were reported from forest products in Chester County.

Table 16

**Land Cover From Satellite Imagery
Chester County**

<u>Land Cover Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Evergreen Forest	107,871
Deciduous Forest	26,940
Mixed Forest	156,068
Scrub/Shrub	35,349
Agricultural/Grassland	36,627
Barren/Disturbed Land	1,552
Urban Land	6,492
Water	5,212
TOTAL	367,111

Source: Approximate acreage based on SPOT satellite images taken December 1988 - March 1990 converted to land cover data by S.C. Land Resources Conservation Commission. Accuracy level is estimated to be 85 - 90 percent.

SCENIC VIEWS AND SITES

The rolling character of the land in Chester County allows for a number of pleasant views in the countryside. Areas of particular scenic interest include the Catawba River and the Fishing Creek lake and other smaller impoundments in the Great Falls area. The Landsford Canal State Park provides scenic views of the section of the Catawba River which includes rapids. In May and June, the flowering of the Rocky Shoals Spider Lily in the river shoals provides a spectacular view. The park also has a nature walk and an interpretive walk along the ruins of the canal. Chester State Park also provides scenic areas and views of its lake. The Sumter National Forest provides public access and scenic views along the Broad River and within the forest.

The downtown area of the City of Chester has a significant concentration of historic buildings. Because the city was begun on a hill, there are scenic views of interest in many directions. Downtown Chester has become a favorite spot for filming movies, television shows, and commercials.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
<p>To encourage respect for and preservation of the natural environment including water, land and air resources.</p>	<p>-To support the preservation and protection of unique natural areas, habitats of rare and endangered species and areas of significant resources.</p>	<p>Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>-Limit structural development in areas which have natural limitations such as floodplains, extreme slopes or extreme soil limitations.</p>	<p>Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>-Encourage provision of adequate lands for passive and active recreation.</p>	<p>Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission Chester County Recreation Department</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>-Encourage the continued health of sustainable agricultural industry through the preservation of prime farm lands and recognition of the importance of agriculture to the local economy.</p>	<p>Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
<p>To encourage respect for and preservation of the natural environment including water, land and air resources. (continued)</p>	<p>-Support efforts such as the Great Falls Trails Plan, the Heritage Tract, and improved access to the Catawba and Board rivers.</p>	<p>Chester County Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Support improved air quality in Chester County.</p>	<p>Chester County Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Resources Element considers those manmade and natural elements which contribute to the quality of life in Chester County. These factors include historic buildings and sites, archaeological sites, commercial and residential districts, natural and scenic resources, and cultural activities.

HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Chester County is fortunate to have a number of sites and structures which are important reminders of her history. The county was first settled by Europeans in the 1750s. Prior to that, it was the home of American Indians, including the Catawba and Cherokee tribes, for hundreds of years. The historic resources which remain should be recognized as significant. As the County grows and develops, many sites will be threatened by demolition or inappropriate construction. The Comprehensive Plan is not intended to be a complete inventory of historic sites. However, it will include the most important sites for two reasons. First, under federal environmental review regulations, any activities involving federal funds must include a review of impacts on historic properties. This document will help to alert officials to the presence of the most important sites. Secondly, a recognition of the significance of these resources in the Comprehensive Plan should help to inform the general public to their presence and to the value of preservation. As Chester County grows and becomes more urbanized, the presence of structures which give evidence of the architecture and history will be important in providing a balance to new construction and in preserving a sense of place.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In Chester County, a number of archaeological sites have been identified. These are places which have evidences of human activity but which no longer contain structures. These sites range from ancient Indian camp sites to foundations of buildings dating from the 1800s. The value in identifying, studying and preserving archaeological sites lies in the information they may provide about past human activities and cultures. Often, they provide the only link to our understanding of the society and life of other times. Table 18 gives the general locations and descriptions of important archaeological sites in the unincorporated areas of Chester County as

listed in the records of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA). There may be many additional archaeological sites in the county. The listing includes those which have been identified and investigated by SCIAA. These sites are often fragile and subject to disturbance by unauthorized digging. For this reason, they are not shown on a map. The locations will be on file with the County Planning Commission.

Table 17
Selected Archaeological Sites
Chester County

<u>Site #</u>	<u>General Location</u>	<u>Description of Site</u>
1	Southeast of Chester	Site of a late 18th or early 19th century log cabin.
2	East of Chester	Concentration of prehistoric lithics around summit of knoll. Middle and late Archaic periods.
3	East of Chester	Evidence of small hunting station on knoll with quartz flakes and projectile points. Middle Archaic period.
4	North of Great Falls	Prehistoric lithics on ridge top. Early Archaic to Woodland period.
5	Near Landsford Canal	Landsford Canal State Park - evidence of prehistoric lithics and sherds. Archaic and Woodland periods.
6	Broad River at S.C. Highway 72 Bridge	Fishdam Ford - V-shaped fish trap constructed by Indians in a prehistoric period. National Register of Historic Places.
7	Near Broad River above S.C. Highway 72	Fishdam Ford Battlefield - site has yielded evidences of Revolutionary battle which occurred on November 9, 1780.
8	East of Blackstock	Site containing quartz waste flakes and projectile points. Archaic period.
9	Bascomville area	Campsite on ridgetop yielding points and flakes. Archaic period.

Table 17 (Continued)

**Selected Archaeological Sites
Chester County**

<u>Site #</u>	<u>General Location</u>	<u>Description of Site</u>
10	Near Broad River in- to Sumter National Forest	Site yielding lithics and ceramics. Archaic early Woodland period.
11	Near Broad River below S.C. Highway 9	McCollum mound and house. Indian Mound of Lamar and Savannah Bridge culture, National Register of Historic Places.
12	In Broad River below S.C Highway 9 Bridge	McCollum Fish Weir - remains of fish trap constructed by Indians in Broad River. National Register of Historic Places.
13	South of S.C. Highway 9 near Broad River	Site of a possible mill or factory from 19th or early 20th century.
14	North of S.C. Highway 9 near Pleasant Grove Church	Campsite on ridgetop yielding points and flakes. Middle Archaic period.

Source: S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology.

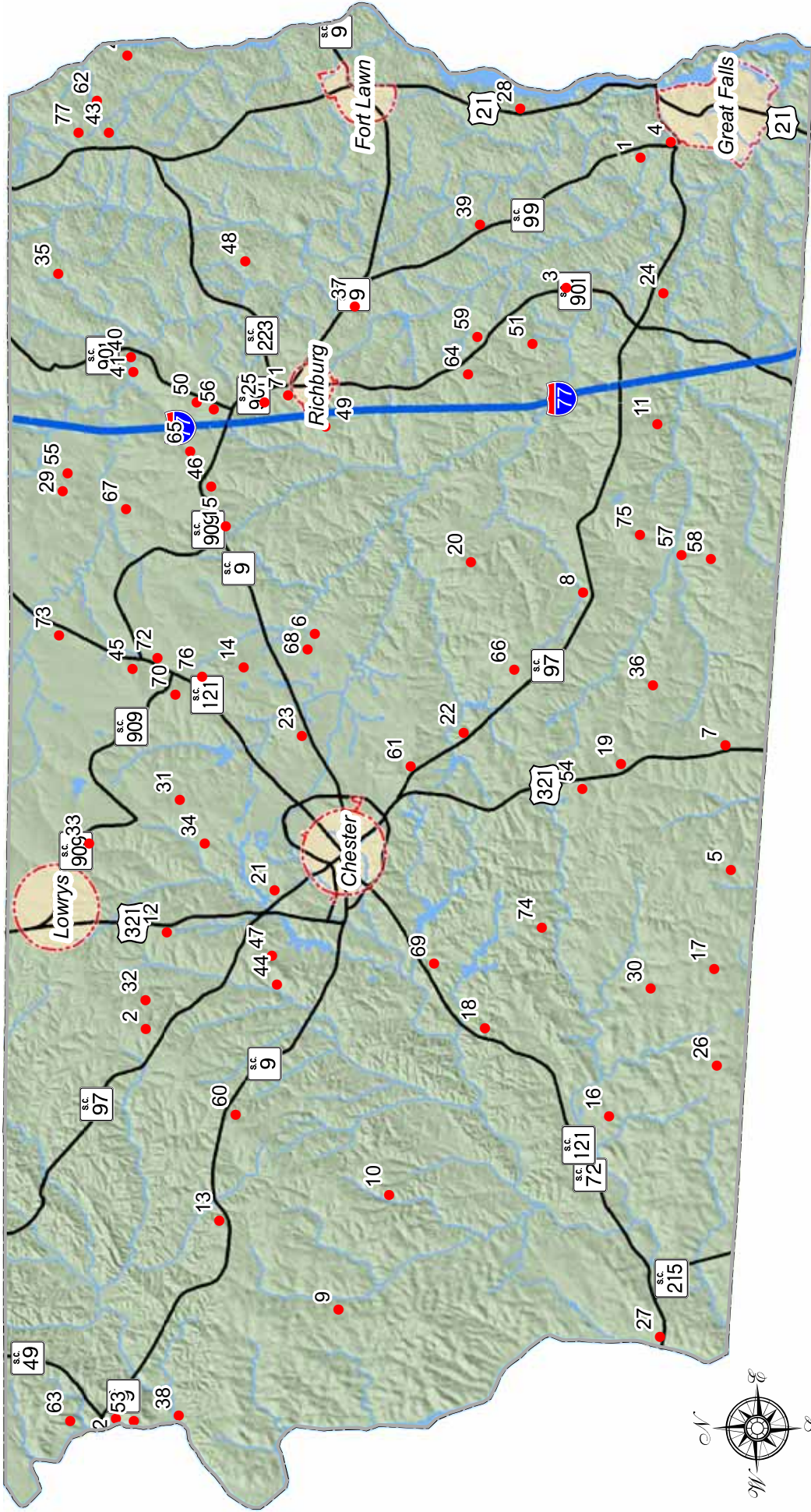
HISTORIC SITES

Historic sites are scattered throughout Chester County. A Historic Site Survey was prepared by Catawba Regional Planning Council in 1976. Unfortunately, a formal inventory of historic properties has never been completed. Such an inventory would identify all structures over fifty years old and make preliminary judgments of their age and architectural and historical importance. The South Carolina Department of Archives and History provides matching grants for such inventories and also maintains a listing of known historic properties. Perhaps

the most widely recognized listing of historic resources is the National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Department of the Interior with assistance from the State Department of Archives and History. Table 19 lists the properties in the unincorporated areas of Chester County which are included in the National Register of Historic Places or which are of historic interest. National Register properties are listed in bold print. The approximate locations of these properties are shown in Map 7. Only sites in the unincorporated areas of the county are shown. Because a formal inventory has not been conducted, this listing obviously is not complete. Included on the list are a number of family and church cemeteries, many of which are abandoned or inaccessible. Those interested in visiting historic sites should remember to respect the private property rights of current property owners. As development becomes more widespread in the county, some of these cemeteries may be in danger of destruction.

Table 18
Historic Sites
Unincorporated Areas
Chester County

1. Anderson Family Cemetery
2. Armenia United Methodist Church (organized 1832)
3. Bankhead House (early 1800's)
4. Beckhamville Battle Site (May 1780)
5. Bethlehem United Methodist Church (org. c. 1795)
6. Black Rock Baptist Church (org. 1850s)
7. Blackstock Inn (c. 1778)
8. Brice Plantation (1851)
9. Brushy Fork Baptist Church (org. 1822)
10. Calvary Baptist Church (org. 1838)
11. **Catholic Presbyterian Church (org. 1759)**
12. Capers Chapel (org. 1855)
13. Cassells House (1856)
14. Cedarhurst (1850)
15. Chisolm Cemetery
16. Colvin Family Cemetery
17. **Colvin-Fant-Durham Farm Complex (c. 1830)**
18. Cornwell Family Cemetery
19. **Cornwell Inn (1841)**
20. Covenanter Cemetery (Brick Church)
21. Dodds House (c. 1790)
22. Douglas House (1784)



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Legend

- Interstate
- US / SC Highways
- Municipal Boundaries
- Water
- Historic Sites

Map 7 Chester County Historic Sites

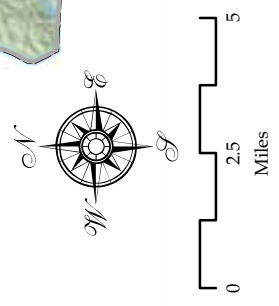


Table 18 (Continued)

**Historic Sites
Unincorporated Areas
Chester County**

23. Donovan Family Cemetery
24. Ebenezer United Methodist Church (org. 1845)
25. **Elliott House (c. 1770)** (This property has been moved)
26. Estes Plantation (1852)
27. **Fishdam Ford Battle Site (November 9, 1780)**
28. Fishing Creek Battle Site (August 8, 1780)
29. Fishing Creek Presbyterian Church (org. 1752)
30. Friendship House (c. 1830)
31. Gethsemane Baptist Church (org. 1852)
32. J. Samuel Guy House (c. 1868)
33. Reuben Cassels Guy House (1875)
34. William Newton Guy House (1820)
35. Harmony Baptist Church (org. 1839)
36. Hopewell A.R.P. Church (org. 1787)
37. Hopewell Baptist Cemetery
38. Irish Graveyard
39. Jordan House (late 1800's)
40. Lando (Manetta) Mills (c. 1880) (partially demolished)
41. Lando School (1905)
42. **Landsford Canal (1832)**
43. **Landsford (Davie) Plantation (c. 1830)**
44. Lees Mill (early 1800's)
45. **Lewis Inn (pre-Revolutionary)**
46. Lewisville Female Academy (c. 1840)
47. Liberty Baptist Church (org. 1832)
48. Lower Fishing Creek Cemetery (Burnt or Richardson's Cemetery)
49. Marion House (c. 1850)
50. Martin House (1913)
51. Rev. William Martin's Grave
52. **McCullom Fish Weir (pre-history)**
53. **McCullom Mound and House (pre-history)**
54. McKeown Family Cemetery
55. Millwood (c. 1845)
56. William Moffatt House (c. 1810) (This house has been moved)
57. Moffatt-Strong-McDill Cemetery
58. Mons Aesculapius (1828) (Site)
59. Mount Prospect United Methodist Church (org. early 1800s)
60. New Hope United Methodist Church (org. 1832)
61. Old Purity Presbyterian Cemetery

Table 18 (Continued)

Historic Sites Unincorporated Areas Chester County

62. Old Stone Graveyard
63. Osborne House (1853)
64. Paul's Cemetery (Covenanter)
65. Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church (org. 1848)
66. Pleasant Grove Presbyterian Church (org. 1831)
67. Simpson House (c. 1815)
68. Smyrna Church Cemetery (Associate Presbyterian)
69. John S. Stone House (1886)
70. Stringfellow Plantation (1852)
71. Union A.R.P. Church (org. c. 1775)
72. Uriel Presbyterian Church (org. 1888)
73. Wherry Plantation (1806; 1824) (This house has been moved)
74. Woodward Baptist Church (org. 1789)
75. Dr. Samuel Moffatt Wylie House (c. 1850)
76. William Wylie House (c. 1780)
77. Wyoming (c. 1830)

Note: **Bold type** indicates a property which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This listing is not intended to be a complete listing of historic properties. It is taken from existing lists and does not represent a full research effort. A historic sites survey of Chester County would reveal additional properties of historic importance.

The municipalities within Chester County have additional historic sites. The City of Chester contains a large historic district which is listed in the National Register. The Chester Historic District was established in 1972 and expanded in 1988. The Great Falls Historic District was listed in the National Register in 2000.

A number of private groups are active in identifying and protecting the historic resources which exist. The Chester County Historical Society operates the Chester County Historical Museum and is planning to establish a transportation museum. The Chester District Genealogical Society has a broad membership of people interested in the county's history and the families who have lived in Chester County over the years. This group has published a number of books on local history and has helped to document location of cemeteries and home sites throughout the county.

The City of Chester is a Certified Local Government with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

There are few developed commercial districts in the unincorporated areas of Chester County. The largest commercial districts are located in the City of Chester and the Town of Great Falls. The downtown sections of these two communities have traditionally served as the chief commercial districts. In recent years, significant new commercial development has developed along the J. A. Cochran By-Pass, creating a ring of commercial uses around the eastern fringe of the City of Chester. Most of this development is outside the city limits, and therefore under the jurisdiction of the county. The center of this new commercial area is at the intersection of the J. A. Cochran By-Pass and S. C. 9 (Lancaster Street). Commercial development in this area includes shopping centers, grocery stores, restaurants, auto dealerships, general commercial, and financial offices.

Another newer commercial district is developing at the interchange of S. C. 9 and I-77 to the west of Richburg. This area is largely developing to serve the traveling public, with restaurants, gas and convenience stores, and motels. Also developing in this area are distribution uses. Smaller commercial districts exist in the Town of Fort Lawn, and in other areas to the east and west of the Chester city limits.

These newly developing commercial districts lack the density and design characteristics of the older downtown commercial areas. Often oriented to take advantage of high-traffic locations, they also tend to add to the traffic problems. The Comprehensive Plan may need to address the characteristics of newly developing commercial areas to ensure wise development patterns occur in the future.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Most concentrated residential districts occur in the older areas within the city limits of Chester, Great Falls, Richburg, and Fort Lawn. Within the unincorporated areas of the county, there are several older residential areas which were originally textile mill village communities. The Eureka and Gayle communities are just outside the city limits of Chester. These mill village areas have a concentration of early twentieth century housing. The Lando community in

northeastern Chester County is another mill village in a rural setting. Edgemoor is an unincorporated community near the York County line which was at one time an important rail station. Several newer residential areas surround the City of Chester, especially around Old York Road to the north, Saluda Road to the northeast, S. C. 9 to the east, and U. S. 321/S. C. 97 to the southeast. Two communities exist just outside the Town of Great Falls. The Georgetown area and the Youngstown community both have a concentration of houses.

Other more rural areas of the county have scattered housing patterns. In recent years, a limited number of subdivisions have begun to develop in some of the eastern areas of the county.

NATURAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES

The quality of life in Chester County is enhanced by the beauty of the land. The gently rolling character of the topography and the broad vistas available in the countryside add to the character of the county. Several areas possess special scenic values.

A large area of western Chester County is included in the Sumter National Forest. The forest provides large areas of open space and natural habitats which stretch along the Broad River. The Woods Ferry Recreation Area provides vistas along the river. On the Catawba River, Landsford Canal State Park has beautiful views of the river and the shoals which created the ford. The nature trail along the river provides views of the spectacular Rocky Shoals Spider Lily, which blooms in the late spring. Chester State Park has a lake and scenic areas. Other areas with water-related scenic resources are Oliphant Lake and Mountain Lakes, a residential area south of Chester. The Great Falls area on the Catawba River at one time had a significant water fall. This has been flooded under a hydroelectric facility. However, there are still a number of scenic areas with views of the Catawba River and large changes in elevation. The Town of Great Falls and the Great falls Hometown Association are working with land owners and private conservation groups to encourage a program of nature-based tourism which will take advantage of the scenic attributes in the Great Falls area.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Chester County has a number of organizations which are involved in enhancing the cultural life of the community. The Chester County Arts Council is active in sponsoring local art shows and performances. The Chester Little Theater provides local performances on a regular basis.

Chester County also is the site of several annual festivals and events. The Flopeye Fish Festival in Great Falls is held annually and features concerts, fish fries, street events, and other activities. Great Falls has also begun a fall Heritage Day celebration and a reenactment of the Battle of Beckhamville in June. Chester has the annual Hillarity Days event in the downtown area. This festival involves extensive activities for children and adults. The Chester Downtown Development Association is working to develop additional downtown celebrations and festivals. Several communities have annual Christmas parades. The Town of Lowrys has a unique parade featuring horses and farm vehicles, emphasizing its rural farming heritage.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
CULTURAL RESOURCES**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
<p>To encourage preservation of important elements of the county's history and culture.</p>	<p>Encourage the recognition and preservation of historic, archaeological and cultural resources and sites through local and national survey and registration programs and through public ownership and management programs.</p> <p>Conduct a detailed survey of historic sites and cemeteries in Chester County and ensure that sites are designated on official maps.</p>	<p>Chester County Council Chester County Historical Society</p> <p>Chester County Historical Society</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2010</p>
<p>To encourage and expand cultural enrichment activities in communities countywide.</p>	<p>Encourage the Chester County Arts Council to act as a clearinghouse and resource for cultural activities.</p> <p>To form regional partnerships with other groups and agencies involved in cultural enrichment activities.</p> <p>Cooperate with the Olde English District to enhance opportunities for visitors to Chester County.</p>	<p>Chester County Arts Council</p> <p>Chester County Arts Council</p> <p>Chester County Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element outlines current development patterns in the county based on previous land use inventories. The majority of this data was collected during the 1990s but was updated recently with a review of aerial photography.

Included in this element is a description of the different land use classifications and a discussion of existing and future development patterns.

EXISTING LAND USE

The first step in any planning process is an analysis of existing conditions. In the case of land use planning, an accurate inventory of existing land uses is essential to an understanding of the problems and needs of the locality. In the 1990s, a land use inventory was undertaken for the unincorporated portions of Chester County by the former Chester County Planning Commission, using staff of Catawba Regional Council of Governments (CRCOG). This inventory conducted by CRCOG was updated this year through the use of aerial photography.

The land use inventory consisted of a “windshield survey” A team of two staff members drove each road in the county and recorded structures and their uses on tax maps furnished by the County Tax Assessor’s Office. These maps consisted of approximately 170 aerial photographs overlaid with property lines. This method of recording land use provides a thorough overview of development patterns within a reasonable period of time. Because the survey was limited to observations which could be made quickly from a passing automobile, detailed analysis of structural conditions was impossible.

The following land uses were identified:

Residential: All housing units were classified as either single-family detached, multi-family or mobile home. Manufactured or modular homes which were located on a permanent foundation also were considered to be single-family detached. All residential units also were identified as occupied or vacant.

Commercial: This classification included all retail and wholesale businesses; offices; professional, personal and business services; and transportation and warehouse operations.

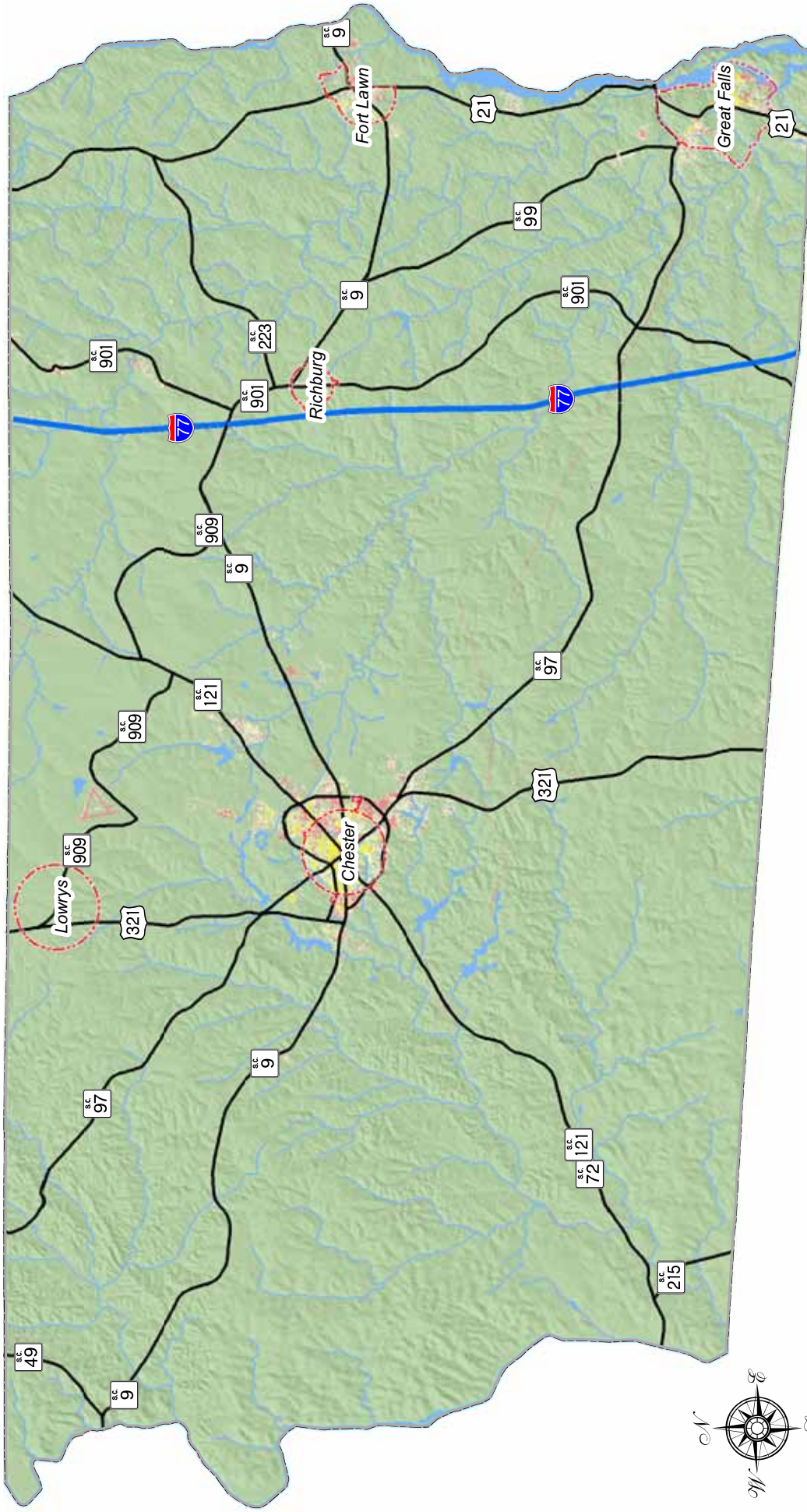
Industrial: All manufacturing, fabricating, and mining facilities were classified as industrial.

Public and Semi-public: This classification included all public buildings, schools, churches, cemeteries, parks, utilities, fraternal and charitable facilities, recreational facilities, and public service facilities.

The inventory did not record agricultural uses and open spaces. Where direct retail sale of agricultural products takes place, such as a farmers market or a plant nursery and greenhouse operation, the land use was classified as retail and was therefore recorded as commercial. Home businesses were recorded where a structure is used for commercial purposes (such as a garage or a beauty shop in a side yard) or where a sign clearly indicated a business use in part of the residence. When a large parcel of land was only partially used, a rough indication of the utilized area was sketched on the work map.

The land use information from the field maps has been consolidated and transferred to a permanent map at a smaller scale for presentation purposes. This map (Map 8) shows the generalized patterns of land use in the county. To follow is a discussion of these patterns.

Chester County still retains many characteristics of a predominately rural county. Although farming is no longer as important as a source of employment, large areas of the county are devoted to pasture land and to woodlands. The western section of the county contains a portion of the Sumter National Forest, with large expanses of timberland. Many large parcels in other areas of the county are owned by timber companies. Within the context of this rural pattern of development, a number of unincorporated communities such as Edgemoor, Blackstock and Lando have developed exhibiting the dense land use patterns typically found in an incorporated area. The cities of Chester and Great Falls have the largest populations, and the hinterlands around these municipalities are densely populated. This is especially true of the Gayle and



Legend

 Interstate	 US / SC Highways	 Municipal Boundaries	 Water
 Land Use Classification	 Open Space	 Low Intensity Residential	 High Intensity Residential
 Commercial / Industrial / Transportation			

Map 8 Chester County Existing Land Use

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Eureka Mill villages surrounding Chester and the Georgetown and Youngstown communities adjacent to Great Falls. The towns of Richburg, Fort Lawn and Lowrys are the county's other incorporated towns but have much smaller populations and development patterns similar to the communities previously mentioned.

Although the land use survey revealed that Chester County is continuing to grow, this growth is not concentrated in a single area. The fact that all five Census County Divisions show increased growth between 1990 and 2000 illustrates that the county's growth is widespread.

Land use patterns in many areas of Chester County remained intermixed. In most areas, the low density of development has reduced conflicts between potentially incompatible land uses. Commercial uses continue to be intermixed with residential while mobile homes and conventional homes are located in close proximity. Fortunately, these past development patterns has created few public controversies over conflicting land uses. However, as the county continues to grow, these conflicts will be more likely to occur. The past controversy over the location of an asphalt plant near residential areas is a good example of such conflicts.

It is anticipated that much of the future growth in the county will be influenced by the presence of I-77 and the direct linkage that corridor provides to York County and the Charlotte and Columbia metropolitan areas. Industrial and wholesale commercial growth are already highly visible in the Richburg area. There also is increasing residential growth in this area. To date, the industrial growth has been confined to existing industrial parks or along the S.C. 9 corridor. Water, sewer and natural gas are available around the I-77/S.C. 9 interchange, and large portions of this area will continue to develop as industrial or commercial. Another area with potential for increasing growth is the northeast section of the county, which is adjacent to York County and near the City of Rock Hill, the Catawba Region's largest municipality.

Potential for medium density residential growth exists in this area, which includes the Edgemoor and Lando communities. The major impediment to growth continues to be the lack of public water and sewer outside the Richburg area.

The area along S.C. 9 heading towards Chester and Fort Lawn also will experience increased growth due to the location of the corridor and the presence of water and natural gas. Public sewer also is available near Chester, Fort Lawn and Richburg. The new growth along this corridor will predominately be residential and commercial, with industrial growth clustering near the municipalities where public sewer is available.

The City of Chester and its surrounding area also will experience new growth but to a lesser extent than the Richburg area and the northeast portion of the county. This area will experience a variety of new development due to the presence of public infrastructure.

The industrial areas to the north of the city including the county's Industrial Park will likely further develop as well.

The remaining areas of the county including its western and southern sections will likely continue to be predominately rural for the indefinite future. Low density, primarily scattered residential growth will occur in this area. The only exceptions to this trend will be the area around Great Falls and the I-77/S.C. 97 interchange which should develop over time once public water and sewer is extended.

LAND USE PLAN

Chester County's Land Use Plan is a vision statement. It represents an ideal of how the county, with its growth properly managed, should develop over the next twenty years. It also reflects the hopes of county residents that the need to grow and develop can be balanced with the need to protect the environment and existing quality of life.

The previous sections of this document have helped to set the stage for the development of a Land Use Plan for Chester County. These sections have provided background information, documented problem areas and areas of potential progress, established physical limitations, and set forward a series of goals and objectives. These elements provide a foundation upon which the Land Use Plan can be built.

It is important that the purpose and role of the Land Use Plan be understood. It is a broad guideline for the development of Chester County over the next twenty years. It is not a development ordinance; it is the basis for development ordinances, such as zoning, which have been adopted by Chester County Council to implement the Plan. Because of its long time period and broad scope, the Land Use Plan is necessarily general in nature. It does not attempt to predict or determine the development of individual parcels of land. Rather, it recommends that general areas of the county develop a certain way. It attempts to anticipate development patterns directly but works to channel those patterns in an orderly and coordinated manner.

The Land Use Plan will serve as a guide for future decisions of the county government in a number of areas, including the implementation of development ordinances, the placement of public facilities and improvements, and protection of natural and cultural resources. The Plan must be constantly analyzed and should be revised at regular intervals in order to take into account new developments. The Land Use Plan can be effective in its efforts to improve development patterns in Chester County, but only if it is implemented in a timely and continuing manner.

Chester County is expected to experience moderate population growth over the next twenty years. The growth that is experienced is likely to be uneven in its distribution. Patterns of growth can be seen emerging at the present time, influenced by several factors, such as transportation facilities, the availability of water and sewage service, and established patterns of land use. This section of the Plan will attempt to describe these emerging patterns of growth, which can be expected to develop more fully over the twenty-year period of the Plan.

The area of highest growth will be around a corridor along S.C. Highway 9 from the City of Chester eastward to the Town of Fort Lawn. Several factors will influence the growth of this corridor. First, the area has existing urban concentrations which will be expanding. The City of Chester, on the western end of the corridor, is by far the largest municipality and the area around Chester should continue to expand. Chester will retain its role as the governmental, cultural, and

business center of the county. Richburg and Fort Lawn provide focal points for growth near the center and the eastern end of the corridor. A second factor is the presence of excellent transportation facilities. The influence of Interstate 77 is already very evident in the Richburg area and the S.C. Highway 9 interchange. The interstate provides easy access to urban areas, such as Charlotte and Columbia, and will serve as an important factor in growth of all types. The development of S. C. Highway 9 as a major east-west route and an access point to Interstate 77 has been enhanced due to its widening to four lanes through the length of the growth corridor. A third factor in the growth of this area is the presence of water and sewer service. The existing water main along S.C. Highway 9 provides a water supply to the entire corridor. Sewage service is available in the areas surrounding Chester and Richburg and in Fort Lawn. It can be anticipated that sewage service will be made available to larger areas of the corridor as growth occurs. The presence of adequate utilities can be a major factor in the attraction of industrial, commercial and higher quality residential growth. A final factor in the development of this corridor is the influence of external growth patterns. York County to the north is already experiencing strong growth in the Fort Mill Township and around the City of Rock Hill from the expansion of the Charlotte urban area. As this growth continues, areas of Chester County with good access to Interstate 77 can be expected to begin to develop with medium to low density residential uses. The access to the Charlotte urban area and its international airport is already evident in the industrial growth which is occurring along the S.C. Highway 9 corridor in the Richburg area.

Away from the major transportation arteries and the cities, areas of medium intensity growth are expected to develop. Some of these areas will have partial utility services. These medium growth areas can expect scattered development which will make them somewhat more dense in nature. However, most of the development will be residential in character, and the areas should retain their rural orientation. Several factors will be at work in these areas. The Great Falls area should continue to recover from the decline in the textile industry. New employers will locate in the area, the connection with Interstate 77 via S.C. Highway 97 will become more important, and modest growth can be expected in the areas around Great Falls. The areas along the York County border have already begun to experience some increase in housing activity as growth

crosses the border. Continued residential growth in this area can be expected. If water and sewer service becomes available, higher density residential growth can be anticipated, with larger and more densely developed subdivisions. The areas to the south and west of Chester should continue to develop as the city grows.

Much of southern and western Chester County is still very rural in nature. The current existing land use patterns can be expected to continue in these areas. Forestry and agriculture are the largest land uses along with scattered residential development. The presence of the Sumter National Forest on the county's western border, extensive privately owned timberlands in other sections and the lack of public infrastructure will preclude development of large areas.

Designation as a low growth area does not mean that rural sections of the county will not change. Scattered residential and small commercial will continue to occur. Many people seek out a rural lifestyle with reasonable access to employment opportunities. The development of residential subdivisions in some areas can be expected. It also is possible that industrial development could occur. Some firms seek out large sites and do not require public utilities. For the most part, however, the rural areas should not experience major growth over the next twenty years.

In addition to a discussion of growth patterns, it also is worthwhile to examine trends for various types of land use. The major categories to be examined are residential, public, industrial, commercial, and agricultural.

Residential. The predominant housing type in Chester County currently is the single family home. Housing densities are generally low except in and around the largest urban areas of Chester and Great Falls. Mobile homes remain an important part of the housing mix. Over the next twenty years, it is anticipated that Chester County will begin to experience more growth in the housing stock as the population grows.

In the high growth areas, housing will have the greatest diversity in type and density. Single family homes will be located on individual parcels and in subdivisions. It is expected that subdivisions will become more prevalent. Mobile homes will be located on individual lots, in

subdivisions, and in mobile home parks. Multi-family housing, currently limited to small apartment complexes, should become more common as densities increase. Environmental regulations relating to water supplies and sewage disposal have become more strict. These regulations will tend to limit larger and higher density developments to areas where public water and sewer services are available. Land use controls will provide separation between residential uses based on densities and housing types. These residential land use categories will need to be most highly defined in high growth areas.

In the medium growth areas, where public utilities are generally not available, the density of residential development will be lower. Subdivisions will have lot sizes large enough to accommodate the use of septic tanks. These large-lot subdivisions are more likely to develop in the northeastern section of Chester County. Higher density subdivision, mobile home parks, and multi-family housing will be limited by lack of public utilities. Land use controls for residential uses in the medium growth areas are less rigid than those imposed in high growth areas.

The rural areas of Chester County should remain the same in character, with residential growth taking the form of single family houses and mobile homes scattered on individual parcels of land. Some large-lot subdivisions for homes and/or mobile homes may develop in these areas. Higher density housing types are unlikely. Land use controls related to residential uses in these areas are relatively unrestricted.

Public. Public land uses include schools, parks and recreation areas, government properties, and cultural facilities. Also included in the concept of public properties can be semi-public land uses such as churches, cemeteries, privately owned recreational facilities, and lodges and other civic and cultural facilities. The Land Use Plan attempts to recognize the importance of these types of land uses. They should be placed wherever possible with good public access and should be provided with protection from incompatible land uses where necessary. Many public uses are compatible with low density residential land use patterns. Others have higher volumes of traffic and properly belong in a more densely developed area. Some others, such as maintenance facilities and landfills, may have negative impacts on surrounding land uses.

Recreational facilities are needed in many areas of Chester County. The Catawba Regional Outdoor Recreation Plan, published in 1980, establishes a number of potential areas for mini-parks, neighborhood parks, play fields, and recreational complexes. These facilities should be placed where they are convenient to residential areas and easily accessible. The concept of reserving flood plains and other areas undesirable for intensive development for passive recreational areas should be pursued. In many communities, this has provided needed open space, preserved flood plains and allowed for some public use of the land.

The county contains two state parks and some recreational areas within the Sumter National Forest. While both Chester State Park and Landsford State Park are currently in areas of little development, they may need to be provided with buffer zones as the surrounding land is developed. This will help to avoid incompatible commercial or industrial development and preserve scenic vistas and park environment. Currently, a non-disturbed vegetative buffer of 100 feet also is in place for the riparian land along the Catawba and Broad rivers.

A number of historical, archaeological, and unique natural sites were noted in the body of this document. Protection of these areas as important elements of our cultural and natural resource heritage is recommended. It is uncertain whether public agencies will be able to acquire and preserve many of these areas.

Industrial Development. Because of the special requirements large industrial uses have, much of the new industrial growth expected to take place in Chester County will be in the high growth area. This area already has all of the major assets that industrial uses need such as utilities, various forms of transport and prime location for quick access to major markets. Not surprisingly much of the new growth is predicted to occur in the county's industrial parks or in areas adjacent to existing industries. However, as utilities are extended along prime transportation corridors such as Interstate 77 and S.C. Highway 9, there will be opportunities for new sites to be developed for industrial use. Through a combination of zoning regulation and the timely and aggressive extension of needed infrastructure, the county can insure that prime sites are established for future industrial needs.

The medium and low growth areas of the county are not expected to experience much new industrial growth. Lack of needed utilities and indirect access to Interstate 77 are some of the factors which will inhibit industrial growth in these areas. When new growth does occur, it will probably consist of small to medium sized facilities which can be supported by private water and sewer systems and which are adjacent to existing industrial uses.

Commercial Development. Unlike industrial development, new commercial development is likely to occur countywide. However, many of the factors which affect industrial development also will play a role in determining the location of certain commercial enterprises. The availability of needed utilities in the high growth areas will allow for the development of large scale commercial uses such as warehousing/shipping facilities and shopping centers. These uses are expected to cluster at major intersections around Chester and Richburg and near existing industrial uses. Medium to small commercial uses such as small retail establishments, convenience stores and small businesses will likely occur in all areas of the county depending upon the feasibility of private water and sewer systems. The most likely location for these new commercial enterprises will be at the intersections of state roads. As was the case with industrial uses, zoning regulations should help to reserve prime locations for commercial use while serving to prevent negative development patterns such as strip development along major traffic corridors.

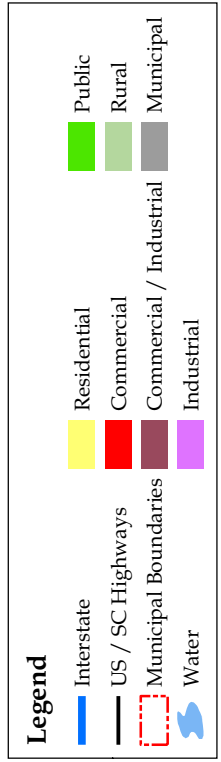
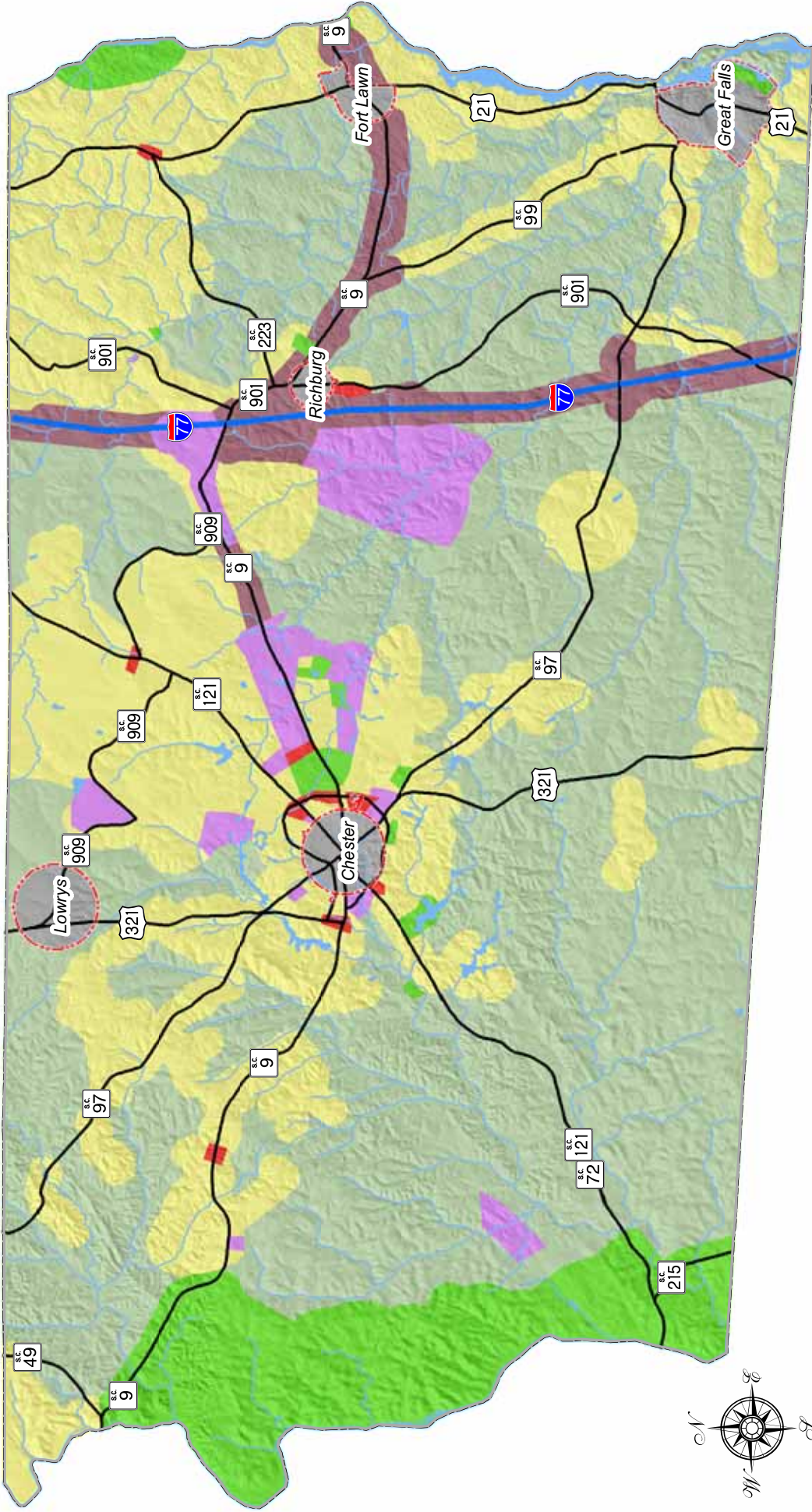
Agriculture, Forestry and Open Space. The bulk of the land area of Chester County will continue to be devoted to open space. This land may be used for cropland, grazing land, woodlands, and vacant areas. The preservation of open spaces will help to maintain the rural character of Chester County. Agricultural uses, while not a major factor in employment, continue to be important to the economy of the county. Patterns of crop planting and livestock farming will change over the years as market conditions change. Prime soils for farming should be preserved so that they will be available in future years.

LAND USE PLAN MAP

The Land Use Plan Map is intended to provide a graphical representation of development patterns in Chester County over the coming twenty years. It is important to realize that this is a generalized map; the boundaries of various areas are not specific and individual parcels are not identified. The Land Use Plan Map (see Map 9) provides a general guideline for the way in which land use will develop.

Several basic concepts are evident. Based on the projections of high and medium growth areas already discussed, the major areas of development will be along the S.C. Highway 9 corridor for Chester east to Fort Lawn. This area, which to a large extent has public utility services, is shown with concentrated development patterns. Industrial and/or commercial growth, also is expected to move north along I-77 to the York County and Fairfield County lines and along S.C. Highway 9 between Chester and Fort Lawn as infrastructure is extended. Residential development is expected to expand in existing areas particularly around the City of Chester, the Edgemoor Community, along S. C. Highway 72/121 and the Catawba River. Future commercial development will occur in already established areas and in concentrations at major intersections throughout the county. Large areas of southern and western Chester County are expected to remain largely rural, with scattered development.

The yellow areas represent the areas of greatest residential density. At this point, no distinction is made between various types of residential housing. Although these areas are expected to be predominately residential in nature, they may contain small neighborhood commercial and service areas. Residential development will be most dense in those areas with water and sewage service. The general pattern is to encourage infill development where utilities and services are available and to discourage residential growth which occurs in a scattered pattern, encroaching on open space and prime agricultural lands.



Map 9
Chester County
 Future Land Use

Map Produced By:
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Catawba Regional COG disclaims any responsibility for damages or liability that may arise from the use of this map. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.



The areas shown as white represent a less dense pattern of development. These areas will develop mainly with houses and mobile homes on individual parcels of land. This residential development pattern will be scattered and provide for open space, agricultural uses, and forestry. Small-scale neighborhood commercial uses may be located in these areas, as may small industries. Because densities will be relatively low, land use conflicts should be minimized. In general, these low density development areas will continue to resemble the open country side with which we are currently familiar.

The blue areas represent lands reserved for industrial development. These areas generally have good access to water and sewer service, are near rail lines and major transportation arteries, and are near current areas of industrial development. These prime industrial areas should be preserved to accommodate future economic development needs.

Commercial concentrations are represented in red. Major commercial areas are shown with access to traffic arteries and at strategic intersections. Small neighborhood commercial uses are not shown and may develop at a number of points with convenient access from residential areas.

Public areas are shown in green. While there are still private inholdings within the boundaries of Sumter National Forest, it is assumed that these will be acquired over a period of time. Many small public and semi-public areas, such as churches, cemeteries and playgrounds, are not shown on the map. However, they should be provided protection through development ordinances. Specific sites for new recreational facilities, schools, and cultural facilities are not shown. These sites will be located by various agencies at an appropriate time.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
LAND USE ELEMENT**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	TIMEFRAME
To use sound judgment and proper planning to ensure that future growth in the County is compatible with existing development and enhances the quality of life.	To maintain a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.	Chester County Council Chester County Planning Commission	2005-2025
To hire qualified professional staff to enforce the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations.	To hire a qualified Zoning Administrator/Planner.	Chester County Council	2005-2025
To keep the Comprehensive Plan updated so that it accurately reflects socio-economic trends and the changing needs of County citizens.	To update the Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every five years.	Chester County Planning Commission	2005-2025