

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY



Expand a vibrant and diversified economic climate that provides a range of employment opportunities, retains existing businesses and attracts new businesses



Boeing



SAIC



Trident Medical Center



Roper Hospital Office Park



Mercedes Benz

North Charleston has a strong economy based on its successes in commercial and industrial development. As such, it has continued to be a significant employment hub in the region which continues to grow. In 2018, an estimated 5,662 businesses in the City of North Charleston employed slightly fewer than 95,000 people. Principal industry groups in the City include Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing, Retail Trade, and Healthcare Services. Major employers located in the City include:

- **Boeing SC**
- **Trident Medical Center**
- **Trident Technical College**
- **Mercedes-Benz Vans LLC**
- **Detyen's Shipyard**
- **Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)**
- **Scientific Research Corporation**
- **Joint Base Charleston**

While the City enjoys economic prosperity, it is important to recognize and continue the collaboration needed to sustain economic growth. Partnerships with both public and private sector interests will serve as the basis for economic sustainability and future growth.

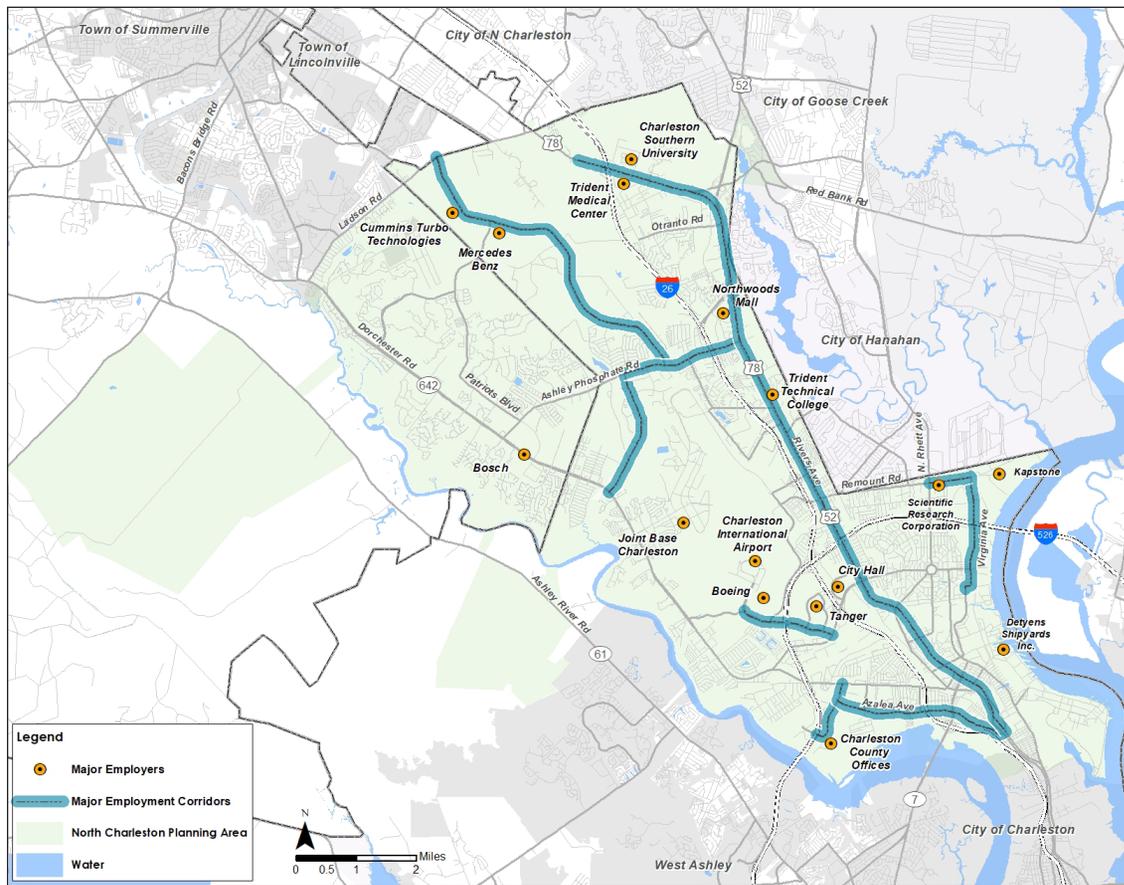
Approximately 95,000 people are employed by 5,662 businesses and industries located within the City of North Charleston – more employees and businesses than in either Berkeley or Dorchester Counties.



Joint Base Charleston Air Force Base main entrance

EO-GOAL 1: <i>Encourage economic activity that capitalizes on North Charleston's locational advantages and economic assets</i>	
EO-1A	Continue to encourage the revitalization of North Charleston's commercial corridors and nodes by improving public infrastructure
EO-1B	Continue coordinating with the SC Ports Authority, Palmetto Railways, and the SC Department of Transportation in long range planning, including intermodal infrastructure advances and improvements, to support the City's role in the maritime industry
EO-1C	Capitalize on opportunities for additional port-related investment, including recruitment of import-export firms
EO-1D	Coordinate long range planning with universities, colleges, and medical institutions to attract spinoff investment in research and development and provide opportunities for training
EO-1E	Support and promote North Charleston as a business and cultural center of the region through continued marketing and recruitment activities
EO-1F	Develop a plan to ensure the vitality of the former Navy Base, capitalizing on its potential as an economic catalyst, including defining the southern base area for port supportive activities and creating a small area master plan for the northern area of the base to guide and direct public and private investment to implement the vision for a future downtown North Charleston
EO-1G	Continue support of airport expansion and supporting industries
EO-1H	Position the City to be competitive in future federal and state economic incentives and programs, such as brownfield funding, opportunity zones and small business incubation

The key to economic stability is the synergy of co-location by commercial enterprises. For the most part, the City's current commercial economy is centered along principal transportation corridors. Growth of future commercial development should be guided to vacant and underdeveloped lots located along those same corridors where the infrastructure exists. These mixed-use corridors and employment areas are shown on the Future Land Use Map. Where needed, infrastructure in those corridors should be enhanced. Without question, the City should continuously evaluate ways to maintain its well-known "business-friendly" environment.



North Charleston Employment Corridors

EO-GOAL 2:

Locate intensive commercial and/or industrial uses where supportive infrastructure exists and impacts on neighborhoods can be mitigated

EO-2A	Develop a program of incentives to foster infill development of commercial and employment uses along transportation corridors that are easily accessible to residents, employees, and customers
EO-2B	Enhance economic viability of commercial corridors as shown on the Future Land Use Map
EO-2C	Invest in existing infrastructure to attract and retain businesses
EO-2D	Evaluate the impact of City processes on doing business, including permitting, business licensing and other requirements, and modify where appropriate to support business investment

Despite its economic success and prosperity, as well as being the region’s employment hub, some of the City’s population groups continue to face greater challenges accessing employment within the City. While greatly improved since the recession, North Charleston has an unemployment rate of 8.4% - greater than any of its neighboring jurisdictions. With lower levels of educational attainment coupled with a higher proportion of households with no or limited access to vehicles, many residents are disadvantaged by a lack of education or training to gain employment, and/or face challenges in securing reliable transportation to job skills training or to work.

Equitable access to education, training, and/or jobs is needed to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity for employment. SC Works and other agencies provide connections between unemployed and underemployed members of the labor force to education and training and/or jobs so that a lack of skilled labor is not a challenge to continued economic growth. Likewise, there are opportunities for collaborations to support the retention and growth of small businesses desiring a City of North Charleston location and/or affordable commercial spaces.



Lowcountry Local First’s Good Enterprises Initiative Community Business Academy



*Trident Technical College -
Aeronautical Center*

EO-GOAL 3:

Attract businesses that will provide increased opportunities for North Charleston’s citizens to work within the City, thereby creating a strong local employment base

EO-3A	Continue to support and work with the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, the counties’ economic development departments, and other regional business organizations to retain existing businesses and recruit new employment opportunities
EO-3B	Work with the Charleston County School District, the Dorchester School District Two, Trident Technical College, Charleston Southern University, Ready SC and the State Department of Education to improve education and development of a skilled labor force
EO-3C	Identify and adopt incentives for small businesses and work with partners to create “incubator” spaces or business districts for new commerce



A BERKELEY-CHARLESTON-DORCHESTER COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PROGRAM

Historical and cultural arts resources are another economic sector that is key to the City’s quality of life. Cultural resources should be accessible to all residents.

This is **prime** time for the City to integrate spaces for permanent art exhibits and historic archives that are accessible to the public, whether in formal museum spaces or galleries or at public spaces. The future bus rapid transit system has the potential to bring cultural resources to the larger North Charleston area beyond I-526 expanding greater access to the community at-large. Due to the City’s recent growth, the inventory of the City’s historic properties, most recently conducted in the mid-1990s should also be updated.



City Arts Festival Exhibit

EO-GOAL 4:

Utilize North Charleston’s cultural assets as a generator for the local economy

EO-4A	Identify funding sources to continue providing support for local arts organizations and establish a permanent cultural arts center/art gallery/museum to celebrate the City’s diverse history and promote the arts
EO-4B	Integrate public arts at all future bus rapid transit stations for branding and display purposes
EO-4C	Conduct and maintain an updated Historical and Architectural Survey
EO-4D	Expand farmer’s market to other areas within the City