9.0 LAND USE

9.1 OVERVIEW

Analyzing existing land use and development patterns is a critical component that along with the other existing conditions elements create the framework for the long range land use planning ideas that will be expressed as goals coming out of the Comprehensive Plan, guiding future land use decisions for the City’s next 20 years.

9.1.1 Previous Planning Work

It is worth mentioning a few plans that have been developed over the past decade. The Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC) developed an Area Revitalization Plan that was completed in 2010.32 LAMC organized in 2005 in an effort to preserve and protect the communities that were close to the where the South Carolina General Assembly sited the Hugh Leatherman Terminal in North Charleston. In 2014, BCDCOG completed the Partnership for Prosperity Master Plan (PPMP).33 The PPMP examined the transit network, bike and pedestrian facilities, freight mobility, economic development, open spaces and recreation, environmental sustainability, and catalyst areas in the “Neck Area” which includes portions of both North Charleston and Charleston.

9.2 EXISTING LAND USE

9.2.1 Planning Area 1

Planning Area 1 is the core of North Charleston as it contains some of the oldest neighborhoods that were established well before the City’s incorporation. Liberty Hill, which is the oldest neighborhood in North Charleston, was founded in the 1870s for instance. Neighborhoods like Cherokee Place, Charleston Heights, and Chicora Place were developed between 1903 and 1930. In 1915, the Park Circle neighborhood was laid out as a concentric Garden City style development that stemmed from an open space in the center. The homes in parts of Park Circle were built between 1915 and 1940 and the urban form is generally very pedestrian friendly as it measures from the center approximately one-half mile in any direction. In fact, it is only a one-half mile from the center of Park Circle to the center of the Olde Village business district on East Montague Avenue.

32. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzyq5cLI02kI5tSmUtamt4S WNqcW/view
World War II sparked a housing boom during the early 1940s as the Naval Base brought in more service members for operations. Neighborhoods such as Whipper Barony, Liberty Park, Ferndale, and Russelldale were built to increase the housing supply for service members. The location and density of these neighborhoods suggest that the developments occurred before automobiles became the primary form of travel in the United States. After the 1980s, and particularly after the closure of the Naval Base, many of these areas suffered from suburban flight and minimal reinvestment, becoming blighted with abandoned and vacant properties.

However, since the early 2000s, Planning Area 1 has seen a resurgence of new developments that are revitalizing the area. Younger families and new businesses are moving to Park Circle and the Olde Village is thriving with new shops, restaurants, and small offices. The majority of the surrounding Park Circle neighborhoods have a grid system, traditional lot size, and small front yard setbacks. Similarly, the former Liberty Homes/Century Oaks site has been redeveloped into a walkable, eco-conscious neighborhood called Oak Terrace Preserve.34

While Planning Area 1 does not consist of large-scale commercial or retail developments, Rivers Avenue is the main commercial corridor that traverses it today. Rivers Avenue is a highway lined with strip commercial uses and is very sub-urban in context with parking lots built towards the street and buildings set back at far distances. Spruill Avenue is another major corridor that runs north and south. In fact, the section of Spruill Avenue that begins at East Montague Avenue is seeing new business growth today. East Montague between North Boulevard and Virginia Avenue is already an established commercial corridor in the Olde Village, however, East Montague from approximately Mixson Avenue to I-26 is a major avenue for travel. Remount Road, from Virginia Avenue to I-26 is another east/west corridor that abuts Hanahan. Lastly, Reynolds Avenue from Meeting Street to Spruill Avenue contains a small business district and scattered commercial along the corridor.

34. http://www.oakterracepreservesc.com/
9.2.2 Planning Area 2

While Planning Area 2 has some residential areas, it mainly consists of large commercial, office, and industrial uses. The residential areas are generally located on local streets off of Dorchester Road and Azalea Drive. Accabee and Dorchester Terrace are located in the southern portion of Planning Area 2, while Hunley Park and Riverbend exist at the northern end. These residential areas include a mix of single-family, multi-family, and mobile homes. The southern end is typically more urban with smaller lots and more grid-like streets. The northern end consists of post-World War II conventional suburban large lots and streets with one generally one way in and out of the neighborhood.

Charleston International Airport and the Charleston Air Force Base, comprise most of the land in Planning Area 2. Boeing, a commercial airplane manufacturer, also abuts Joint Base Charleston. Centre Point development, south of I-526, is a horizontal mixed-use development made up of residential apartments, commercial, convention, and office uses. It incorporates the North Charleston Coliseum, Convention Center, and Performing Arts Center, along with the Tanger Outlet Mall. There are also some major office developments located along Leeds Avenue, and industrial uses toward the intersections with Azalea Drive and Dorchester Road. The Charleston County Public Services Building is located south of Leeds Avenue, and the Charleston County Detention Center is located on Leeds south of Azalea Drive. Leeds Avenue and Faber Place Drive consist of a large commercial site and an office park that step back from I-526 as a buffer for the Wando Woods neighborhood.

Dorchester Road is the major thoroughfare through Planning Area 2. As Dorchester Road moves northwest from I-26, it becomes increasingly more suburban in context. On Dorchester Road, between Michaux Parkway and I-26, there are lots of strip centers and businesses for commerce to take place. After Michaux Parkway, heading northwest, there are only spots where a few businesses exist directly along the corridor as the corridor turns into more entrances for residential communities. Cross County Road connects Dorchester Road with Ashley Phosphate Road and consists mainly of commercial and industrial uses.

9.2.3 Planning Area 3

Planning Area 3, is largely within Dorchester County and is almost entirely developed as suburban residential. The older residential developments in this area include Coosaw Creek, Kings Grant, Indigo Fields, and Whitehall. A more recent development is Wescott Plantation, which is the largest development in Planning Area 3. Wescott Plantation offers a variety of housing types, of different sizes and prices, along with some commercial uses. Dorchester Road is the major thoroughfare through Planning Area 3 with limited commercial nodes at intersections like Ashley Phosphate Road, Appian Way, Club Course Drive, and Wescott Boulevard. Sparse strip commercial development exists along Dorchester Road in Planning Area 3 as it is mainly serves as access to single family neighborhoods. Ashley Phosphate Road does provide commercial opportunities for the residents in North Charleston as well.

On the west side of the Ashley River in Dorchester County, the Watson Hill tract was recently sold and plans for future mixed-use development are being developed. There are conservation easements in place to help protect this ecologically sensitive area by limiting residential development to 1004 principal dwelling units. In Charleston County, North Charleston recently annexed Runnymede and Millbrook Plantations in addition to a 2,200-acre tract west of the Ashley River. Currently this land is undeveloped but has the potential for development in the future.
Planning Area 3 has the potential to grow by future annexations as the other areas are mostly land locked. The potential to expand further into both Charleston and Dorchester Counties exists to accommodate future growth.

9.2.4 Planning Area 4

This area is the northeastern quadrant of North Charleston which is bounded by Dorchester and Berkeley Counties. Planning Area 4 consists of many residential neighborhoods along Rivers Avenue that were developed in the 1970s and 1980s as people moved out of the City’s core. Neighborhoods in Planning Area 4 include Northwoods Estates, Deer Park, Elms Plantation, Plantation Acres, Paddock Pointe, Pepperhill, and Spencer Creek Woods.

Commercial land uses in the area include the Northwoods Mall and other retail centers along Ashley Phosphate Road and Rivers Avenue east of I-26. Trident Medical Center, Charleston Southern University, and Wannamaker County Park are all also included in this area.

More recent development has occurred and will continue to develop along Palmetto Commerce Parkway and Ingleside Boulevard. Palmetto Commerce Park has grown with industrial uses in recent years, particularly to supply Boeing and Mercedes Benz. Ingleside Boulevard supplies access to both residential and commercial development.

9.3 EXISTING LAND USE*

Table 23 shows how much of each land use category exists in each planning area within North Charleston. The Existing Land Use Map (Figure 65) shows generalized categories for Charleston’s current land uses. The definitions of each category are below.

- Agriculture / Forestry - Land that is used and/or suitable for agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, and other low intensity uses and may contain a homestead or farmhouse.
- Commercial Retail and Services - Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, service provision, and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building in urbanized areas. These uses are typically found in town centers and along major roadways.
- Government - The Government land uses are used for public uses and consist of government owned or operated buildings. Government uses include City Hall and other government buildings or complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, and post offices.
- Industrial/Manufacturing/Waste - Land that is designated to accommodate manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, waste sites, or other similar uses.
- Office – Land designated for business office space.

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* Land Use is based off of the Charleston and Dorchester Counties Assessors’ Information and does not constitute local zoning.
• Recreation/Arts/Cultural/Open Space - Land is dedicated to active or passive recreational uses, as well as land conserved as green space where development is restricted. These areas may be publicly or privately owned and may include public parks, playgrounds, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses. These areas also provide public benefits and ecosystem services such as water filtration, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, and natural flood control.

• Residential - Land used for housing units and is divided into the following three categories:
  • Single-Family Residential: consists of built homes on a single lot or a townhomes.
  • Multi-Family Residential: consists of residential properties with more than one housing unit per structure, such as duplexes, triplexes, condos, and apartments.
  • Mobile Homes: consists of manufactured housing on individual lots or in planned developments and cooperative communities.

• Social/Institutional - Social/Institutional lands are used for nonprofit uses, such as schools, religious institutions, hospitals and assisted living facilities.

• Transportation/Utilities - This land use category is comprised of rights of way, railroads, utilities, public facilities and services, major transportation routes, public transit stations, or other similar uses.

• Undevelopable - This category is for lots or tracts of land that are restricted from future development due to easement, environmental constraints, etcetera.

• Vacant Land - This category is for lots or tracts of land that are undeveloped and unused, but not necessarily designated as open space or restricted from future development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
<th>Planning Area 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Planning Area 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Planning Area 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Planning Area 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>% Of Total</td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>% Of Total</td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>% Of Total</td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>% Of Total</td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>% Of Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/ Forestry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>16,369</td>
<td>85.37%</td>
<td>2,609</td>
<td>13.61%</td>
<td>19,174</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Retail and Services</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td>20.97%</td>
<td>2,878</td>
<td>37.03%</td>
<td>1,293</td>
<td>16.63%</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>25.36%</td>
<td>7,772</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Facilities &amp; Properties</td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td>70.95%</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>28.17%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>1,566</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial/Manufacturing/Waste</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>43.92%</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>23.73%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>32.34%</td>
<td>3,415</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Home</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>45.58%</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>30.82%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>23.61%</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily</td>
<td>2,535</td>
<td>22.95%</td>
<td>7,256</td>
<td>65.69%</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
<td>1,117</td>
<td>10.11%</td>
<td>11,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>28.69%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>30.13%</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation, Arts, Cultural, Open Space</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>7.85%</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>33.12%</td>
<td>1,781</td>
<td>51.57%</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>7.46%</td>
<td>3,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Attached</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19.30%</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>58.15%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22.56%</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Detached</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>14.19%</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>18.70%</td>
<td>4,863</td>
<td>52.88%</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>14.22%</td>
<td>9,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Institutional</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>14.52%</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>10.67%</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>26.97%</td>
<td>1,294</td>
<td>47.84%</td>
<td>2,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Utilities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.58%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.66%</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>94.76%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undevelopable</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>22.03%</td>
<td>1,023</td>
<td>55.85%</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>4.78%</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>17.34%</td>
<td>1,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities/Infrastructure</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>16.85%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>14.68%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>68.47%</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Nonresidential</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>28.55%</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>36.40%</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>9.56%</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>25.49%</td>
<td>2,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Residential</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>20.56%</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>22.96%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1,309</td>
<td>56.48%</td>
<td>2,318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23: Land Use by Planning Area in Acres
Figure 65: Existing Land Use
9.4 OVERLAY DISTRICTS

While zoning helps to site and identify the appropriate use for individual parcels of land, overlay districts can be applied to establish additional standards over larger areas. Overlays can also be used to improve design standards to insure higher qualities of building materials are used. Lastly, overlays can be used to promote mixed-use, affordable housing, or to improve housing along transit corridors. The specific design detail for each district is located in the North Charleston Zoning Regulations.

9.4.1 Dorchester Road Corridor I District
The Dorchester Road Corridor I District covers all of the parcels that are located within Dorchester County. The overlay establishes a front forty-foot vegetative buffer along Dorchester Road, such that when one drives down Dorchester Road, the main sight is usually trees. This preserves the character of the road and helps to mitigate noise and light pollution. This overlay is bounded by Ladson Road and the Charleston County line as depicted in Figure 66.

9.4.2 Dorchester Road Corridor II District
The Dorchester Road Corridor II District is bounded by the Ashley River, the Mark Clark Expressway, the Norfolk Southern rail line, Ashley Phosphate Road, and the Dorchester County line. Similar to District I, District II has a front fifteen foot vegetative buffer along private and public rights-of-way. The buffer is intended for aesthetics rather than screening purposes.

9.4.3 Ladson Road Overlay District
Like the Dorchester Road Corridor II District, the Ladson Road Overlay District requires a front vegetative fifteen foot aesthetic buffer along private and public rights-of-way. The Ladson Road Overlay is generally bounded by Ladson Road on the north, the Dorchester County line on the west, I-26 on the east, and Ashley Phosphate Road on the south.

9.4.4 University Boulevard Overlay District
The only front corridor buffer in this overlay district exists on US 78 and it is a fifteen foot vegetative buffer as well. This district includes all parcels of land south of Goose Creek, east of I-26, west of Rivers Avenue/US 52 and generally north of I-26, US 52 and the US 78 Connector.

9.4.5 Old Village Business Overlay District
The Old Village Business Overlay District is generally bounded by Stone's Alley on the north, Virginia Avenue on the east, Cat Alley on the South, and Jenkins Avenue on the west. The Garco Park planned development is also included in this district. This overlay allows for sidewalk cafés to exist.

9.4.6 Historic and Scenic Overlays
Other overlays that protect and preserve land in North Charleston can be found in Figure 37 in Chapter 6, Cultural and Historic Resources.

Figure 66: North Charleston Overlay Districts
9.5  **JOINT LAND USE STUDY**

The Charleston Air Force Base and Naval Weapons Station periodically review and conduct a regional Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). The JLUS is a cooperative plan conducted between the military and the surrounding local jurisdictions to determine compatible and appropriate land uses. An Air Force base generates noise, smoke, and pollution that could be detrimental to residential areas. Likewise, new developments in a jurisdiction in proximity to the base may put constraints on the operations of the military. The JLUS works to identify solutions that are beneficial to the local jurisdiction(s) and the military installation. The most recent JLUS prepared for Joint Base Charleston (JBC) was prepared in 2008. Since then, the Council of Governments has worked with regional leaders to implement various activities recommended in the 2008 JLUS with assistance of a grant from the Department of Defense’s Office of Economic Adjustment. At the time of this Plan, the COG continues to coordinate with Joint Base Charleston and a Policy Oversight Committee of regional leaders to enhance communications between JBC leaders and surrounding communities as JLUS Implementation Phase II.

9.5.1  **AICUZ**

The Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) study is a Department of Defense standard for noise, clear zones, and accident potential zones. Noise contours show the average Decibel level (dBl) experienced in those areas. Figure 67 shows the AICUZ Impact Zones for the Charleston Air Force Base. A Clear Zone (CZ) is the area that has the highest probability for an air accident and is a 9,000,000 square foot area at the end of the runways. Accident Potential Zone I (APZI) has the second highest probability for an accident and the land area is 15,000,000 square feet past the CZ. Lastly, the area that is 21,000,000 square feet past APZI is considered the Accident Potential Zone II (APZII). Figure 67 overlays these zones on an aerial of the surrounding community. An updated AICUZ study was released by Joint Base Charleston in August of 2019. While the Clear and Accident Potential Zones have not substantively changed, Joint Base Charleston continues to express concerns about increasing development intensities and traffic within those zones. As part of the JLUS Implementation Phase II, the Policy Oversight Committee is discussing efforts that could be undertaken to educate the public about the missions of Joint Base Charleston, as well as Accident Potential Zones and programs to acquire land and/or redirect development out of those areas.

**Community Partnership Charter**

In late January 2020, the City of North Charleston’s Mayor was one of the many community leaders who signed a Charter establishing the Lowcountry Defense Community Partnership Council. The purpose of this new Council is to identify partnership opportunities between Joint Base Charleston and surrounding communities, as well as to deepen collaboration among community and military leaders in the region. An important framework for this collaboration is the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). Ut es traed iptimis sentus scis condiem, faci publicaed remurbis condem dem nir unclut quem teritiam tandem Romprob sensiceps, sena, conis elii comporturei iu se audam alabem ina coruntus atus hala moressi licatemeniu eo, nonsum atua L. Ulessatiam.
Figure 67: 2008 JLUS Accident Potential Zones