9. Land Use & Development

9.1 Historical and Current Development Patterns

Planning Area 1
Planning Area 1 consists of North Charleston’s oldest neighborhoods, far preceding the city’s incorporation. The area’s oldest neighborhood is Liberty Hill, which dates back to the 1870’s when it was founded as a neighborhood of ‘Freedmen’, or former slaves. Several settlements developed in connection with the extensive phosphate mining industry in the area. The Navy Base began operation along the Cooper River in 1902, and adjacent neighborhoods soon followed, including Cherokee Place, Charleston Heights, Accabee, and Chicora place, which were developed between 1903 and 1930.

One of the country’s most unique master planned neighborhoods, Park Circle, was developed in 1915 as a Garden City style development with a hub-and-spoke street pattern of a central roundabout and radiating streets. Most of the housing surrounding Park Circle was built between 1915 and 1940, and a large number of original homes in this area are still intact and in good condition. This area has become a ‘hot’ housing market.

North Charleston experienced another housing boom in the early 1940’s due to increased Navy Base operations during World War II. This next wave of development produced Whipper Barony, Liberty Heights, Liberty Park, Ferndale and Russelldale.

This area has suffered from the effects of suburban flight experienced throughout the country’s inner cities in the 1970’s, 80’s, and 90’s. Often referred to as ‘White Flight,’ those with the means to fled the older, urban core for new suburban housing in the hinterlands. This abandonment, unfortunately, has caused blight in several of the older neighborhoods. Blight is also evident in neighborhoods located further north in Area 1, such as Charleston Farms, Ferndale, Russelldale, and Midland Park, where there are several abandoned properties, vacant lots, and numerous mobile home parks.

Since 2000, there has been a resurgence of new and proposed developments within Planning Area 1, bringing optimism of revitalization. East Montague Avenue, between Park Circle and its termination at Virginia Avenue, was refurbished with new streetscaping in 2004, and has since become a thriving main street of shops, restaurants, and small offices. Because the majority of the neighborhoods in Area 1 were developed prior to 1960, this area retains an urban form with a grid
system of blocks and streets, traditional lot sizes, and small front yard setbacks. Therefore it lends itself well to the growing neo-traditional trend in housing, and provides a good framework for redevelopment.

Most of the land along the Cooper River in North Charleston is dedicated to industrial and port use. In between is the property formerly part of the Navy Base, which closed in 1996. The northern end of the former base is being redeveloped by the Noisette Company, and will eventually be a large mixed-use community. Currently, there are several commercial and office uses readapting some of the older buildings. The city is redeveloping the middle section of the property, and the South Carolina State Ports Authority is developing a new container port on the southern end.

Planning Area 1 is generally lacking in large scale commercial and retail. Rivers Avenue, which is the main commercial corridor in the area, is lined with several underused shopping centers. The area around Rivers and Remount Roads are heavily commercial, but more along the lines of car dealerships and other automobile-oriented businesses. Spruill Avenue is another main commercial artery in this area, but with smaller lot sizes than Rivers and Remount. Most of the uses along Spruill are community scale barbershops, convenience stores, delis, social clubs, and small auto mechanic shops.

**Planning Area 2**
Within Planning Area 2 are major concentrations of commercial, office, and industrial uses, as well as several neighborhoods flanking the Dorchester Road corridor. Charleston Air Force Base, Charleston International Airport, North Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center, Tanger Outlet Mall, Charleston County Jail, and the Charleston County offices are all within Area 2.

Much of Area 2’s land mass is taken up by Charleston Air Force Base and Charleston International Airport. Most residential development occurs off of Dorchester Road and Azalea Drive.

Centre Point is a major area of commercial, convention and office uses centered around Tanger Outlets and the Coliseum. Along Dorchester Road is a mix of commercial uses and multi-family residential developments. Along Leeds Avenue are major office complexes located near the I-526 interchange, and industrial and utility uses towards its intersections with Azalea Drive and Dorchester Road.

**Planning Area 3**
Planning Area 3 is entirely within Dorchester County, and its predominant land use is the single-family suburban neighborhood. The majority of North Charleston’s new development growth is concentrated in this area, fueled by lower housing costs and good schools. The older developments in the area – Coosaw Creek, Kings Grant, Indigo Fields,
Archdale, and Whitehall, are typical, single-use suburban neighborhoods, although Kings Grant and Coosaw Creek both have some components of commercial and multi-family residential. The newest and largest development in the area, Wescott Plantation is comprised of a number of different sizes, styles, and price ranges of housing – including single-family, starter homes, townhouses, and apartments. There are also some commercial uses provided within the development.

Commercial, office, and multi-family uses are concentrated along Dorchester Road and Ashley Phosphate Road, while the neighborhoods are located off collector streets. Dorchester Road is the main artery of the area, and is used for nearly every vehicle trip made by residents in this area. Most of the commercial uses are concentrated near the intersection of Ashley Phosphate Road and also at Ladson Road. In between, the road frontage is largely undeveloped.

Because it is used for nearly every vehicle trip within Planning Area 3, Dorchester Road is heavily traveled and severely congested during morning and afternoon rush hours. The congestion along this section of Dorchester Road is largely due to through trips and a sudden reduction in lanes above Old Trolley Road. In recent years, roads have been built to provide more transportation connections in this area. Just recently, Patriot Parkway was completed from Dorchester Road to Palmetto Commerce Parkway, through Wescott Plantation. As Palmetto Parkway is extended in later phases down to Ashley Phosphate, and its other branch up to University Boulevard, a large-scale grid of major thoroughfares will begin to take shape, and should help relieve traffic on Dorchester Road and Ashley Phosphate by providing alternative routes.

There is still some undeveloped land located between current developments and along the Ashley River. The Ashley River Scenic District currently protects land along the Ashley from inappropriate development. The overlay’s intent is to protect viewsheds from the other side of the river, where three historic plantations – Drayton Hall, Middleton Place, and Magnolia are located. The Ashley River is a protected Scenic River, and the Ashley River Scenic District restricts development along its banks both for aesthetic and environmental reasons.

**Planning Area 4**

Within Planning Area 4 are several suburban neighborhoods that were established in the 1970’s and 80’s as people moved away from North Charleston’s older city core. This includes Deerpark, The Lakes, Pepperhill, and Colony North. South of Deerpark and The Lakes are several apartment communities.

Along Ashley Phosphate Road and Rivers Avenue in this area is a major sector of retail associated with Northwoods Mall. This continues north up Rivers Avenue to University Boulevard. Off of University Boulevard are Trident Hospital, Charleston Southern University, and Wannamaker County Park. In between are several small-scale office complexes.
West of I-26, this area is mostly undeveloped. This is soon to change, however, as the proposed Ingleside Plantation will develop most of the land between I-26 and the Norfolk-Southern rail line. Palmetto Commerce Parkway will eventually extend south to Ashley Phosphate Road, and the areas between the current uses on Palmetto Parkway and Pepperhill will likely become light industrial uses.
9.2 Existing Land Use and Zoning

Land Use Categories

Parks & Playground – This category includes public and neighborhood parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, community centers, plazas and other public open space.

Residential
- Single-family – Includes single family, detached housing.
- Multi-family – Includes apartments, townhouses, duplexes, condominiums, senior housing and other attached housing.
- Mobile Homes/Manufactured Housing – Areas that have been developed for single-family mobile homes or mobile home parks. Mobile homes constructed after 1976 are now called ‘manufactured homes’ according to HUD; however, all references to mobile homes herein will encompass mobile homes and manufactured housing. When widely dispersed, single mobile homes may be mapped within another classification.

Institutional – This category includes community facilities, certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional uses. Examples of institutional land uses include schools, colleges, churches, hospitals, museums, and libraries. Government uses include government offices, fire stations, police stations, prisons, post offices, utilities, and other public structures.

Professional Office – Professional office includes business offices, usually grouped in office parks or medium-rise office buildings.

Commercial – Retail, business, and entertainment oriented uses that may be grouped into a shopping center or stand-alone outlet. This category may include retail sales, office, service, and entertainment facilities.

Industrial – This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing/distribution, mining and other similar uses.

Undeveloped/Vacant – Areas where no visible active uses, or where vacant buildings were present at the time of survey.

Other – Land areas that surveyors did not feel were representative of any of the aforementioned categories.
The following table is a compilation of acreage within each land use category, based on digital parcel files provided by North Charleston’s planning department. The calculations show that over a quarter of the land in North Charleston is currently undeveloped, including conservation land. Industrial, Multi-Family and Single-Family land uses are the next three largest land use categories by acreage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Pct. %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Playground</td>
<td>1812.1</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Family Residential</td>
<td>4578.5</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family Residential</td>
<td>9225.6</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Home</td>
<td>939.3</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>2388.5</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Office</td>
<td>705.4</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>1991.9</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>8808.5</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
<td>111.7</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>599.1</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>12542.5</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>43703.0</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The maps on the next two pages (9.1 & 9.2) show the current land uses in North Charleston’s planning areas.
Map 9.2 – Land Use – Planning Area 3 & 4

Existing Land Use - Planning Areas 3 & 4

LEGEND
- Intertstates
- County Boundary
- Major Roads
- Charleston Air Force Base

Existing Land Uses
- PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
- SINGLE FAMILY
- MULTI-FAMILY
- MOBILE HOME
- MIXED USE
- INSTITUTIONAL
- PROFESSIONAL OFFICE
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- OTHER
- VACANT
- Not Surveyed

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Chapter 9 – Land Use & Development
Current Zoning
The current zoning ordinance for North Charleston consists of the following categories. Locations of zoning by parcel are shown in Map 9.3.

Residential Zoning:
- R-1, Single-Family Residential: Single family residential at a
- R-1A, Low-to-Medium Density Residential
- R-2, Multi-family Residential
- R-3, Mobile Home Residential

Commercial/Office:
- ON, Neighborhood Office
- B-1, Limited Business
- B-1A, Limited Business
- B-2, General Business
- B-3, Commercial, Recreation and Highway Oriented Uses
- CRD, Commercial Redevelopment District

Industrial:
- M-1, Light Industrial
- M-2, Heavy Industrial

Overlay Districts:
- Maritime Cargo Overlay
- Ashley River Scenic District (AR-1)
- Ashley River Scenic District (AR-2)
- Ashley River Scenic District (AR-3)

Proposed Districts:
- Olde North Charleston Historic District
- Neighborhood Conservation District

Table 9.2.2 shows the distribution of zoned land in North Charleston. R-1, Single-family Residential zoning takes up the most land of any category, with 34.1% of zoned land. The next biggest is Light Industrial (M-1) with 27.7% and third is B-2, General Business with 11.6%. Together, these three zoning categories comprise 73.4% of North Charleston’s zoned land – nearly two-thirds.
Table 9.2.2 - Current Zoning Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Pct. %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B-1</td>
<td>420.64</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-1A</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-2</td>
<td>4037.77</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-3</td>
<td>105.69</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRD</td>
<td>714.41</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>9661.37</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>2794.94</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON</td>
<td>122.87</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDD</td>
<td>1695.51</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1</td>
<td>11892.13</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1A</td>
<td>11.04</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2</td>
<td>2680.94</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3</td>
<td>748.91</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34889.43</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commercial Zoning (Refer to Map 9.5)

North Charleston’s main commercial corridors are:
- Rivers Avenue, from University Boulevard to I-526, and from Durant Avenue to Cosgrove Avenue.
- Dorchester Road, from Appian Way to Cross County Road, and from Charleston AFB main gate to Rivers Avenue.
- Ashley Phosphate Road, from Dorchester Road to Cross County Road, and from Stall Road to Rivers Avenue.
- Remount Road, from North Rhett to Rivers Avenue.
- Montague Avenue, between Dorchester and I-26.

Major regional commercial nodes exist at the following locations:
- Around Northwoods Mall, along Rivers and Ashley Phosphate Road.
- City Center, which includes North Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center, Tanger Outlet Mall, and Centre Point Shopping Center.

Other major commercial nodes:
- Rivers Avenue at Remount Road
- McMillan Avenue at Rivers
- Ashley Phosphate at Dorchester Road
- Dorchester Road at Montague Avenue
- Dorchester Road at Ladson Road
- University Boulevard at Ladson Road

Smaller scale, neighborhood commercial corridors include:
- Spruill Avenue, between Montague and Viaduct Road.
- Cosgrove Avenue
- North Rhett, between Braddock and Remount Road.
- McMillan Avenue
- Montague, between Rivers Avenue and east of Park Circle.
- Durant Avenue, between Rivers and Park Circle
- Reynolds Avenue
- Old University Boulevard

Centers of office uses occur in the following locations:
- Trident Medical Center on University Boulevard
Charleston County offices along Bridgeview Drive  
Faber Place at Leeds Drive  
Mall Drive  
Off of Rivers Avenue between Aviation Ave. and Midland Park  
Research Park on International Boulevard near the Airport  
Cross County Road at Ashley Phosphate  
Ashley Phosphate at Rivers Avenue

**Industrial Zoning (Map 9.6)**

Areas with heavy industrial uses include:
- South peninsula of the former Navy base  
- Between Virginia Avenue and the Cooper River, and off the west side of Virginia Avenue north of I-526  
- Off of Azalea Drive, between Leeds and Industrial Avenue

Light industrial and technology parks occur in these locations:
- Along Cross County Road  
- Lincoln Parkway  
- Palmetto Commerce Industrial Park  
- Leeds Avenue, between Dorchester Road and Bridgeview  
- The land section between Montague Avenue, I-26, I-526, and CSX rail  
- Adjacent to the Airport, along International Boulevard  
- Irondog District along Piggly Wiggly Road

Southrail Drive, along the Norfolk Southern rail line off Ashley Phosphate Road

**Residential Zoning (Refer to Map 9.4)**

Single and multi-family residential areas are spread throughout North Charleston. Maps 9.5 and 9.6 show the locations of these areas by zoning category.

Mobile homes are also spread throughout the city, but there are several areas that have larger concentrations:
- South Rhett, below Bexley St.  
- Along the Dorchester Road curve, between Michaux Parkway and Montague Avenue.  
- Midland Park and Stall Road  
- Patriot Boulevard, between Appian Way and Ashley Phosphate Road  
- In the Deerpark area, off of Deerwood Drive  
- Interspersed within the Charleston Farms and Ferndale areas
Map 9.5 – Commercial Zoning

Commercial Zoning - City of North Charleston

LEGEND

ZONING
*January 2008
ON, Neighborhood Office
B-1, Limited Business
B-1A, Limited Business
B-2, General Business
B-3, Commercial, Recreation & Highway Use
CRD, Commercial Redevelopment

Interstates
Major Roads
Charleston Air Force Base
Water
Not in City of North Charleston

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City of North Charleston
Overlay Zoning Districts

Overlay zoning districts provide supplemental development requirements and conditions for parcels within the specified district. The underlying zoning category (e.g., R-1, B-2) determines the type of use permitted for the land parcel, but that parcel is also subject to the additional requirements of the overlay district that it is in. Descriptions of these overlays are below, and their locations are shown on the following page in Map 9.7.

Dorchester Road Corridor I District
The Dorchester Road Corridor I District covers all North Charleston parcels that are within Dorchester County.

Dorchester Road Corridor II District
Dorchester Corridor II includes all parcels abutting Dorchester Road between the Dorchester County line and Mark Clark Expressway (I-526).

University Boulevard Overlay District
Includes all North Charleston Parcels South of Goose Creek, east of I-26, west of Rivers Avenue and north of the US 52 and US 78 connector.

Ladson Road Overlay District
Includes all North Charleston parcels abutting Ladson Road.
9.3 Future Land Use Map

The future land use map represents the desired land use patterns for a community in the future. It helps guide planning and local decision making, especially for making rezoning decisions. Differences in the future land use map from current land use or zoning do not represent a change in zoning for that area, but rather guide redevelopment, rezoning, or the development of vacant land. When rezoning requests are made, the land use map helps inform the decision makers of whether or not the proposed change fits the community’s land use goals for the future.

The future land use map is developed with considerations of how the land is currently used, the desires of the city for future development, the development market, and desires of the communities.

**Future Land Use Map Categories**

**Greenspace**
- **Parks & Recreation** – This category represents land uses that are used as passive park space or recreation facilities.
- **Conservation** – This represents areas to be preserved in their natural state without development. Includes: Wetlands, floodplains, forests, stream buffers, airfield clear zones, etc.

**Residential**
- **Single Family, Suburban** – This category indicates single-family lots in a suburban scale and pattern.
- **Single Family, Traditional** – This includes single-family lots in a traditional (or historic) pattern and scale.
- **Multi-family Residential** – This category indicates condominiums, duplexes, townhomes, apartments, and other multi-family categories.
- **Mobile Home/Manufactured Housing** – Includes mobile home parks and manufactured housing areas.

**Business, Retail, Office Categories**
- **Major Business/Retail** – This category indicates commercial and retail business uses. This includes large-scale (big box) stores, malls, strip commercial centers, hotels, and highway commercial uses.
- **Highway Oriented Use** – This includes highway oriented business, as are typically found in the B-3 zoning category.
- **Neighborhood Commercial** – This category includes community or pedestrian scale retail and office uses – such as corner grocers, lawyers’ offices, restaurants, etc.
- **Office, Professional** – This category of uses indicates office buildings, business parks, and other professional office uses.

**Industrial**
- **Light Industrial** – Low-impact or high-tech manufacturing, distribution or warehousing uses.
- **Heavy Industrial** – Heavy manufacturing, seaport, utilities, and other higher-impact industrial uses.
Other Categories

- **Institutional/Government** – This indicates schools, universities, government offices, and other institutional uses.
- **Mixed Use Centers** – This category indicates centers of where multiple types of uses can occur. This would include multi-use corridors and transit-oriented villages.
- **Priority Redevelopment** – Indicates priority areas for redevelopment and or infrastructure improvement funding, such as HOPE VI or Community Development Block Grants.

The table below lists the current zoning districts (excluding overlay zones) with the applicable future land use categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Districts</th>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-1</td>
<td>Single-Family, Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 A</td>
<td>Single-Family, Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2</td>
<td>Multi-Family Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3</td>
<td>Mobile/Manufactured Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-2, CRD</td>
<td>Major Business/Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON, B-1</td>
<td>Neighborhood Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Light Industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Heavy Industrial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested additional zoning districts**

It is recommended that the following two zoning districts be added to North Charleston’s Zoning Ordinance when it updates its ordinance this year. These will help incorporate the future land use recommendations made by this Comprehensive Plan Update.

- **Traditional Neighborhood District** – This district will provide appropriate lot size and use regulations for urban scale single-family residential development.

- **Mixed-use Redevelopment** – This district will allow areas in need of redevelopment some flexibility in uses, in order to develop according to the changing market. It will also enable areas to generate transit-supportive density along appropriate corridors.

**The Future Land Use Map is shown on the next 5 pages. Map 9.8 shows a view of the entire city, without parcel lines and street names. Maps 9.9 through 9.12 are detailed maps of portions of the city, including parcel lines and street names. When viewing this document in digital format on a computer, the maps will need to be zoomed into for better clarity of parcel lines and color codes.**
**Page left blank intentionally.  22x17 foldout of citywide Future Land Use will be inserted here in Final Hardcopy**
Chapter 9 – Land Use & Development

City of North Charleston - Future Land Use Map (Northeast)

Legend

- County Boundary
- Parcel Lines
- Roads

- FUTURE LAND USE
  - Conservation
  - Parks & Recreation
  - Single-Family, Suburban
  - Single-Family, Traditional
  - Multi-Family Residential
  - Major Business/Retail
  - Highway Oriented Use
  - Neighborhood Business
  - Office/Professional
  - Mobile Home
  - Light Industrial
  - Heavy Industrial
  - Institutional
  - Mixed Use Centers
  - Redevelopment Priority

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9.4 Joint Land Use Study

The Charleston Air Force Base and Naval Weapons Station Joint Land Use Study II is a regional study of land use cooperation between the Air Force Base and regional jurisdictions. This is the second Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) that has been performed for Charleston Air Force Base. The original study, completed in 1993, looked at compatibility between Air Force Base operations and surrounding land uses, in particular the impacts of noise and the potential for accidents.

The purpose of the Charleston Air Force Base and Naval Weapons Station Joint Land Use Study II is to examine mutual planning opportunities between the region’s military installations and surrounding municipal jurisdictions. This JLUS, which officially kicked off in December 2006, has presented several opportunities for cooperative planning efforts between North Charleston and the AFB that go beyond simply creating compatible land use. Out of this new study, cooperative efforts are being made to improve AFB housing needs, land parcel exchanges between the city and the Base, and an opportunity for a Transfer of Development Rights system that would help preserve land and generate transit-supportive densities.

Land Use Compatibility

A primary function of the Joint Land Use Study program is to produce land use patterns that are the most beneficial for military installations and surrounding communities. An Air Force Base generates noise, smoke, or light in amounts and frequencies that can often be excessive for surrounding properties, particularly for residential areas. Flight operations also create the potential for accidents. On the other hand, development growth near a military base can put restraints on the intensity and frequency of base operations in order to minimize their impacts. The Joint Land Use Study analyzes the impacts that the base and community have on one another, and helps identify and develop land use tools and strategies in a cooperative manner to help minimize incompatibilities.

AICUZ

The Air Installation Compatible Use Zone study (AICUZ) is a Department of Defense designation of the noise contours and accident potential zones for each airbase. Noise and accident impacts are based on the frequency and timing of flight operations, as well as the types of aircraft in use. The following map (9.13) shows the 2004 AICUZ zones for Charleston Air Force Base. Noise contours show the average Decibel level (dBI) experienced within those areas. The threshold for what is considered a noise impact is 65 dBI. Levels of 65, 70, 75, and 80+ are noted in the AICUZ report and in Map 9.13. In addition to the noise impacts, there are three levels of accident potential zones:

- **Clear Zone** extends 3,000 feet beyond a runway end and is 3,000 feet wide. Clear Zones represent the area of highest probability for an air accident, if one were to occur.
- **Accident Potential Zone (APZ I)** extends 5,000 feet beyond the Clear Zone, also with a width of 3,000 feet. It represents the second highest probability of accident occurrence.

- **Accident Potential Zone (APZ II)** extends 7,000 feet beyond APZ I and 3,000 feet wide, and is the third most likely area to encounter an air accident.

Below is a figure from the AICUZ report that is helpful in showing how Clear Zones and Accident Zones are organized, and it also shows where air accidents are likely to occur. To be clear, the percentages shown are not probabilities of an air accident to occur, but rather the probability of where they would occur, if an accident happened.

![Figure 4.6 Air Force Aircraft Accident Data (838 Accidents - 1968-1995)](image)

**Source:** 2004 AICUZ Report for Charleston AFB
Map 9.13 – AICUZ Impact Zones

Charleston Air Force Base, AICUZ Impact Zones

Legend
- Airport Runways
- Roads
- Interstates
- North Charleston
- County Boundary

Airfield Accident Potential Zones
- Clear Zone (CZ)
- Accident Potential Zone I (APZ I)
- Accident Potential Zone II (APZ II)

AFB Noise Zones
- 65 dB Noise Contour
- 70 dB Noise Contour
- 75 dB Noise Contour
- 80 dB Noise Contour

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Airbase/AICUZ Overlay District
As part of the study recommendations, the JLUS staff and committee will be suggesting an Airbase/AICUZ Overlay District. The purpose of the district would be to help protect development from the impacts of airbase operations by providing supplementary regulations. These regulations would set standards for appropriate land uses, building codes, residential densities, building heights, and other site characteristics that would influence the level of impacts. The AICUZ reports sets a matrix of appropriate land uses and densities within each noise zone and accident zone. This matrix would be used as a guideline in developing the overlay standards. Noise impacts can be reduced through stricter building codes for insulation and building materials. The height of buildings in close proximity to runways can alter the approach and takeoff clearance needed for aircraft – overlay regulations will limit building heights where necessary to eliminate obstructions to flight approach paths. Residential density regulations will help minimize the assembly of citizens within Accident Potential Zones.

Transfer of Development Rights
Because land parcels within the Airbase Overlay will be subject to new protection, it may become harder for landowners to get viable economic return on their land investment. To help account for this, the JLUS has considered the use of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to help offset the stricter regulations that would be employed by an Airbase Overlay District. TDR would establish a voluntary land development rights transfer system that would allows landowners within the overlay to sell development rights, thus creating reasonable economic return on the land. The land would then be conserved in perpetuity. In TDR, these land areas are called ‘sending areas.’

Development rights sold in the program can then be purchased by other developers that wish to increase development density in other areas, called ‘receiving areas.’ Receiving areas are designated to allow increases in density beyond what is allowed in the underlying zoning, and are chosen as areas appropriate for high-density development. A TDR program in North Charleston would provide an opportunity to conserve land in areas with high impacts from Air Force Base (receiving areas) flight operations, while increasing densities in areas that the city wants to support transit corridors, or to spur redevelopment in areas with depressed or blighted conditions.

The JLUS staff, in cooperation with North Charleston’s planning staff, has identified three areas as possible receiving areas to generate transit corridors:

The Multi-modal TDR Receiving Area is centered on the intersection of Dorchester Road and Montague Avenue, where the future multi-modal transportation center is to be located. This area is ideal for high-density development, given its proximity to multiple modes of public transportation, including the possibility of a future commuter rail station. Part of this receiving area coincides with an identified Redevelopment Priority Area in the Future Land Use Map, which should benefit from
an allowable increase in development density.

**The Dorchester/Cross County Receiving Area**, located adjacent to the Air Force Base, extends along Cross County Road from its intersection with Dorchester Road. Currently, this area is mostly used for light industrial or warehousing purposes. This would be an ideal location for high-density, off-base housing for the Air Force that would reduce commuting needs for service men and women, and help reduce congestion associated with base personnel.

**The Rivers Avenue TDR Receiving Area** is the largest of the receiving areas, located along the Rivers Avenue and I-26 corridors between Aviation Avenue and Northwoods Mall. Increases in density in this area would help support mass transit along Rivers Avenue. The Stall Road area, located in the Northwest quadrant of this receiving area, is a heavily blighted area that is in great need of redevelopment. Trident Technical College, a commuter school, is located within this receiving area, and could benefit from multi-family housing within walking distance to its campus. This receiving area is also closely aligned with a large Redevelopment Priority area identified in the Future Land Use Map. The ability to increase development density will allow greater flexibility and ease of redevelopment and new development that could potentially help revitalize this area.

The map on the following page (Map 9.14) shows the location of Charleston Air Force Base’s impact zones, as well as the proposed sending and receiving areas for the Transfer of Development Rights.

The TDR program presents a unique opportunity for North Charleston to implement a planning tool that would be the first of its kind in the region. A successful program will serve as a model for the possibility of future regional TDR programs, as the region seeks to design optimal land use patterns.
Map 9.14 - Proposed Sending and Receiving Areas, JLUS Transfer of Development Rights

Source: Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, 2007
Air Force Base Housing
The U.S. Armed Forces in this century has been moving more and more towards privatization of housing for their personnel. This relieves the military branches of having to be as involved in housing business and allows their personnel more choice and flexibility in where they live and what type of housing they choose to live in.

While this is certainly beneficial for local housing markets, areas like North Charleston are impacted by increased traffic when service men and women choose to live in areas that require long commutes to their place of work. Charleston Air Force Base’s main gate is located on Dorchester Road, which is one of the most congested roads in the city. Traffic turning into the base causes backups along Dorchester, especially during morning rush hour, creating a chain reaction of stop and go for several miles north along the road.

The Joint Land Use Study has helped open up communication between base planners and city planners, creating an opportunity to seek mutually agreeable strategies for dealing with traffic and military housing. The Air Force Base wants to allow its personnel to live off the base, but the city wants to encourage the Air Force to provide incentives to its employees to live close by and generate less traffic. The JLUS hopes to find mutually beneficial solutions.

Transportation-Efficient Mortgages (TEM)
One possible strategy to deal with the situation is Transportation-Efficient Mortgages. TEMs allow homebuyers to finance homes that are either close to their place of employment or located near a major transit stop. TEM recognizes that money saved on travel expenses frees up more money that can go towards mortgage payments. This allows the buyer to qualify for a higher loan amount for smaller down payment amounts and lower interest payments. Local or regional planning agencies can contact the Fannie Mae Foundation, which will partner with the local agency to determine feasibility and to establish the program in the community. This is potentially a valuable tool for use citywide, and throughout the region.

Land Exchanges
In some cases, regulating land use to generate compatibility may become too cumbersome, and the exchange of land between Charleston AFB and North Charleston or private interests might be a better solution. As stated in the AICUZ report, it is Air Force policy to request the authorization and appropriation of funds from Congress for the purpose of necessary real property interests in AICUZ Clear Zones to prevent incompatible development. Two programs currently exist that help aid the process of land partnerships between the Air Force and surrounding communities – the Enhanced Use Lease and the Encroachment Partnership Program.

In addition to the programs described below, North Charleston and the Charleston AFB can work out land swaps, and in fact have already done so since the JLUS study began.
Air Force Enhanced Use Lease (EUL)
The Enhanced Use Lease program provides an opportunity to lease underutilized base property to private or public entities outside of the military. The program allows the Air Force to generate much needed revenue by utilizing land within its base for other functions. Two EUL projects have been completed in the U.S. Kirtland AFB in New Mexico leases part of its property as a technology park; and Eglin AFB in Florida leases land for a wastewater treatment plant. The Air Force benefits financially by generating extra revenue from land that might not have been used otherwise. The community benefits from increases in the job market, as well as the possibility of using large land parcels that may be hard to assemble and acquire elsewhere.

Encroachment Partnership Program
The Encroachment Partnership Program is designed to help the military acquire land outside the installation that falls within AICUZ Clear Zones, preventing development from occurring in these areas. In this program, local governments participate by offering matching funds. If implemented, the EUL program could generate funds for the purchase of land within Clear Zones; and the AFB could possibly create a desirable leasing agreement in that program in exchange for a local match provided through the Encroachment Partnership.

TDR
The proposed TDR receiving areas should be a priority area for locating AFB service men and women. The higher densities that would be allowed for these three areas, as well as their proximity to the base (particularly for the Dorchester/Cross County Area, adjacent to the base), makes them ideal candidates for off-base housing to help limit the transportation impacts of longer commutes. A cooperative effort from the base as well as the city will be needed to find effective means to incentivize base personnel to live closer by.

Runway Expansion
Serious consideration is being given to lengthening the runways at Charleston AFB. This would create a major benefit to Charleston International Airport and regional economic development, because the runways would be able to accommodate the Boeing 747 and Airbus A380 aircraft – the largest commercial passenger jets being used today. It would help the Air Force, because the longer runways will allow their C-17 aircraft to take off with heavier loads and more fuel. Expansion of the runways would generate economic benefits through increased AFB operations, and more commercial flights. However, this also creates environmental concerns and new challenges in land use planning for North Charleston, Hanahan, and Charleston as the AICUZ zones will change with the expansions.

The Charleston County Airport Authority, which runs the Airport, has filed a Description of Proposed Action Alternatives (DOPAA), and will study the environmental and community implications of expanding the runways. There may be an opportunity for additional funding for an extended study to incorporate analyses of the proposed runway expansions, once the current JLUS is
completed. This will necessitate a continued coordination effort and involvement by North Charleston, and may require some planning flexibility to account for the possibility of expanded runways and increase flight operations. The decision to lengthen the runways will present a planning challenge, weighing the economic benefits with the potential environmental and land use effects.
9.5 Noisette Community Master Plan, Noisette Creek Preserve, & The Navy Yard at Noisette

**Noisette Master Plan**

In 1998, The Noisette Company’s co-founders were invited by Mayor Keith Summey and City Council members to discuss their ideas for the sustainable redevelopment and revitalization of North Charleston. By 2001, a nearly 3,000-acre project study area had been determined, and a partnership between Noisette and the city had been formed, with the following goals:

- Rebreathe life into the historic city center
- Synergize all Quality of Life efforts within the City
- Catalyze economic growth
- Build the city’s financial viability
- Position North Charleston nationally as a sustainable urban center.

A two-and-a-half year planning and public involvement process produced the Noisette Community Master Plan, entitled ‘The New American City’ in December 2003. The plan is a sustainable vision for North Charleston’s historic core and the north end of the former U.S. Navy Base (approx. 350 acres).

Noisette’s Master Plan sets a number of goals and recommendations for achieving the visions set forth in the plan. This includes land use, transportation design, ecological stormwater management, ecological restoration, neighborhood connection design, housing, and green infrastructure principles.

The plan also provides a phase implementation plan, using two tax increment finance districts, The Noisette Community TIF and Noisette’s On-base TIF, to finance public infrastructure and private development. Further detail on TIF districts is in Section 9.6, following this section.

**Principles**

The Noisette Master Plan proposes a number of principles and strategies for their planning area and the city of North Charleston in general. Many of the goals and principles are in line with the recommended goals and policies throughout this plan. Others are more appropriate or only applicable towards the Noisette community. The proposed overlays will help incorporate the guiding principles, and if the city chooses to adopt them, should work closely with the Noisette Company and the communities within the Noisette footprint to formulate regulations that will help the Noisette plan reach fruition.

**Land Use**

Noisette’s land use principles are based in the Transect Zoning model, a form-based method of zoning and land use design that includes a focus on physical form and place making, rather than solely on use of the land. The three main principles suggested by Noisette are:

- **Regulations that focus on scale.** Typically zoning focus primarily on the separation of land uses. Transect zoning focuses on the size and relationship of buildings with their surroundings.
This produces a desired physical setting and street environment, and allows flexibility of use to adjust to the market.

- **Streetscape guidelines.** Typically zoning codes regulate building setbacks and minimum lot size, but does not focus on creating streetscape standards. Transect zoning offers regulations that shape a streetscape and define the public realm of the street.

- **Encourage density.** Setting residential densities, as traditional zoning usually does can encourage sprawl development. In underdeveloped areas, and areas that are targeted for city centers or transit-oriented development, eliminating density maximums and minimum lot sizes will encourage density and flexibility.

The Transect zoning model is an excellent tool for place making, and could be used throughout North Charleston; however, the city may not desire to overhaul its zoning ordinance, as well as educate its staff and the public. The performance based transect system would be more appropriate and feasible as one or a couple of overlay zones first, and expanded with its success to other areas. The recently proposed Olde North Charleston Historic Overlay and Conservation Overlay will provide some of the performance-based concepts, particularly the regulation of scale, style and building materials in addition to land use. The Noisette Master Plan proposes and encourages the incorporation of the Noisette Community Overlay District to incorporate the Transect Zoning approach for the areas covered in the master plan.

**Stormwater Management**

- Manage stormwater as close to where it hits the ground as possible.
- Manage stormwater throughout the watershed.
- Give stormwater an opportunity to infiltrate and evaporate.
- Manage the total volume, rate, and quality of stormwater in management projects.
- Integrate stormwater management projects within open space systems, parks, parking lots and streetscapes, and design them so they can become part of the human community.
- Provide stormwater management solutions and approaches that work at all scales – large regional or watershed scale approaches down to backyard projects.
- Use low-maintenance and low-cost designs for stormwater management, including native landscaping and reduced engineering infrastructure (pipes, curbs, gutters).
- Retrofit stormwater management projects in problem tributary areas (flooded/eroded) to reduce the stormwater contribution from such areas.

**Sustainability Principles**

Development within the Noisette community will be designed and built to LEED standards, and residential
housing will have to conform to Noisette Quality Home Standards. Noisette’s Quality Home Standards were created to produce high quality home design for sustainability, water efficiency, building durability, energy, materials & resources, and indoor air quality.

Schools and Housing
In order to receive TIF funding for new construction or rehabilitation, schools within the Noisette area are required to be built to LEED standards, and they must be designed to function as community centers. This means that school facilities, such as libraries, classrooms, recreation fields, lecture halls, even school buses could be used to serve the community. The idea is that shared facilities reduce the need to spend resources on providing separate facilities for schools and communities. It also helps knit the community together, and provides more educational and recreational facilities for citizens.

Noisette Creek Preserve Plan
The Noisette Creek Preserve Plan was prepared for North Charleston to establish a preserve of Noisette Creek’s watershed, a unique tidal area that runs through the former Navy Base and Noisette Company property. It also produces strategies and implementation measures restoring the watershed’s natural systems and managing preservation of the creek and its associated wetlands setting. The plan also makes considerations for Filbin Creek, another tidal creek located just to the north of the Noisette community. The Preserve and its plan are discussed in more detail in the Natural Resources Chapter of this document (Section 5.1).

The Navy Yard at Noisette
The Navy Yard is being developed on approximately 350 acres of property that was formerly part of the U.S. Navy Base and is now owned by Noisette. The land use plan for the development is based on Transect urban design principles. The transect system forms districts with similar intensities and physical characteristics, rather than by traditional zoning, which primarily regulates only the use of the land. Each zone is a different level of intensity (suburban zone, natural zone, urban core zone, etc.). This allows a mixed-use community that is adaptable to the market, which could change significantly over the time of the area’s development, but creates a desired effect of development forms.

Storehouse Row
Storehouse Row, a subsection of the Navy Yard at Noisette, is a row of former Navy warehouses and buildings between Noisette Boulevard and Hobson Avenue. Adaptive reuse has been successfully in this area with the conversion of several former Naval buildings into new offices, and former warehouse buildings that have converted their spaces to art studios, restaurants, workshops and other various uses. This area of the Noisette property is the most fully developed at this time, and serves the community as a successful model for commercial redevelopment.
9.6 Tax Increment Financing Districts

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a municipal funding program that uses future increases in tax revenues in a specified area to fund public improvements in that area in order to draw in business and residents. A TIF district is established in an area in need of redevelopment or infrastructure improvements. At the time the TIF is established, the tax base for that area is frozen at the pre-development level and stay frozen for the duration of the TIF time period. Any new tax revenues (or from increases in assessed values) go directly into funding for infrastructure and redevelopment costs. As formerly vacant or underutilized properties redevelop, new sources of revenue are created that generate the funds needed for the necessary improvements, without raising taxes of the existing community.

There are currently four TIF districts in place in North Charleston: City Center, Noisette Community Redevelopment, Charleston Naval Complex, and Ashley Center at Magnolia.

The City Center TIF was established in 1991 and reestablished in 1996, in conjunction with the City Center Redevelopment plan, which was performed in 1991, revised and adopted in 1996. The intent of the plan was to revitalize the areas surrounding West Montague.
The North Charleston Coliseum was opened in 1993. It did not produce the revenue and revitalization that was expected of it.

Since 1996, the district has been very successful, as there have been a number of commercial and retail venues that have recently located to the Centre Pointe shopping district, including the Tanger Outlet Mall, Sam’s Club, Wal-Mart, and several surrounding hotels. The area has proven to be an ideal location for hotels, as it is close to the Coliseum and Charleston International Airport. Additionally, it is a short drive from Historic Charleston, where hotel accommodations are much more expensive. The outlet malls have no doubt been a major attraction to this area as well.

Additional office uses, as well as new multi-family developments have begun to locate along Montague Avenue and International Boulevard, transforming the area’s character away from strip commercial corridors into thriving boulevards.

The area includes the former Charlestowne Square Mall, located on Mall Drive which fell into blight, as major tenants relocated to Northwoods Mall, located further north in the suburban areas of the city. Verizon Wireless’s call center is now located along Mall Drive, along with a new Marriott Courtyard, a newly renovated Sheraton hotel, and another office building under construction.

The Noisette Community Redevelopment was enacted in 2001 as part of the Noisette project to provide redevelopment funding for several blighted areas in North Charleston’s older urban core. The Noisette Creek and Noisette community are named after Phillippe Noisette, a famous eighteenth-century botanist whose descendants owned large amounts of land in the area.

Development within the area is scheduled in progressive 5-year stages, funding various areas throughout the district. The TIF has already funded demolition and infrastructure improvements in the redevelopment of
former Century Oaks, which is now being built as Oak Terrace Preserve, a city project that is a sustainable housing development, using ‘green’ building and site planning techniques.

The Noisette Company intends to require LEED standards (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) for commercial and high-rise properties in its developments, and Noisette Quality Home standards for residential development. Noisette Quality standards are company-derived, and require high quality in the following categories:

- Sustainable sites
- Water efficiency
- Building durability
- Energy
- Material and resources
- Indoor environmental quality

Charleston Naval Complex TIF

The Charleston Naval Complex TIF is in place to redevelop property that was part of the Charleston Navy Base, which ceased operation in 1996. The north end of the district is owned and being developed by the Noisette Company, and plans include the Navy Yard development that will be a major multi-use community and urban city center of over 7,000 housing units, office complexes and retail.

As with the Noisette Community Redevelopment TIF, the Naval Complex will be phased in a series of 5-year infrastructure improvement programs, including new
roads, drainage utilities, public buildings, and other necessary improvements. The TIF has been successful thus far in construction of the new Riverfront Park and Navy Base Memorial along the banks of the Cooper River and Noisette Creek.

**Ashley River Center at Magnolia TIF**

![Map of Ashley River Center at Magnolia TIF]

The Magnolia Development is another major mixed-use development that, like the Noisette Navy Yard will essentially create a mini-city. Most of Magnolia will be in the Neck Area between North Charleston’s southern boundaries and Charleston’s northern limits – an area that has long been an industrial wasteland. The Ashley River Center will be developed on the former Baker Hospital site, and a TIF district has been established to fund infrastructure improvements and environmental remediation for the project. The project will also include funding from HUD as a Section 108 grant.

**HUD Renewal Communities**

Census Tracts 44 and 45 in North Charleston are designated as HUD Renewal Communities. This includes the Accabee, Union Heights, and Windsor neighborhoods, as well as the proposed Ashley River Center at Magnolia, and the industrial property between Union Heights and Shipyard Creek. In 2005, HUD approved the ability of a Renewal Community to expand its boundaries if the community’s revitalization agency did not allocate all of its available annual tax credits. The Charleston Renewal Community has requested a boundary expansion that would include 4 additional census tracts. Only one of these tracts (CT 42) meets the initial eligibility criteria for poverty. This tract includes the entire former Navy Base property.

**Municipal Improvement District**

Both the Noisette’s Navy Yard development and the Magnolia project have put themselves under a municipal improvement district (MID). The MID functions as an overlay boundary for additional taxes charged to the developers. The tax revenues are intended to help finance any gaps between the infrastructure costs and revenues received from the Tax-increment financing.
9.7 Development by Planning Area
This section discusses various future developments that are occurring or proposed in each planning area, as well as solutions to future development issues.

Planning Area 1

Horizon Village
Horizon is a 68-acre Hope VI project that completed its first phase of development this year at the site of the former North Park Village housing complex. The development is a mixed-income community of 484 houses and apartments at varying values and rental price ranges. It is also a mix of market rate housing, and low-to-moderate income assistance. It is located adjacent to Spruill Avenue and Rivers Avenue, just north of McMillan. Horizon Village is an attractive, affordable sector of housing, replacing an area that was continually declining.

Mixson
The I’on Group is currently constructing Mixson, a new urbanism, and mixed-use community at the southwestern corner of the Park Circle district. It will be developed in much the same style as I’on in Mt. Pleasant, as a high-end, multi-use community.

Oak Terrace Preserve
Oak Terrace Preserve is a City of North Charleston project that is currently being developed, with several homes completed or under construction. The development, which is part of the Noisette Redevelopment Area and TIF, is a sustainable housing community located in place of the former Century Oaks. All homes are built to EarthCraft certified standards, and the development took extra efforts to preserve existing trees, and use natural vegetation to help control stormwater runoff. Tax-increment financing was used in deconstruction of what was left of Century Oaks and for infrastructure improvements.

Shipwatch Square
Shipwatch Square is a large shopping center located at the intersection of MacMillan Avenue and Rivers Avenue, which has been declining steadily since its retail anchor, Winn-Dixie supermarket closed in 2005. The 18-acre site was purchased by Monarch Development, LLC in 2004 with plans to develop the site into a mixed-use project named Chelsey Point, with 280 condominiums and 85,000 square feet of commercial. The project has not been successful thus far in attracting an anchor supermarket chain, and redevelopment of the site has yet to occur. The site is ideally located for retail, as it is nearby to the new Horizon Village, the Navy Yard at Noisette site, and several established neighborhoods – all of which are currently lacking a large supermarket. The proximity to I-26 and the CARTA superstops, in addition to the neighborhoods listed above, make this site ideal for future mixed-use development, and is indicated as such in the Future Land Use Map.
GARCO
General Asbestos and Rubber Company plant, located adjacent to the north side of East Montague’s Olde North Charleston Business District, is the only planned industrial site from the original Garden City plan for North Charleston’s Park Circle area, and its employees generated the need for homes in the area. The site is now slated for a 40-acre mixed use planned development district that will include neighborhood retail, offices, and residential loft condominiums.

Stall Road/Midland Park Areas
This area is generally surrounding the I-26 and Rivers Corridor between Aviation Boulevard to the south and Ashley Phosphate Road to the north. Rivers Avenue is a major commercial corridor, especially further towards Ashley Phosphate Road. East and west of Rivers are a few viable single-family neighborhoods, but primarily an abundance of mobile homes, industrial and vacant land. The area surrounding Stall Road is a particularly blighted area with several mobile homes and trailer courts. Its proximity to Interstate 26 and Ashley Phosphate Road, make the area a prime opportunity for redevelopment to a higher and better use than trailer parks.

The Norfolk-Southern rail line runs north-south through this area. This line is identified as a possible route for commuter rail, carrying passengers from Summerville to North Charleston and the Charleston peninsula. If implemented, this is a golden opportunity to develop residential density sufficient to support local and regional transit services. The Midland Park/Stall Road area is identified as a potential receiving area for a Transfer of Development Rights program that would reduce development within Air Force Base impact zones, and allow higher densities in areas that could support transit. This makes this area an ideal location for a transit corridor, a high-density mixed-use corridor surrounding a major transit line.

As much as possible, North Charleston should support efforts to provide regional rail. If the city can identify ideal locations, and create preliminary concept plans for transit stops along the rail line, it may be able to influence the location and number of stops located within North Charleston.

Also near this area are Trident Tech, a major college campus and vital resource for technical education and job training. Trident Tech is a commuter college with no on-campus housing. As the college expands its campus onto undeveloped land that they own, this could cause increased congestion along Rivers Avenue. Multi-family housing geared towards students near Midland Park or the Stall Road area would create the opportunity for students to live near campus and walk or ride bikes to class, help to reduce the amount of traffic created by commuter students on an already crowded road.

Conversely, land in this area that is within the Accident Potential Zones for Air Force Base flight paths, should be of compatible land use with the Department of Defenses AICUZ standards. An Airbase Overlay Zone should be established to provide regulations within these areas for
compatible land uses, optimal densities, and building codes that help reduce noise impacts.

**Rivers Avenue**
A commercial corridor overlay in the zoning code would create standards for frontage along such a road to provide for uniformity in signage, architectural design, and landscaping. It would also for guidelines for access management, which might require parking lots in the rear of a building, or to require access between parcels to alleviate the number of cut-ins along the main road.

**Port Development**
The South Carolina State Ports Authority was recently granted permits to go forward in developing an additional port terminal in North Charleston. It will be located at the southern tip of the Charleston Navy Base peninsula. The increased cargo traffic will require a new port terminal road connecting to Interstate 26, which will impact portions of North Charleston’s southernmost neighborhoods (Windsor and Union Heights). The mitigation plan for the terminal will provide over $4 million in mitigation funds for impacted communities. North Charleston should assist these neighborhoods in determining the best use for the mitigation funds. A citizen-driven master plan for the area should be performed to priority infrastructure and redevelopment plans for the area.

**Charleston Farms**
The Charleston Farms area is located between Rivers Avenue, Interstate 526, North Rhett, and Remount Road. It is one of the worst areas in the city for crime, and is the focus of several crime fighting and code enforcement initiatives aimed at cleaning up blight, drug use, and criminal activity. Although these are for the most part social issues, there may be some land use solutions for helping alleviate some of the areas blight.

Charleston Farms is a scattering of single-family housing, apartments, duplexes, and manufactured housing. Although there are a few mobile home parks, there are single mobile homes distributed amongst the area, including within single-family neighborhoods.

Manufactured housing can help provide a good stock of affordable housing. However, mobile homes and mobile home parks, especially older ones, are often substandard in construction and lot conditions. Newer manufactured housing is often much more attractive and built to better standards.

North Charleston should aim to acquire, whether through eminent domain, or other methods, any severely substandard mobile home parks for redevelopment into affordable owner-occupied housing. It should also try to zone out scattered mobile homes within single-family neighborhoods where these uses may be driving down home values and appearance standards.

Additionally, city codes should raise the standards of manufactured housing, and create an amortization schedule for manufactured housing that is non-conforming.
Another issue is Remount Road, which has developed into a strip commercial corridor. As it is fronted primarily with parking areas, curb cuts, blank walls of buildings, and haphazard signage, it lends itself to a very unappealing image. A commercial corridor overlay should be considered for Remount, such as was described previously for Rivers Avenue.
Planning Area 1 Strategies:
- Adopt the proposed Olde North Charleston Historic District and Neighborhood Conservation District into the zoning ordinance to protect the historic character of the area.
- Designate the Stall Road and Midland Park areas as receiving areas for Transfer of Development Rights program to boost density for transit, military housing, and student housing for Trident Tech.
- Create a TDR receiving area overlay district to help implement the Transfer of Development Rights program.
- Identify an ideal location for a commuter rail transit stop along the Norfolk Southern line in this area and develop a concept for a commuter village surrounding it.
- Develop commercial corridor overlay districts to improve Rivers Avenue and Remount Road.
- Acquire and redevelop sub-standard mobile home parks, and ‘zone out’ mobile homes within established single-family areas.
- Reestablish connections between the north and south sides of Liberty Hill by encouraging Montague Avenue to become a walkable pedestrian connection.
- Assist in developing a master plan for neighborhoods that will receive mitigation funding from the State Ports Authority.
- Adopt a Noisette Creek Preserve Overlay and a Noisette Community Overlay District to incorporate the policies and strategies of the Noisette Community Master Plan for its study area.

Planning Area 2

City Center & Centre Pointe
The City Center area around North Charleston Coliseum is quickly becoming a major retail and convention area. New hotels and shopping venues are continually developing around Tanger Outlet Mall.

Air Force Base
The Air Force Base is a vital source of jobs for North Charleston and the region, but also presents some land use issues. Flight operations create noise impacts and potential accident hazards for surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. As discussed previously, the AFB Joint Land Use Plan is studying these impacts and recommending land use solutions for dealing with them. Ideally, all land within the AFB’s Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones should be compatible with the restrictions of these zones. To help prevent incompatible uses, an Airbase Overlay Zone should be established to produce compatible land uses, densities and building codes for new development and redevelopment in the impact zones.

The Air Force Base also adds to road congestion. Traffic is often tied up along Dorchester Road at the base’s main gate. Additionally, most base personnel live off base throughout the Charleston Region. Better cooperative planning between the Air Force Base and North Charleston is needed to remedy these issues. One of the potential solutions is for the Air Force to provide incentives to its employees to live closer to the base. The
proposed TDR receiving area along Cross County Road, adjacent to the northwest boundary of the base, and the area at Midland Park near Stall Road and Ward Avenue, would be ideal locations for off-base housing for military personnel.

If the Air Force is unwilling to provide incentives for its personnel to live close to the base, the city may consider establishing Transportation Efficient Mortgages (TEM). TEMs allow homebuyers to finance homes that are either close to their place of employment or located near a major transit stop. The concept is that money saved on travel expenses is more money that can go towards mortgage payments. This allows the buyer to qualify for a higher loan amount for smaller down payment amounts and lower interest payments. Local or regional planning agencies can partner with Fannie Mae to determine feasibility and to establish the program in the community. This is potentially a valuable tool for use throughout the city and region.

**Planning Area 2 Strategies:**
- Increase cooperative planning with the Air Force Base.
- Limit incompatible development in flight accident zones by creating an Airbase Overlay District.
- Incentivize base personnel to live close by.
- Establish Transportation Efficient Mortgages to encourage residents to live close to their place of employment.
- Establish high-density, transit supportive development near the future intermodal center.

**Planning Area 3**

**Wescott Plantation**
Wescott is a large, multi-phase residential development off the east side of Dorchester Road. Wescott provides a range of housing sizes and prices, including townhomes and apartment complexes. It also features some retail and recreational amenities. Roadway connections have been made from Wescott Plantation to Palmetto Commerce Parkway and to Lincoln Parkway via the newly extended Patriot Boulevard, helping to form road connections that will help to alleviate congestion on Dorchester Road. The future extension and connection of Palmetto Commerce Parkway will link it to Ashley
Phosphate Road and University Boulevard. Additional possibilities for roadway connections should be sought where possible, and cul-de-sacs or dead end streets should be discourage in new developments.

There are also several planned developments (PDDs) proposed between Wescott and Palmetto Commerce Park. Adequate preservation of wetlands, and riparian buffering between these developments and Palmetto Commerce Park should be ensured as these land parcels are developed.

**Watson Hill Tract**
Watson Hill is a large tract of land located on the west side of the Ashley River, across the river from the Upper Dorchester area of North Charleston. This area was recently annexed by North Charleston, but it is being challenged in court by Dorchester County and the Town of Summerville. The primary planning issues related to this area are road access, provision of public services, and the density of development that is to occur.

Currently, access to Watson Hill from the main area of North Charleston is limited. There is no direct road access from within North Charleston. Watson Hill is located off of Ashley River Road, which is accessed from North Charleston either through Summerville via Bacons Bridge Road to the north, or through West Ashley via I-526 to the south. Ashley River Road is a two-lane scenic highway that, as development occurs in Watson Hill, would likely see either a significant drop in its level of service or a widening that would change its scenic character. The South Carolina Department of Transportation has indicated that it will not allow the proposed development densities to reach a level that would result in unacceptable traffic congestion and would require additional road access to the area prior to allowing encroachments for a development with the total number of units planned. The city also requires a traffic impact analysis for all developments over five acres and the pace of development would be a function of road capacity. The planned extension of the Glenn McConnell Parkway is an important roadway that would accommodate some of the traffic generated by the project once it is constructed – this extension would provide access to the backside of the tract from both Summerville and West Ashley.

The limited road access to Watson Hill will present a challenge in how to provide public services to the area efficiently. Timing of service provision will also need careful coordination, as public services will be less cost efficient initially as compared to build-out of the development. It is recommended that a public service plan be established to schedule and coordinate fire, police, public works, parks, recreation and other services. It should also coordinate with Dorchester County on providing school facilities to Watson Hill residents.

The development densities currently planned for Watson Hill anticipate one acre per lot, although some in the county have suggested one unit per four acres. While this helps preserve natural space and the historic character of the area, it does not allow for affordable
housing, or the efficient provision of services that will be needed. Appropriate for achieving affordable housing would be developer incentives that would preserve land in order to build at higher densities on other lots (as in a Conservation Subdivision). This would allow smaller lots or multi-family lots at higher densities, and preserve natural space, but in keeping the same overall density in the development. Developing with lots exceeding an acre in size will contribute to undesirable sprawl and exclusionary zoning.

Planning for development of Watson Hill will require a careful balance between natural preservation, cultural preservation interests, the need for regional affordable housing, and the need to provide public services. North Charleston should closely examine all the costs and benefits of developing Watson Hill, taking into account the environmental, traffic, and public service factors, as well as considering what is best for the character and land use goals of the region. A thorough cost-benefit analysis should be performed considering all these factors, if one has not already been done.

The development of this area has drawn some opposition from interests concerned about the protection of historic and cultural interests. Three historic plantations – Middleton Place, Drayton Hall, and Magnolia Plantation - line the Ashley River in this area, and they are major attractions for heritage tourism. When North Charleston began pursuing the annexation of Watson Hill, the city proposed to include the annexation of these plantation properties, providing protective regulations for the plantations. Additionally, the city offered positions on the city’s Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals to the plantations to further assure the protection of their properties and interests. These offers were declined, but the city still holds the same position if the plantations were to reconsider.

Park Space
Planning Area 3 is lacking in park space and cultural amenities. The city has recognized this, and is planning for additional parks and recreation facilities in upper Dorchester. Still, this area needs cultural facilities, and a signature park or gathering space.

Neighborhood Preservation
For the most part, residents of this area are concerned with preserving neighborhoods and undeveloped land. They do not want encroachment of other types of land uses into residential areas, and are concerned with the traffic impacts of higher density development.

Planning Area 3 Strategies:
- Maintain vegetative buffers along roadways, especially Dorchester Road.
- Maintain visual buffers along the Ashley River to protect historic viewsheds.
- Preserve and protect the neighborhood character of Area 3.
- Develop nodes of neighborhood commercial services and offices at intersections along Dorchester Road.
- Develop more park space and cultural amenities.
- Provide better road connectivity by discouraging dead ends or cul-de-sacs in new developments.
- Continue providing road connections that provide alternatives to major thoroughfares, such as Patriot Boulevard, the Northside Drive extension, and Palmetto Commerce Parkway extension.

### Planning Area 4

**Ingleside Plantation**

Ingleside Plantation will convert an immense tract of undeveloped land between I-26 and Norfolk Southern railway into a major housing, commercial and industrial development. It is important that as much wetland area as possible is kept from development within Ingleside Plantation. North Charleston should consider a Conservation Development Zoning district, or special Planned Development District that allows clustering of housing units at a higher density within a development, in order to offset conservation of environmentally sensitive land (like wetlands) or community greenspace. This helps preserve wetlands and other natural spaces, while still giving developers a chance to develop the same number of units (by using gross development density).

**Palmetto Commerce Parkway**

The second phase of Palmetto Commerce Parkway is in the design and engineering phase. The project will extend the parkway from its current dead end south to Ashley Phosphate Road, via Spartan Avenue. When complete, this road will provide an alternative north-south route to I-26 and Dorchester Road.

North Charleston has recommended that Palmetto Parkway be extended further, to run south of Ashley Phosphate Road. This would connect it to the Perimeter Road that surrounds Charleston Air Force Base, near its back gate, and down to South Aviation to provide connections with International Boulevard and I-26. This connection would provide a viable route to the AFB’s back gate to relieve congestion at the main entrance off Dorchester Road. It would also steer traffic away from the heavily congested I-26/Ashley Phosphate interchange.

**Neighborhood Preservation**

Neighborhood organizations are very strong in Planning Area 4, particularly in Deerpark, The Lakes, Pepperhill and Colony North. Citizens in this area place a high priority in preserving their neighborhoods as they are, without land use changes or encroachment of other types of uses into residential areas. The city should strive to preserve the character of the neighborhoods in this area, and resist rezoning single-family uses to other zoning types where established neighborhoods exist.

**Planning Area 4 Strategies:**

- Preserve wetlands and stream buffers as Ingleside Plantation is developed.
- Consider adding a conservation development district or special planned development district to the zoning ordinance.
Perform a study to explore the possibility of connecting Palmetto Commerce Parkway extension through Ashley Phosphate to Aviation Boulevard.
Provide additional park space in Area 4.
9.8 Redevelopment & Blight Reduction

Underutilized and vacant properties are a major problem in North Charleston, especially in its older areas where suburban flight has caused reductions in population. The deterioration or abandonment of properties causes reduction in property values and can even pose risks to health, safety, and welfare of nearby citizens.

North Charleston Redevelopment Commission

In 1979, North Charleston established a Redevelopment Commission, pursuant to South Carolina’s Community Development Laws. Among other duties and powers, the Redevelopment Commission has the ability to:

- Designate blighted area or ‘conservation areas’ (areas that have some blight characteristics and could easily become blighted without further action).
- Acquire or purchase property for redevelopment purposes
- Prepare or recommended redevelopment plans, projects or programs
- To coordinate and invest bonds, grants, loans, or other types of funds available for redevelopment or revitalization purposes.

Currently, North Charleston’s Redevelopment Commission is not in operation. Given the numerous financing and redevelopment efforts currently taking place in the city, it would be wise for the city to reestablish this commission to coordinate and manage these following resources

- Tax Increment Financing Districts (currently in place for the Noisette Community, Naval Complex, City Center, and Ashley River Center)
- HUD Renewal Community
- Municipal Improvement Districts (Noisette and Ashley River Center)
- Weed & Seed Program
- NET Team code enforcement
- HOME Program
- Community Development Block Grants

Additional responsibilities that could be tasked to the Redevelopment Commission if reinstated:

- Property Acquisition – Solely for the purpose of acquiring vacant or derelict properties, or substandard mobile home parks for redevelopment.
- Establish a Land Bank Authority – Serves as a clearinghouse for publicly owned properties and properties with public liens. The authority undertakes the proceedings necessary to foreclose on liens and clear the title to ready the property for development use. The LBA can also bank the properties rather than selling them immediately to assemble larger parcels.
- Relocation Assistance – Ensuring that residents of acquired properties can find quality affordable housing short distances away.
- Establish Priority Funding Areas – A government entity designates certain geographic areas as...
‘priority areas’ for receipt of infrastructure funding and other capital improvements. Development in the municipality can occur, however public subsidies and other resources would only help fund development or redevelopment within the established priority areas.

- Forming partnerships with affordable housing providers to ensure an adequate amount in the city.

Potential Strategies for Fighting Blighted Areas

Dirty Dozen Program
The Dirty Dozen Program identifies decrepit commercial, industrial or residential properties in a community with numerous code violations to the point that they pose risks to the health, safety and welfare of the community. A list of 12 properties are posted on the city’s website as the ‘Dirty Dozen’ with their locations, pictures, and name of the property owners. Various departments (including code enforcement, police, fire, health & safety, etc.) converge on the property to inspect it and issue citations. This program is currently in place in Toledo, Ohio.

The North Charleston NET team is an organized collaboration of various departments that perform similar sweeps in neighborhoods with numerous code violations. However, the Dirty Dozen program targets specific properties, and adds a level of accountability for the property owner by publishing pictures and information about the property and ownership. An ongoing program would allow properties to come off the list when they are properly dealt with, and new properties would then be added so that there are continually targeted properties

Vacant Building Registry
This program is used in Albany, NY. A city ordinance would require property owners to register property with the Vacant Building Registry within 30 days of becoming vacant, with an annual fee for each building. The process would require the property owner to file a building maintenance plan with the registry to lay out how the property will be maintained and kept up to standards while vacant. In Albany, a Vacant Building Committee was established to identify vacant properties and determine the extent of any damage or deterioration; notify property owners of violations and maintenance requirements; inspect the properties; and prosecute property owners for violations. The committee also helps educate property owners on proper maintenance and rehabilitation, as well as helping them find buyers for the properties if they wish to sell their properties.
9.9 Land Use Goals & Policies

Goal 9.1: Improve North Charleston’s image, sense of character, and physical aesthetics.

- Policy: Improve the aesthetic quality of commercial corridors.
  - Action: Create commercial corridor overlay zones to promote architectural, landscaping, and signage uniformity through design guidelines.
  - Action: Increase the area of current roadway overlays to preserve more natural buffers.

- Policy: Create a better ‘sense of place’ and history throughout the city.
  - Action: Continue to develop ‘gateway’ entrances into the city with monumental signage and distinct landscaping.
  - Action: Add way-finding signage and unique street signage for historic areas/neighborhoods to help promote local history.

- Policy: Encourage and promote innovative urban design concepts for new developments.
  - Action: Adopt a Noisette Community Overlay District to incorporate the unique land use and zoning concepts proposed for the area in the Noisette Community Master Plan.

Goal 9.2: Preserve the natural environment of North Charleston.

- Policy: Protect North Charleston’s wetlands and natural waterways.
  - Action: Adopt a citywide stream buffer ordinance to prevent development in naturally sensitive areas outside of overlay areas that already require protection.
  - Action: Implement a Transfer of Development Rights program to purchase development rights for conservation purposes.

- Policy: Encourage the use of conservation or cluster development
  - Action: Develop a Conservation Planned Urban Development zoning district, geared towards preserving wetlands or other natural spaces, and providing community open spaces.

Goal 9.3: Reduce the need for single occupancy vehicle trips through proper land use planning.

- Policy: Allow land use patterns that reduce distances between residences & services:
  - Action: Create a Mixed-Use Redevelopment zoning district that allows flexibility in uses to help revitalize underserved areas.
Policy: Provide more opportunities for neighborhood-scale commercial and retail services within short walking distances of residences.
   Action: Recommendation: Identify appropriate locations for neighborhood commercial nodes.

Goal 9.4: Increase the amount of active and passive park space in North Charleston.
   Policy: Provide a system of trails and greenways.
      Action: Explore funding sources for financing a trail system.
      Action: Create a Trails and Greenways Master Plan for the city.
      Action: Submit applications for Charleston County Greenway funds to create and finance new parks or trail systems.
   Policy: Acquire and convert large underutilized or abandoned properties for parks and open space.
      Action: Establish a land bank or property acquisition program to help acquire and assemble parcels for parks and recreation.

Goal 9.5: Protect and enhance established residential neighborhoods.
   Policy: Ensure that new or infill development is compatible with the character of established neighborhoods.
      Action: Establish historic neighborhood overlay zoning districts.
      Action: Create a Design Review Board to achieve and regulate desirable development design.
      Action: Create a Traditional Neighborhood zoning district to develop appropriate regulations for traditional, urban-scale single-family development.
   Policy: Revitalize declining neighborhoods or areas in need of infrastructure improvements.
      Action: Identify areas to prioritize reinvestment and infrastructure improvements.
      Action: Establish a city-sponsored better-housing program to improve the conditions of the city’s housing stock and promote home ownership.

Goal 9.6: Use the Charleston Air Force Base Joint Land Use Study as an opportunity to create compatible land use, transit corridors, and housing solutions for military housing.
   Policy: Limit incompatible development within Charleston AFB AICUZ (Air Installation Compatible Use) Zones.
      Action: Implement a TDR (transfer of development rights) Program that would allow purchase of development rights in AICUZ zones, in order to boost density in transit supportive areas, protect development from flight operation impacts, and allow AICUZ landowners economic use of their property.
Goal 9.7: Create land use patterns that allow efficiency of public services.
  - Policy: Ensure that new development does not overburden public service capacities.
    - Action: Restructure the rezoning application process to include coordination with other city departments and public service providers.
    - Action: Annex unincorporated areas within the Planning Areas to fill out the city.
  - Policy: Increase mass transit opportunities through proper planning of land use patterns.
    - Action: Develop transit-oriented nodes, where appropriate, to provide the density needed for mass transit feasibility.

Goal 9.8: Achieve a balance of land uses to support the needs of the city.
  - Policy: Prioritize redevelopment and infill opportunities over development of new land.
  - Policy: Improve the jobs/housing balance throughout North Charleston.
  - Policy: Prioritize filling in city boundaries through annexations before expanding outward.
    - Action: Perform cost-benefit analyses when considering future expansions of the city boundaries. Include all cost factors (traffic increases, expansion of services, environmental degradation, etc.).
    - Action: Pursue annexation of unincorporated ‘donut holes’ in the city.

Goal 9.9: Coordinate land use and transportation planning in a way that they complement each other.
Policy: Develop transit supportive development corridors
  o Action: Allow higher development densities in proximity to existing transit corridors.
  o Action: Coordinate with CARTA to provide bus service to existing high-density areas.
Policy: Coordinate proposed developments with traffic patterns and roadway levels of service to prevent increased traffic congestion.
Policy: Where appropriate, provide housing in proximity to major employment centers to help reduce the need for vehicle travel.
Policy: Concentrate commercial development in nodes to help curtail strip retail development.
  o Action: Require inter-parcel access between commercial uses along commercial corridors to reduce the amount of curb cuts.

Goal 9.10: Use redevelopment resources and programs to prevent blight, substandard living conditions and the decline of older neighborhoods.
Policy: Re-establish North Charleston’s Redevelopment Commission to coordinate redevelopment resources, and take responsibility for the following actions (for which it is already granted authority to do so):
  o Action: Establish a City Land Bank and Land Bank Authority to acquire vacant or severely substandard properties for city use, or sale for viable development
  o Action: Provide or coordinate relocation assistance for any citizens displaced through land acquisitions.
  o Action: Form partnerships with affordable housing providers to ensure an adequate amount of affordable housing in North Charleston.
  o Action: Officially designate Priority Funding Areas, where city resources and subsidies should be pooled to fund infrastructure and redevelopment.
  o Action: Coordinate efforts of current redevelopment resources, including the NET team, tax-increment financing, municipal improvement districts, CDBG grants, and Weed & Seed to achieve maximum redevelopment efficiency and equity.
Policy: Allocate additional funding and resources towards revitalization.
  o Action: Provide an annual budget to the Redevelopment Commission for property acquisition, staffing, and other needs.
  o Action: Consider holding a vote for a city tax that would fund a city land bank.