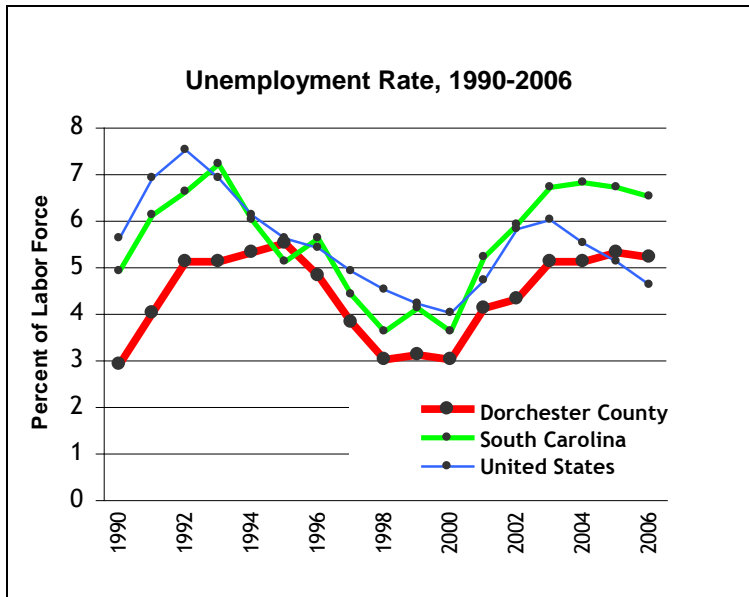


Economic Development • Snapshot

Economic development for Dorchester County is the creation and sustainability of a range of employment opportunities. The county's economic health and well being is tied to a commitment to promote a wide range of employment opportunities as well as to provide a setting and quality of life that attracts businesses and residents.

The unemployment rate is a key indicator of an area's economic health and prosperity. In 2006, Dorchester County's unemployment rate was 5.2 percent, significantly lower than that of the state: 6.5 percent. The State offers a variety of tax incentives to entice businesses to the state and reduce the unemployment rate.



Job Tax Credits

South Carolina provides companies with a credit against their corporate income tax liability for new jobs created anywhere in the state. Credits range from \$750 to \$8,000 per job, depending on the number of jobs created, the type of business, the location, and the wage rate. New jobs created in Dorchester County receive job tax credits between \$1,500 and \$2,500 per job.

Corporate Headquarters Credits

Companies that meet specific job requirements in establishing a corporate or division headquarters in South Carolina are eligible for a credit equal to 20 percent of their lease cost for five years, OR 20 percent of the building design/construction costs. This credit may be used to eliminate the company's corporate income tax liability for up to ten years.

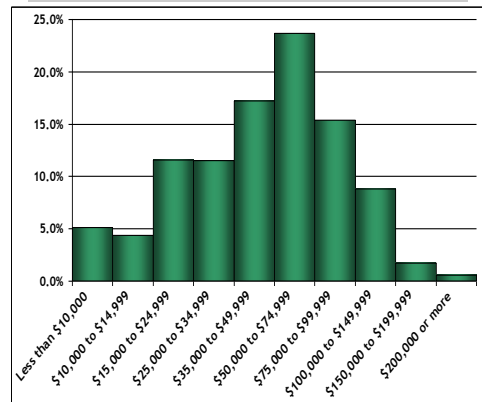
Dorchester County Top Ten Industrial Employers

(Source: Dorchester County Government)

Robert Bosch Corporation	2,400
InterContinental Hotels	650
CAT Reman Powertrain Services	570
iQor Call Center	460
Giant Cement Holding	250
Showa Denko Carbon, Inc	225
Knight's Companies	220
Linde Material Handling	200
Scout Boats, Inc	182
MeadWestvaco	130



2006 Dorchester County Annual Household Income (Percent of households by income range)



Dorchester County's average annual income by household was estimated at \$56,595 in 2006, slightly ahead of the state (\$55,128). (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey)

Investment Tax Credit

Companies locating or expanding in South Carolina counties designated as Economic Impact Zones can receive a credit against their corporate income tax liability of up to 5 percent of their investment in new production equipment. Dorchester County has this designation. This credit can be applied without limits against corporate tax liability and may effectively eliminate it. Unused credits may be carried forward for ten years.

Sales Tax Exemptions

South Carolina levies a six-percent sales tax statewide and its counties may levy an additional one percent to fund infrastructure projects or provide property tax relief. Industries investing more than \$35 million are eligible for an exemption on material handling equipment. Exemptions include equipment used in the production process, electricity and fuels used in the production process, raw materials, repair parts, and packaging materials.

Property Tax Incentives

Companies locating in South Carolina with an investment of \$50,000 or more receive an *abatement* of the county ordinary portion of their property taxes for a period of five years. In general, this will result in a savings of between 25 and 30 percent on a company's property taxes.

Companies investing \$5 million or more in South Carolina within a five-year period may negotiate *fee-in-lieu of* property taxes with a county to obtain a reduced assessment and a lower than normal millage rate for a period of up to 20 years (South Carolina Department of Revenue, Tax Incentives for Economic Development, 2006 Edition).

Child Care Credit

Companies may also claim a credit to South Carolina corporate income tax, bank tax, or premium tax for costs incurred from operating a childcare program, or for providing childcare benefits to employees. The credit can be claimed for payments made directly to licensed or registered independent childcare facilities in the name of, and for the benefit of, an employee. The company may claim a credit equal to 50 percent of the childcare payments incurred by the employer, up to \$3,000 per participating employee. This credit may be "stacked" with other credits. Unused credits have a ten-year carry-forward (South Carolina Department of Revenue, Tax Incentives for Economic Development, 2006 Edition).



Foreign-Trade Zone No. 21, located in Dorchester County, maintains 14 active businesses, which employ approximately 425 people, producing home furnishings and accessories, ammunition, mass transit bellows and plastic molded parts. The Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) program has proven to be a successful trade program by consistently creating and retaining jobs and capital investment in the United States. Willard Berry, executive director of the National Association of Foreign Trade Zones says:

"FTZs pack a big economic punch to the U.S. economy. They provide exporters and global manufacturers with cost efficiencies that translate into lower consumer prices. Their activities, likewise, contribute to employment and border security."

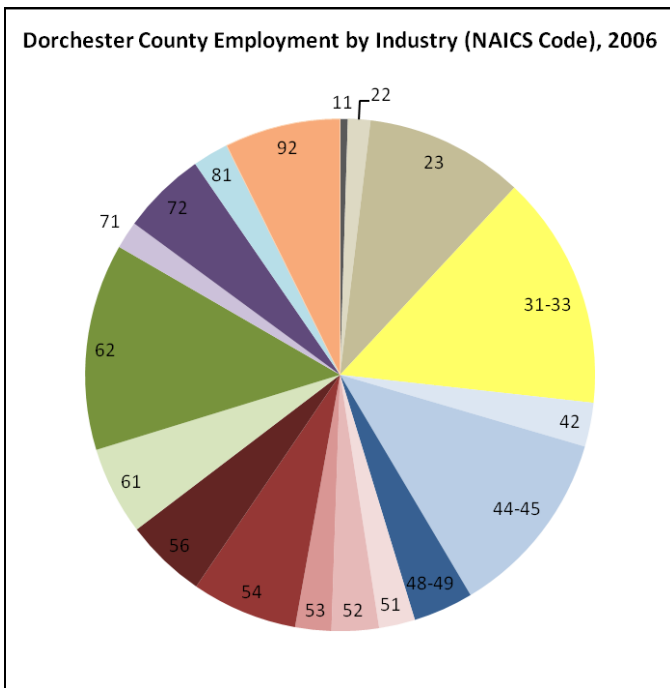
FTZs are a US federal government program, so the basic tax or customs duty and cash flow benefits are the same, but there are differences according to state and local initiatives for other business incentives in such locations, as well as differences in how responsible grantees operate FTZs. There are also obviously more factors in the comparison of business location alternatives than just taxes and incentives (Source: US Department of Commerce, <http://ia.ita.doc.gov/ftzpage/index.html>, 2007).

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Dorchester County is a competitive location for businesses. According to the Dorchester County Economic Development Office, several companies recently expanded operations in the county.

The County Economic Development Office has had success with speculative buildings (“spec” buildings, for short). Spec buildings have been a significant contributor to employment growth in Dorchester County. Jim Friar, former Director of Dorchester County Economic Development Office, reported:

We have had a focus for years of building speculative industrial buildings and it has paid great dividends for us. In Summerville and St. George, we have built a total of eight buildings and have successfully sold them all. Six were sold prior to dedication and the other two were sold in a year.”



Dorchester County Employment, 2006		
NAICS Code	Industry	Employees
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	268
22	Utilities	788
23	Construction	5,557
31-33	Manufacturing	8,181
42	Wholesale trade	1,534
44-45	Retail trade	6,605
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	2,106
51	Information	1,263
52	Finance and insurance	1,652
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	1,264
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services	3,707
56	Administrative and support and waste management services	2,849
61	Educational services	3,088
62	Health care and social assistance	7,226
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	958
72	Accommodation and food services	2,949
81	Other services, except public administration	1,255
92	Public administration	4,059
	Total	55,309

Note: The pie chart at left reflects industry by share of total employment reported in the above table. Source: South Carolina Employment Security Commission

Farming and forestry have been cornerstones of the Dorchester County economy since the establishment of the county 101 years ago. These industries will remain important even as the county grows and diversifies. Subsequent Comprehensive Plan updates should investigate strategies to support and maintain these local industries even as the lands they utilize face pressure to convert to other land uses.

Economic Development • Shape

Goal 1

Dorchester County will be community of employees with high-paying jobs and a diverse local economy with employment in services, retail and manufacturing. The county will be home to employers loyal and committed to the community and employees that take pride in their work. A balance of opportunities between the upper and lower portions of the county will be achieved.

Policy 1.1: Dorchester County will improve labor skills through supporting efforts to provide opportunities, education and/or training for current and future residents. Dorchester County will support the construction of technical school facilities to increase the skilled labor force of the region. Trident Technical College's Quick Jobs – an example – is an adult workforce training school opening in 2008-2009 in the upper part of the county, near St. George.

Policy 1.2: Dorchester County will periodically review and update economic development strategies, policies, investments and programs to respond to changing economic conditions and opportunities. Its Economic Development Office will monitor local and regional development trends and review and update economic development finance, incentive and technical assistance tools. Dorchester County will review the success of its economic development incentive programs and adjust them in order to remain competitive in the marketplace.

Policy 1.3: Dorchester County will market incentives to target businesses that provide higher wage jobs with benefits. The County will implement Charleston Regional Development Alliance's report by Angelou Economics, *Targeted Marketing & Economic Development Strategy*. The five "targets" identified are biosciences, aerospace, automotive, creative industries, and advanced securities.

Dorchester County's market incentives will also target new or expanding businesses involved in or related to cement production and fiberglass boat building – both successful existing industries in the county.

Policy 1.4: Dorchester County will maintain a balanced and competitive inventory of business and industrial sites, particularly sites certified by the State Economic Development Department. The County will make available "shovel-ready" sites – locations equipped with infrastructure and ready for vertical construction – as well as speculative buildings ready for occupancy by employers.

South Carolina Jobs-Economic Development Authority



The purpose of JEDA is to develop the business and economic welfare of South Carolina through loans, investments and the financial promotion of export of goods and services produced within the State. Such efforts are aimed at providing maximum opportunities for the creation and retention of jobs by the small and middle market business sector and thereby allowing the State and its citizens to prosper and enjoy a quality of life unsurpassed. (Source: JEDA, www.scjeda.net, 2007)

Building High Value Business Clusters

On April 13, 2005, Austin-based economic development consultants Angelou Economics presented recommendations for building high value business clusters in the Charleston region. This effort is aimed at building an economy that benefits all businesses, residents and families.

- More than 750 business, education and community leaders from throughout the region participated in focus groups, interviews and surveys.
- The project included an extensive analysis of the region's demographics, workforce skills, existing industries and business assets.
- Angelou Economics identified five target industry sectors that match our region's strengths and future vision.

(Source: Charleston Regional Development Alliance, www.crda.com, 2008)

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Policy 1.5: Dorchester County will update the existing website to include an inventory of sites complementary to Charleston Regional Development Alliance and the South Carolina Department of Commerce. The County will identify opportunities to deliver services to economic development prospects and existing businesses more effectively and efficiently. The County will upgrade its existing website to become more interactive and user-friendly, providing aerial photographs, lists of available properties with acreage, power suppliers, and status of water and sewer service.

Policy 1.6: Dorchester County will collaborate with utility providers and others to set up commerce and industrial parks. The County will ensure roads are paved and ready for heavy truck traffic and sewer service is ready to be expanded into the park as prospective tenants show interest. Dorchester County will guide development to the Employment Growth Areas on the *Future Land Use Map*.

Goal 2

Dorchester County will attract entrepreneurs and new businesses through housing choice, a variety of recreational and cultural outlets, and high quality of life. The County will be a destination for outdoor enthusiasts who may share its remarkable natural amenities, such as the Ashley River, Beidler Forest, Four Holes Swamp, and the Edisto River. Dorchester County communities will retain rich cultural heritage, willing to share it with others and expressing pride through festivals and events that celebrate what makes Dorchester County such a fantastic place to live, work, and play.

Policy 2.1: Dorchester County will coordinate with the Greater Summerville Chamber of Commerce, the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to promote “ecotourism” in the County. Dorchester County will put itself at a competitive advantage by aggressively preserving and promoting its natural and cultural heritage.

Policy 2.2: Dorchester County will use land wisely to reduce the risks of adversely affecting natural resources. The County should take a judicious approach when converting or approving the conversion of land to urban uses, and should seek to maintain the integrity of natural systems in urban settings.

Policy 2.3: Dorchester County will create and support a “water trails plan” and encourage or require new routes in Greenbelts as adjacent land is developed.

Policy 2.4: Dorchester County will create and support a bicycle-pedestrian plan and implantation through walking trails, multi-use paths, bike lanes, and signage.

SC Department of Commerce: Site Certification Program



The Department of Commerce has a site certification program to accomplish the following:

- Provide prospects with additional site data and assure that certain minimum information is available on a site;
- Assist the communities in determining the marketability of existing sites; and
- Provide a structured step-by-step process certifying sites.

A Certified Industrial Site is defined as a site of at least 20 acres that can support a minimum of 50,000 square feet of building space on a single level and meets the standards of the site certification program. (Source: SCDOC, www.sccommerce.com, 2007)

Water Trails: Ribbons of Discovery



(Photo courtesy of Adventure Carolina, Inc., www.adventurecarolina.com, 2007) “A water trail, or blueway, is a stretch of river, a shoreline or an ocean that has been mapped out with the intent to create an educational, scenic, and challenging experience for recreational canoeists and kayakers. The trails are organized by local volunteers with the help of public officials and private landowners, all of who promote its proper use and maintenance.”

“For communities across the country, water trails are a flexible and responsive tool for promoting a healthy economy and a high quality of life while preserving our natural and cultural heritage. Water trails can energize individuals and unify communities.” (Source: The National Park Service, www.nps.gov, 2007)

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Policy 2.5: Dorchester County will support investment in recreational, entertainment, and cultural amenities, quality neighborhoods, and community features important to attracting and retaining the diverse skilled workforce needed to be competitive.

Policy 2.6: Dorchester County will promote its cultural resources through continued coordination with the South Carolina Heritage Corridor, expanding on the Corridor's Regional Highlights currently identified in the County.

Policy 2.7: Dorchester County and its chambers-of-commerce allies will create a new marketing strategy to promote itself as a place where people come to live, work and play. In addition to other measures, the County will seek to increase visibility at the visitor's center near the rest area on Interstate Highway 95 just north of Dorchester County boundaries, which will include information about historic, recreational, and industrial resources and opportunities available.

Policy 2.8: Dorchester County will recruit Community Health Centers for private health clinics in order to fulfill the need large employers have for healthcare, especially in the upper part of the County.

Policy 2.9: Dorchester County will support the creation of a variety of housing types to attract entrepreneurs, including "live-work" units, which combine a residence with an office, workshop, or retail space for patrons.

Goal 3

Dorchester County will invest in public infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, and rail) which large employers rely upon in order to make the county an attractive location for business.

Policy 3.1: Dorchester County will seek transparency in government, especially regarding progress of infrastructure expansion, adhering to the Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvements Program.

Policy 3.2: Dorchester County will encourage growth in areas best suited for development, areas where water and sewer are likely or readily available and with sufficient road frontage or access. The County will place priority on public facility investments that promote compact forms of development. It will focus funds toward capacity for economic development, including water, sewer, transportation infrastructure, and land use.



A historical marker and park stand on the northwestern bank of Four Holes Swamp, at the intersection of US highways 78 and 178, where an American Revolutionary War battle occurred. The site is on, but unrecognized by, South Carolina's Heritage Corridor. (Photo of Four Holes Swamp courtesy of the State of South Carolina, www.sc.gov/PhotoGallery, 2007)



Governor Mark Sanford and the South Carolina General Assembly recognize the role taxes play in making important business decisions. South Carolina has developed an impressive array of tax incentives. The job tax credit, job development and retraining credits, and the fee in lieu of property taxes are incentive building blocks that have resulted in record economic growth in the state.

Noteworthy facts distinguishing South Carolina from other states include:

- South Carolina has the lowest corporate tax rate in the Southeast.
- South Carolina has not had a general tax increase in 20 years.
- South Carolina does not impose a state or local tax on intangibles or inventory.
- South Carolina does not impose a local, value-added, or unitary tax on related corporations.
- South Carolina does not permit local governments to impose an income tax.
- South Carolina provides alternative methods to fairly apportion income of multi-state businesses.
- South Carolina permits generous job development and retraining credits to qualifying businesses.
- South Carolina's tax incentives package is designed to encourage economic growth and to make South Carolina one of the best places in the nation to do business.

(Source: South Carolina Tax Incentives for Economic Development, Spring 2007 Edition, www.sctax.org)

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Policy 3.3: Dorchester County will recycle urban land through infill and redevelopment. The County will seek to enhance and restore place-making historic and architectural qualities and integrate new developments with existing communities.

Policy 3.4: Dorchester County will work with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, South Carolina Department of Commerce and other such organizations to identify cost-effective investments the public sector can make to support the competitiveness of existing industry groups.

Policy 3.5: Dorchester County Public Works Department will prepare a sanitary sewer service master plan that will evaluate the system, identify service capacity to communities and industrial areas, and project operational shortfalls. (See Chapter 2: Infrastructure Concurrency.)

Policy 3.6: Dorchester County will support commuter rail and promote development in employment centers near commuter rail stations that have been identified on the *Future Land Use Map*. (See Chapters 1 and 3: Future Land Use and Transportation.)



Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective: One of Ten Principles of Smart Growth

For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, it must be embraced by the private sector. Only private capital markets can supply the large amounts of money needed to meet the growing demand for smart growth developments. If investors, bankers, developers, builders and others do not earn a profit, few smart growth projects will be built. Fortunately, government can help make smart growth profitable to private investors and developers. Since the development industry is highly regulated, the value of property and the desirability of a place are largely affected by government investment in infrastructure and government regulation. Governments that make the right infrastructure and regulatory decisions will create fair, predictable, and cost-effective smart growth.

Despite regulatory and financial barriers, developers have been successful in creating examples of smart growth. The process to do so, however, requires them to get variances to the codes - often a time-consuming, and therefore costly, requirement. Expediting the approval process is of particular importance for developers, for whom the common mantra, "time is money" very aptly applies. The longer it takes to get approval for building, the longer the developer's capital remains tied up in the land and not earning income. For smart growth to flourish, state and local governments must make an effort to make development decisions about smart growth more timely, cost-effective, and predictable for developers. By creating a fertile environment for innovative, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use projects, government can provide leadership for smart growth that the private sector is sure to support.



The Smart Growth Network, in which USEPA is a partner and funder, developed the ten principles of "smart growth." (Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov, 2007)

Economic Development • Build

Implementation Strategies Notes

The Build section outlines steps that can be taken to achieve the desired goals. It identifies the partners who need to be involved in order to achieve success and possible funding sources that may assist in attaining the County's vision. Participation by Dorchester County staff is implied by inclusion of the County board or commission as a partner, with which county staff works. Coordination is a key implementation tool for the majority of Economic Development policies.

In order to attract and retain desirable industries and a skilled workforce, the County will develop educational and institutional partnerships and programs, such as the Center for Accelerated Technology Training (CATT), South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, Dorchester County School District 2 and District 4, and Trident Technical College. The County will monitor and market the existing and future workforce development and training programs available to ensure labor supply issues are continuously addressed.

Environmental assets will be leveraged for associated and needed economic diversification and development. Identifying, adopting and implementing best use practices for land development planning and preservation will support this strategy.

Commuter rail offers an opportunity to stimulate regional economic activity and development. The County Zoning and Land Development Ordinance is a tool to guide growth to the potential commuter rail stations, where increased density of housing units mixed with office, retail and other commercial uses will provide a convenient location for commuters and businesses to locate. This type of development may be marketed to small businesses and live/work situations.

The County will strengthen heritage tourism by working with area attractions and event providers and pursuing the development of tourism programs. Small downtowns will build on the inflow of tourists and day-trippers through continued development and promotion of these

historic downtowns (i.e., Summerville and St. George), bolstering these communities' images as quaint get-away destinations.

Upgrading the County's website, www.dorchestercounty.net, will promote the appeal of Dorchester County to a broader market. The website will present interactive maps detailing the areas of possible development, highlight the numerous tax incentives available to businesses that locate in the County, and link with other economic development organizations across the region, state, nation, and world.

Throughout the public involvement meetings held during the compilation of this plan, the public expressed concern over the lack of health care in the upper portion of the County. Two strategies to amend this problem include South Carolina Primary Health Care Association and Primary Care Office housed within the state's Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Primary Care Office (PCO) focuses on the recruitment and retention of primary care providers who want to provide health care to medically underserved populations. PCO will pay down student loans for health care professionals who commit to work in the upper part of Dorchester County.

South Carolina Primary Health Care Association (SCPHCA) was created in response to a need to provide health care services in medically underserved areas of South Carolina. Community based private non-profit health centers provide primary care services to citizens across the state. As an advocate for those that do not have access to basic health services, the SCPHCA works to ensure the continued growth of community based programs and centers that provide primary care for people most in need.

With the loss of the SCDHEC-operated St. George health clinic, upper Dorchester County lacks a basic service that prospective employers seek as they prospect for locations. The County needs to attract an SCPHCA clinic for future employees as well as existing residents of upper Dorchester County. If the SCDHEC clinic is unsuitable to a prospective private clinic, Dorchester County must secure land for a new facility, at the very least.

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Attract and Retain Desirable Industries and a Skilled Workforce

Policy	LEAD, Partners	Implementation		
		Funding	Priority	Timeline
1.1: Improve labor skills and opportunities for workforce education and training	<u>SC Workforce Development Office</u> , DCPC, SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department, Dorchester School District 2, Dorchester School District 4, CATT, Trident Technical College, and other educational institutions	Operating budget	HIGH	Ongoing
1.2: Review economic development strategies and adjust to trends	<u>Dorchester County Economic Development Board</u> , Dorchester County Planning Commission	Operating budget	LOW	Ongoing
1.3: Target businesses that offer higher wage jobs with benefits	<u>DCEDB</u> , DCPC, SC Department of Commerce, Charleston Regional Development Alliance, SC Jobs-Economic Development Authority	Operating budget	HIGH	Ongoing
1.4: Maintain an inventory of business and State-certified industrial sites and speculative buildings	<u>DCEDB</u> , DCPC, South Carolina Department of Commerce, utility companies (e.g., SCE&G)	Operating budget	HIGH	2-5 years
1.5: Update County website to increase exposure to a wider business market	<u>DCEDB</u> , DCPC, Charleston Regional Development Alliance	Operating budget	HIGH	1-3 years
1.6: Create commerce and industrial parks in the Employment Growth Areas identified on the FLUM	<u>DCEDB</u> , DCPC, utility providers, SCDOT, County Transportation Authority, landowners, employers	Tax-Increment Financing	MEDIUM	2-10 years

Maintain and Increase Quality of Life

Policy	LEAD, Partners	Implementation		
		Funding	Priority	Timeline
2.1: Coordinate with the chambers of commerce, SC DPRT to promote ecotourism	<u>DCPC</u> , Greater Summerville Chambers of Commerce, Tri-County Chamber of Commerce, SCDPRT	SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism	HIGH	Ongoing
2.2: Establish natural corridors to reduce the risk of adverse affects of development	<u>DCPC</u> , <u>DCEDB</u> , landowners	Operating budget, conservation easements	HIGH	1-4 years
2.3: Create and support a “water trails plan”	<u>DCPC</u> , Lowcountry Paddlers, SCDHEC-OCRM SCDNR, SCDPRT, SC Sea Grant Consortium,	Operating budget, SCDPRT	LOW	3-10 years
2.4: Create and support a bike-ped plan	<u>DCPC</u> , DCTA, CHATS, SCDOT, Coastal Cyclists, Charleston MOVES	Operating budget, CHATS “Complete Streets,” USDOT transportation enhancements funding, SCDOT “Safe Routes to Schools” funding	LOW	3-10 years
2.5: Support investments in community amenities for conservation and recreation	<u>Real estate development industry</u> , DCPC	Costs to real estate development	LOW	Ongoing
2.6: Promote cultural resources	<u>DCPC</u> , SC National Heritage Corridor, Summerville Historic Preservation Society, Summerville D.R.E.A.M	Operating budget, SCPRRT	MEDIUM	2-5 years

Plan Foundation 4: Economic Development

Policy	LEAD, Partners	Implementation		
		Funding	Priority	Timeline
2.7: Marketing, visitor's center to increase visibility	DCEDB, DCPC, SCDOT, Chambers of commerce	Operating budget	LOW	5-10 years
2.8: Attract a community health center to upper Dorchester County	County Council, DCPC, SCPHCA, SCDHEC-PCO	Operating budget, USDHUD, SCPHCA, SCDHEC	HIGH	3-5 years
2.9: Encourage workforce housing to promote and support job expansion	DCPC, Lowcountry Housing Trust, real estate development industry	Operating budget	MED	1-5 years

Investing in the Future

Policy	LEAD, Partners	Implementation		
		Funding	Priority	Timeline
3.1: Transparency in government and streamline the permitting process	DCPC, County Council	Operating budget	HIGH	Ongoing
3.2: Promote compact forms of development to promote real estate investment	DCPC, County Council	Operating budget	MEDIUM	1-4 years
3.3: Promote property reuse and redevelopment to uphold real estate values	DCPC, County Council	Tax-Increment Financing	MEDIUM	3-10 years
3.4: Identify cost-effective investments to support the competitiveness of existing industry groups	DCEDB, DCPC, CRDA, South Carolina Department of Commerce	Operating budget	LOW	Ongoing
3.5: Master plan sewer	DCPWD, DCPC	Operating budget	MEDIUM	1-3 years
3.6: Commuter rail	DCPC, CHATS, CARTA, County Council, DCTA	To be identified, a combination of federal, state, and local funding sources	MEDIUM	15-30 years