# McClellanville
# 2040

March 2022

*Planning Commission Review/ First Reading Draft*

Town of McClellanville
South Carolina
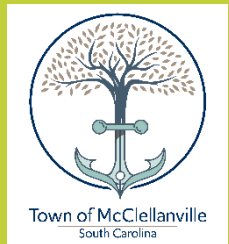
# Acknowledgements

This Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Town of McClellanville Planning Commission with input from the citizens of the Town and support of Town Council

# What is a Comprehensive Plan

*A Comprehensive Plan constitutes a community's blueprint for development.*

A Comprehensive Plan is developed based on existing data but is created through a cooperative effort between the public and Planning Commission.  The Plan assesses current strengths and challenges, opportunities and threats to achieve the village vision for twenty years in the future.

The Plan is more than a document with maps.  The Comprehensive Plan guides public officials in decision-making regarding land development, conservation of land and cultural resources, and public services that will affect the quality of life that McClellanville residents cherish.

Comprehensive Plans are mandated by the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling act enacted in 1994 Planning Enabling Act for any community that employs zoning and land development regulatory powers. It assigns responsibility for development and maintenance of the Plan to the local Planning Commission as a means of having a continuous planning program for the physical, social, and economic growth and development or redevelopment within the town.  The Town adopted its first comprehensive plan that complies with the 1994 Act in May of 1999.  The Planning Commission has reviewed the Plan for relevancy every five years and adopted a complete update ten years ago.

[Graphics to be inserted - smart art/graphic of comp plan objectives as watermark]

In accordance with the State's enabling legislation, as amended, this update of the McClellanville Comprehensive Plan 2040 assessed the elements listed below.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Population | • Housing | • Cultural Resources |
| • Natural Resources | • Resiliency | • Economic Development |
| • Community Facilities | • Transportation | • Land Use |
| | • Priority Investments | |

Detailed assessments of each element are contained in the Plan's appendices.

## Our Vision

*The Town of McClellanville will maintain its legacy as a close-knit fishing village through:*

- *Careful management of growth to protect its small-town character;*
- *Conservation of its natural resources: wetlands, waterways and tree canopy;*
- *Protection of its rich historic and cultural heritage;*
- *Growth of a sustainable resource-based economy, including a working waterfront; and*
- *Continued efforts to increase its resilience to threat of a changing climate.*

## Our Priorities

- *Conservation of the working waterfront*
- *Development of a master drainage plan*
- *Increasing housing options*
- *Economic development efforts to create jobs/provide workforce training*

# Our Town – High Livability and Quality of Life

In twenty years, McClellanville has not changed…at least residents' perception of the town's character, both as it is today and how it should be in the future. The municipality of McClellanville is designated as a "town", based on its incorporation. However, the simple definition of a town is that of *"a residential area that is smaller than a city and larger than a village"*, generally within a rural area and generally with more than 1,000 residents. At the same time, simple definition of a village is *"a residential area in the country that is smaller than a town"* and some would say that definition better describes McClellanville. Thus, when reference is made to McClellanville in this document the terms town and village are used interchangeably. When referencing the town's government, Town is capitalized.

During initiation of the plan process, respondents to the public surveyed conducted about the town's opportunities and challenges voiced overwhelming support for the town's main goal to be to maintain its small-town atmosphere. McClellanville has that "small town" atmosphere not only because of its size but more so because of the numerous qualities that define its character: tree-lined pedestrian friendly streets, lots and homes that vary in size and scale, and residents that represent generations of the village founders' descendants.

In the past two decades the town's population has grown, despite a recession and despite limited job opportunities within its boundaries. After decreasing in population during the mid-20th century from a population of 417 in 1950, the Town has steadily grown each decade since 1980 at rates ranging from 2.5% each of the last two decades in the last century, to 9% between 2000-2010, to 16% in the most recent decade (US Census ACS 2019, 2020 initial data release). While that 16% increase may seem high, it is comparable to the overall growth in Charleston County (17%) but nowhere close to Mount Pleasant's growth (35%) during the same period. For the first time, the town can boast of having a population greater than 500 residents. Concurrently, the town can really see the effects of Charleston's urban area being "full".

The Town's quiet, rural quality of life that residents enjoy increasingly attracts retirees and second-home owners. In the past this trend, coupled with challenges in offering quality education options, has raised concerns about preserving McClellanville as a "home-town" rather than a vacation destination. However, the most recent census reports the proportion of school-aged residents has doubled since 2010 indicating that young families are settling in town. Balancing this increase with a decreased proportion of residents in their twenties/thirties and an increased proportion of residents in their forties/fifties, the median age of residents has stayed relatively the same at about 47-48 years.

Residents 65 years of age and older still constitute about 25% of the residential population. These older generations constitute slightly less than 20% of the population in the surrounding census tract and the Town of Awendaw, thus continuing a need for the community to have facilities and services that accommodate those who wish to "age in place" rather than moving out of town closer to the needs and services offered in urban areas.  Furthermore, since second-home residents are not reported in the Town's census data, there likely are part-time residents in the same age groups that would also benefit from such facilities and services.

McClellanville's housing stock very much contributes to the village's character with approximately one-quarter of homes dating from 1960 or earlier.  However, with permitting of new construction, older and historically representative homes pre-dating 1940 are now a smaller proportion of the total housing inventory than homes constructed since the millennium.  Given this shift in the balance of historic homes, it was not surprising that one of the top three goals cited in the survey of residents is to expand the protection of cultural and/or historic resources.

Options for housing in town have traditionally been limited to single family detached dwellings, despite an amendment to zoning regulations in 2004 to allow for single family attached and multi-family homes in the highway commercial area. While this lack of diversity has not presented too many challenges for residents, there have been more property owners taking advantage of other ordinance provisions allowing for construction of structures up to 800 square feet in heated floor area as accessory dwelling units or temporary principal structures on a lot (which convert to accessory units once the larger principal residential structure is constructed).

However, rising costs of single-family homes in town due to market demand and supply, along with recent construction material prices, are challenging the town's availability and affordability of housing options for current and future residents. Since 2010 approximately 90% of the town's housing stock has been owner-occupied and coupled with many second homes becoming short term rentals, it is very difficult for residents to find rental housing or even existing homes to purchase. While changes to zoning provisions in 2004 were intended to remove barriers to construction of alternative housing types and increase rental housing, many of the accessory dwelling units constructed are used by family members or (again) by property owners while saving to construct a larger principal residence on the same property.  As a result, median gross rent within the town has increased to $1375/month (up from $900/month in 2010) and like the rest of Charleston County, more than 47% of renter households in McClellanville are now reportedly spending more than one-

third of the household income on rent.  Households spending more than one-third of their income on housing are considered to be "cost burdened".  The cost burden is emphasized when residents have additional transportation/commuting costs.  The national standard for affordable housing + transportation costs is 45% of a household income.

The US Census reports median home values based on sample surveys, which are often lower than actual market prices.  Based on the US Census data, median home values in the town rose more than 25% between 2010-2019 from $270,000 to $339,500, which is more than double the median home value reported in 2000 of $147,200.  As of early 2022, current real estate listings outside of town are higher for even small homes and there are no listings of existing homes in the village itself.

Compared to a median household income of $78,200 in 2019, these homes are not affordable for new homeowners without a sizable down payment, and those renting in town are unlikely to have discretionary income to save for that down payment.  Yet affordability is relative for prospective property owners based on where they are moving from. According to a December 2021 report by the Charleston Trident Association of Realtors, the median price of homes on the north side of Mount Pleasant are double that of those in McClellanville which explains why many looking to purchase or construct second homes find housing and lot prices in the village to be affordable.

To address the need for more affordable housing options, the town could consider allowing clustered subdivision of parcels creating smaller lots to support smaller homes with corresponding conserved open space. Yet, housing costs plus the lack of options in town are not the only reasons why older residents chose to "age in place" and not look for smaller homes that require less maintenance. Having adequate community facilities and services to support residents of all ages and businesses is a key component of a town's livability and quality of life. In a small village such as McClellanville, community facilities and services provided by the town government are limited, and in some cases supplemented by various agencies of Charleston County and the provision of private services.

In the survey of residents, a high proportion of respondents noted that they are somewhat or very concerned that access to high quality public education be maintained for residents.  Since the last Comprehensive Plan update, the Charleston County School District (CCSD) closed Lincoln High School which was located on the periphery of town and had already integrated a portion of the area's middle school students. Middle and high school students currently attend schools in Mount Pleasant, although CCSD is working to locate and construct a new middle school in Awendaw that would service students in the "north" area of the county.

CCSD operates St. James Elementary school, which previously integrated sixth grade students from the area.  With the establishment of a SC State Charter school, CREECS (Cape Romain Environmental Education Charter School) offers an alternative public-school education for over 200 students in pre-K

through 8th grade.  Taking advantage of a vacant private school facility in town, CREECS was established by a group of community advocates to educate future leaders of the community in ecological conservation and sustainability through critical thinking and environmental stewardship. Although students from anywhere in the state can technically enroll at CREECS, as the town's young student population grows, the sustainability of CREECS is paramount to retaining and attracting young families to live in town.

Aside from Horry-Georgetown Technical College's campus in Georgetown, adult education opportunities within the immediate vicinity are limited.  This campus of the state's technical college system offers a program in advanced technology and manufacturing as well as many other traditional majors, that can prepare young adult residents for careers in the regional economy and/or advancement to four-year colleges. The former middle school facility in the heart of the village could also offer an opportunity for advanced education providers, public or private, to establish programs that supplement the technical college offerings particularly in skills related to marine construction and the working waterfront.

Another component critical to sustaining the quality of life and livability of the village that ranked high in importance to residents include diversified recreational opportunities.  The town's location within the Francis Marion National Forest, Cape Romain Wildlife Refuge, and the Atlantic coastline affords an abundance of opportunities for both active and passive recreation.  Recognizing that active recreation opportunities in the natural environment are often dependent on access to boats and other motorized vehicles, the town park/playground and community dock adjacent to Town Hall are the only active recreation facilities maintained by the town. Community functions that residents noted as lacking in the survey include services and activities geared towards both seniors and young residents and a multi-use community center was encouraged. Again, the former middle school facility has existing, although aged, facilities where other active recreation activities could be programmed such as basketball and soccer.

The Town contracts for household waste collection, but residents rely on maintenance of a recycling collection center operated by the County. With the support of Charleston County, residents are provided fire protection and law enforcement, as well as emergency medical services, at the County's satellite service center on Highway 17.  The services operating out of this center support residents of the county's north area and continuously seek to improve responsiveness.  With additional development on the southeastern side of town, along Kitt Hall and Romain Road, there is need for a water source/tank to supplement the resource to fight fires on that side of town.

Access to services outside of town, as well as those within town, is dependent on residents' ability to drive or walk.  Many of the town's residents are unaware of TriCounty Link's bus service to and from the north side of Mount Pleasant.  This service connects residents to the Mt. Pleasant Hospital and

medical center operated by Roper St. Francis. There is a need to increase residents' awareness that this option for transportation exists and dissemination of information on the schedule and stops.

The town prides itself as a pedestrian friendly community and as the population grows (and ages) recognizes that walking and biking in the street is not as safe as it once was.  The long-anticipated bike/ped bridge over Jeremy Creek will provide improved connectivity for non-motorists between neighborhoods on either side of the creek. New developments are asked to provide adequate right of way to accommodate walking and biking, but not to guarantee construction of paved facilities. There is strong understanding that the town needs to seek funding and support for making improvements in the sidewalk system whether in terms of physical conditions or connectivity.  With SCDOTs new complete streets directive, the Town can work with DOT and the County to ensure that new paving projects include striping and/or wider shoulders to accommodate cyclists.

[Graphics to insert map of Jeremy Creek bridge connection]

| Our Town – Livability and Quality of Life: | |
|---|---|
| McClellanville will strive to preserve its small-town character | 1. Focus tree conservation efforts on retaining, diversifying and enhancing the town's tree canopy<br>2. Evaluate, and amend as needed, the short-term rental ordinance to mitigate the possibility of STRs dominating residential neighborhoods and compliance with noise ordinances<br>3. Protect the distinct character of the village commercial area as a community gathering place<br>4. Limit street lighting and require down shielding of private lighting to retain the night sky; seek designation as an international dark sky community |
| McClellanville will accommodate development of a variety of housing types to accommodate a broad-spectrum of residents' needs and budgets | 1. Review, and amend as needed, the Zoning Ordinance to allow for development of smaller lot sizes; identify appropriate areas for their development<br>2. Review, and amend as needed, lot and building standards to remove barriers to development of a variety of housing types; incentivize development of SFA and MF units in the Highway Commercial District<br>3. Evaluate and amend district regulations to allow options for conservation subdivisions: smaller lot developments with corresponding open space set aside<br>4. Evaluate zoning options for allowing and encouraging development of a senior/assisted living facility |
| McClellanville will provide adequate Community Facilities and Services | 1. Evaluate available facilities and funding sources to support team sports activities and a multi-use community center<br>2. Work with Charleston County to ensure an increased presence and acceptable responsiveness of Emergency Services: fire protection, sheriff protection; EMS<br>3. Work with Charleston County to retain and maintain recycling collection centers easily accessible by town residents and businesses<br>4. Coordinate with Charleston County 911 services to ensure all properties have adequate signage for addresses, particularly for remote or multiple driveways<br>5. Partner with DHEC to educate residents on the importance of and methods for septic system maintenance.<br>6. Continue coordinating with Charleston County on obtaining easements to upgrade the town's drainage system |
| McClellanville will provide and enhance multiple modes for mobility within and to/from town | 1. Coordinate with Charleston County Public Works and residents to address sidewalk safety and maintenance issues<br>2. Coordinate with the County and SCDOT on road paving projects to ensure inclusion of pavement markings for cyclists and pedestrians<br>3. Coordinate with TriCounty Link to educate residents on the availability of public transportation, service and stop locations<br>4. Coordinate with Charleston County to educate residents on evacuation routes<br>5. Review and amend as needed the Town's land Development requirements to ensure new developments include sidewalks and trails that provide connectivity between all areas of town<br>6. Review town ordinances to require minimum distances between driveways, particularly on US 17, to limit turning movements and increase safety |

# *Our Economy – Vibrant, Diversified, and Resource Based*

The Town seeks to have a vibrant economy, not necessarily one that provides employment for all residents in the labor force, but one that offers employment options tied to the Town's cultural and natural resources.

Conservation of cultural and natural resources not only contributes to preserving the town's character but also affords great opportunity for growth in the town's economy. Listed by several publications in 2021 within the top 10 small town destinations in South Carolina, the town was described as *"small in size but big in historic cache"* and an *"archetypal small southern fishing town"*. The inherent attractiveness of the town's historic district and working waterfront to day-visitors and their spending power creates opportunity for a local economy that doesn't rely on incompatible industrial development. Whether out of concern about the effects that population growth and development will have or recognition of the economic opportunity they present, almost 60% of survey respondents ranked expanding protection of cultural and/or historic resources as the number one goal to include in the comprehensive plan.

For over thirty years, residents of McClellanville have been mindful about the importance of these resources beginning with listing of 75 structures on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. When a number of these structures were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Hugo in 1989, the town was not deterred in its goal to protect its historic resources and conducted a survey to create a local historic district that expands beyond that listed on the National Register. Many of these structures represent 19th century vernacular architecture and some even serve as records of the town's history and notable residents. Recognizing the importance of the village's cultural resources, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) approved McClellanville as a part of its Certified Local Government (CLG) in partnership with the National Park Service.  The access provided to funding, technical assistance and training with this designation provides opportunities for the town to being better prepared to manage future growth and encourage economic development while protecting the village's significant historic resources.

[Graphics to insert map of historic resources and note that more details can be found in A3]

Another cultural resource and resource-based economic generator is the town's working waterfront. For over a century, harvesting of shrimp and oysters in nearby waters has been the primary industry in the village.  McClellanville is one of the few villages along the Carolina coasts with a working waterfront which supports the seafood industry in a number of ways.  The number of businesses supporting this industry in town have decreased in past decades, challenged by the inconsistency in harvests and influx of foreign shrimp.  The remaining seafood companies in town are intermediary

wholesalers in a large processing and distribution system. The challenge is exacerbated by an increased demand by locals and tourists for wild caught, eastern seafood.  Without these, the town's working waterfront will cease to exist.  Since 2018, with assistance of Hometown Economic Development grant from the Municipal Association of SC, a group of community members and waterman have been working to evaluate threats to the working waterfront and identifying options to protect it.  This group continues to work with a consultant to identify and examine options in development of a strategic plan for future wholesale and retail operations.  In 2020, the McClellanville Community Foundation was formed to seek financial resources to support implementation of plans to ensure facilities at the working waterfront continue to operate.

[Graphics to insert photo of working waterfront]

In addition to concerns with continued operation of the town's working waterfront, residents fear that in the future there will be pressure to convert the working waterfront into another residential development, as was done with the area now developed as Pinckney Street Docks.  The foundation is working with local land trusts to find funding to establish conservation easements that will protect the area from such a conversion.

The McClellanville Community Foundation is a critical component of the town's economic development.  Likewise, the Village Museum and McClellanville Arts Council are key organizations in helping conserve the cultural resources that support a resource-based economy for the village's future.   In evaluating opportunities for expanding upon these resources, two challenges are evident: supportive infrastructure and availability of the labor force.

With COVID-19, the long-standing challenge of a deficit in broadband infrastructure and service in the village gained national attention as rural areas struggled to continue the education of students during the shut-down and residents struggled to work remotely from home.  Broadband providers who are receiving huge influxes of federal funding to support expansion of infrastructure and service to rural areas, are currently extending new infrastructure to serve portions of the village. This infrastructure is needed not only to support residents, but also to attract potential resource-based employers. In addition, the Town continues to work with other utility providers, including Dominion Energy and Berkeley Electric Coop to improve the reliability of service to the village. There is opportunity for the town to coordinate with utility providers on some of their sustainability initiatives as well.

While the town's labor force participation rate is lower than that of Awendaw, Charleston County as a whole, and the tri-county region, the rate is greatly influence by very low participation rates of residents 16-19 years of age, as well as residents over age 60. Low participation by these age cohorts is not surprising given McClellanville's rural location limits options for teen workers most of the year and many of the village residents over age 60 are retired.  However, there is still reportedly a high

unemployment rate for residents 60-64 years of age, that may reflect a desire of individuals to remain in the workforce or those who have not chosen to officially retire and remove themselves from the labor force.  The availability and skillsets of these matured residents are assets that could contribute to economic development efforts in the village.

| Our Economy – Vibrant and diversified resource-based | |
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| McClellanville will protect its cultural resources as a valued economic asset. | 1. Review historic district design guidelines and ordinances to ensure they have the strength to protect, while encouraging investments in, properties that do not compromise the historic district's character<br>2. Draft a "demolition by neglect" ordinance for consideration<br>3. Protect entrances to the village from in appropriate commercial development through design review and/or conservation easements<br>4. Actively enforce ordinances for maintenance of vacant properties<br>5. Promote the village museum, arts council, working waterfront and village center to day-tourists<br>6. Support development of accommodations such as Bed and Breakfasts/Inns t |
| McClellanville will retain and preserve its working waterfront | 1. Work with the McClellanville Community Foundation and other nonprofits to develop an operations and funding plan for continuance of the seafood industries |
| McClellanville will support opportunities for new employment spaces to include provision of:<br>• Supportive infrastructure<br>• An available labor force<br>• Small business resources | 1. Assess the need and feasibility for development of a facility offering shared office/spaces<br>2. Work with local businesses and commercial property owners to reactivate the local chamber of commerce or comparable organization<br>3. Identify and help secure funding for branding and marketing of the town's distinct business districts<br>4. Identify areas appropriate for development of light industrial, warehousing, and/or construction support service uses compatible with the rural character of town<br>5. Collaborate with broadband providers to ensure all residents and businesses have access to enhanced service in the village<br>6. Collaborate with utility providers to improve and ensure reliability of the power system<br>7. Coordinate with SC Works and READY SC to identify and implement programs that ensure the village's labor force is paid a living wage via adequate access to education or skills training<br>8. Support home-based businesses; review ordinances to eliminate barriers to development of cottage industries<br>9. Collaborate with small business resources, such as Lowcountry Local First, to assist local entrepreneurs with business start ups |

# Our Environment – Sustainability and Resiliency

Comparable to resident's desire to maintain McClellanville's small-town character, is residents' desire to conserve the town's natural resources.  In addition to the important economic value that natural resources have in developing a resource-based economy, these resources play a major role in sustaining the environmental health and resiliency of the village.  One of the top three goals noted by residents was to increase the focus on natural hazard planning.  While the town's hazard mitigation plan is coordinated as part of the County's larger plan, natural resources also play a large part in mitigating the impacts of natural hazards and initiatives to protect them fall on the local government. However, the village faces an increasing challenge in balancing growth and development with conservation of these resources.  New property owners are quick to clear cut lots, build as close to wetlands and other critical areas as possible, and remove vegetation that protects the properties from the impacts of storms for the sake of views.  All of these activities run counter to using natural resources to mitigate impacts of natural hazards.

The town's charming character is also derived from the tree canopy that residents have also worked hard to protect. Many residents are not aware that the grand oak trees lining Scotia and Baker streets are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.  These oak canopies extend to many other principal roads within the town.  Because of these canopies and other factors, the town is a designated as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation.  This recognition provides the town with a framework to maintain and grow the tree cover, demonstrating the town's commitment the mission of protecting this valuable resource which contributes to resiliency of the town in the wake of environmental changes.

In a recent study by the College of Charleston, the town was documented as being vulnerable to wildfires, severe storms, flooding, and sea level rise.  While removal of certain trees can mitigate a property's vulnerability to wildfires, implementation of "fire wise" measures within the wildlife/urban interface needs to be balanced with retention of certain forested areas to ensure the ability of properties to mitigate impacts of flooding due to severe storms and other factors, not to mention removing natural habitat for several native species.  Development increases impervious surfaces, which increases the amount of water that the town's drainage system (ditches) needs to handle. Trees in McClellanville play a huge role in mitigating flooding from storm water and high tides through canopy and root absorption of water. Trees also play a large role in maintain the high air quality that the town enjoys, while filtering stormwater runoff into the creek to protect its water quality.  Therefore, future amendments to the zoning ordinance's tree conservation provisions should prioritize consideration of whether the proposed amendment reduces those mitigation benefits of trees in the village.

McClellanville was also included in a recent assessment of coastal forest resiliency by the Green Infrastructure Consortium in support of the SC Forestry Commission. As a result, core habitats in and around the village were documented. Protecting the network of core habitats and critical wetlands, etc. establishes a start point for the village to create a system of green infrastructure that will protect water quality of the creek and its tributaries. Through the development review process, the Planning Commission can work with its partners (the SC Forestry Commission, US Forest Service, and Cape Romain Wildlife refuge) to ensure new development does not fragment the network of habitats through conservation efforts.

The town has built upon the SC Forestry Commission's project to map the assessed coastal forests to develop a town wide plan for a network of open spaces. As part of a green infrastructure system, these spaces will contribute to providing recreation areas and will be prioritized by the town to maintain natural areas and resources that the town seeks to conserve. In support of protecting the water quality of Jeremy Creek and the Intracoastal Waterway (the town's blue infrastructure), the town should consider instituting a Resource Conservation overlay district. Much like the historic district overlay, this district can include provisions for protecting areas directly abutting critical areas and other wetlands to mitigate impacts of storms, abnormal tides, and sea-level rise particularly to those properties identified as vulnerable to the 1-foot sea level rise.

[Graphics to insert snapshot of open space plan and SLR maps]

[Graphics to add sidebar regarding stormwater mitigation by trees and riparian buffers]

| Our Sustainability and Resiliency | |
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| McClellanville will work to ensure a balance between the natural and built environment while accommodating growth | 1. Encourage development of existing lots with minimal impacts on the tree canopy<br>2. Ensure ordinance provisions incentivize the use of low-impact development techniques<br>3. Encourage residents to employ green building construction including but not limited to solar panels and metal roofs<br>4. Collaborate with Charleston County, SCDOT and property owners to identify and fund the use of alternative materials to repair existing sidewalks with minimal disturbance of tree roots |
| McClellanville will support actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change and increase the town's resiliency to natural hazards | 1. Develop and implement a menu of actions to mitigate the village's vulnerability to wildfires, severe storms, flooding, and sea level rise through education and partnerships<br>2. Review tree conservation regulations and collaborate with the SCFC and USFS to promote fire-wise initiatives recommended for the wildlife/urban interface<br>3. Review ordinances and apply standards to ensure narrow and longer driveways have adequate turnarounds for emergency vehicles<br>4. Work with the Awendaw Fire District to ensure adequate water resources to protect properties on both sides of the creek. |
| McClellanville will prioritize identification and conservation of its green infrastructure | 1. Consider establishment of a Resource Conservation district for those areas identified on the open space plan and future land use map<br>2. Identify priority actions to protect water quality (aka the town's Blue Infrastructure), including but not limited to riparian buffer areas.<br>3. Partner with the USFS and Cape Romain Refuge to address habitat fragmentation through conservation of identified habitat spaces within the village<br>4. Acquire, where possible, and/or protect identified open space areas to create a network of Green Infrastructure as shown on the open space plan<br>5. Consider development of a Climate Action Plan to protect the village's air and water quality |

# Our Land – Framework for Land Uses and Sustainable Development

The village has traditionally been segregated into residential and commercial development areas.  As the town grows there are opportunities to ensure that development patterns within each of these areas is done in a way that it blends in with existing development.  These areas are depicted on the future land use map.

There are currently two residential sections of town, each with unique characteristics.  The historic village area consists of smaller residential lots with smaller setbacks. The town prioritizes development of existing vacant lots in the historic area over creation of new subdivisions.  When larger tracts are occasionally proposed for subdivision, resulting parcels should follow the existing lotting pattern that is prevalent in the historic area's grid of streets.  Tracts adjacent to the village proposed for subdivision, whether annexed into the town or not, should be connected to this grid to create a natural extension of existing neighborhoods.

[Graphics to insert photos of historic residential streetscape and Broadmarsh subdivision]

The same principles should be applied to the non-historic residential areas, but with more flexibility to work around natural features and to create new, usable open spaces. New subdivisions of lots on the southwestern side of Jeremy Creek should connect to existing roads to ensure more than one access point for emergency vehicles and evacuations. In creating usable open spaces, the town should consider adopting ordinance provisions that accommodate conservation subdivisions where lots are most clustered and create a greater amount of conserved usable open spaces.

All new residential developments should contribute to the town's tree canopy as well as the pedestrian-friendliness by planting street trees and creating paved walking/biking trails or sidewalks. Provisions for these are already included in the town's ordinances.  However, priority should be given to application of low-impact development standards to lessen impervious surfaces and grey (concrete) infrastructure.

There are also two distinct commercial areas in the town with unique characteristics.  The historic village center is home to several small businesses, including restaurants and offices.  Although several prior retail establishments were at one time successful, a number closed during the great recession. This area is prime for redevelopment with destination businesses such as retail boutiques and restaurants that cater to tourists as well as locals. There are several revitalization strategies employed by larger towns that could be applied to branding and marketing this area to prospective business investments and customers.  However, these efforts require coordination and collaboration among existing businesses and property owners.  The town looks to support efforts for these owners to organize and develop a marketing plan by creating linkages to small business development centers

and incubators in the greater Charleston region.   The town and the McClellanville Community Foundation might also assist in seeking and applying for funding to support creation of a village "brand" with a marketing strategy.

[Graphics to insert photos and sidebar about example downtown branding initiatives]

The highway commercial area would typically be developed with auto-oriented uses.  Deep lots primarily front on the US highway narrow frontages, each with the possibility of securing encroachment permits from SCDOT.  The town conducted visioning sessions for this area in 2002-2003 and seeks to foster development of separate "villages" of commercial uses along the highway. To mitigate development of this area with a series of strip commercial uses and multiple driveways, the Town enhanced the highway commercial district provisions to include design guidelines with a plan that requires shared access points/driveways and access via internal roads.  To implement this vision, the town amended the district provisions to allow for additional residential uses such as townhomes and multifamily developments on a limited scale.  While none of these have been developed to date, the land area available along the highway could accommodate additional demand for housing that is financially attainable to residents.  The town's vision is not for this area to be developed with formula (chain) stores and restaurants, but with goods and services that support residents of the village and surrounding area.  One goal is to secure development of an establishment that provides healthy, fresh foods which may typically be done by a chain grocery store.  However, to ensure that the corridor is not developed with a series of large box and/or chain stores (formula businesses), the town can adopt policies and zoning amendments to further limit the size and spacing of such.  In concert with village center businesses and property owners, the highway commercial area could also benefit from development of branding and marketing strategies.

[Graphics to insert illustration of highway commercial vision plan]

The highway commercial area has provisions to allow for some light manufacturing uses, however the principal area for employment uses is the marine commercial area along Jeremy Creek with frontage on Morrison and/or Oak streets.  Uses in this area are part of the working waterfront and related to marine commerce.  Given the small size of parcels in this area, the town does not envision establishment of other employment uses.

Recently the town has become concerned with development of areas abutting the town, both of highway properties not incorporated into the town or of properties in the rural fringe about ¼ mile surrounding the village.  These areas provide opportunities for establishment of other employment uses that are compatible in scale with and have limited impacts on residential lots around the periphery of the village as well as agricultural uses on unincorporated parcels. The town has begun to consider and should continue development of a new district that would accommodate a node of

special and employment uses such as contractor services in the rural fringe with standards to mitigate any potential incompatibilities or externalities.

[Graphics to insert photos of the working waterfront]

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Town's character, sustainability and resiliency would greatly benefit from designation of a resource conservation area along Jeremy Creek.  Supplemented by conservation of undeveloped parcels, as shown on the open space plan, the town would establish provisions to create riparian buffers protecting properties fronting on the creek from impacts of flooding and incentivize employment of low-impact development techniques.

[Graphics to insert future land use map]

| Our Land – A Framework for sustainable development and land uses | |
|---|---|
| McClellanville will retain its distinct residential areas | 1. Promote use and development of existing properties as a preferred alternative to large subdivisions or developments in and adjacent to the historic district<br>2. Ensure new developments follow existing lotting patterns and connect to the existing street system to retain a connected grid system<br>3. Promote development of conservation subdivisions on the south side of Jeremy Creek, with clustered lots and common open spaces<br>4. Incorporate provisions for conservation and small lot subdivisions in the zoning ordinance |
| McClellanville will retain and promote development of its distinct commercial areas | 1. Ensure the village center commercial area retains its pedestrian orientation with destination businesses<br>2. Adopt provisions to limit establishment formula (big box and/or chain) businesses, particularly within the village commercial center<br>3. Work with property owners and the Bulls Bay Chamber of Commerce to increase the number of restaurant/food options and small local retail shops.<br>4. Review and amend the ordinance as needed to establish realistic size limitations for commercial buildings in the Highway Commercial District, as well as a minimum distance requirement between box and/or chain variety stores<br>5. Provide incentives for development of establishments that will increase access to healthy foods<br>6. Seek opportunities to fund development of a branding and marketing plan for the village<br>7. Encourage proactive annexation by the Town to ensure compatible development of the identified rural fringe areas<br>8. Support continuance of a weekly farmer's market |
| McClellanville will protect the marine commercial area as a working waterfront and seek to expand employment areas in other sections of town | 1. Identify areas in and around the Town in its rural fringe that are appropriate for rural/agriculturally compatible employment uses such as light industry and construction services with indoor storage<br>2. Coordinate with Charleston County on development review of non-residential proposals within the rural fringe and in the highway overlay district |

[Appendices to add:

A: Individual assessment of existing conditions per element required by state code

B: Summary of public input received

C: Copy of other resources (Resilient Coastal Forests, C of C vulnerability studies)]