

Chapter II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – TABLE OF CONTENTS..... 1

A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEES 2

B. CITIZEN OPINION SURVEY..... 2

C. PUBLIC HEARINGS 2

D. OVERVIEW 3

*An overview of this Chapter can be found in *Chapter 1 – Introduction and Executive Summaries*.

A Comprehensive Plan is only as good as the quality of the public involvement utilized during its development. The Planning Commission has created a series of opportunities for public participation and input throughout the 18-month Comprehensive Plan update process to reflect the broadest cross section of community interests and concerns. To ensure that residents were provided opportunities to be involved in the planning process in a manner that fits their schedules and interests, meetings were scheduled for lunch times and evenings, as well as other times. Citizens were also invited to participate via email.

Between October 9, 2018, and the adoption of the plan on December 2, 2019, there were 28 public input sessions to gather input and information. Included were twelve Planning Commission meetings with public input opportunity related to the Comprehensive Plan, eight Planning Commission workshops on the Comprehensive Plan open to the public, two formal public input sessions for a review of the completed draft of the Comprehensive Plan, and two City Council meetings with public input leading up to the First and Second Readings of the Comprehensive Plan by City Council.

A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEES

The *Clemson 2024 Comprehensive Plan* document is organized around ten elements, of which nine are required and one is an additional element unique to Clemson. In January 2018, committees were formed to guide the review of each of the elements. These committees were charged with reviewing background data and existing conditions and developing a status report on the goals and strategies of each element. The element committees met three to four times over several months to accomplish this task. On September 26, 2018, these committees publicly shared the results of the extensive reviews and embarked on the Comprehensive Plan update process.

B. CITIZEN OPINION SURVEY

In January 2019, a city-wide on-line survey was conducted to help establish priority areas of interest. This survey was advertised via blast emails, postings on Nextdoor and Facebook, City website posts, the use of hang tags on roll-carts, letters to churches and other civic groups, and the offer to assist those without computers in completing the survey. There were 636 responses. While not statistically valid due to the sampling method, the survey provided insights on the concerns of Clemson residents. The 2019 update considered the results of this survey in decision-making.

C. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Upon obtaining a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission and prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City Council held two formal public hearings to receive further public input.

D. OVERVIEW

The City of Clemson has experienced significant changes over the last thirty years. During that time the City's population doubled in size, business corridors expanded along the City's primary arterial roadways, the number of residential dwellings rose sharply, and significant investment was made in public improvement projects designed to enhance the City's appearance and overall quality of life. The impetus for much of these changes can be attributed to two primary sources: the rapid growth during recent decades that generally typified the Upstate region of South Carolina and the advancement of Clemson University as a nationally known research institution that was accompanied by significant enrollment increases.

Despite these changes, Clemson has retained much of the small college town atmosphere for which it has always been known. Originally named Calhoun, the town was settled in 1872 along the railroad at a stop that served the local agricultural community, most notably the Fort Hill Plantation. The land around the rail line, still locally known as Calhoun, contains some of the oldest structures in the City. After the establishment of Clemson College in 1889, the center of town began a gradual shift away from the railroad toward the College. New businesses and several churches developed along routes that are now known as College Avenue and Old Greenville Highway, establishing a new 'downtown' for the emerging town and forging a permanent link between the City and the College. Neighborhoods slowly emerged near the new commercial center, providing housing in large part for the faculty and staff of the College.

The town was formally incorporated as the Town of Calhoun in 1937, but was renamed the City of Clemson in 1943 to eliminate confusion with Calhoun Falls and to officially recognize the "town-gown" partnership. Along with the College's growth in the post-World War II era and due in large part to opportunities provided by the "GI Bill," the new City continued to expand. The college town became a lakefront community in 1963 with the completion of Lake Hartwell by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a project that enhanced both the natural beauty of the area and greatly expanded recreational opportunities. The construction of U.S. Highway 123 in the 1960s provided the City with a direct a connection to the emerging Greenville/Interstate 85 corridor.

Several significant opportunities and challenges must be considered as the City looks to its future. This document seeks to analyze these factors and offers appropriate strategies to address each factor. Chief among these issues is the obligation to promote and protect the quality of life in Clemson. Clemson is first and foremost a university town. Effective partnerships between the City and Clemson University must be strengthened and enhanced since the futures of both are interconnected in many ways.

As the only lakefront municipality on Lake Hartwell, preservation of this valuable water resource is vital and must be considered as part of an overall commitment to protecting the City's natural resources. The City must also contend with the lack of significant undeveloped land area within its current corporate limits that, coupled with other geographic and administrative obstacles to future expansion, will continue to impact land costs in the City. Escalating land costs will have a significant impact on both housing costs and availability in the City. As the Upstate of South

Carolina and Clemson University continue to grow, the City will also continue to grow and change accordingly. Strategies must be developed that allow the City to effectively manage and respond to growth as it occurs both within and outside of its boundaries.