



INTRODUCTION

The *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028* provides a blueprint for the future growth and development of the City in the coming decade. The Comprehensive Plan is long-range in scope and represents a comprehensive update of the previous *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2007-2017* that was most recently updated in 2013. This new Plan serves as a general guide for the future social, economic, and physical development of the City of Camden. Intentionally area-wide and non-site specific, the Plan is implemented through more specific tools such as the City of Camden Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, the Camden Design Guidelines, and other ordinances, codes, policies, and programs.



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A. LOCATION

The City of Camden is located in the Santee-Lynches region of South Carolina, along the I-20 corridor that links the Columbia Metro region to Atlanta to the west and Florence and the I-95 corridor to the east. Access to the Wateree River and trade routes between the coast and the inland frontier established the area as an early center for commerce, government, and cultural resources for the region. The City continues to benefit from its strategic location today at the edge of the growing Columbia metropolitan region and within a close drive of the bustling Charlotte area. Camden is the Kershaw County seat and the largest of the County’s three municipalities in terms of both land area at nearly 11 square miles and in population, with 6,931 residents in 2014.



MAP 1.1. CITY OF CAMDEN LOCATION

B. AUTHORITY

The *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028* was developed under the authority of, and in compliance with, the requirements of the *South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 (Title 6, Chapter 29 of the South Carolina Code of Laws)* and subsequent amendments. The new Comprehensive Plan is anchored by a process that builds on a visioning effort in which staff, public and private stakeholders, local service providers, the Planning Commission and City Council created a detailed plan to guide the City’s development into the next decade.



C. PLAN REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

Per the provisions of the 1994 *Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act* and subsequent revisions, comprehensive plans must be re-evaluated by each jurisdiction’s planning commission at least every five years, and must be updated at least every ten years. Ten-year comprehensive plan updates must be prepared and recommended by the planning commission and adopted by the governing body. Each element of the Plan must address three components in the planning process:

CAROLINA CUP



- An inventory of existing conditions including research and a descriptive summary of existing conditions in the City that are relevant to each planning element.
- A statement of needs and goals derived from the existing conditions research and providing general guidance for policy implementation.
- Development of implementation strategies with timeframes for each element, including objectives and coordinated action strategies to address the identified needs and goals. The strategies are linked to key entities and partnerships identified as essential in implementation responsibility and oversight.

The Comprehensive Plan is an essential guide for future development, providing multiple benefits by defining common goals, prioritizing community needs, and promoting efficient use of limited resources. Not only does the Plan identify the issues and opportunities facing the City over the next decade, it creates an image of what our community is and what we want it to be that serves as a written policy reference for decision-makers.

D. SCOPE OF PLAN AND ELEMENTS

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to assess existing conditions, examine the community’s strengths and weaknesses, and analyze trends in the City of Camden. This information is then used to define the consensus goals, objectives, and policies that City leaders will use to guide public and private development in Camden in the coming years. In short, the planning process seeks to answer the fundamental questions of:

- Where are we headed?
- What do we need to improve and what can we build upon?
- What do we want to become and how do we get there?



The City's Comprehensive Plan includes the basic elements as required by the *1994 Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act* and subsequent revisions, as well as an additional Implementation Summary. Each of the required elements includes an inventory of existing conditions and a statement of needs and goals that identify future activities and improvements to attain these community goals. Implementation strategies for each element address specific objectives, action steps, key participants, and timeframes for completion of plan objectives. This prescribed process is designed to support not only the preparation of the Plan, but also the continuous monitoring, reassessment, and update of the core planning elements considered critical, necessary and desirable to guide local development. Each of the nine required elements, as well as the Implementation Summary, is profiled below.

- The **Population Element** includes information related to historic population trends and projections; the number, size and characteristics of households; resident educational attainment levels and trends; race, gender, and age characteristics of the population; and other information relevant to a clear understanding of how the population affects the existing and future conditions of the City.
- The **Housing Element** includes an analysis of existing housing in the City by age and condition; owner and renter occupancy; housing location and type; housing costs and affordability; and projections of housing need to accommodate existing and future populations as identified in the Population and Economic Elements.
- The **Economic Element** includes an economic base profile; historic trends and projections on the size and characteristics of the workforce; employment centers and commuting patterns; employment characteristics and trends; economic development targets and incentives; and other conditions impacting the local economy. Related existing economic plans and studies were referenced and incorporated where appropriate.
- The **Natural Resources Element** includes information on water resources; slope and soil characteristics; areas identified as prime agricultural or forest lands; unique plant and animal habitats; unique park and recreation areas; significant wetlands; and other natural resources within and adjacent to the City.
- The **Cultural Resources Element** includes an inventory of historic resources including buildings, structures, and archaeological sites; unique commercial or residential areas; unique scenic resources; educational, religious, or entertainment institutions and venues; and other resources relating to the cultural aspects of Camden. Relevant existing historic surveys and cultural planning documents were referenced and incorporated where appropriate.
- The **Community Facilities Element** includes information on a wide range of public facilities and services including existing and proposed water supply, treatment and distribution; existing and proposed sewer systems and disposal facilities; solid waste collection and disposal; police and fire protection; emergency medical facilities; general government facilities and staffing; existing and proposed educational facilities and libraries, and funding sources for these essential facilities and services.
- The **Transportation Element** includes an analysis of transportation systems serving the City. This analysis includes existing roads; planned or proposed major road improvements and new road construction; existing, planned or proposed transit projects; and existing and planned pedestrian



and bicycle facilities. Also incorporated are analyses of related data such as road capacities, traffic counts, commuter statistics, population and employment projections, funding sources, and other factors.

- The **Priority Investment Element** provides direction for implementing recommended strategies from the above elements that require capital improvements. This element examines future capital improvement needs, identifies viable funding sources in the coming decade, and encourages and facilitates coordination and cooperation with identified adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies in the identification, planning, and implementation of capital improvement projects.
- The **Land Use Element** provides information on the existing and future use of land in the City of Camden. The content and goals of the other elements define the types and amounts of land needed for various uses to include residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, public and institutional, recreational, and open space. The element provides an existing land use inventory developed using digital mapping. This geographic information system (GIS) mapping of existing land uses incorporated Kershaw County Assessor tax parcel data and City staff knowledge of the area. Development of the future land use map built upon the existing land use inventory and was supplemented by City staff assessment of current development trends and potential future development areas.
- The **Implementation Summary** consolidates and prioritizes the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies from all nine elements into a more manageable format that can be readily monitored by City staff and officials. The summary provides timelines for completion of each strategy, along with a listing of the appropriate agency or organization responsible for implementation. A chronological listing of implementation strategies is also provided to inform annual budgeting and resource planning considerations for all action items.

E. REVIEW AND ADOPTION

The comprehensive planning process for the City of Camden included the active involvement of individuals representing local agencies, organizations, Kershaw County, the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments, and neighboring municipalities, in addition to the participation of numerous City staff, appointed board and commission members, and elected officials. Participants also included stakeholders such as local service providers, non-profit and civic organizations, business owners, and interested citizens. Following review by the staff, stakeholders, and other relevant agencies and jurisdictions, the draft document was sent to the City of Camden Planning Commission for additional review, editing, and recommendation to the City Council. Once all Plan elements had been recommended by the Planning Commission, City Council conducted a final review of the entire Plan draft, including a public hearing and two readings, with final adoption of the *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028* on January 22, 2019.



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