

INTRODUCTION

The County derives its name from one of the eight original proprietors of the Carolinas, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, dating back to a land grant given in 1785. The County played an important part in the Revolutionary War campaign of the “Swamp Fox”, Francis Marion.

The Town of Summerton dates back to 1737. Once called Summertown, it was a summer resort for landowners along the Santee River who sought inland retreats to escape the mosquitoes and the heat of the South Carolina summers.

The Town of Turbeville derived its name from a family of the same name. The area was historically known for its production of timber, turpentine, and tobacco.

The Town of Paxville was originally a land grant to the Pack family in the middle 1700s. It is the oldest section of the County.

The City of Manning, the county seat, was named for John Laurence Manning who served as governor of South Carolina from 1852 to 1854. Manning was selected to be the county seat because of its central location in the County.

Clarendon County is located in the eastern-central section of South Carolina. Interstate 95 passes through the planning area intersecting South Carolina state routes 58, 260, 261, and 527. U.S. routes 301, 378, and 521 pass through Clarendon County. The County is approximately 60 miles from Columbia, the state capital; 60 miles from Charleston; and 40 miles from Florence. A location map is provided at the end of this section.

In 1994, the South Carolina General Assembly consolidated all the previous planning enabling legislation into one section of the Code of Laws by enacting the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994, hereinafter called the Act. In addition, the Act, codified as Section 6-29, updated the old law with current practices and new methods, tools, and procedures for local planning. The Act is not mandatory, but it does require a comprehensive plan in order to regulate development activity through zoning, subdivision regulations, floodplain regulation, wetland protection, historic preservation and any other regulations concerning development activity.

One of the basic principles of the Act is to manage new growth to protect the natural resources, provide new residential space and encourage economic development. Balancing these competing needs requires a careful, thoughtful process and a game plan called the Comprehensive Plan. Upon its adoption, the Plan becomes the official public policy statement for how the County will develop in the future. Implementation of the Plan increases protection of private property rights for agricultural, industrial, commercial and residential property owners by establishing the use of all lands in the County and providing stronger procedures for changing the established uses.

The Act provides that upon Plan adoption "...no new street, structure, utility, square, park, or other public way, grounds, or open space or public buildings for any use, whether publicly or privately owned, may be constructed or authorized in the political jurisdiction of the governing authority or authorities establishing the planning commission until the location, character, and extent of it have been submitted to the planning commission for review and comment as to compatibility of the proposal with comprehensive plan of the community..." (See Section 6-29-540, SC Code of Laws) **This provision means that all regulations concerning the development of land shall be consistent with the Plan and that the Plan's Policies and Objectives control the location, character and extent of all development and redevelopment.**

Furthermore, it means that whenever someone wishes to start any kind of development activity, the Planning and Public Services Commission (PPSC) staff must evaluate whether the proposed project is compatible with the Plan and so advise the PPSC. **It also means that government projects will be governed by the same rules as those for the private sector.**

The Act also requires the County, principally through the PPSC, to maintain and ongoing planning program that results in a continual re-evaluation and updating of the Plan, or portions, thereof. In other words, the Plan is not the end of the County's effort, but rather the beginning of a continual process. **Planning is a proactive verb.**

In June 2007, the governor signed into law the South Carolina Priority Investment Act (PIA). The PIA consists of amendments to the 1994 Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act. One of the amendments adds the Priority Investment Element to the list of required elements for local comprehensive plans. Another takes the transportation section of the community facilities element, and sets it aside as a separate and distinct element.

Preparation of the Plan is not a complicated task. It requires collection of relevant data regarding such matters as population characteristics, existing land use patterns, sewer and water programs, location of wetlands and agricultural resources, etc. These data are then analyzed to determine the important development issues facing County residents.

Once the needs, or problems, are identified, the County establishes a goal to attack the problem, or need. It then sets milestones, called objectives, to measure the progress toward achieving the goal. Each objective will have a series of specific actions steps, called policies, or implementation strategies, designed to achieve the objective. This whole process is formalized in the Comprehensive Plan document itself.

The Plan must be economically feasible. This statement means the Plan must do what it says it is going to do within the framework of County financial condition. In other words, part of the comprehensive planning process includes identification of ways to fund the desired activity.

For example, Clarendon County has fairly low median household income in comparison to the State as a whole. In recognition of this problem, the County Council has initiated several programs to attack this problem and find ways to help households increase their incomes. One such program is the establishment of the Development Board to attract new jobs to the County.

This Plan conforms to the process described above. The document is divided into sections called Elements. Each Element contains an Inventory Of Existing Conditions, A Statement Of Needs and Goals and A Statement Of Implementation Strategies With Timeframes.

The overall Goal of this Plan is

To maximize the County’s location advantages by encouraging high value economic development and job creation, viable agricultural land preservation, compact urban development and natural resource protection.

The Elements mandated by the Planning Act are summarized below.

Population Element	A Consideration Of Historic Trends And Population Projections
Economic Development Element	A Consideration Of Labor Force And Employment Issues
Natural Resources Element	A Consideration Of Agricultural Lands, Wetlands And Other Natural Resources
Cultural Resources Element	A Consideration Of Historical And Archeological Resources
Community Facilities Element	A Consideration Of Water Facilities, Sewer Facilities, Solid Waste Disposal, Stormwater Management And Public Safety Issues
Housing Element	A Consideration Of The Location, Types, Age And Condition Of Housing For Both Renters And Owners
Land Use Element	A Consideration Of All Types Of Existing And Future Land Uses
Transportation Element	A consideration of roadways and transportation facilities.
Priority Investment Element	Analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those local funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools.

Figure I-1, Location Map,