Mayor
ISAIAH SCIPIO

City Council
ALLIE WINTER, Mayor Pro-Tem
DANNY ADAMS
JONATHAN BAKER
CAMERON RIVERS
FLOYD ROGERS
RAY WILSON

City of Pickens
Where the Mountains Begin.

City of Pickens

www.cityofpickens.com

Administrator
TIM O'BRIANT

City Clerk/Human Resource Dir.
MEAGAN NATIONS

AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Monday, August 24, 2026
6:00 p.m.
CITY HALL
219 PENDLETON STREET
PICKENS, SOUTH CAROLINA

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

2. COMMENTS FROM MAYOR SCIPIO:

3. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF COURT STREET PARKING, INCLUDING ANY INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

4. DISCUSSION OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

5. DISCUSSION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

6. DISCUSSION OF FORMING A CITY OF PICKENS EVENTS COMMITTEE

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION:
   S.C. CODE OF LAWS, SECTION 30-4-70 (A) ALLOWS THAT SPECIFICALLY DELINEATED AND QUALIFYING MATTERS MAY BE DISCUSSED OUTSIDE THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC.

   a. BOARD AND COMMISSIONS - SECTION 30-4-70(A)(1):
      i. Board and Commissions Appointments

   b. PERSONNEL – SECTION 30-4-70(A)(1):
      i. Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline or release of an employee, or an appointment to a public body

8. ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS (*as needed*):

9. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

10. ADJOURNMENT:

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

Court Street Parking Management and Courthouse Security

This Intergovernmental Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into by and between the City of Pickens, South Carolina ("City") and Pickens County, South Carolina, acting through Pickens County Courthouse Administration ("County").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the City owns and maintains Court Street within the City of Pickens, including the public parking areas located along Court Street adjacent to the Pickens County Courthouse; and

WHEREAS, the Pickens County Courthouse has requested appropriate control of immediately adjacent parking areas to address courthouse security, law enforcement access, prisoner transport, emergency access, court operations, and other public safety needs; and

WHEREAS, the City and County desire to cooperate in providing the County and Courthouse Administration sufficient authority to manage parking immediately adjacent to the courthouse while preserving the City's ownership of Court Street;

NOW, THEREFORE, the City and County agree as follows:

1. Grant of Parking Management Authority

The City hereby grants to Pickens County and Pickens County Courthouse Administration the authority to manage, regulate, designate, restrict, and maintain all on-street parking spaces and parking areas located on the west side of Court Street adjacent to the Pickens County Courthouse.

This authority replaces any prior limitation providing for six (6) individually designated or reserved parking spaces within this area.

2. Courthouse Security and Operational Use

The County and Courthouse Administration may determine the appropriate use of parking within the area described above based upon courthouse security and operational requirements.

Such authority includes the ability to:

- designate spaces for law enforcement, court personnel, judges, jurors, witnesses, prisoner transport, emergency vehicles, or other courthouse-related purposes;
- reserve or restrict individual spaces or portions of the parking area;

- temporarily close parking spaces when reasonably necessary for courthouse security, special proceedings, emergencies, maintenance, or other governmental purposes;
- install and maintain appropriate signs or markings identifying restricted or reserved parking; and
- modify parking designations as security and operational requirements change without the necessity of amending this Agreement.

3. Maintenance

Pickens County and/or Courthouse Administration may perform or arrange for routine maintenance associated with the parking areas subject to this Agreement, including signage, pavement markings, parking designations, and similar improvements related to the management and security of the parking area.

Any substantial alteration to the street, curb, drainage system, sidewalk, utilities, or other permanent City infrastructure shall require prior approval of the City.

4. Enforcement

The City authorizes the County and Courthouse Administration to establish parking restrictions within the area covered by this Agreement. The parties may coordinate with their respective law enforcement and other authorized personnel regarding enforcement of those restrictions consistent with applicable law.

5. City Ownership and Public Right-of-Way

Nothing in this Agreement transfers ownership of Court Street or the underlying public right-of-way to Pickens County. Court Street shall remain a City-owned public street.

The authority granted by this Agreement is limited to the management, regulation, security, and maintenance of parking on the west side of Court Street adjacent to the Pickens County Courthouse.

6. Public Safety

The County shall exercise its authority under this Agreement in a manner that maintains reasonable access for emergency vehicles and does not unnecessarily interfere with the safe movement of vehicular or pedestrian traffic on Court Street.

7. Term and Termination

This Agreement shall become effective upon approval and execution by both parties and shall remain in effect until terminated by either party upon thirty (30) days' written notice to the other party.

8. Intergovernmental Cooperation

The parties acknowledge that this Agreement is intended to facilitate cooperation between the City and County and to enhance security and efficient operation of the Pickens County Courthouse.

9. Entire Agreement

This Agreement constitutes the understanding of the parties concerning management of the parking area described herein and supersedes any prior agreement or understanding between the parties concerning the designation of the six (6) reserved parking spaces on the west side of Court Street adjacent to the courthouse.

CITY OF PICKENS, SOUTH CAROLINA

By: _____
Mayor

Attest: _____
City Clerk

Date: _____

PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

By: _____
Authorized Representative

Title: _____

Attest: _____

Date: _____

Mayor
ISAIAH SCIPIO

City Council
ALLIE WINTER- MAYOR PRO TEM
CAMERON RIVERS
FLOYD ROGERS
DANNY ADAMS
RAY WILSON
JONATHAN BAKER

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Administrator
TIM O'BRIANT
City Clerk
DONNA OWEN

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Adoption of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission respectfully submits the enclosed 2026 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pickens and recommends its adoption by the City Council in accordance with the requirements of the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act.
The Comprehensive Plan represents the City's long-range vision for future growth, development, and preservation. It evaluates existing conditions and establishes goals, objectives, and implementation strategies related to land use, housing, economic development, transportation, public facilities, natural resources, cultural and historic resources, community services, and capital improvements. The plan is intended to provide policy guidance for future legislative and administrative decisions affecting the physical, economic, and social development of the City.

During the preparation of this plan, the Planning Commission reviewed demographic and economic trends, existing land use patterns, infrastructure capacity, community assets, and anticipated future needs. Opportunities were provided for public participation and comment throughout the planning process, and the Commission carefully considered the input received in developing the final document. The resulting plan reflects the community's vision while providing practical recommendations for managing growth, protecting community character, and enhancing the quality of life for current and future residents.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as a policy document and planning guide. Adoption of the plan does not amend zoning classifications or approve individual development projects. Rather, it establishes the framework upon which future land use decisions, zoning amendments, capital improvement planning, and economic development initiatives may be evaluated.

Accordingly, the Planning Commission respectfully requests that the Mayor and City Council consider the enclosed Comprehensive Plan and adopt it by ordinance as the official Comprehensive Plan of the City of Pickens.

Respectfully,

Planning Commission

CITY COUNCIL DRAFT – AUGUST 2026

CITY OF PICKENS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Contents

CITY COUNCIL DRAFT – APRIL 2026 0

POPULATION 6

Population Trends 6

Household and Family Trends 7

Race and Ethnicity 9

Age 9

Education 11

ECONOMY 13

Economic Profile 13

Income 13

Employment 14

HOUSING 16

Housing Element 16

Existing Conditions 16

Value and Affordability 17

Type and Occupation 18

Age and Condition 19

CULTURAL RESOURCES 21

Pickens County Museum 21

Hagood Mauldin House 21

Hagood Grist Mill 22

Pickens Outdoor Amphitheater 22

Festivals/Events 23

Azaelea Festival 23

Pickens Appalachian Folk Festival 23

Jeep Fest 23
Other Events 23
COMMUNITY 24
Community Facilities 24
The Village Library 24
Education 24
Post Secondary Education 25
Safety – Police 25
Safety – Fire 26
Water/Sewer 26
Recreation 26
Hagood Community Center 28
Pickens Senior Center 28
Doodle Trail 28
Doodle Park 28
NATURAL RESOURCES 29
Geographic Location 29
Climate 29
Topographic Character 29
Lakes, Rivers, and Streams 29
Flood Lands 29
Soils 30
Unique Park and Recreation Areas 31
Lake Jocasee 31
Lake Keowee 31
Lake Hartwell 31

Duke Power Company Land 31
The Franklin L. Gravely Wildlife Management Area (Horse-Pasture Game Management Area) 32
Keowee-Toxaway State Park 32
Table Rock State Park 32
The Foothills Trail 32
County Maintained Parks 32
South Carolina State Botanical Gardens 32
Cherokee Foothills Scenic Hwy (SC11) 33
Sassafras Mountain 33
TRANSPORTATION 34
Road Network 34
Commuting Patterns 36
Road Maintenance 37
Non-Motorized Transportation 38
Sidewalks 38
Bike Lane and Trails 38
Railroads 38
Airports 38
LAND USE 40
Existing Land Use 40
Residential 40
Commercial 41
Institutional 41
Industrial 41
Undeveloped/Vacant Land 41

Existing Zoning 41
Residential Single-Family 42
Residential Multifamily 42
Commercial 42
Future Land Use 43
Single Family Residential 43
Multifamily Residential 43
Institutional 44
Commercial 44
RESILIENCY 48
Purpose 48
Primary Hazards 48
Severe Thunderstorms, Tornados, and Lightning. 48
Drought 48
Hail 49
Winter Storms 49
Hazardous Materials 49
Tools and Existing Protective Measures 49
International Building Code Series 50
Conclusion 50
PRIORITY INVESTMENT 51
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) 52
Table of Contents 52
1. Introduction 52
2. Legal Framework 52
3. CIP Development Process 52

4. Project Categories 53
5. Funding Sources 53
6. Project Prioritization 53
7. Five-Year Project Schedule 54
CITIZEN INPUT 55
GOALS FOR 2025-2035 59
Population 59
Economy 59
Housing 59
Community/Cultural Resources 59
Transportation 60
Land Use 60

POPULATION

Population Trends

Population shifts play a key role in shaping community development. As the population grows, demand rises for housing, transportation networks, utilities, schools, parks, public safety services, and local businesses. Population data examines the number, size, and makeup of households within a community, while also considering residents' income levels and educational backgrounds.

The City of Pickens has seen a steady increase in population since 2010 with an increase of 11%. The increase is projected to continue, with an additional 9% by 2029.

Population Summary, 2010-2029	
2010 Total Population	3,157
2020 Total Population	3,388
2024 Total Population	3,506
2029 Total Population	3,821
2024-2029 Annual Rate	6.5%

The Upstate Region of South Carolina continues to see significant population growth, with the region's population growing by more than 182,000, or 13.4% between 2010 and 2020. Pickens County also experienced growth during the 10-year period, with an estimated 2020 population of almost 120,000, a 9% increase from 2010.

City of Pickens Population vs Pickens County Municipalities 2010-2020			
	2010	**2020**	**Change**
City of Pickens	3157	3388	7.3%
Liberty	3269	3465	6%
Easley	19993	22154	10.8%
Norris	813	847	4%
Central	5159	5239	1.5%
Clemson	13905	16081	15%
Pickens County	119,224	130,793	9.7%
Upstate South Carolina	1,362,073	1,544,206	13.4%
South Carolina	4,625,364	5,321,206	15%

Although the City of Pickens is not growing as quickly as the broader region, its population is once again increasing, a sign that the community may be stabilizing. Recent development in Greenville and Pickens Counties has begun to extend into the City of Pickens. When compared to other municipalities of

comparable size in the Upstate, noticeable differences emerge between Pickens and the surrounding region. Within Pickens County itself, the City of Pickens remains one of the smaller cities by population.

Household and Family Trends

Shifts in population size or demographics directly affect the number of households and the demand for housing. Increases in households and families are closely tied to population growth. A *family household* refers to relatives living together, while a *non-family household* consists of a householder living alone or with non-relatives.

City of Pickens Households and Families, 2010-2029				
	Households	**Average Household Size**	**Families**	**Average Family Size**
2010	1262	2.32	823	2.87
2020	1317	2.29	858	2.92
2024	1372	2.28	870	2.95
2029	1512	2.25	958	2.95

In 2024, the City of Pickens had 1,372 Households and 870 Families. There was an 8% increase in the number of households since 2010 and 5% increase in the number of families since 2010. The projected increase of households between 2024 and 2029 is expected to be 9% while families will increase by 9%.

Since 1850, the average number of people per household in the United States has steadily declined, due to two demographic shifts: smaller family sizes as women had fewer children, and a decrease in extended families living together. However, in 2018 the nation experienced its first increase in household size since 1850, a trend with potential impacts on the housing market. This pattern is also reflected in both state and local data. According to ESRI Business Analyst projections, the average household size in 2024 is 2.41 people in both Pickens County and South Carolina, down slightly from 2.48 and 2.49, respectively, in 2010. The City of Pickens, however, has remained below both the county and state averages for household size in both years.

Comparison of Household and Family Size City of Pickens, Pickens County, and South Carolina 2010-2029									
	Household Size			Family Size			Percentage of Families		
	City of Pickens	Pickens County	SC	City of Pickens	Pickens County	SC	City of Pickens	Pickens County	SC
2010	2.32	2.48	2.49	2.87	2.95	3.01	65%	58%	67%
2020	2.29	2.43	2.43	2.92	2.93	2.98	65%	60%	68%
2024	2.28	2.41	2.41	2.95	2.94	2.90	63%	62%	69%
2029	2.25	2.37	2.38	2.95	2.90	2.95	62%	61%	68%

In terms of families, the City of Pickens has seen a slight decrease in the number of families since 2010. In Pickens County and the State of South Carolina, the number of family households increased since 2010. This trend is not surprising. Across the country, young singles tend to gravitate toward urban areas while families transition to suburban and rural areas for better schools and safer neighborhoods.

Another demographic factor to consider is the percentage of married couples within City of Pickens households. Married couples comprised 57% of all households in City of Pickens in 2024, compared to 50% in Pickens County and 48% in South Carolina.

City of Pickens 2024 Population 15+ by Marital Status	
Total	2,949
Never Married	27.1%
Married	56.9%
Widowed	5.7%
Divorced	10.3%

It is still uncertain whether the recent rise in household size will persist. For more than a century, household sizes steadily declined, but that trend has now slowed and may be leveling off. Because population and household size are closely tied to housing market changes, shifts in these factors can have a direct impact on consumer spending.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2024, the City of Pickens had a population that was 79.9% White and 11.3% Black, reflecting a modest increase in diversity compared to previous years. This marks a slight shift from the 2010 census, when the population was 80.8% White and 15.2% Black. While the city remains less diverse than the overall state of South Carolina, where the White population stands at 66.2%, it is notably more diverse than Pickens County as a whole, which is 82.7% White.

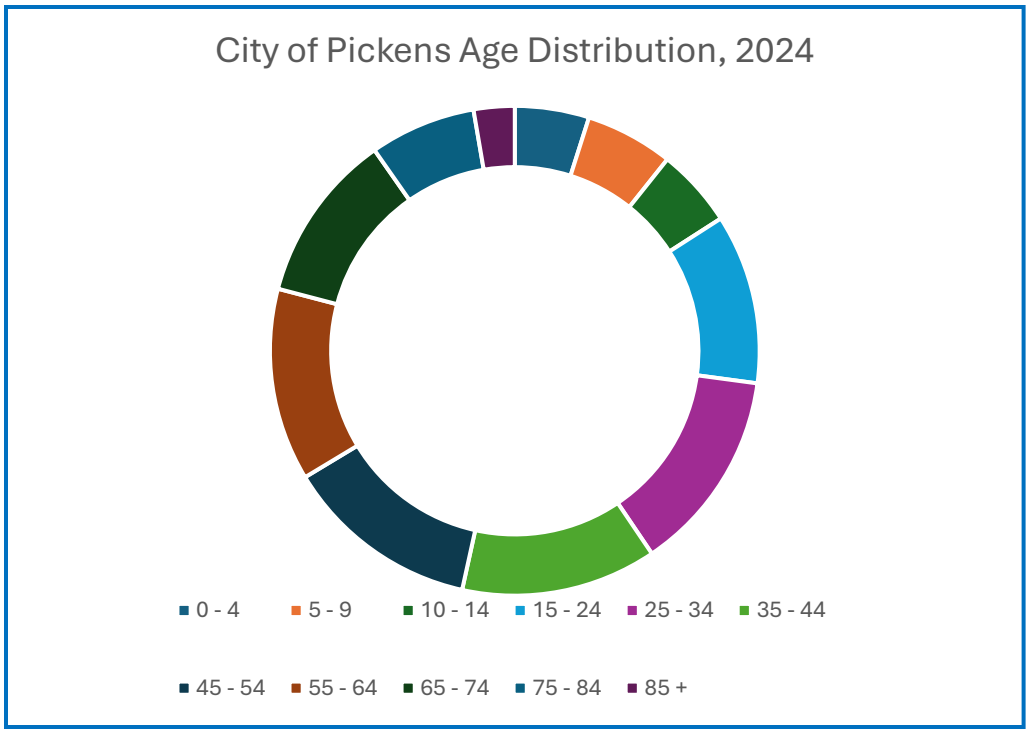
These demographic trends suggest that Pickens is gradually becoming more representative of broader state-level diversity, positioning the city for inclusive growth and community development initiatives.

City of Pickens 2024 Population by Race/Ethnicity	
Total	3,506
White Alone	79.9%
Black Alone	11.3%
American Indian Alone	0.3%
Asian Alone	0.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	1.5%
Two or More Races	6.8%
Hispanic Origin	4.4%
Diversity Index	39.9

Another noticeable trend is the increase of the Hispanic population as they continue to settle in the Upstate Region. The region's population is 7% Hispanic, a 1.2% increase from 2010. The Hispanic population in City of Pickens grew at a faster clip with 3% in 2010 and now make up 4.4% of residents in City of Pickens.

Age

Understanding a city's age composition is crucial, as it directly influences land use and planning decisions. The distribution of people across age groups shapes the demand for both public and private services. For instance, if the senior population is rising while the number of young children is declining, prioritizing new school construction over senior facilities would be an inefficient use of resources.



Between 2010 and 2024, the City of Pickens experienced a steady rise in its median age, increasing from 39.7 to 42.3 years. This trend mirrors broader demographic shifts seen across both Pickens County and the state of South Carolina. During the same period, the county's median age rose from 34.9 to 36.5 years, while the state saw an increase from 37.8 to 40 years.

These figures suggest an aging population across all levels, which may have implications for local services, workforce dynamics, and long-term planning. The City of Pickens, with a median age higher than both the county and state averages, may be particularly poised to address the needs of older residents while balancing growth and generational diversity.

2024 Population by Age	
Total	3,506
0 – 4	4.9%
5 – 9	5.8%
10 – 14	5.2%
15 – 24	11.2%
25 – 34	13.4%
35 – 44	12.9%
45 – 54	12.9%
55 – 64	12.7%
65 – 74	11.2%
75 – 84	7.0%
85 +	2.7%
18 +	80.7%

The largest percentage of the City of Pickens's population (51.9%) includes people ages 25 to 64 years old. Individuals in this age bracket are the main working age population. People over 18 years old make up over 80% of the city's population.

Regardless of broader trends, understanding a community's population makeup is essential for determining the services needed to support residents. In the City of Pickens, the 0–14 age group makes up 16% of the population. This cohort includes both school-aged children and those not yet old enough to attend school, creating demand for a wide range of services. These include childcare, quality educational facilities with appropriate student–teacher ratios, school transportation, free or reduced lunch programs for economically challenged families, safe routes to school through well-maintained sidewalks and crosswalks, parks and playgrounds, age-appropriate entertainment and retail options (such as children's museums and clothing stores), as well as access to pediatric healthcare and specialists.

Another significant age group in the City of Pickens is residents aged 65 and older, who make up 28% of the population. Seniors and retirees have distinct needs compared to the general population and often require specialized services. While many choose to remain in their homes and "age in place," retirement communities that support active lifestyles are increasingly common. Older adults may also require assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) and, in some cases, transition to assisted living facilities. Many of these facilities offer a "continuum of care," allowing residents to move seamlessly from independent living to assisted care and, if needed, nursing home services within the same community. Accommodating such housing options may necessitate updates to zoning and land development ordinances.

Seniors who choose to remain in their homes often rely on services such as Meals on Wheels or other nutritional programs. Many also require transportation support, whether through public transit, paratransit services, or safe and accessible sidewalks that connect to key destinations within walking distance. These transportation needs should be addressed in future transportation plans and funded through the Capital Improvement Program or other sources. As healthcare demands rise with age, medical providers in the City of Pickens may also need to expand facilities and increase staffing to adequately serve the growing senior population.

Education

In 2024, more than 38% of City of Pickens residents over the age of twenty-five have obtained a high school education or equivalent. At least 88% of City of Pickens's residents over the age of twenty-five had either a high school or post-secondary degree, including 17% with a bachelor's degree or higher. In Pickens County as a whole, 30% of the population over the age of twenty-five had obtained a high school education or equivalent, with 90% having at least a high school education or higher with 20% having at least a bachelor's degree. Both City of Pickens and Pickens County outpace the State of South Carolina in high school level educational attainment, with only 29% of the State's residents obtaining a high school education or equivalent. However, the state has more residents with a bachelor's degree or higher (29.6%) compared to the city and the county.

Both the city and county outpaced the State of South Carolina in high school-level attainment, where only 29% of residents had a high school diploma or equivalent. However, the state surpassed both in higher education, with 29.6% of residents holding a bachelor's degree or more.

These figures highlight a sturdy base of educational achievement in Pickens, while also pointing to opportunities for expanding access to higher education and advanced degrees within the region.

City of Pickens 2024 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment	
Total	2,556
Less than 9th Grade	2.1%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	9.5%
High School Graduate	30.6%
GED/Alternative Credential	7.7%
Some College, No Degree	20.4%
Associate degree	12.5%
Bachelor's Degree	11.8%
Graduate/Professional Degree	5.4%

ECONOMY

Economic Profile

Economic growth is vital for creating jobs, expanding the variety of goods and services available, and building a strong tax base that sustains a community through different business cycles. Given its growing importance, economic development can no longer be left to chance—communities must take deliberate steps to attract new industries and diversify their tax base. A city's ability to draw businesses depends on multiple factors, including workforce availability, quality of life, taxation, and development costs. Through initiative-taking planning that identifies challenges and implements strategies to address them, communities can strengthen their capacity for long-term economic stability.

Income

The City of Pickens is a middle-income community, with approximately 44% of households earning less than $50,000 annually. The median household income stands at $65,959, and 35% of households earn between $50,000 and $100,000. Despite these figures, 18% of households live below the poverty line.
These economically vulnerable households often face significant challenges, including unstable employment in a shifting labor market, difficulty managing monthly expenses, and limited access to essential services such as healthcare, housing, and childcare. These pressures can hinder long-term stability and reduce opportunities for upward mobility, especially for families raising children.

As a result, demand for community support services has grown. Local government agencies and nonprofit organizations regularly receive requests for assistance with basic needs—shelter, food, clothing, and utility payments—particularly during periods of economic hardship. This underscores the importance of sustained investment in social infrastructure and targeted programs that address the root causes of poverty and promote economic resilience.

Household Income, 2024 16 years and older	
Less than $15,000	8%
$15,000 - $24,999	13.7%
$25,000 - $34,999	12%
$35,000 - $49,999	13.2%
$50,000 - $74,999	20.8%
$75,000 - $99,999	14.5%
$100,000 - $149,999	14.6%
$150,000 - $199,999	1.5%
$200,000 or More	2%
Average Income	$65,959

Source: 2024 ESRI Estimates

Employment

Since the industrialization of the South, manufacturing has been a key driver of the local economy, initially centered around textiles. Although textiles and manufacturing no longer dominate the economy as they once did, they still play a significant role in the economic well-being of both the city and the county, representing 14% of each.

Employment by Industry, 2024	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining	0.1%
Construction	9.5%
Manufacturing	17.7%
Wholesale Trade	1.8%
Retail Trade	10.3%
Transportation and Warehousing, Utilities	5.2%
Information	0.1%
Finance and Insurance, Real Estate	3.8%
Services	43.7%
Public administration	7.8%

In 2024, the Services sector emerged as the dominant source of employment in the City of Pickens, accounting for 43.7% of the workforce. This figure, while substantial, is slightly lower than the 51% of workers employed in Services across Pickens County and trails the statewide average of 47.3% in South Carolina.

Beyond Services, other key employment sectors in Pickens include manufacturing, retail trade, and construction. These industries play a vital role in the local economy and reflect broader regional trends, as similar patterns are observed throughout Pickens County and across the state.

The Services category encompasses several sub-categories, including:

- Personal Care and Service Occupations (e.g., barbers, hairstylists, fitness trainers, manicurists/pedicurists)
- Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations (e.g., housekeeping, pest control, janitorial services)
- Food Preparation and Service Occupations (e.g., servers, cooks, dishwashers)
- Protective Service Occupations (e.g., correctional officers, police officers, firefighters, security guards)
- Healthcare Support Occupations (e.g., medical, and dental assistants, massage therapists, medical transcriptionists, home health aides).

The services industry is expected to generate the newest jobs in Pickens in the future. However, many jobs in this sector tend to offer lower salaries. As a result, average household and family incomes in Pickens are lower than the statewide averages. Families often struggle to meet their basic needs—such as housing and transportation—leaving them with little extra money to spend. This, in turn, reduces the city's sales tax revenues. Therefore, attracting higher-paying jobs is crucial for increasing average family incomes.

The City of Pickens has three major employees within City Limits as well as two other major ones within 5 miles or less of the city limits.

Major Employers within the City of Pickens and Surrounding Areas		
Employer	**Distance from City Limits**	**Number of Employees**
Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative Inc.	Inside City	100
AnMed Health Cannon	Inside City	232
Pickens County	Inside City	730
Imperial Die Casting Company, an RCM Industries Company	4	160
School District of Pickens County	4	2,457
Cornell Dubilier Marketing, Inc.	5	220
Sulzer	6	100
Ortec, Inc.	6	190
Wilbert Plastic Services	7	215
Yokohama America, South Carolina	7	470
Prisma Health	7	2,348
JR Automation	8	120
TaylorMade	8	300
Abbott	8	330
Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Company, Inc.	8	720
Champion Aerospace	9	180
Danfoss	11	260
Cotswold Industries	14	120
Southern Wesleyan University	14	192
City of Clemson	19	389
Clemson University	21	6,281
Aramark Services	22	621

HOUSING

Housing Element

The housing element includes an analysis of existing housing—its location, age, whether single or multi-family design. It also reviews whether the housing is owner occupied or rental.
Key questions to consider when evaluating housing include:

- What are the locations, types, ages, and conditions of existing housing?
- How many units are owner-occupied versus renter-occupied?
- What are the costs associated with developing an adequate supply of affordable housing?

Existing Conditions

Between 2010 and 2022, the City of Pickens did not see a lot of new housing permits. However, between 2023 and 2024, the City of Pickens saw 21 new houses being built with an average cost of $138,000 to build. The permits totaled over $2.8 Million. As of the end of 2025, there were no permits for new housing units, only remodels and renovations.

Pickens significantly lagged when compared to the overall growth rate of both Pickens County and the State of South Carolina, which each gained over three times as many housing units by percentage at 10.03% and 9.7%, respectively. City of Pickens falls as the second lowest of new housing units being built.

Additionally, the City of Pickens currently has 11% of its housing stock listed as vacant. This number is the fourth highest of the areas surveyed in the following table, trailing Seneca, Central, and Williamston. These numbers indicate that Pickens is on trend with most of the region, county, and state in available or dilapidated housing stock.

Housing Units 2010 - 2022			
Area	**2010**	**2022**	**Change**
Anderson	12,938	12,695	-1.88%
Central	2,230	2,376	6.55%
Easley	9,072	10,413	14.78%
Liberty	1,508	1,544	2.39%
Pickens	1,481	1,474	-0.47%
Seneca	4,076	4,417	8.37%
Westminster	1,227	1,134	-7.58%
Williamston	1,878	1,846	-1.70%
Pickens County	51,244	56,385	10.03%
South Carolina	2,137,683	2,344,963	9.70%

Vacancy Rates 2010 - 2022			
Area	**2010 Vacancy Rate**	**2022 Vacancy Rate**	**% Difference**
Anderson	14.36%	11.13%	-22.49%
Central	11.57%	14.18%	22.59%
Easley	8.63%	6.37%	-26.23%
Liberty	8.82%	9.84%	11.62%
Pickens	15.87%	11.33%	-28.60%
Seneca	13.86%	11.86%	-14.42%
Westminster	15.65%	15.52%	-0.82%
Williamston	14.38%	9.21%	-35.95%
Pickens County	11.74%	10.68%	-9.04%
South Carolina	15.74%	12.62%	-19.80%

Value and Affordability

As of mid-2025, the average home value in Pickens stands at approximately $265,000, with median sale prices ranging from $237,000 to $270,000. Listing prices tend to be higher, averaging around $420,000, driven by premium and new-build listings. For planning, affordability assessments, or comparison purposes, the $237,000 to $270,000 range offers a practical reflection of typical market sale prices.

The average rent across all property types and bedroom sizes is $1,400, well below the state average of $1,800. Despite this, approximately 60% of renters in Pickens are considered rent burdened, meaning they spend 30% or more of their monthly income on housing alone. This figure excludes other essential expenses such as transportation, food, and, in many cases, utilities.

These trends highlight a growing challenge not only for Pickens, but for South Carolina and the nation. As home prices rise and rental costs continue to climb, the financial pressure placed on households reduces disposable income, weakens economic stability for families, and impacts local businesses and service-related industries within the community.

Median Home and Rent Values					
Area	Median Value		Rent Median		Rent Burden
Anderson	$	177,300	$	884	53.0%
Central	$	207,000	$	919	37.6%
Easley	$	229,200	$	852	62.6%
Liberty	$	150,800	$	809	57.1%
Pickens	$	265,000	$	1400	60.6%
Seneca	$	201,300	$	757	51.0%
Westminster	$	152,500	$	579	40.8%
Williamston	$	154,100	$	840	29.0%
Pickens County	$	299,100	$	873	49.3%
South Carolina	$	254,600	$	1,084	52.2%

Type and Occupation

67% of Pickens's homes are single-family structures. Almost 9% of available dwelling units are in structures that contain five or more units, 8% are duplexes, triplexes, or quadplexes, and 14% are mobile homes. This means that there is limited flexibility in housing types for residents. While this strengthens Pickens's small town, rural character, it can also contribute to an increase in housing costs and make affordable housing harder to come by for current and future residents in need.

Of these available housing types, 65% are owner-occupied, while the remaining 35% are occupied by renters. This number reflects the low home ownership costs identified by the median housing cost in the previous section. However, there is still over one quarter of the city's population that rents their housing, and as such it has the potential to benefit from affordable rental housing which can be made available by diversifying the housing types within the city.

Units per Structure							
Area	1	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	20+	MH	Other
Anderson	63.1%	12.5%	9.6%	4.1%	7.0%	1.4%	0.1%
Central	32.3%	8.6%	9.7%	36.8%	9.4%	3.1%	0.0%
Easley	76.1%	4.8%	8.3%	2.0%	3.7%	5.0%	0.1%
Liberty	85.9%	2.9%	2.5%	0.0%	1.4%	7.3%	0.0%
Pickens	67.8%	7.9%	3.0%	4.8%	2.2%	14.4%	0.0%
Seneca	69.1%	12.1%	5.3%	3.9%	6.3%	3.3%	0.0%
Westminster	73.6%	9.9%	1.7%	2.1%	2.8%	9.9%	0.0%
Williamston	75.1%	3.6%	15.8%	0.0%	0.6%	4.9%	0.0%
Pickens County	64.5%	5.2%	3.7%	5.1%	3.2%	18.1%	0.3%
South Carolina	67.5%	4.5%	4.2%	3.3%	5.3%	15.0%	0.2%

Owner vs Rental				
Area	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied %	Renter Occupied	Renter Occupied %
Anderson	6009	50.0%	5999	50.0%
Central	379	20.1%	1507	79.9%
Easley	7070	69.0%	3182	31.0%
Liberty	910	72.6%	344	27.4%
Pickens	766	65.2%	408	34.8%
Seneca	2212	55.9%	1742	44.1%
Westminster	675	66.7%	337	33.3%
Williamston	1033	62.3%	624	37.7%
Pickens County	34,448.98	68.4%	15,915.02	31.6%
South Carolina	1,475,216.64	72.0%	573,695.36	28.0%

Age and Condition

Seventy percent of the City of Pickens's housing stock was built before the year 1980. The means that a large majority of the homes within the city are near or over 50 years old. 25% of homes were built between 1980 and 2009 and just 5% are under 14 years of age, having been built since 2010.

While Pickens may have one of the oldest housing stocks identified, it is also in good condition. No structures have been identified through the Census to be lacking complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Year Structure Built			
Area	Since 2010	1980-2009	1979 or before
Anderson	5.4%	35.9%	58.8%
Central	6.8%	64.0%	29.2%
Easley	9.3%	47.3%	43.3%
Liberty	2.1%	28.4%	69.4%
Pickens	5.4%	25.2%	69.2%
Seneca	10.6%	34.7%	54.6%
Westminster	4.0%	34.6%	61.4%
Williamston	2.3%	37.4%	60.1%
Pickens County	11.1%	52.7%	36.2%
South Carolina	14.1%	51.3%	34.5%

Housing Conditions						
Area	Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	Kitchen %	Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	Plumbing %	No Vehicle Available	Vehicle %
Anderson	44	0.40%	0	0.0%	1495	12.50%
Central	41	2.20%	41	2.20%	186	9.90%
Easley	142	1.40%	46	0.40%	1003	9.80%
Liberty	0	0%	0	0%	22	1.80%
Pickens	0	0%	0	0%	173	14.70%
Seneca	118	3%	36	0.90%	250	6.50%
Westminster	6	0.60%	0	0%	57	5.60%
Williamston	24	1.40%	0	0%	42	2.50%
Pickens County	485	1.00%	210	0.40%	3414	6.80%
South Carolina	12866	0.60%	6647	0.30%	115682	5.70%

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The cultural resources element could include historic buildings, unique commercial or residential areas, archeological sites, educational, religious or entertainment institutions, and other features relating to the community's culture.

Pickens County Museum

Housed in the county's historic old jail, the Pickens County Museum of Art & History is dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich artistic and historical heritage of Pickens County for generations to come.

The museum offers a distinctive blend of local art and history. Permanent exhibits highlight unique artifacts such as General Andrew Pickens' dueling pistols, a scale model of Fort Prince George, Hitler's radio, and a 19th-century doctor's field kit, among many others.

In addition to its historical displays, the museum serves as a vibrant hub for the arts. Each year it hosts two major exhibitions: Youth Arts Month in April, celebrating the creativity of students from the local school district, and the South Carolina Juried Arts Competition each fall, highlighting the work of regional artists from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia. Between these signature events, rotating exhibitions highlight the talents of local artists across a variety of mediums.

Hagood Mauldin House

The Hagood-Mauldin House, located in Pickens, South Carolina, is a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally built around 1856 for James Earle Hagood in the town of Old Pickens, the house was carefully relocated in 1868 after the division of Pickens District into Pickens and Oconee counties. Each board and beam were numbered, disassembled, and reassembled at its current site in the town of Pickens.

The original structure was crafted with log beams and pegged joists, sided with slat boards, and topped with cedar shingles laid on open wood slats. Over time, the house underwent several significant additions:

- 1868 – A dining room was constructed to connect the main house to the rear kitchen house, separated by a breezeway.
- 1886 – The front parlor and rear dining room were expanded, a covered side entry porch and a bathroom were added, and new fireplaces were built to serve the additional rooms.
- 1904 – The front porch was enlarged to include a covered driveway, while the interior was updated with Victorian trim work and drywall. A wood parapet and fluted Ionic columns were also added, giving the home its distinctive Classical Revival style that endures today.

The home remained in the Hagood family for generations. After James Earle Hagood's death in 1904, it passed to his daughter Frances Hagood Mauldin and her husband, Judge Thomas Joab Mauldin, who completed the 1904 renovations and built a matching law office on the property.

Today, the Hagood-Mauldin House is owned by the Pickens County Historical Society and serves as the home of the Irma Morris Museum of Fine Arts, preserving both its architectural beauty and cultural heritage.

Hagood Grist Mill

The Hagood Mill, located near Pickens, South Carolina, is an operational water-powered gristmill originally built (or rebuilt) in 1845 by James Hagood. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, the mill stands on Hagood Branch (formerly Jennings Creek), a tributary of the Twelve Mile River.

Mills have existed on the site since the 1790s, but the current structure was constructed in 1845 and remained in the Hagood family until 1966, when new federal grain-testing regulations brought an end to commercial grist milling in Pickens County. During its historic operation, the mill and an adjacent store (no longer standing) served as a vital gathering place for the community.

In 1973, the Hagood family donated the mill and surrounding property to the Pickens County Museum. The water wheel and mechanical systems were rebuilt in the 1970s, incorporating much of the surviving original material, and later restored again in the 1990s by historian and miller Alan Warner.

The mill itself is an unpainted, two-story structure of hand-hewn logs clad in clapboard siding. Its original dam, located 1,650 feet upstream, once fed water into an earthen headrace. Today, water is pumped underground to the headrace, the final 80 feet of which is wooden. The overshot wooden water wheel measures 20 feet in diameter and 4 feet in width, producing 22 horsepower. Its ring gear spans 18 feet, and the millstones—carved from local granite—weigh approximately 1,600 pounds each.

Today, Hagood Mill serves as the centerpiece of the Hagood Mill Historic Site & Folklife Center, which features two historic cabins, a blacksmith shop, a cotton gin, and a traditional moonshine still. The site also preserves important cultural landmarks, including the Hagood Creek Petroglyph Site, home to ancient Native American rock carvings, and the Prater's Creek Bridge, a 64-foot steel bridge built in 1930 and relocated to the site in 2007.

Pickens Outdoor Amphitheater

The Pickens Amphitheater, located in the heart of Pickens, South Carolina, is a scenic open-air venue that brings the community together through music, culture, and celebration. Throughout the year, it hosts a wide range of events—from live concerts and festivals to movie nights and special community gatherings.

With its inviting atmosphere, excellent acoustics, and beautiful surroundings, the amphitheater has become a hub for highlighting local talent, fostering cultural experiences, and providing family-friendly entertainment. Loved by both residents and visitors, the Pickens Amphitheater is a vibrant centerpiece of community life in Pickens.

Events included at the Pickens Amphitheater include movie nights, concert series, and many other events throughout the year.

Festivals/Events

Azaelea Festival

When the azaleas are blooming, the City of Pickens celebrates! For over 40 years, friends and family have come back home for one of the largest family reunions in the Southeast. It is a two-day event each year on the last weekend in April, which includes a cruise, local artisans and crafters, music, food, and a 5 K.

Pickens Appalachian Folk Festival

This two-day event celebrates the unique Appalachian heritage in Northern Pickens County and the Upstate of South Carolina including a magical night of bluegrass, vendors, and food.

Jeep Fest

Pickens Jeep Explosion began in 2020 and is more than just a gathering; it is a celebration of everything Jeep. The passion for the Jeep lifestyle creates an inclusive and thrilling experience for all attendees. We believe in bringing people together and creating memories that last a lifetime.

Other Events

- Trick or Treat Down Main Street
- Christmas Tree Lighting
- Christmas Parade
- Doodle Holiday Market
- Farmers Market
- Independence Day Celebration

COMMUNITY

Community Facilities

The Village Library

Early in 1937, the Pickens Branch was started in Dr. J. L. Valley's office waiting room with donated books in a bookcase. The Doctor's receptionist circulated the books.

This continued through most of the first year until a small building was donated to the Town of Pickens. This building was to be used as a library and as a Relic Room by the local D.A.R. Chapter. The Appalachian Lumber Company gave the building, and it was later moved to Court House Square. In the fall of 1937, the name Village Library was chosen for the town library, and the cost of membership subscription was set at $1.00 a year.

In the early 1940s, the Village Library moved to a larger building which was vacated when the city offices moved into a new location. In 1967, a lot on the northeast corner of West Main Street and Florence Street was purchased from the Cox Family. Excavation for a new library began in the spring of 1972, and on November 22, 1974, it opened.

As time passed, the library's circulation increased and the need for expansion became apparent. Pickens County purchased the old Dillard Funeral Home in 1990. After funds were secured, design and renovation began. In the summer of 1992, the new branch opened. The Village Library is located at 124 North Catherine Street in Pickens. It is 8,200 square feet and is open 50 hours per week.

Education

Teacher to Student Ratio				
School	**Grades**	**No. of Students**	**No. of Teachers**	**Teacher to Student Ratio**
Hagood Elementary	PK – 5	575	33	17 to 1
Pickens Elementary	PK-5	575	32	18 to 1
Pickens Middle School	6-8	597	46	13 to 1
Pickens High School	9-12	1281	80	16 to 1

Career and Technology Center

Pickens County School District proudly stands as one of South Carolina's longest-established career centers, offering students access to 23 diverse college and career pathways**.** Through its robust Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, students gain essential academic knowledge, firsthand technical training, and real-world employability skills—empowering them to step confidently into their future careers.

Post Secondary Education

The Upstate region of South Carolina, including Pickens County, is home to a variety of post-secondary institutions. Clemson University, a nationally recognized research university, is located in Pickens County. Nearby in Anderson County, students can attend Anderson University, while Southern Wesleyan University is conveniently situated near the town of Central. Tri-County Technical College serves students across Pickens, Anderson, and Oconee Counties, with campuses in both Pendleton and Easley**,** offering accessible education and workforce training throughout the region.

Safety – Police

The City of Pickens Police Department's mission is to enforce the law, maintain order and to protect lives and property and the rights of all people.

Vision:

As closely as possible, achieve a city that is free from crime and public disorder.

Values:

- Service to our Community
- Reverence for the Law
- Zeal for Justice
- Commitment to Leadership
- Integrity in all we Say and Do
- Respect for all Humanity
- Quality through Continuous Improvement

We are committed to serving the community and protecting the rights of all people. Consistent with this commitment, our Vision, Mission, and Core Values; in concert with the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, the Pickens Police Department will strive to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve and seek to enhance public safety.

We understand that we work in a diverse community in an ever-changing society and political environment. We are active participants in improving the quality of life in our community. Our mandate is to do this with honor, integrity, committing ourselves to the highest ethical standards with a sincere desire to maintain the confidence of the public and maintain our legitimacy.

Safety – Fire

Pickens Fire Department was established in 1900 as an all-volunteer department. Currently the department is a combination career/volunteer department. During the daytime hours, there a 3 people on duty at the station and for nights and weekends there are 2 people on duty. 25 volunteers supplement these career positions. The department is averaging 600 calls for service per year.

The fleet of trucks consists of 2005 Pumper, 1998 Pumper, 1987 Pumper, 2007 Ladder Truck, 2003 Brush Truck, 1986 Service Truck, two Technical Rescue Trailers, three support pickup trucks and two UTVs. The department is equipped with fire suppressions, technical rescues including rope, confined space, trench and water, and medical response. The department holds a SCDHEC EMS license to function as a non-transport BLS service. Presently, the department has an ISO Class 3 rating.

The fire station was built in 1972. A storage loft was added to the apparatus bay as well as an outside storage building due to limited size of the station. The apparatus bay is not large enough to park the entire fleet indoors.

Water/Sewer

The City of Pickens has 2,363 active customers on routes 1-8 which is inside city limits, 2,328 in routes 9-16 which is more of the outside city limits area, and 20 in route 50- this route is businesses but there are businesses in the other routes as well. The total is 4,711 active locations occupied for us.
Water, sewer, and sanitation are the services provided.

Recreation

The City of Pickens Parks & Recreation Department serves over 1,500 youth athletes annually through a robust lineup of seasonal sports programs, including spring and fall soccer, volleyball, baseball, softball, T-ball, football, cheerleading, and basketball. In addition, adult leagues for volleyball and basketball provide recreational opportunities for residents aged 18 and older. Over the past two years, the athletics program has seen significant growth, welcoming more than 300 additional athletes per year.

The department also operates a popular Summer Camp program, offering 6–7 weeks of structured activities for children ages 5–12. This program provides a safe, engaging environment for youth during the summer months and continues to be a cornerstone of community engagement.

Despite the growing demand, the Recreation Division is managed by just two full-time staff members, who work tirelessly to coordinate programming, manage coordination, and ensure high-quality experience for participants.

The Parks & Recreation Department oversees more than 120 acres of public property within the City of Pickens, which includes:

- 7+ miles of trails, including 4 miles of the Doodle Trail
- 3 playgrounds

- 4 public restroom facilities
- 8 ballfields
- 1 Recreation Center
- 4 pavilions
- The Amphitheater
- The Visitor's Center

Maintenance of these facilities including lawn care, landscaping, ballfield preparation, painting, and repairs is managed by a dedicated grounds crew of three full-time employees.

Facilities and Parks Include:

Jaycee Park: 149 N. Homestead Rd.

- Playground of Promise
- Appalachian Lumber Greenway
- Minor Field
- Major Field
- Volunteer Field
- Senior Field
- Collins Bridge
- 3 Pavilions

Cheri T. Anthony Rec Complex: 545 Sangamo Rd.

- 2 Soccer Fields
- 2 Gyms
- Parks & Recreation offices

Hooper Field: 230 E. Jones Ave.

- Softball Field
- Concessions/Bathrooms

Bruce Field: 310 Planer St

- Public Track
- Football Field
- Concessions/Bathrooms

Amphitheater: 114 W. Main St

- Stage
- Patio
- Parking

Doodle Park: 409 E. Cedar Rock St.

- Doodle Trail
- Pavilion
- Playground

Hagood Community Center

At the Hagood Community Center, the goal is to provide activities and events for all citizens of Pickens. The Hagood Community Center is home to the Pickens Senior Center, Young Appalachian Musicians, and Granger Fiber Arts.

Pickens Senior Center

The Senior Citizens of Pickens, Inc. (SCoP)is a non-profit organization that helps seniors in the Pickens area stay active mentally, physically, and socially through fellowship, recreational activities, and communal meals. Founded with the goal of securing a permanent meeting place for local seniors, SCoP achieved this in 2009 when the City of Pickens leased us the former Ben Hagood School. After extensive renovations, the Hagood Community Center now serves both seniors and the broader community.

Doodle Trail

The Doodle Trail, a 7.5-mile rails-to-trails partnership between the City of Easley and the City of Pickens opened Memorial Day Weekend 2015. The multi-use trail is open from dawn to dusk for biking, walking, running and rollerblading.

Doodle Park

Pickens Doodle Park opened in June 2019 at the trailhead of the Doodle Trail in downtown Pickens. The park includes restroom facilities, a railroad depot museum, the AnMed Health Cannon Marketplace Pavilion, benches, bike racks, and a train-themed playground!

The Doodle Park sits on the former headquarters property of the Pickens Railroad Company and was purchased by the City of Pickens in conjunction with the old rail line.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources element looks at the natural systems of the community including climate, topography, soils, water bodies, and other natural features. This information is important to help protect a community's quality of life by promoting proper development, maintaining aesthetic characteristics, preserving open space and significant natural resources.

Geographic Location

The City of Pickens, South Carolina is in Pickens County in the northwestern portion of the state. US 178, US 93, SC 183, SC 8, and SC 186 link the city to the region. US Highway 178 links the city and county with Interstate 85, one of the fastest growing interstate corridors in the country. Pickens is located midway between the cities of Charlotte, North Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina and Atlanta, Georgia.

Climate

The climate of Pickens is relatively mild, with an average temperature of 60.1 degrees Fahrenheit. This is slightly lower than other portions of the state such as the Columbia region, which has an average annual temperature of 63.1, and the Charleston region with an average annual temperature of 64.8 degrees. Precipitation is fairly constant throughout the year with an average of 4.3 inches of rain per month. The Columbia region averages 4 inches of rain per month while the Charleston region averages 4.2 inches per month. The growing season is from late March to early November and averages 225 days.

Topographic Character

Pickens is in the Piedmont region of the state, which is characterized by rolling to hilly topography. Elevations range from 900 feet at the edge of the foothills/mountain area to 600 feet along the Savannah and Broad Rivers at the southern end of the region. The terrain becomes progressively less hilly from north to south across the region.

Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

The City of Pickens is traversed by several rivers and streams including Georges Creek, Middle Branch, Brushy Creek, and Eighteen-Mile Creek. The creeks are an amenity to nearby citizens, function as a reservoir for storm-water runoff, provide flood protection, wildlife corridors, and wastewater assimilation. There are no major lakes in Pickens, but Pickens County does contain Lake Hartwell, a major recreation and tourism resource west of the city. No body of water within Pickens is used for drinking water.

Flood Lands

Traditionally, the presence of floodplains or flood hazard areas has posed a constraint to development. More recently federal flood plain legislation has added legal constraints and regulations to proposed development in flood hazard areas. Where flood hazard areas (marked by 100-year flood boundaries) have been identified on Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Pickens, special regulations relating to

the development of such areas apply. These regulations are designed to reduce and possibly eliminate the hazards of flooding, as required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. The City of Pickens has adopted such regulations as part of its zoning ordinance.

Soils

The soils of the Upper Piedmont have developed from the weathering of metamorphic rock such as granite, schist, gneiss, and diorite. Deep sandy to red brown clay sub-soils are found in most associations. The soils are well-drained with moderate to severe erosion hazards, dependent on slope. Some Upper Piedmont soils are suitable for on-site sewage disposal, except where slope is a problem. Extensive areas of alluvial flood plains are found in most stream drainage basins. The soil of the Upper Piedmont includes some of the best farmlands in Upstate South Carolina. Vast areas of poor or eroded soils have been abandoned in the past due to intensive agriculture.

Pickens is built principally on Cecil and Hiwassee soils mixed with pockets of Catula and Pacolet soils.

Cecil Series - The Cecil soils are characteristically deep, well drained, gently to strongly sloping soils that formed in material weathered from granite and gneiss. These soils are on broad upland areas that have long side slopes. The surface layer is yellowish red with sub-soil that is dominantly red firm clay.

These soils pose moderate to severe constraints, due to slope and permeability, to use as septic tank filter fields, and sewer lagoons, making public sewer systems a prerequisite to development. They also present moderate constraints to low buildings and industrial development due to low load-bearing capacity, slope, and potential for erosion.

Hiwassee Series – The Hiwassee soils are deep, well-drained soils that formed in saprolite or old alluvium. These soils are in the broad upland areas on long side slopes. The slope ranges from 2 to 25 percent. The surface layer is dusky-red sandy loam with a sub-soil of dark-red friable sandy clay loam.

Catula Series – These are well drained, shallow to moderately deep soils which developed in material weathered from granite and gneiss. The surface layer is yellowish-red sandy loam with a sub-soil of firm red clay loam. They present moderate constraints for septic tank filter fields due to slow permeability and slope.

Pacolet Series - These are moderately deep to deep, well-drained soils formed in material weathered from granite and gneiss. The surface layer consists of a fine brown sandy loam with a sub-soil of yellowish-red sandy clay loam. They pose only moderate constraints for use as septic tank filter fields, but present severe problems for use as sewage lagoons, because of slope.

In sum, the four soil series upon which Pickens is located have many of the same characteristics, i.e., red clay surface, slope, and slow permeability. Overall, they pose only slight to moderate constraints to urban

development, except for use as septic tank filter fields and sewage lagoons. As a result, community sewerage treatment and collection systems are a prerequisite to intensified development, such as exists and is taking place in and around the City of Pickens.

Unique Park and Recreation Areas

Pickens County has extensive natural beauty with a continuous chain of large lakes and scenic mountains and valleys. The county is bordered on the west by Lakes Jocasee, Keowee and Hartwell and by the Blue Ridge escarpment to the north. The county is also home to several state parks and wildlife management areas including the land recently purchased from Duke Energy.

Lake Jocasee

Lake Jocasee is a 7,500-acre reservoir of cold, emerald water enclosed by the steep walls of the Blue Ridge escarpment and was formed from the Toxaway and Horse-Pasture Rivers. Its 385-foot-high dam was completed by Duke Power Company in 1973 to provide water for hydroelectric power. Accessible to the public from Devils Fork State Park, Lake Jocasee provides visitors with various outdoor recreation activities such as swimming, water skiing, sailing, scuba diving, and fishing. Laurel Fork and Thompson River waterfalls are also accessible via Lake Jocasee.

Lake Keowee

Carrying the name of the old Cherokee Indian capital, Keowee means "place of the mulberries." This pristine lake was the first of the Duke Power Company improvements developed as part of the Keowee-Toxaway complex. Included in the complex are the Oconee Nuclear Station and the Keowee and Jocassee hydroelectric stations. The lake has 300 miles of shoreline and sports white, smallmouth and largemouth bass, black crappie, bluegill, and threadfin shad.

Lake Hartwell

Lake Hartwell borders Georgia and South Carolina on the Savannah, Tugaloo, and Seneca Rivers. Created by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers between 1955 and 1963, the lake comprises nearly 56,000 acres of water and shoreline of 962 miles. The Corp maintains over 20 recreation areas, many with launch ramps, comfort stations, picnic areas and shelters, swimming beaches, and playgrounds.

Duke Power Company Land

In 1980 Duke Power donated a 373-acre tract of land to the South Carolina Heritage Trust Preserve to protect the outstanding natural area. The area, which lies in Pickens and Oconee counties, is home to a forest of old-growth hemlocks, several rare plants, and a self-sustaining trout population. Within this area lies a campground from which hikers may explore the area.

The Franklin L. Gravely Wildlife Management Area (Horse-Pasture Game Management Area)

This area commonly known as the Horse-Pasture is an enclosed mountain valley between the Toxaway and Eastatoe Rivers. It is located on the site where the Cherokee Indians pastured their horses. The area has superb mountain scenery and one of the few places in the world where the Oconee Bells (Shortia) flowers are found.

Keowee-Toxaway State Park

Located in the northern part of the County along scenic Highway 11, Keowee-Toxaway Park is one of the state parks located in Pickens County. The park is equipped with overnight camping facilities and various hiking trails. The Corps of Engineers also provides recreational facilities and maintains lake access areas. The history of the Upper Cherokee Indians is recreated in the park museum.

Table Rock State Park

Table Rock Mountain is a 1,000-foot granite monolith attraction which takes its name from Indian legend. Native Americans believed that the gods dined on the massive rock while sitting on the "Stool", a smaller mountain nearby. The park has a lake for swimming and boating as well as camping facilities, hiking trails, and a restaurant overlooking the lake.

The Foothills Trail

Duke Power Company maintains a 44-mile hiking trail that crosses some of the most rugged and beautiful terrain in the Carolinas and parts of Pickens County. Photography buffs can aim their lenses at wildflowers, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and black bears. The Trail starts off at Table Rock State Park then journeys to Sassafras Mountain, the tallest point in South Carolina, which has vistas of Pisgah Mountain to the Shinning Rock Wilderness. From there hikers venture to Chimney Gap then via boat on Lake Jocassee to Laurel Valley which has virgin hemlocks, some 5 feet in diameter. The Pickens County portion of the trail ends at Laurel Creek Falls and has ridge-top views of Lake Jocassee

County Maintained Parks

The county also maintains recreation facilities and parks for its citizens. These include Twin Lakes Park and Twelve Mile Park, which provide access to Lake Hartwell as well as playground and picnic facilities. In 1985, Pickens County opened the 155-acre Mile Creek Park, located on Lake Keowee, which offers full facilities to residents.

South Carolina State Botanical Gardens

Established in 1958 as a camellia collection on a small piece of land, the Garden has grown to 270 acres of lush natural vegetation and miles of trails. Special collections include a Pioneer Garden with authentic log cabins, a grist mill, outbuildings housing historical farm implements, and herbs, flowers, vegetable, and native plant gardens. The Braille Trail, which winds through the Pioneer Garden and adjacent Wildflower, Fern and Bog Gardens, features special sections for the visually impaired.

Other popular areas include the duck pond, a tranquil Garden of Meditation, a Flower and Turf Display and the Roland Schoenike Arboretum, a display of woody plants of economic and historical value. The Garden also contains a two-acre Vegetable Garden display, the Xeriscape Garden, and a Wildflower Meadow. The Garden serves as a living laboratory for students and visitors. Lectures, seminars, festivals, and special tours are offered throughout the year.

Cherokee Foothills Scenic Hwy (SC11)

Once known as “Keowee Path” or “Cherokee Path,” this 130-mile road was the route used by the Cherokees and the English and the French fur traders. It now provides a scenic alternative to driving I-85 through SC. Extending from I-85 near the NC border to I-85 at the Georgia line, this route allows the traveler to experience magnificent views and to visit many attractions along the way.

Sassafras Mountain

At 3,554 feet, this is the highest point in South Carolina. From the summit four states can be viewed: Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation and accessibility are crucial to the success of a city and the good of its citizens. The routes that we take and ways in which we move upon them dictate everything from the type of goods we receive, our economic status and mobility, and even our social lives and the ability to connect with people. As much of the rest of the upstate, South Carolina, and the southern region of the United States beyond, Pickens is currently a car dependent City for a vast majority of its residents. The City sits about 21 miles north of interstate I-85, the closest interstate route that connects it to Georgia and North Carolina. It is located at this intersection of two major local highways, US-178 and SC-183 and is bisected by South Carolina Route 8. These roads create the major network that connects Pickens to the cities and towns around it.

As the City continues to develop, special consideration must be given to the provision of alternative methods of transportation within the City Limits. Currently, there exists a sidewalk network, however it is far from comprehensive and leaves many areas of Pickens cut off from potential pedestrian traffic. Additionally, there are no designated bike lanes within the City. This means that anyone looking to travel within the City limits must do so on foot, which can create long travel times and dangerous conditions depending on the destination, or by car which creates an increased burden on the existing road network as both local and regional traffic move through the City. Finally, recreational opportunities can be combined with these mobility efforts in the form of trails. Efforts such as the Doodle Trail and trail network at Jaycee Park can create natural, non-paved paths that connect the residents of Liberty with the businesses providing their goods and services at the same time as providing a health benefit, both mentally and physically, to those who get out to enjoy the trails recreationally.

The rural character of the City of Pickens does add a layer of complication to these efforts. However, with effective planning and coordination with local and state agencies the opportunities to increase the intermodal accessibility of Pickens can be identified.

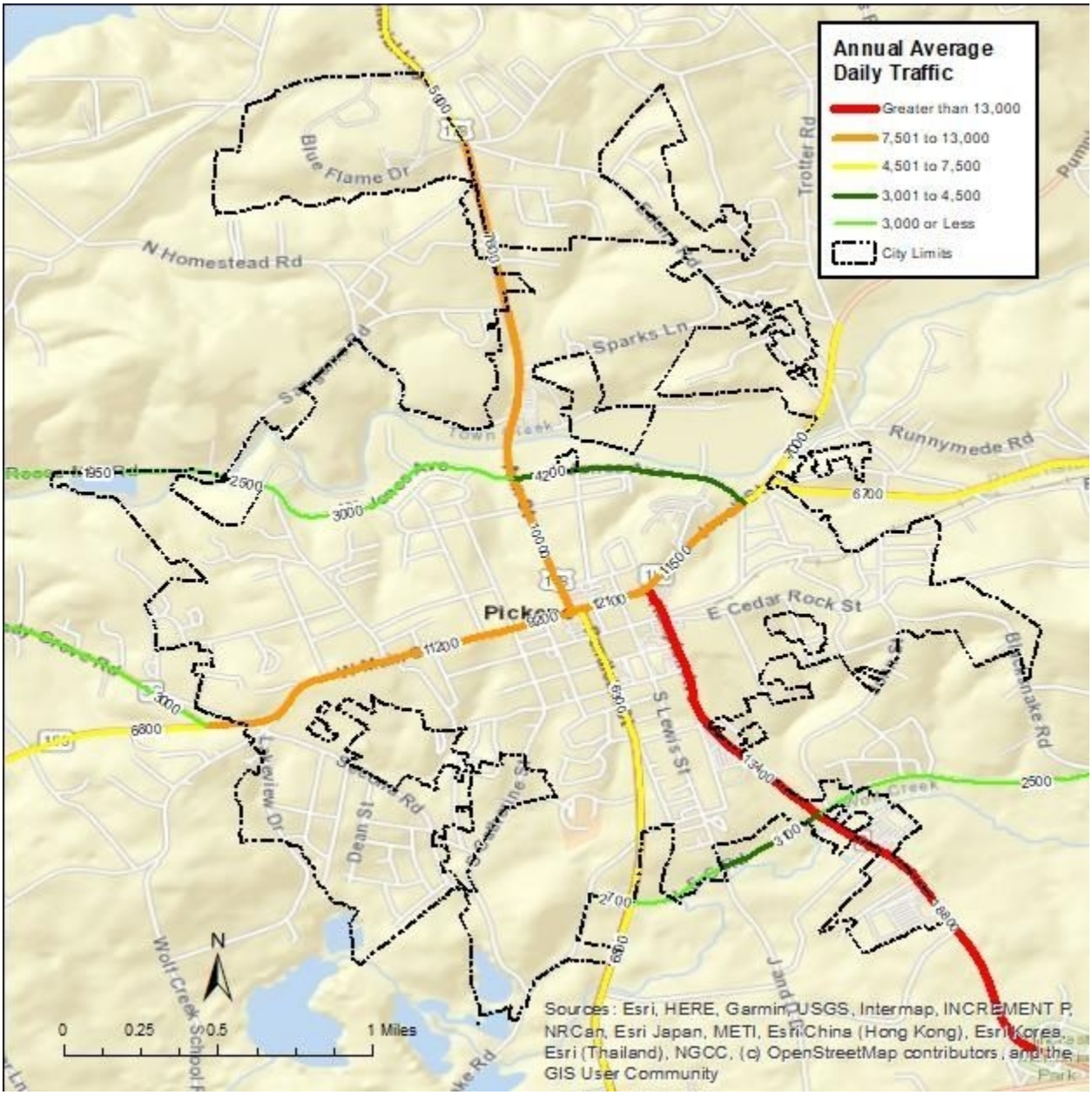
Road Network

Of the roads tracked by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) within the City of Pickens, the annual average daily traffic ranges from just under 2,000 to up to 18,800 vehicles per day. Expectedly, the two most trafficked routes are US-178 and SC-8 at 10,000 and 18,800 peak travelers, respectively.

The most heavily traveled portion of SC-8 is near the intersection with Roberts Dr near the Walmart. This is followed closely by the section between Roberts Dr and the SC-183 intersection at 13,400 travelers per day before combing with SC-183 to carry 11,500 vehicles to the intersection of Planer St near Pickens Middle School. These figures represent movements to and from the City between the City of Easley to the southeast, and access to the Dacusville and Pumpkintown communities and beyond.

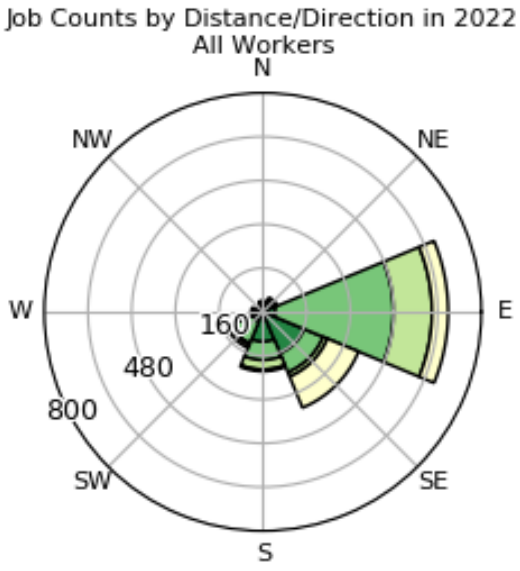
US-178 runs north and south through the City carrying travelers to and from the City of Liberty and the Hagood School area and beyond. At its peak on the north side of the City center, US-178 carries 10,000 vehicles on average per day. As the route continues further north and south it drops to 7,600 and 6,900 travelers per day respectively before dropping to around 6,000 each as it exits the City Limits.

Finally, SC-183, also known as Main Street, carries up to 12,100 vehicles per day between US-178 and SC-8 along East Main Street and 11,200 per day to the west between US-178 and the City's western terminus. These numbers are more localized traffic, as once out of the City traffic along SC-183 drops to 7,000 or less each direction.



Commuting Patterns

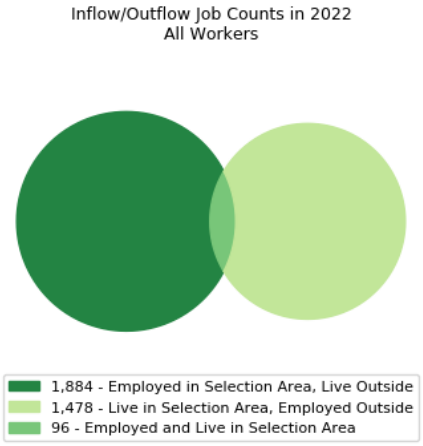
Conclusions seen in the AADT data above are also reflected in the commuting patterns for the City of Pickens from the US Census Bureau seen below. Of the 1,574 recorded employed individuals living in the City of Pickens, just 96, or 6.01%, both live and work within the City limits. This means 93.9% of Pickens' employed population is traveling elsewhere for employment opportunities.



	2022	
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	1,574	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	442	28.1%
10 to 24 miles	692	44.0%
25 to 50 miles	218	13.9%
Greater than 50 miles	222	14.1%

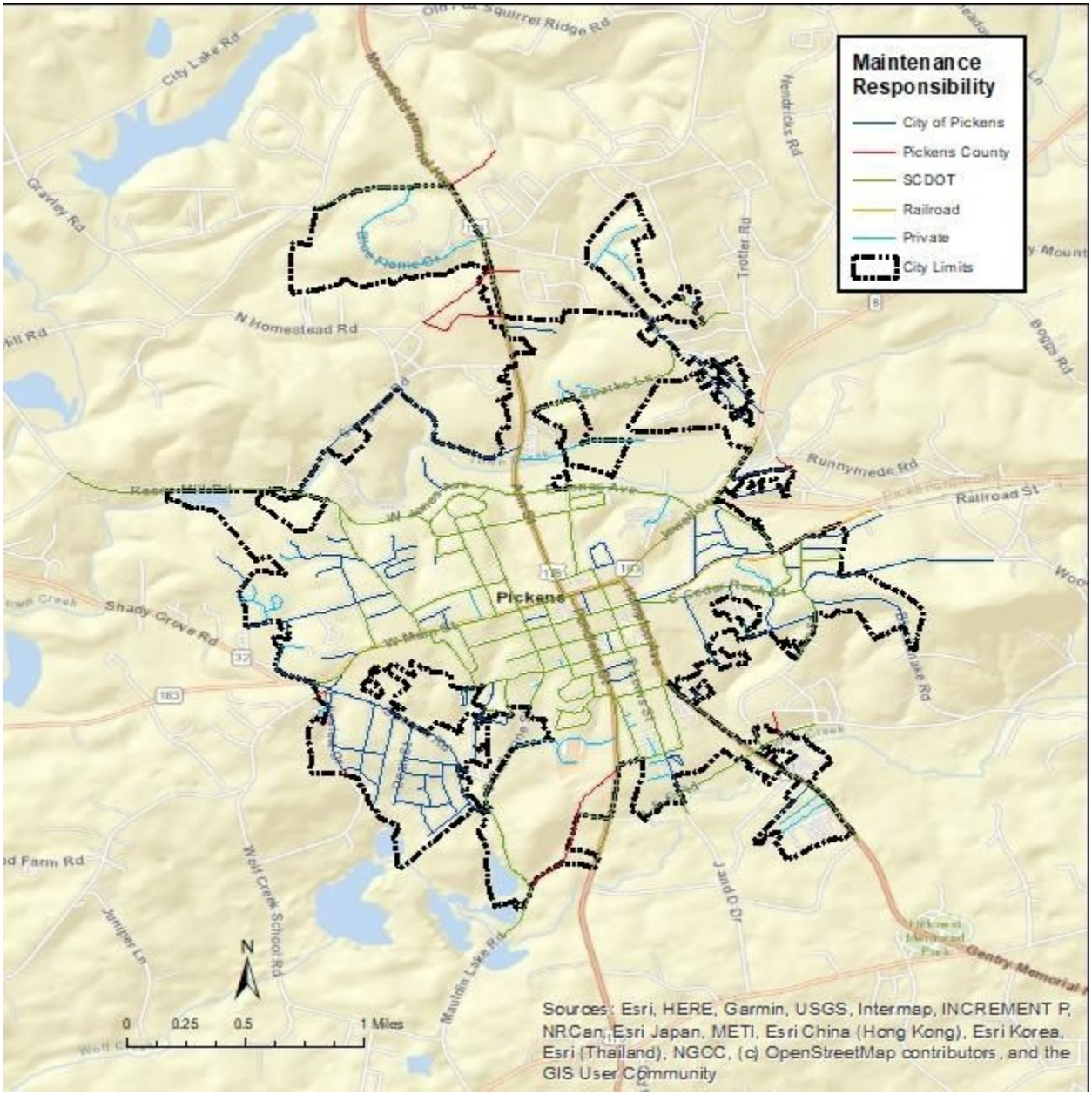
As seen in the radar chart to the right, a vast majority of these workers are travelling east to southeast. The distances recorded in these movements paint an expected picture that most of these employment opportunities for citizens of Pickens are in Greenville and the surrounding areas. This reflects the traffic counts seen on SC-8 as travelers access the more freely moving US-123 to reach their destination.

Other employment centers for the citizens of Pickens indicated are Clemson and Easley to the southeast and south/southwest respectively. Interestingly, there is also reported number of individuals that are using SC-8 to access US-123 or I-85 and travel over 50 miles for their employment opportunities. These patterns help draw two conclusions. First, more gainful employment opportunities can be sought out within the City to provide for those that live there to allow them to work in the same place they live. Second, Pickens currently serves as home to many workers in the Greenville area, and special consideration should be given to their needs and how to make Pickens an even greater opportunity for those that wish to live outside of the City of Greenville.



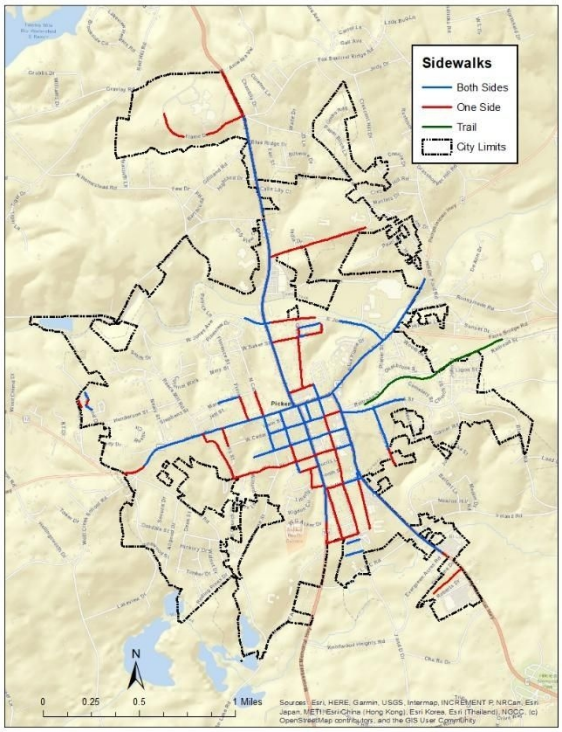
Road Maintenance

As with most of the state of South Carolina, the South Carolina Department of Transportation owns and maintains a vast majority of the road network in the City of Pickens. However, the City of Pickens is responsible for large pockets of roads particularly on the eastern and western sides of towns. Additionally, there are several privately maintained roads and drives with only 2 or 3 county-maintained roads crossing the City's borders.



Non-Motorized Transportation

Sidewalks



Pickens has a robust sidewalk network at its core. Eleven of the approximately twelve blocks that make up the City center on the south side of US-183 downtown have a sidewalk on at least one side of the roadway. Additionally, there are sidewalks nearly connecting each end of the City's limits north and South on US-178/SC-8 and east and west on US-183/SC-8. These provide vital connections to important centers of commerce as well as healthcare with AnMed Cannon hospital and education connecting Pickens High School on the north side of town. However, some of these existing facilities are in a state of disrepair and can make travel difficult, especially for citizens with ambulatory limitations. While having a strong base, the City must focus on maintaining these existing connections while further expanding this network to areas not currently connected.

Bike Lane and Trails

The City does not currently have any designated bike lanes along its roadways. This presents an opportunity for expansion of non-motorized transportation within Pickens, especially as SCDOT has recently adopted a complete streets policy that advocates for adding these types of facilities as roadways undergo their regular resurfacing and maintenance. These efforts can lead to reduced roadway congestion as well as provide for healthier, non-car-depending population.

Though there are no dedicated bike lanes within the City Limits, Pickens does have an important non-motorized asset in the Doodle Trail. This trail runs along a historic railroad that connects Pickens to the City of Easley. This trail can serve as an example of the desire of the citizens of Pickens to utilize these types of non-motorized facilities and has already started to provide an economic benefit to the City.

Railroads

The last remaining section of railroad in the City of Pickens, the Pickens Railroad formerly owned and operated by Pickens Railroad Company, was abandoned and deactivated by the company in April 2013. It has since become the pathway for the Doodle Trail connecting Pickens with the City of Easley.

Airports

The Greenville - Spartanburg International Airport is located along I-85 in Spartanburg County, about three miles from downtown Greer. This location is about halfway between the cities of Greenville and Spartanburg, the two largest cities in Upstate South Carolina. The airport has one runway of 11,000 feet.

The airport is able to accommodate any type of aircraft in common use for passengers and cargo service. The field is open 24 hours a day and controlled between 6:30am and 12am. The airport has an instrument landing system, one fixed base operator and one flying school. There are approximately 25 hanger spaces available to the public although there is a short waiting list.

Pickens County Airport is located on US 178, just six miles south of the City of Pickens. This location places the airport about 15 miles from the nearest interstate, I-85. The airport is a general aviation facility with one runway of 4,999 feet. There is one fixed base operator at the site and flight instruction is available. The field is attended, but not controlled, between 8am and dark.

LAND USE

Existing Land Use

The City of Pickens covers approximately 1,840.55 acres of land. This is an increase of approximately 6.3% of total land area covered since 2012 (1,730.87 acres). This increase in coverage speaks to Pickens' growing community character and how development patterns have necessitated the expansion of the City. Of this land area, approximately 1,562.2 acres or 84.9% is developed. The following table shows the existing acreage for each category of land use.

Land Use	Parcels	Percent of Total Parcels	Acreage	Percent of Total Acreage
SF Residential	1197	67.7	690.79	37.53
Mobile Home	2	0.11	1.87	0.1
MF Residential	32	1.81	48.24	2.62
Institutional	89	5.03	559.2	30.38
Commercial	206	11.65	167.35	9.09
Industrial	3	0.17	94.78	5.15
Vacant/Undeveloped	239	13.52	278.32	15.12
Total	**1768**	**100**	**1840.55**	**100**

Residential

Residential land uses account for 40.25% of all land use in the City of Pickens. Of this, 93.24% are single-family, 0.25% are mobile homes, and 6.51% are multifamily land uses.

As expected, the predominant residential type in the city is single family homes. Single family properties compromise 690.79 acres, or 37.53% of the total land use in the city. This reflects Pickens' rural character that has developed the community into its existing form. The city has made efforts to rehabilitate existing houses and demolish dilapidated homes throughout the town to maintain this character through a revolving loan program and coordination with external and internal organizations and institutions.

There is a notable lack of multifamily housing options within the City of Pickens. Though the City has zoned much more of its land for multifamily purposes, the land uses on those parcels rarely reflects their designated zoning category currently. Multifamily housing makes up just 2.62% of the City's developed land area with just 32 parcels identified as actively being used for multifamily purposes. As the City continues to experience external growth pressures from its ever-growing upstate location, considerations must be made related to multifamily housing to help keep housing costs affordable, and to protect the rural character of the surrounding area by preventing sprawling, single-family development.

Mobile homes are allocated throughout the City, however there are strongholds of these residential types in the south/southeast portions of the City. This land use type makes up just 0.1% of the City's land area for a total of 1.87 acres.

Commercial

Commercial land uses account for 167.35 acres, or 9.09% of the total land area of the City of Pickens. Though this represents a lesser percentage of land area than previously reported, introduction of the institutional land use may account for most of this decrease, as churches, non-profits, and government buildings may have been previously included in this count. Most of the parcels are located along the US-178, SC-183, and SC-8 highway corridors.

As Pickens continues to grow, an increase in the number of commercial uses in the city will be a good indicator for its economic growth and vitality moving forward.

Institutional

Institutional land uses include fire and police stations, government offices, schools, churches, cemeteries, parks, and playgrounds, and any other publicly or non-profit held lands. These land use types make up 30.38% of the City's land area, doe a total of 559.2 acres. This large portion of the City's make up reflects its role as the County's seat with numerous government properties located near the city center. Additionally, it shows the City's investment in recreational efforts for the public with areas like Jaycee Park, the Pickens recreation department, the Doodle Trail Park, and Town Creek Bike Park.

Industrial

The City of Pickens just three industrial properties within its boundaries. However, these uses make up 5.15% of the City's land area for a total of 94.78. Most of this land area is the old Singer Mill, now occupied by a commercial venture known as market at the mill. Though this use has changed and become a focal point for retail in the City of Pickens, the parcel still contains other manufacturing entities such as Bridge Brothers.

Undeveloped/Vacant Land

278.32 acres or 15.12% of the City of Pickens' land is vacant or undeveloped. These parcels represent opportunities for future growth without relying on annexation for the City. These lands may be publicly or privately held, but each one presents a unique opportunity to shape and enhance the character of Pickens in the years to come.

Existing Zoning

The City of Pickens has 10 designated individuals zoning categories. 3 are commercial zones, 4 are residential single-family, and 3 are residential multi-family.

Residential Single-Family

54.8% of Pickens' developed and undeveloped land area is zones as single-family residential. This is broken down into four single family zones: R-20, R-12, R-10, and R-8 which move from lower to higher density, respectively. R-20 is the newest zoning district, and as such no properties within the City have been designated as R-20 at the time of this update. R-12 is the lowest density single-family zone currently on the zoning map. These parcels make up 878.29 acres, or 47.71% of the City's total land area. 20 parcels in the City are designated as R-10, which represent 2.91% of the City's total land area totaling 53.47 acres. The R-8 single family zone is the highest density single-family zone and allows duplexes in these areas. This zoning district represents 187 parcels totaling 76.58 acres, or 4.16% of the City's land areas.

Residential Multifamily

Similar to single-family districts, Pickens' multifamily residential districts are broken into two categories based on the level of density allowed RM-8 and RM-16.

RM-8 is the lowest density multi-family use type in the City allowing 8 units spread across up to two floors in a single building. This zoning district is applied to 62 parcels within the City totaling 20.45 acres or 1.11% of the City's total land area.

RM-16 is the highest density multifamily zone allowed within the City allowing up to 16 units per acre. This zoning district is applied to 202 parcels in the City totaling 120.84 acres or 6.57% of the developed land within the City of Pickens.

Commercial

Pickens' commercial zones are broken down into the following 3 categories: Central Business District (CBD), General Business District (GBD), and Neighborhood Business District (NBD).

Neighborhood Business District zones consist of businesses that provide services to residents and match the character of the surrounding area. These businesses provide much-needed services to local areas and can often be accessed by those that serve within walking distance or without much required travel. Examples of these businesses include but are not limited to hair salons, daycares, and legal consulting services. Typically, these businesses are run out of an owner's residence or a formerly occupied residence. Pickens' Neighborhood Business District accounts for .02% of its total land area with just one parcel currently carrying this designation total .42 acres.

The General Business District category covers all commercial uses that do not fall into any of the other designated categories. These are typically outside the center of the City and its surrounding neighborhoods. Pickens' general commercial uses are clustered on the US-178, SC-183, and SC-8 corridors. General commercial makes up 34.5% of the City's total land area, with 257 parcels totaling 634.94 acres, making it the largest business district by size in the City.

Finally, Pickens' Central Business District zones are concentrated around the downtown areas. These businesses, as the name implies, create the "center" of local businesses that support and supply the citizens of Pickens. These businesses are typically restaurants, furniture stores, local craft stores, or any other use deemed fit to occupy the downtown area. The CBD makes up 3.02% of Pickens' total land area with 149 parcels totaling 55.56 acres.

Zone	Parcels	Percent of Total Parcels	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
CBD	149	8.43	55.56	3.02
GBD	257	14.54	634.94	34.50
NBD	1	0.06	0.42	0.02
R10	20	1.13	53.47	2.91
R12	890	50.34	878.29	47.71
R8	187	10.58	76.58	4.16
RM16	202	11.43	120.84	6.57
RM8	62	3.51	20.45	1.11
Total	**1768**	**100**	**1840.55**	**100**

Future Land Use

As Pickens continues to develop and grow in the coming years, special attention must be paid to how this development is managed and where it is allowed to ensure that the City grows in a sustainable way that minimizes negative impacts to current and new residents and maximizes the potential for those same individuals and the City itself. As the upstate of South Carolina continues to grow, it is inevitable that these impacts will be felt in the City, as they already have and attention to detail in growth patterns moving forward can help to maintain Pickens' character while dealing with the impending growth.

Single Family Residential

The largest growth in land use for the City moving forward will be in single family homes. Though multifamily housing is always needed, Pickens' character and location dictates that its future is majority single family housing. Moving forward, this type of use is expected to occupy 58.74% of Pickens' land area, making it the majority use for the City. There exists enough vacant land within the City Limits to accomplish this goal, but annexation should be taken into consideration as growth patterns dictate.

Multifamily Residential

As Pickens continues to grow, affordable housing options must be made available to current and future residents. The City has already shown a commitment to developing multifamily housing and should continue to do so in the coming years. As mobile homes become in need of replacement in the future the City should encourage multifamily housing in their place. This would maintain the affordability of the

housing while also improving the character of the City. With this in mind, housing is expected to make up 5.72% of Pickens' land area as it continues to develop.

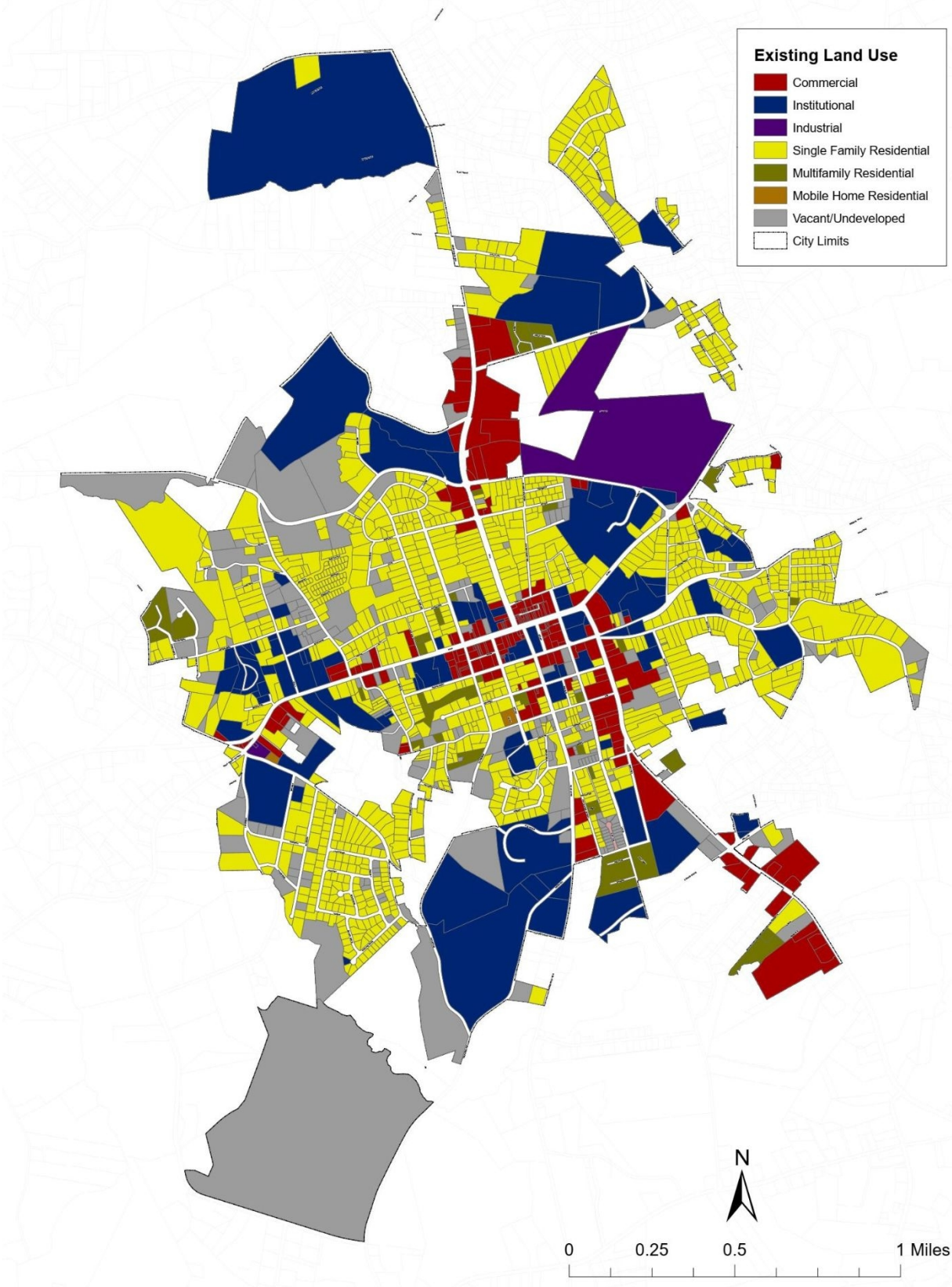
Institutional

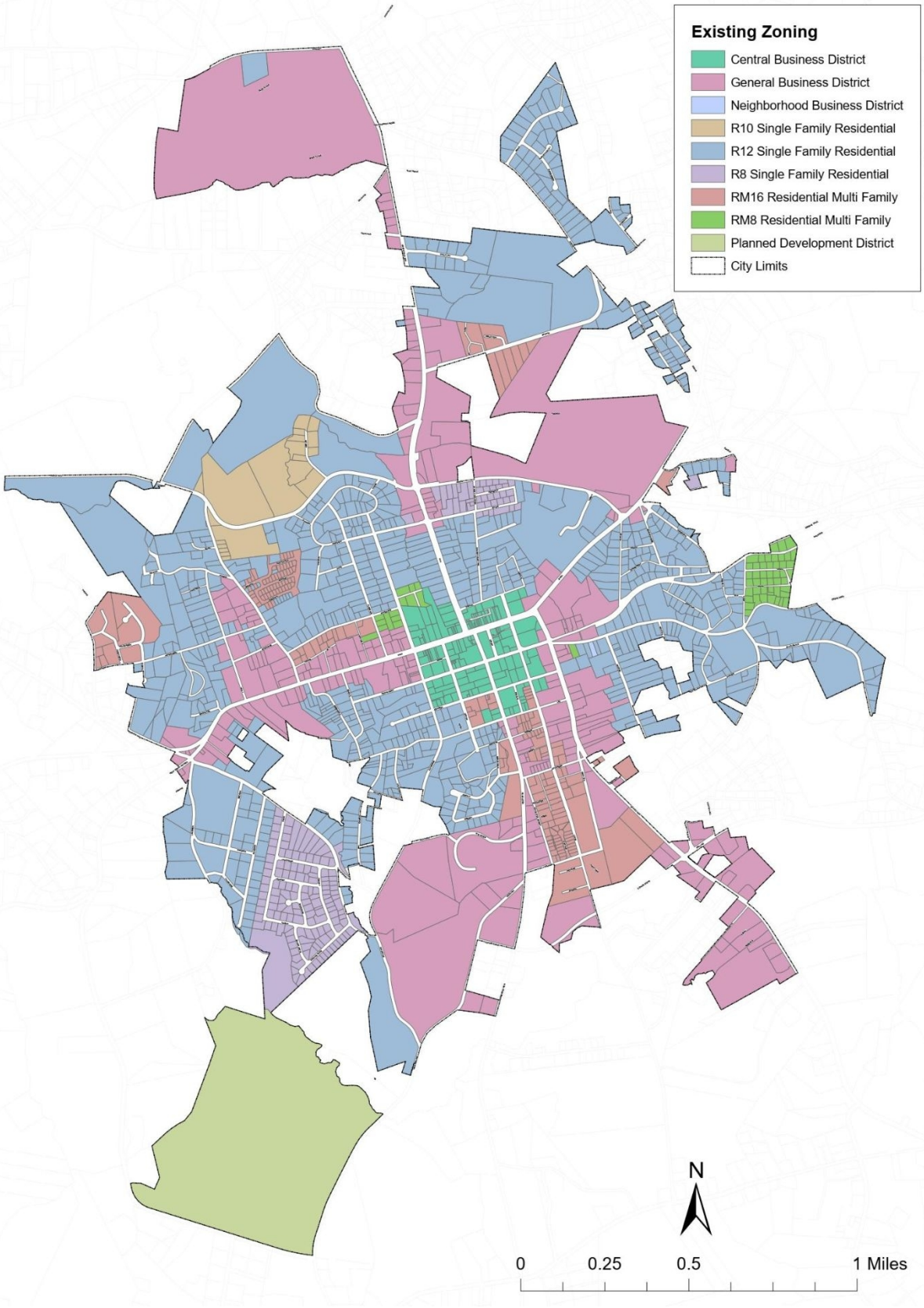
Institutional uses and their growth are dictated by the needs of the City and its people. As such, it can be difficult to predict the future and what municipal, religious, and educational needs will be as Pickens continues to grow. The City must engage with the community and ascertain the public needs to provide any institutional uses that can provide benefit. As for this update, institutional land uses are expected to make up 18.39% of the City's land area in the coming years.

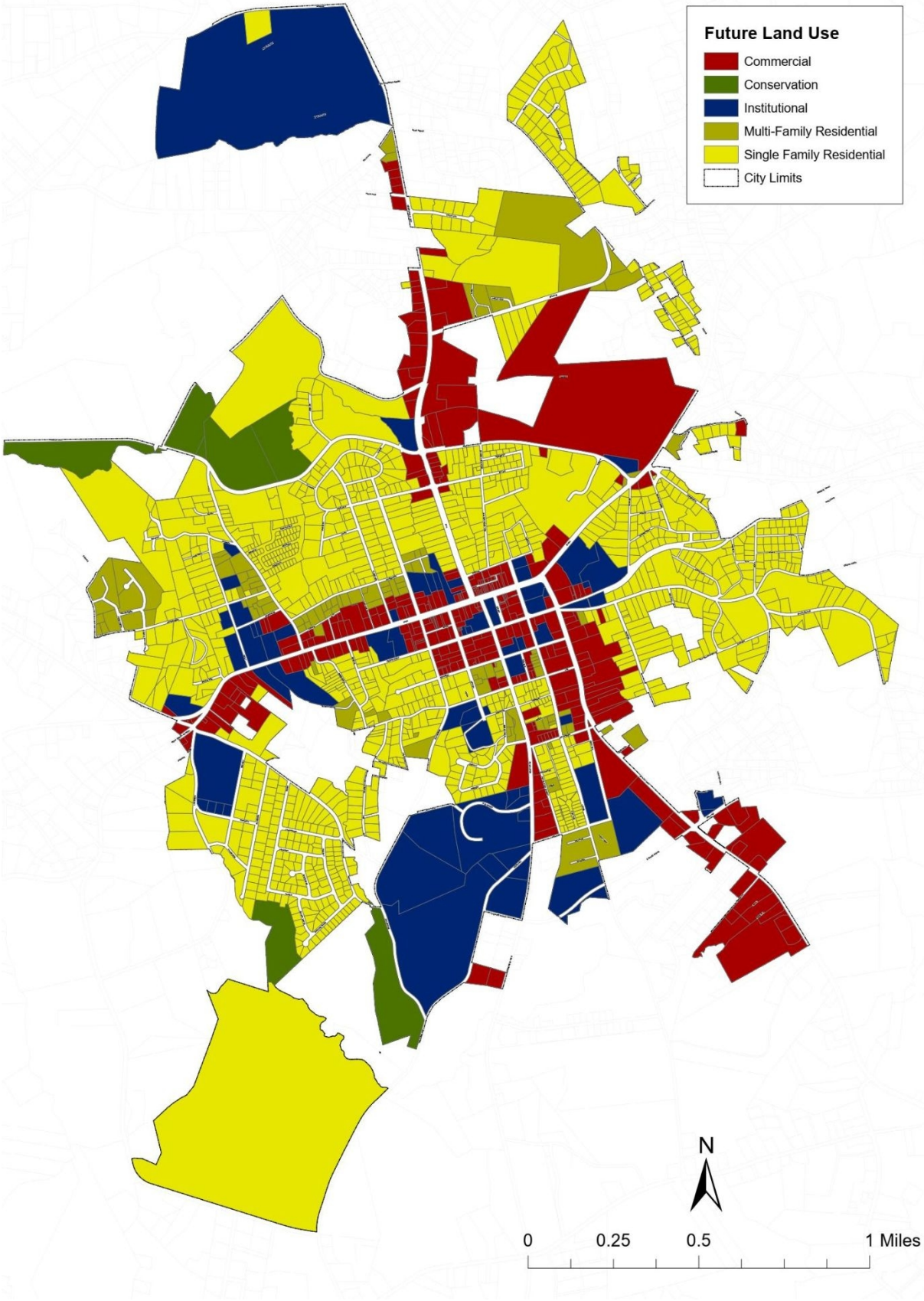
Commercial

As Pickens grows and more residents with ever increasing needs move to the City, commercial uses must grow and adapt to keep up with the changing requirements and to become an attraction for potential new residents. As such, the commercial land area of the city is anticipated to double in the coming years to 20.15% of the land area in the City of Pickens.

Land Use	Parcels	Percent of Total Parcels	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
SF Residential	1159	65.55%	1025.91	55.74%
MF Residential	198	11.20%	105.37	5.72%
Institutional	49	2.77%	338.41	18.39%
Commercial	362	20.48%	370.86	20.15%
Total	**1768**	**100**	**1840.55**	**100**


Existing Land Use
Commercial
Institutional
Industrial
Single Family Residential
Multifamily Residential
Mobile Home Residential
Vacant/Undeveloped
City Limits
N
0
0.25
0.5
1 Miles


Existing Zoning
Central Business District
General Business District
Neighborhood Business District
R10 Single Family Residential
R12 Single Family Residential
R8 Single Family Residential
RM16 Residential Multi Family
RM8 Residential Multi Family
Planned Development District
City Limits
N
0
0.25
0.5
1 Miles


Future Land Use
Commercial
Conservation
Institutional
Multi-Family Residential
Single Family Residential
City Limits
N
0
0.25
0.5
1 Miles

RESILIENCY

In 2020, The South Carolina General Assembly passed an amendment to the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 to require a Resiliency Element to be included in all Comprehensive Plans in South Carolina.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Resiliency Element is to aid in the ability of the City of Pickens to adapt and recover quickly, fairly, and transparently from changing conditions such as recurrent burdens and sudden disasters. Sudden disasters may consist of flooding, high water, and natural hazards.

Primary Hazards

Flooding. According to NOAA, flooding is an overflowing of water on land that is normally dry. Flooding can be further classified, defined, and forecasted depending on several factors including cause, duration, and extent. Flooding is the most frequent and costly natural hazard in the United States. Flash flooding is a rapid onset event that occurs from short, heavy rainfall, accumulating in areas faster than the ground can absorb it. These big rain events are exacerbated by a combination of several factors, including local drainage issues and the amount of impervious surface.

Severe Thunderstorms, Tornados, and Lightning.

A thunderstorm is a rainstorm event during which thunder is heard, which is audible due to lightning causing the air to heat and expand rapidly. Therefore, all thunderstorms have lightning. According to the National Weather Service, there are approximately 100,000 thunderstorms that occur in the United States per year and about twenty-five million lighting flashes a year, killing about sixty-nine people annually. This number reflects the significant decline in fatalities within the past few decades, but lightning continues to remain a top storm-related killer. A tornado is a violent windstorm characterized by a twisting, funnel-shaped cloud extending to the ground. Tornados may also occur as part of a severe thunderstorm event. Tornadoes may form at any time of the year, but in the United States, the peak of events occurs in the spring and early summer months of March through June, especially during the late afternoon and early evening.

Drought

Drought is caused by a lack of precipitation over an extended period, often resulting in a water shortage for some activity, sector, or the environment. In contrast to other environmental hazards, droughts develop slowly over a period of weeks, months, or years. According to NOAA, drought is the second most costly weather and climate disaster affecting the United States, preceded only by tropical cyclones. Historically, South Carolina has experienced many statewide droughts. They can occur at any time of the year and last for several months to several years.

Hail

Hail can occur year-round and can happen anywhere because it derives from severe thunderstorms. It is a precipitation type, consisting of ice pellets that form when updrafts of thunderstorms carry water droplets up into the freezing level of the atmosphere. Hail can be small and generally pea-sized, but hail can also be larger, capable of damaging property and killing livestock and people.

Winter Storms

Winter storms and winter weather kill dozens of Americans each year, from exposure to cold, vehicle accidents, the improper use of heaters, and other winter related incidents. Winter storms are regular occurrences that happen across the country and can take place during spring and fall as well. Many hazards are associated with winter storms and weather including fierce winds, extreme cold, coastal flooding, heavy snow, and ice storms. Other concerns related to winter weather is power, heat, and communication outages. Most deaths associated with winter weather and storms are indirectly related, such as fatalities from traffic accidents due to icy conditions, or hypothermia from prolonged exposure.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous material incidents can include the spilling, leaking, pumping, emitting, discharging, escaping, leaching, or disposing into the environment of a hazardous material, but exclude: (1) any release which results in exposure to poisons solely within the workplace with respect to claims which such persons may assert against the employer; (2) emissions from the engine exhaust of a motor vehicle, rolling stock, aircraft, vessel or pipeline pumping station engine; (3) release of source, byproduct, or special nuclear material from a nuclear incident; and (4) the normal application of fertilizer. Facilities that store or use hazardous materials are scattered throughout the state, but many are in coastal counties, where they are also exposed to hurricane winds and rain. However, hazardous materials are frequently transported along I-85 and I-26 and could create a significant hazard if an accident caused a spill.

Tools and Existing Protective Measures

The Pickens County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. In compliance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) requirements to receive federal disaster funding, Pickens County, local districts and community stakeholders and partners have adopted a Hazard Mitigation Plan that is updated annually, with a full review every five years as required. The purpose of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is to continue guiding hazard mitigation efforts to better protect the people and property in the County from the effects of hazard events.

DHEC’s NPDES Permit Program. NPDES is a regulatory program created under the Clean Water Act, and it is one of the main driving forces behind most of the mandated state and federal regulations. Under the NPDES Permit Program, stormwater discharges are considered point sources and operators of these sources are required to receive an NPDES permit before they can discharge stormwater runoff. Any construction site of one acre or more is required to obtain a stormwater permit via the NPDES program from DHEC.

International Building Code Series

The State of South Carolina requires governing local entities to adopt, by ordinance, the state-approved versions of the International Building Code series. Currently the approved Building Code in South Carolina is the 2021 International Building Code (IBC), and the 2009 Energy Code. The International Building Code series provides best practices to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location and maintenance of all buildings, structures, and certain equipment.

Conclusion

The goal of this Comprehensive Plan Review is to introduce the topic of resiliency into Pickens's Comprehensive Planning process. As was outlined earlier in this section, there are several hazards that occur frequently in the Upstate and in Pickens in particular. A limited number of tools and protective measures exist to mitigate these potential hazards. Initial mitigation recommendations are as follows:

1. Determine areas that are of the highest risk, evaluate development intensity regulations for these areas, and prioritize projects in these areas.

2. Strengthening partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions to combat issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

3. Educate the public about their role in building resilience and how to recover.

4. Review and consolidate resilience-related efforts detailed in other Elements of this Plan during the next five-year update, which may include, but not be limited to, advanced study and audit of existing facilities and programs.

PRIORITY INVESTMENT

One of the requirements of the State Comprehensive Planning Legislation is that the City consider how it will pay for needed capital investments. This includes an analysis of all funding sources for public infrastructure and facilities, as well as coordination with other adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.

The City of Pickens has been engaged in capital asset and debt administration for its infrastructure for many years and understands the benefits of coordination with partner agencies. The City works closely with SCDOT, Pickens County and the Appalachian Council of Governments, for instance, on planning and securing funding for construction of road projects.

The City Council prepares the City's budget, which includes Capital Expenditures and Debt Administration. To address several of the plan's recommendations, the City should consider putting together a five-year operating plan to help staff and Council members anticipate future capital costs and needs.

The City of Pickens has been engaged in capital asset and debt administration for its infrastructure for many years and understands the benefits of coordination with partner agencies. The city works closely with SCDOT, Pickens County, and the Appalachian Council of Governments, for instance, on planning and securing funding for the construction of road projects.

The City Council prepares the city's budget, which includes Capital Expenditures and Debt Administration.

The City has created a Capital Improvement Plan for the timeline of 2025-2029.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)
City of Pickens, South Carolina
Fiscal Years 2025–2029

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Legal Framework
3. CIP Development Process
4. Project Categories
5. Funding Sources
6. Project Prioritization
7. Five-Year Project Schedule

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1. Introduction

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) serves as a strategic roadmap for the City of Pickens, outlining planned capital projects over the next five years. It aims to align infrastructure development with the city's comprehensive plan, ensuring sustainable growth and efficient allocation of resources.

2. Legal Framework

In accordance with South Carolina Code Section 6-1-960, the CIP includes:

- A general description of existing public facilities and their deficiencies.
- An analysis of facility capacities and current usage levels.
- Land use assumptions and projected demands.
- A schedule for project implementation.

This ensures transparency and compliance with state requirements.

3. CIP Development Process

The CIP is developed through a collaborative process involving:

- **Community Engagement**: Soliciting input from residents and stakeholders.
- **Departmental Submissions**: Gathering project proposals from city departments.
- **Planning Commission Review**: Evaluating projects for alignment with the comprehensive plan.
- **City Council Approval**: Finalizing the CIP through legislative endorsement.

This iterative process ensures that the CIP reflects community needs and strategic priorities.

4. Project Categories

Projects within the CIP are categorized as follows:

- **Transportation**: Road improvements, sidewalk installations, and traffic signal upgrades.
- **Utilities**: Water and sewer infrastructure enhancements.
- **Public Safety**: Fire stations, police facilities, and emergency response equipment.
- **Parks and Recreation**: Development and maintenance of parks, trails, and recreational facilities.
- **Public Facilities**: Construction and renovation of municipal buildings.

5. Funding Sources

The CIP utilizes diverse funding mechanisms, including:

- **General Fund**: Allocations from the city's primary operating fund.
- **Grants**: State and federal funding opportunities.
- **Bonds**: Issuance of municipal bonds for large-scale projects.
- **Impact Fees**: Charges levied on new developments to fund infrastructure expansion.
- **Public-Private Partnerships**: Collaborations with private entities for mutual benefit.

6. Project Prioritization

Projects are evaluated and prioritized based on:

- **Urgency**: Addressing critical infrastructure needs.
- **Community Impact**: Enhancing quality of life for residents.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis**: Ensuring fiscal responsibility.
- **Regulatory Compliance**: Meeting legal and environmental standards.

This prioritization ensures that resources are allocated to projects with the highest strategic value.

7. Five-Year Project Schedule

Fiscal Year	Project Name	Category	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
2026	Main Street Revitalization	Transportation	$1,200,000	General Fund, Grants
2026	Water and Sewer Upgrades	Utilities	$3,500,000	Bonds, Grants, Loans
2026	Events Center/Court/Council Chambers at Teen Canteen	Public Facilities	$1,000,000	Grants, Bonds
2028	Road Resurfacing	Public Works	$1,000,000	General Fund
2029	City Hall Renovation	Public Facilities	$1,000,000	General Fund

Note: The above schedule is illustrative and subject to change based on funding availability and project readiness.

CITIZEN INPUT

Citizen input is a major part of the comprehensive plan update process, and the City of Pickens took this step very seriously. Three public hearings were held over the last year to gather public input. The City of Pickens invited the public to attend these meetings to share with staff and council their goals and concerns about the city, as well as their vision for the next 10-20 years. The City of Pickens also created a citizen survey for another option to gather citizen input, and over 100 people completed the survey. The meeting notes and survey results are included below.

What do you like about Pickens?

- Near mountains
- Cost of living
- Small town feel
- Friendly people
- Peaceful
- Community vibe
- Decent shops
- Public Works
- Restaurant diversity
- Location
- Great city council
- Small but very innovative
- Connections
- Agricultural heritage

Business Owner Comments:

- Pedestrian traffic to the West End
- Extend sidewalks/planters/lighting to the West End
- Signage for the West End
- Parking updates for the West End
- More residents=more businesses=more jobs
- More green space downtown
- Sidewalks from jail to Main Street
- Marketing the city to the region

- Address empty and dilapidated buildings.
- Code enforcement
- Grants for rehab
- Small business friendly
- Welcoming feeling downtown
- Biking paths throughout the town
- Improve downtown infrastructure.

Types of Businesses Wanted:

(*most common request)

- Building supplies
- Nice restaurant
- Video store
- Bookstore *
- Hobby shop
- Clothing stores
- Plant store
- Breakfast place
- Bed and breakfast.
- Community center
- Swimming pool
- Skating rink
- Grocery store *
- Steakhouse *
- Department store *
- Meat and three restaurants *
- Shoe store
- Movie theatre
- Deli
- Dry cleaner
- Hotel
- Outdoor store
- Bakery
- Day care
- Kid shop
- Farm to table restaurant

- Ice cream parlor.
- Leather shop
- Brewery
- Healthy restaurant
- Seafood restaurant
- Asian restaurant
- Community theatre
- Dog parks

Changes Needed in Pickens:

- Fix up old houses.
- High-speed internet
- Variety of restaurants
- Better upkeep and less litter
- More community events
- Water bills
- Increase pay rate for public service.
- More stores downtown
- Community pool
- Business incentives
- Vitality of Main Street
- More transparency
- Improve parks and recreational facilities.
- More jobs
- Too much growth
- Empty spaces on main street
- Homeless population
- Water issues
- More police
- Affordable housing
- Slow down high-density housing.
- Better downtown parking
- Annexation
- Fill the vacant factory locations.
- Annexations to fill donut holes first.
- Better signage with City logo

- Infill housing (provide incentives
- Affordable housing
- Balance of rental and owner units

Planning Commission Goals

(Ones in Bold are the Planning Commission's Priorities)

- Affordable rental housing options
- Teen Canteen upgrade
- Senior population (services and housing)
- **Infill development**
- Annexation/smart growth/balanced growth/healthy growth
- Young families (services and housing)
- Effective communication/one dialogue with citizens and the city
- Bike paths throughout the entire city
- Sidewalk improvements/additions
- Hotel
- Marketing of the city
- Target the work-from-home sector
- **Obtainable housing**
- More restaurants
- Address dilapidated/vacant buildings
- Walkability
- More single-family housing options
- Rehabilitation grants
- Demolition/condemnation
- Use the chamber/visitor center
- **Pro Business**

City Council Goals

- Workforce Development
- Sidewalk Parking
- Quality Jobs
- Relationship with high school for training to create a future workforce
- Obtainable housing
- Smart growth
- Hotel/bed and breakfast

GOALS FOR 2025-2035

Population

- Addressing the major age cohorts of the City's population
  - More than 50% of the population is of working age.
    - Need more jobs in the area.
  - Almost 30% of the population are considered seniors.
    - Need to address more services for seniors (senior activities and housing options)
  - 16% of the population is 0-14.
    - Need to address more services for children (childcare, after school activities, more, family friendly businesses)

Economy

- 18% of the population lives below the poverty line.
  - Need services/support services that provide assistance with food, transportation, utilities, and rent.
- More nonservice jobs (lite manufacturing)
- Target the West End Area
- Target the Work from Home Populations
- More Restaurants
- Address the dilapidated buildings throughout the city.
- Outdoor Related Businesses
- Market the city to the region and state
- Hotel/Bed and Breakfast
- Workforce Development

Housing

- Limited housing types need to be addressed.
  - More multi family, duplexes, patio homes
  - More options for the senior population
- Obtainable Housing
- Infill development
- Rehab incentives/grants because a majority of the existing housing stock is over 50 years old.
- Affordable rental housing options

Community/Cultural Resources

- More officers to address the expected growth.
- Lower the ISO rating to 2.

- New fire station
- Community theatre
- Improve parks.
- Effective community from city officials

Transportation

- More sidewalk connections throughout the city
- Bike trails throughout the city/connecting city parks
- Street maintenance
- Public transportation with a possible CAT BUS connection

Land Use

- Control smart growth through regulations and smart annexation.
- Industrial and commercial growth
- Greater mix of residential housing types
- Neighborhood Plans of the different areas of the City (West End, South Pickens, East Pickens, North Pickens)