

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SC

Economic Development Strategy

March 9, 2022



VISION
ECONOMICS
STRATEGY
FINANCE
IMPLEMENTATION

CONTENTS

- STRATEGY PRIORITIES
- BACKGROUND & KEY NEEDS
- ECONOMIC CLUSTERS
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

STRATEGY PRIORITIES

ENGAGEMENT & ANALYSIS TO INFORM THE STRATEGY

Town priorities and economic development opportunities were informed by stakeholder engagement and prior plans

Organization	Key Contact
Mount Pleasant Town Council	Mayor Will Haynie, Jake Rambo, Tom O'Rourke, Gary Santos, Howard Chapman, Brenda Corley, Guang Ming Whitley, Kathy Landing, Laura Hyatt
Mount Pleasant Waterworks	Alan Clum, Rick Crosby, Clay Duffie
South Carolina State Ports Authority	Jordi Yarborough
Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce	Rebecca Imholz, Eddie Phipps
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce	Bryan Derreberry
Charleston Regional Development Authority	David Ginn
Charleston County Economic Development	Steve Dykes, Ashley Richardson
CODE/+/TRUST, Harbor Entrepreneur Center	Patrick Bryant

Plan/Report	Date Published
Town of Mount Pleasant Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017	2013
2019-2029 Town of Mount Pleasant Comprehensive Plan	2019
2021-2025 Strategic Plan	2021
2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report	2020
Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel: Framework for Responsible Growth	2015

To inform the development of the Economic Development Strategy, SB Friedman conducted the following engagement and analysis of existing conditions and past planning efforts:

- Conducted 19 stakeholder interviews
- Reviewed 5 past and current Town plans and reports
- Conducted fieldwork in October 2021
- Performed secondary data analysis of Town composition and trends

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ENGAGEMENT


Stakeholder engagement revealed three key takeaways about Town strengths and weaknesses

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Mount Pleasant lacks a unified vision and long-term implementation strategy, which has challenged past economic development initiatives
2. Mount Pleasant has a very talented high-wage workforce and significant local assets, which are underutilized locally
3. Entitlement uncertainty and a historic reputation as an anti-development town previously damaged relationships with both business and real estate development communities

KEYS TO AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Growth needs, priorities and development sites drive economic development strategy in key clusters

KEY NEEDS	KEY GROWTH PRIORITIES	KEY DEVELOPMENT ZONES	KEY CLUSTERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and retain high-quality, high-wage jobs • Take advantage of highly educated workforce and reduce commute outflow • Diversify local tax base • Increase supply of attainable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job types that align with local workforce • Job types where Mount Pleasant has a competitive advantage compared to other job centers in the Charleston region • Industries that have a minimal impact on local infrastructure and traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriots Point • Wando Welch/Long Point Rd • Johnnie Dodds Blvd infill • Carolina Park 	<p>CRDA Priority Clusters</p> <div>   </div> <p>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LIFE SCIENCES</p> <p>Local Competitive Advantage Clusters</p> <div>    </div> <p>ARCH. & ENGINEERING MARKETING, DESIGN & PUBLISHING FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS</p>

BACKGROUND & KEY NEEDS

KEY TOWN ASSETS

Economic activity within the Town leverages several unique key assets

The Town is unique in that it includes zones with substantially different purposes and existing conditions– from a historic downtown, to a premier office destination, to the port.



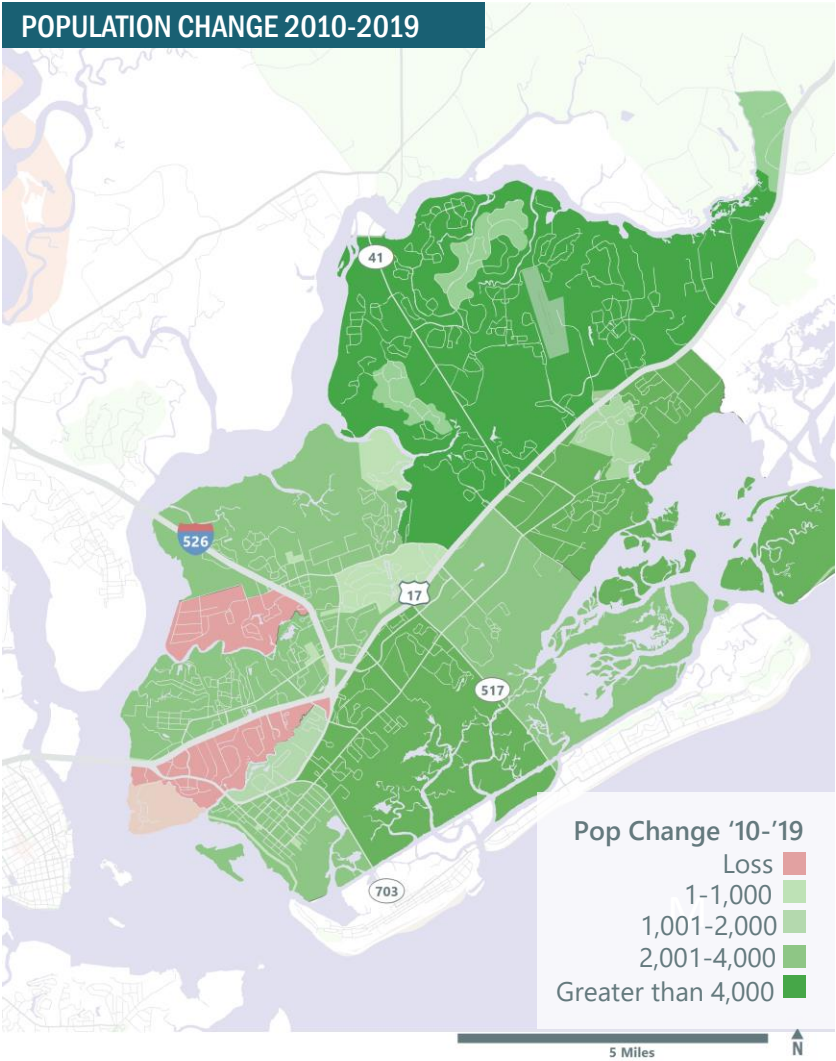
MOUNT PLEASANT POPULATION GROWTH

The population of Mount Pleasant doubled since 2000 to almost 91,000 residents in 2020

The Mount Pleasant population increased substantially over the past three decades. From 2000 through 2020, the population grew by over 43,000 residents. A portion of the population growth is attributable to infill development. However, the majority of population growth occurred in entirely new subdivisions located within recently annexed neighborhoods on the northern extents of the Town.

Mount Pleasant	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Total Population	14,464	30,108	47,609	67,843	90,801
Population Change		+15,644	+17,501	+20,234	+22,958
Population Change %		108%	58%	43%	34%

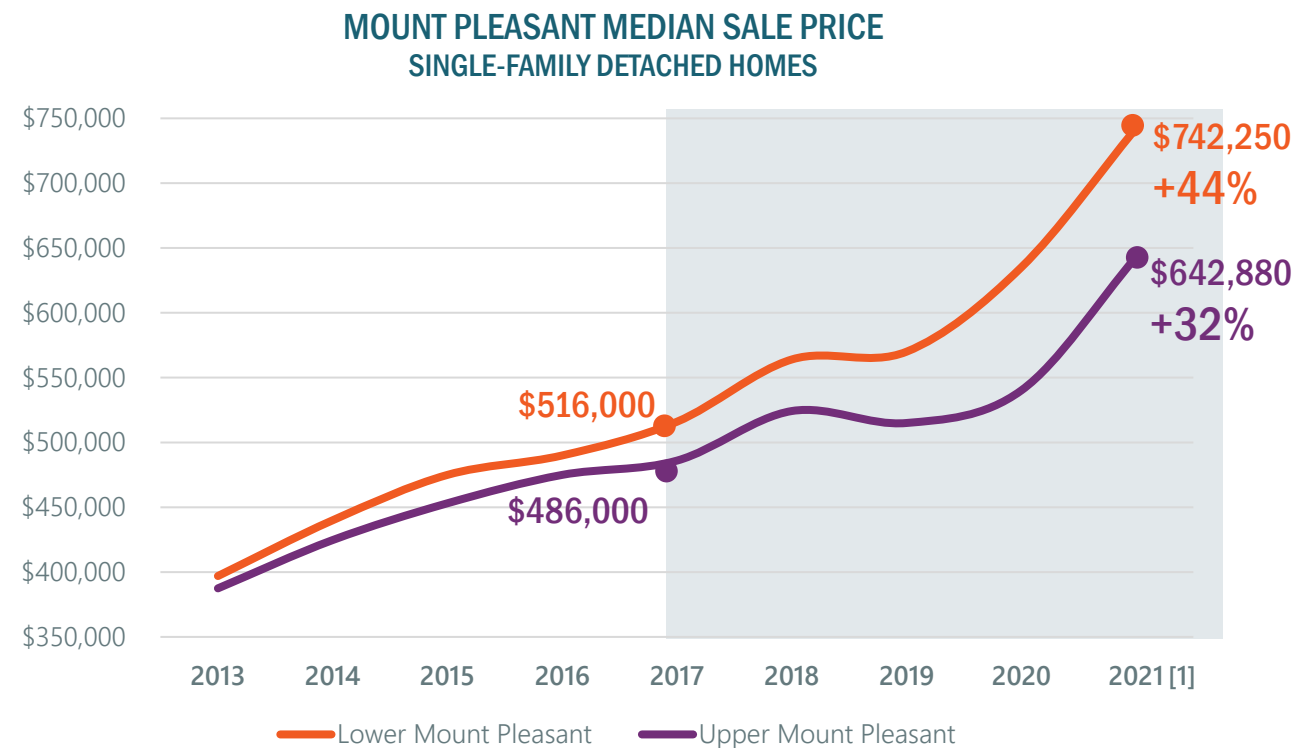
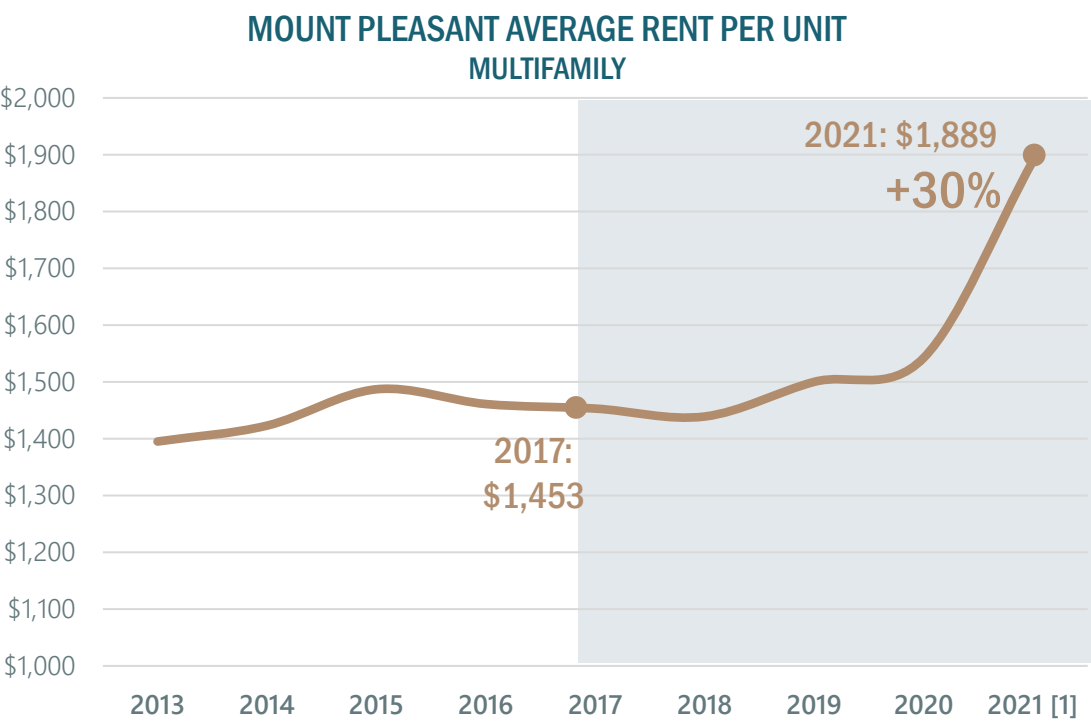
Source: ACS 2006-2010, 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census, SB Friedman



MOUNT PLEASANT HOUSING COSTS

Average rents and median home prices both increased significantly in the last five years

Housing prices are increasing dramatically within the Town. The average rent per unit in Mount Pleasant was \$1,889 as of 2021 and increased 30% since 2017. As of November 2021, the median home sale price was \$742,250 in Lower Mount Pleasant (south of Highway 41) and \$642,880 in Upper Mount Pleasant. In addition, sales prices across the Town increased significantly over the past five years. Residential affordability impacts economic competitiveness, as companies account for cost of living in relocation decisions.



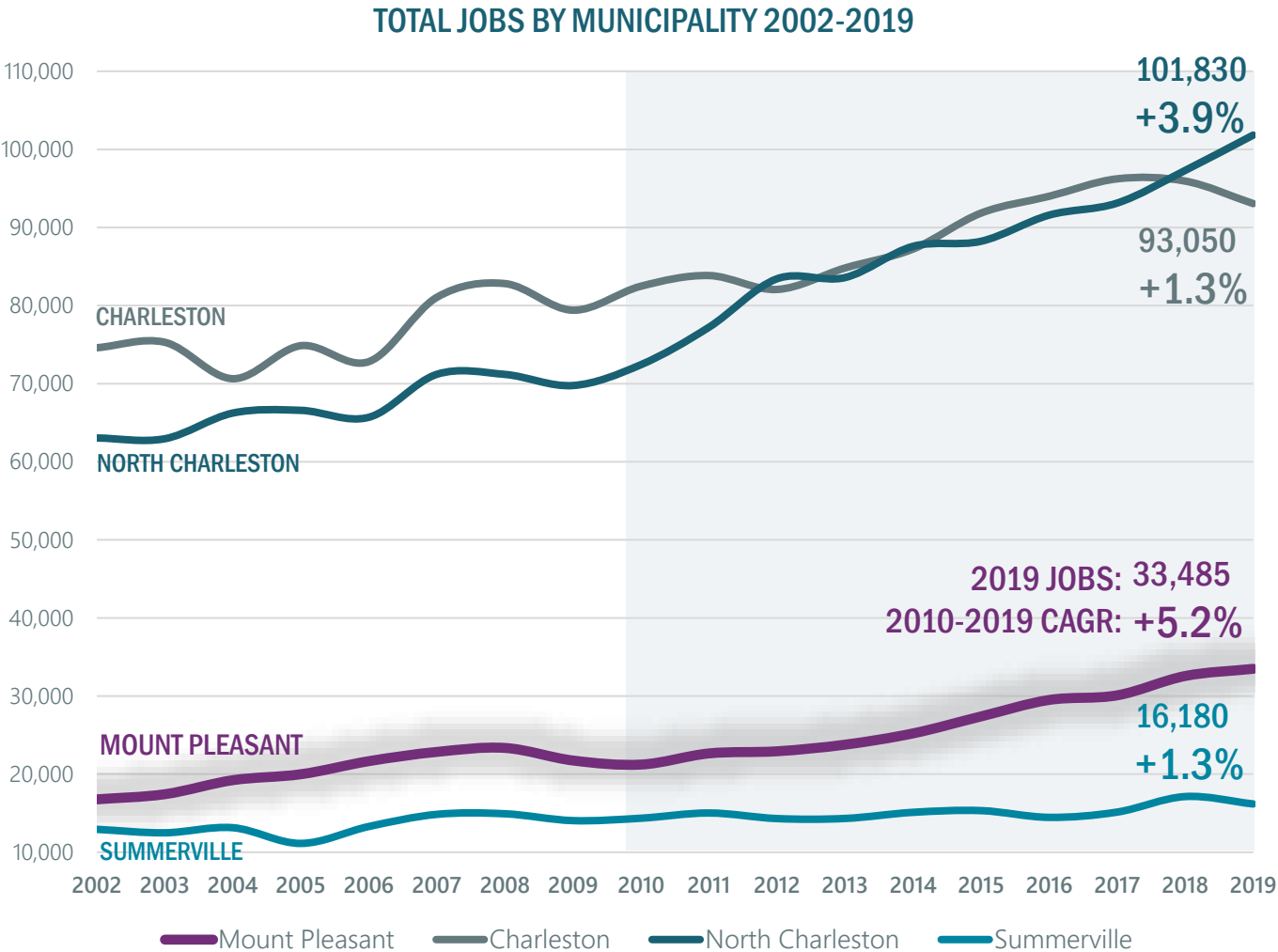
[1] Year-to-date through November 2021
Source: Charleston Trident Association of Realtors, CoStar, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors

MOUNT PLEASANT EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Mount Pleasant can improve jobs-to-housing balance

Mount Pleasant had the highest average annual job growth, 5.2% from 2010-2019, among local peers. Despite this period of growth, the Town’s jobs per capita ratio remains significantly lower than both Charleston and North Charleston. The low jobs to housing ratio impacts the lingering perception of the Town as a ‘bedroom community’ rather than an employment hub.

Municipality	Jobs (2019)	Population (2020)	Jobs per Capita
Mount Pleasant	33,485	90,801	0.37
Charleston	93,054	150,227	0.62
North Charleston	101,826	114,852	0.89
Summerville	16,182	50,915	0.32

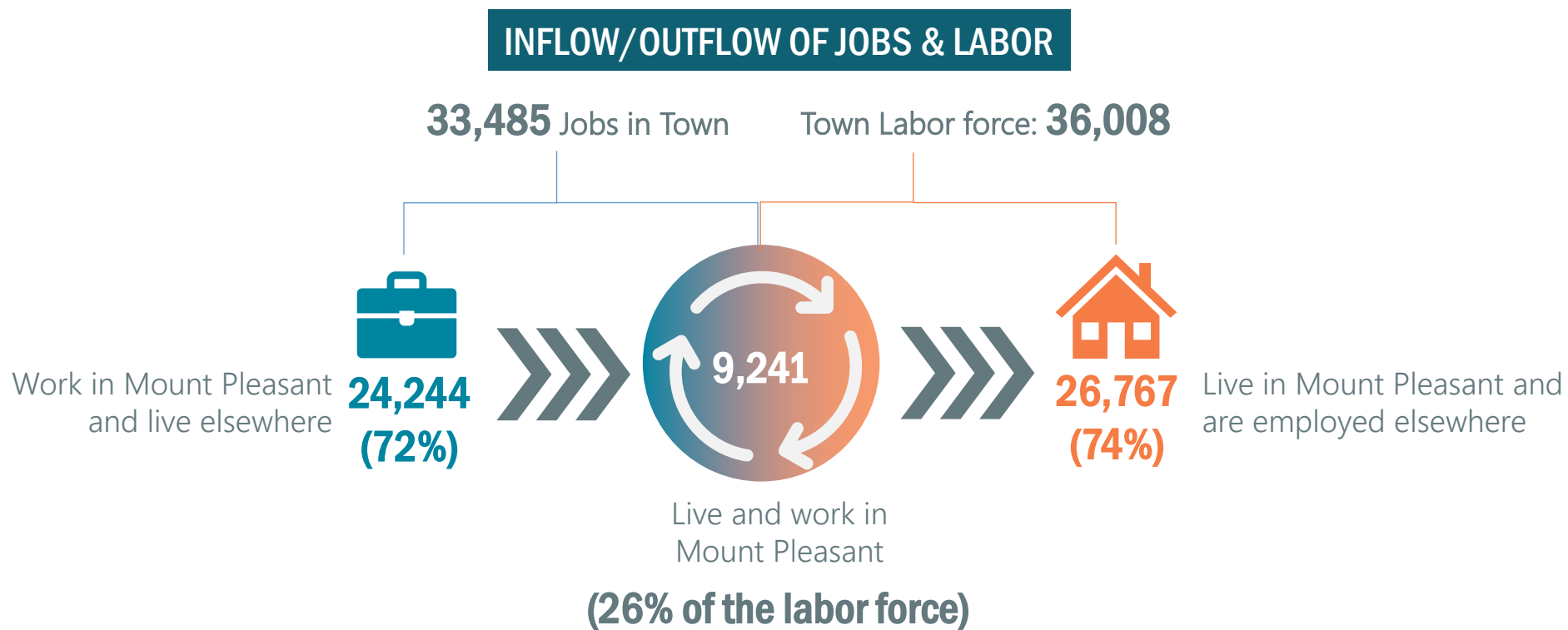


Source: LEHD OnTheMap, U.S. Census, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors

MOUNT PLEASANT EMPLOYMENT INFLOW/OUTFLOW

74% of workers who live in Mount Pleasant commute elsewhere in the region

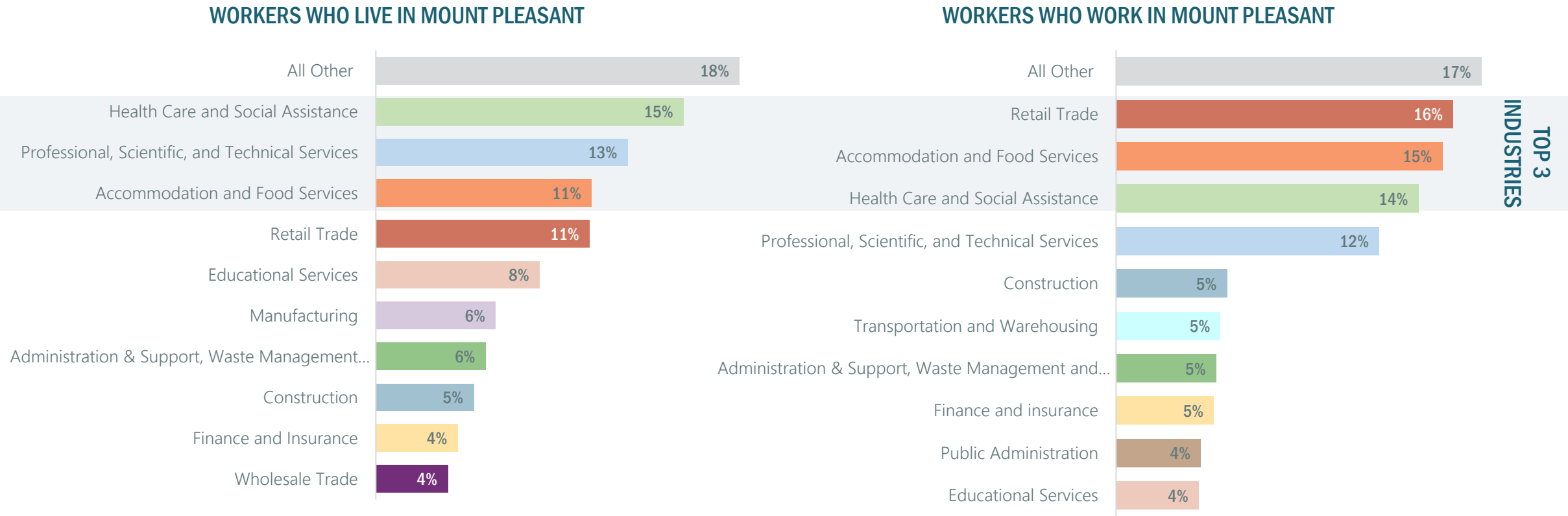
- Only 26% of Town residents in the labor force work within Mount Pleasant. 74% of the labor force commutes to other job centers throughout the region.
- 72% of the jobs in the Town are held by people who do not live in Mount Pleasant and commute into the Town from outside of the region.



MOUNT PLEASANT WORKFORCE PROFILE

A greater share of retail, hospitality and food service workforce work in the Town than live in the Town

Industries accounting for the greatest share of the Mount Pleasant labor force include health care and professional services. Industries with the greatest share of workers who work in Mount Pleasant but live elsewhere include retail trade and accommodation and food services.



MOUNT PLEASANT TOP EMPLOYERS

Half of the top employers changed between 2011 and 2020, with notable growth in retail employees

Rapid retail growth since 2010 has increased the presence of several major retail employers. Since 2010, 1.1M SF of new retail space was delivered, while total retail jobs increased by 1,540^[1].

Top Employers: 2011		Top Employers: 2020	
Name	# of Employees	Name	# of Employees
East Cooper Medical Center	748	Charleston County School District [2]	1,200
Target Stores	500	East Cooper Medical Center	830
Mount Pleasant Hospital	340	Town of Mount Pleasant [2]	705
Motley Rice, LLC	315	Roper St. Francis Mount Pleasant Hospital	572
Wild Wing Café	310	State Ports Authority	471
Sandpiper Retirement Community	300	Walmart	464
Mediterranean Shipping Co.	290	Publix	440
Franke At Seaside	245	Harris Teeter	420
Whole Foods	204	Mediterranean Shipping Company	366
The Agent Owned Realty Co.	172	Sandpiper Retirement Community	211
Mount Pleasant Manor	153	Wild Wings Café	N/A
Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina	150	Motley Rice, LLC	N/A
Sticky Fingers	150	Nason Medical Clinic	N/A

[1] 2010-2019 job growth in Retail Trade based on data from LEHD OnTheMap

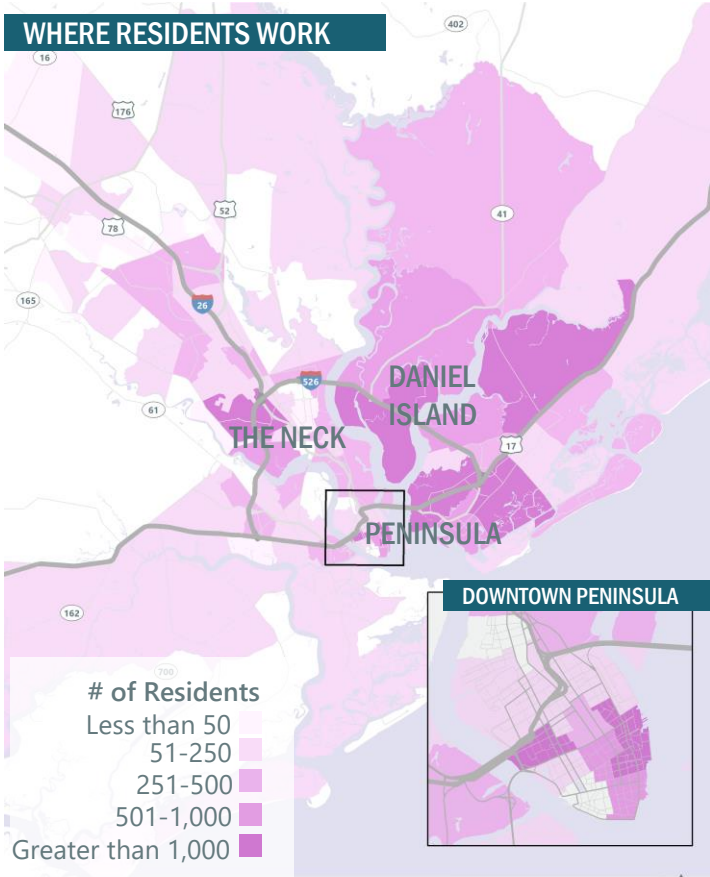
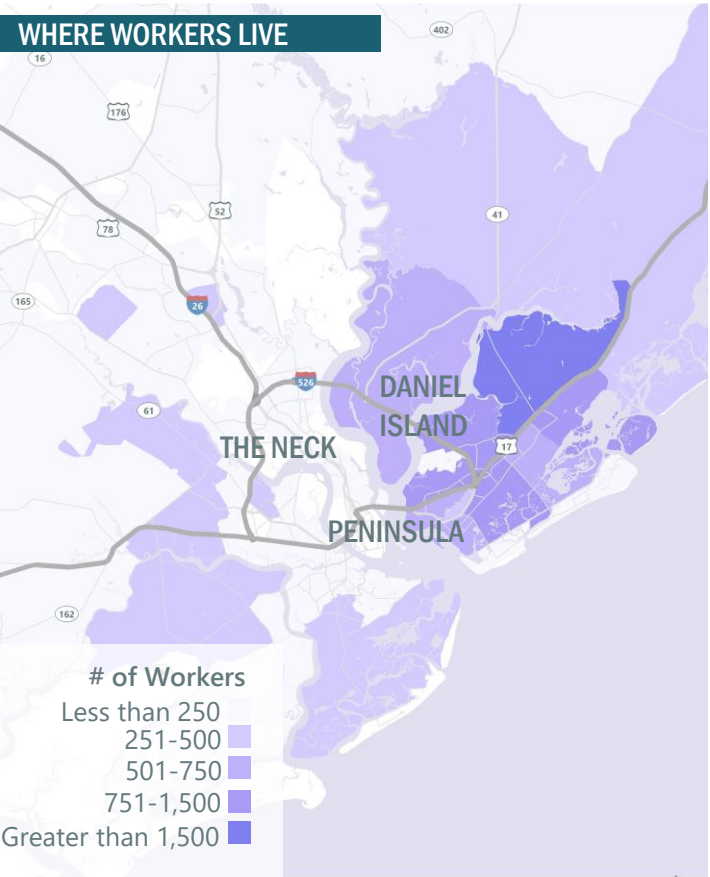
[2] Government employers likely excluded from 2011 list

Source: 2020 Town of Mount Pleasant CAFR, LEHD OnTheMap Mount Pleasant Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017, SB Friedman

MOUNT PLEASANT COMMUTE PATTERNS

29% of workers who live in the Town commute to the Charleston Peninsula, Neck, or Daniel Island

Employees who work in Mount Pleasant tend to live across the region. While the highest concentrations of employees live locally, there are also a high percentage of employees traveling from other communities including James Island, Summerville, and West Ashley. The inverse is also true, residents of Mount Pleasant work throughout the region. A large share of workers commute from Mount Pleasant to larger job markets such as Daniel Island, the Peninsula and the 526 Corridor.



WHERE WORKERS LIVE

Top ZIP Codes	Residence Location	% Workers
29464	Mount Pleasant (western)	16.5%
29466	Mount Pleasant (eastern)	12.5%
29412	James Island	4.8%
29483	Summerville	4.2%
29407	West Ashley	4.2%

WHERE RESIDENTS WORK

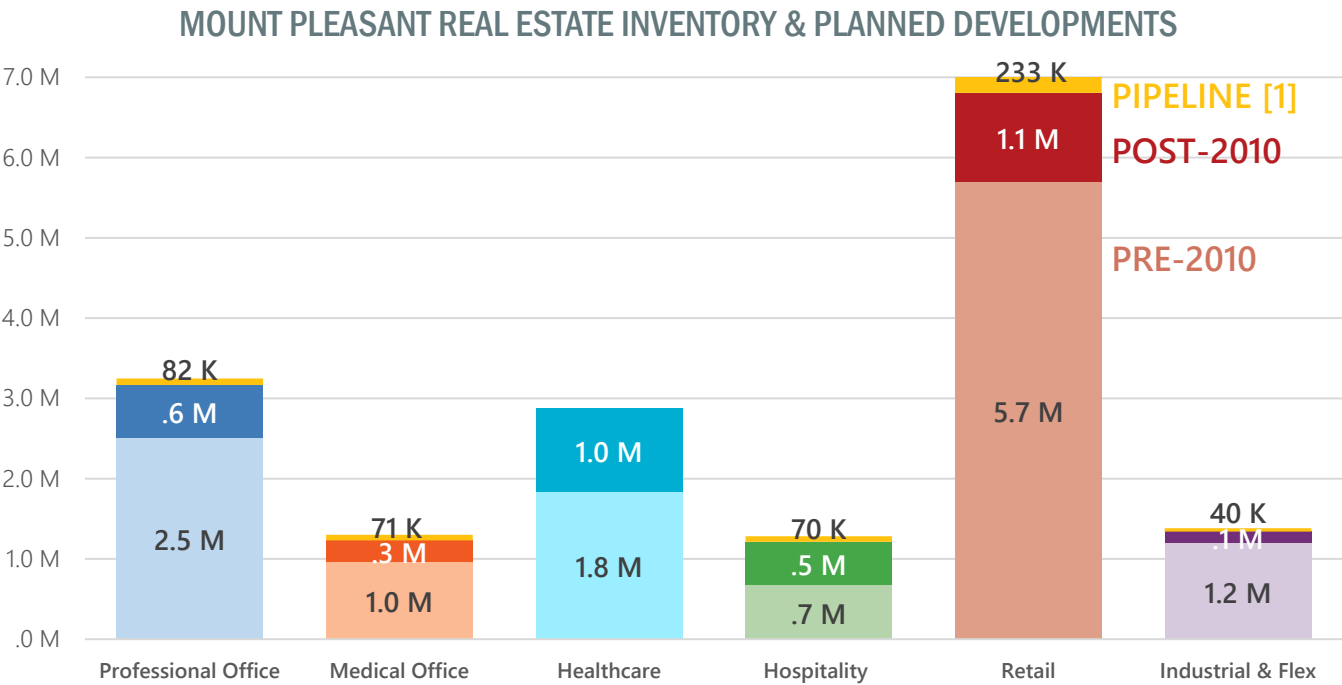
Top ZIP Codes	Work Location	% Residents
29464	Mount Pleasant (western)	21.2%
29403	Downtown Peninsula (north of Calhoun)	10.5%
29401	Downtown Peninsula (south of Calhoun)	6.4%
29405	The Neck/Lower North Charleston	6.3%
29492	Daniel Island	6.0%

Source: LEHD, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors

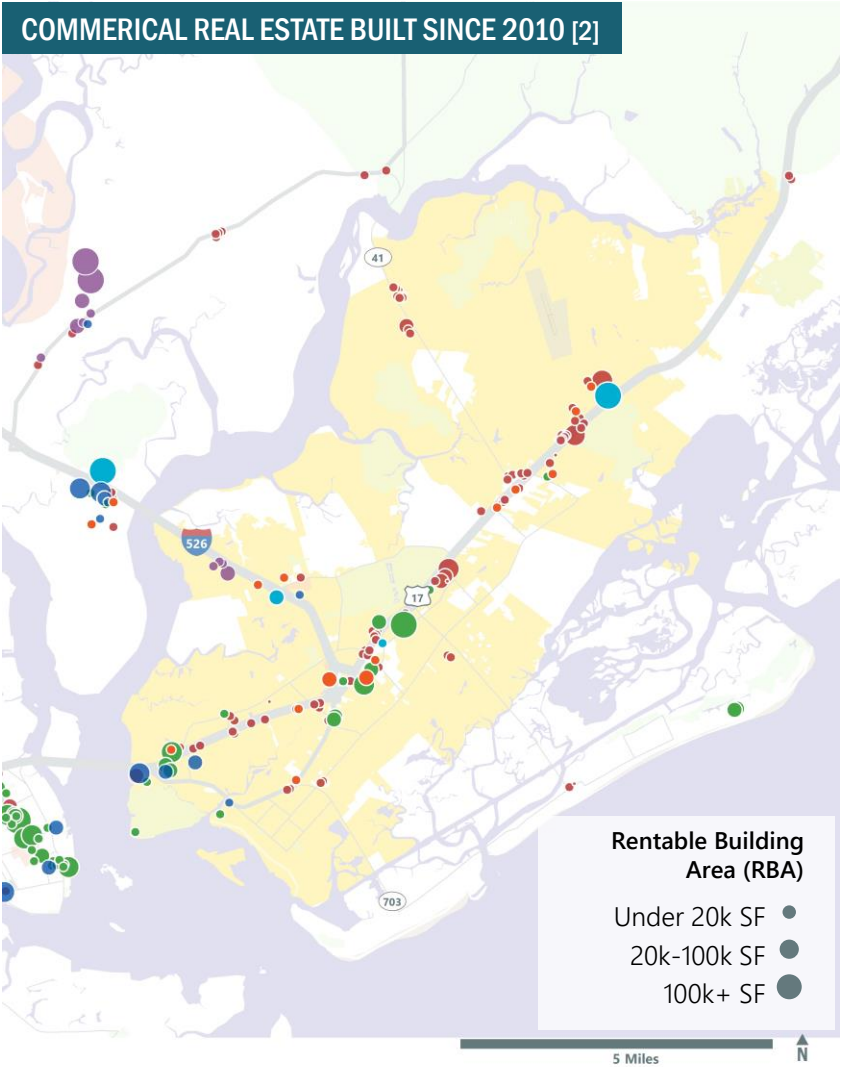
MOUNT PLEASANT REAL ESTATE OVERVIEW

Since 2010, there has been significant new development in all major real estate categories

New development in the Town has predominately been office, retail or healthcare space. There has been approximately 600,000 SF of new professional office space developed in the Town since 2010 and an additional 300,000 SF of medical office. The greatest share of recent development has been retail, adding over 1 million SF since 2010.



[1] Defined as either under construction or proposed as reported in CoStar as of 11/5/2021
[2] Map displays Class A office only
Source: CoStar, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors



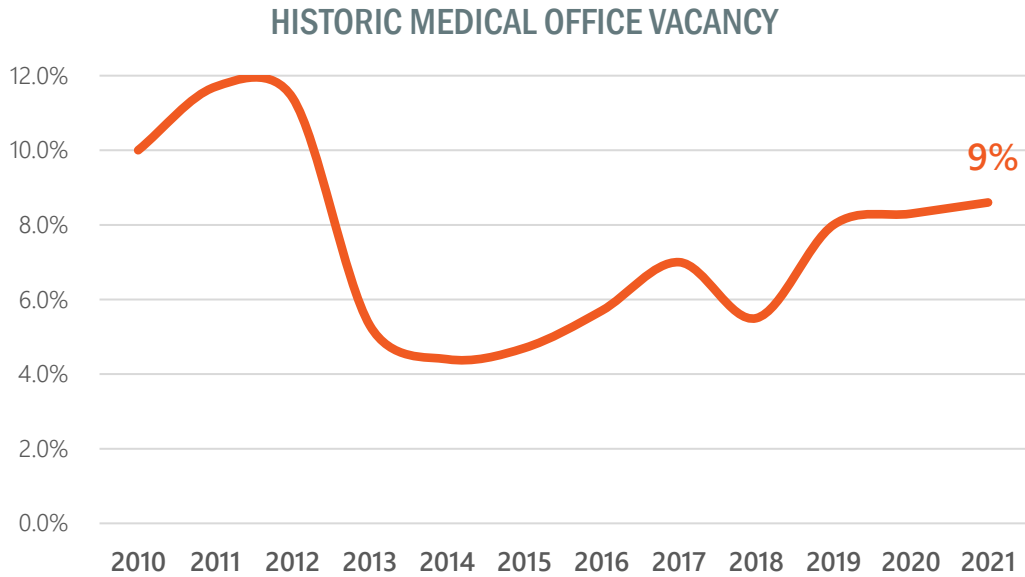
MOUNT PLEASANT OFFICE VACANCY

Office vacancy in Mount Pleasant remained stable in recent years near typical market averages

In 2021, about 7% of professional office space in Mount Pleasant was vacant, a percentage that has remained stable since 2019. While vacancies have risen slightly since hitting a low of 3% in 2017, the vacancy rate is still considered near a typical market average.

Medical office vacancies are slightly higher at 9% as of 2021 and have risen slightly since 2018.

The vacancy rate of Class A office properties built since 2010 is 7%, indicating that new construction is well-leased.



ECONOMIC CLUSTERS

BENEFITS OF A CLUSTER STRATEGY

A cluster-based approach builds on industries and assets that are already present in the Town and region

WHY A CLUSTER ^[1] STRATEGY IS IMPORTANT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENEFITS OF CRDA CLUSTERS
Focuses economic development efforts and resources	Clearly identified industries with good wages
Enduring competitive advantage stems from local industry knowledge, shared jobs and skills, technologies and other agglomeration effects	Creates more job opportunities for residents seeking to grow their skills or move between jobs
Spurs innovation	Selling point for companies in terms of a well-trained workforce in related industries
Builds on existing supply chains institutional assets and infrastructure	Simple screening criteria if incentives are being considered

[1] Clusters are groups of related industries.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CLUSTER INITIATIVES

Future strategies can leverage past and current local and regional initiatives

The previous Mount Pleasant economic development strategy recommended aligning with five regional competency targets and four additional job categories compatible with the Town’s economic environment.

The Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) leads the region in economic pursuits. The current CRDA Regional Competitiveness Strategy prioritizes five clusters.

The Town can leverage the work of current CRDA initiatives to attract and retain jobs in priority clusters that align with the Town’s economic composition.

2013-2017 MOUNT PLEASANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

REGIONAL COMPETENCY TARGETS:

- Advanced Materials
- Drivetrain & Power Systems
- Software
- Creative Design
- Logistics

LOCAL ADVANTAGE:

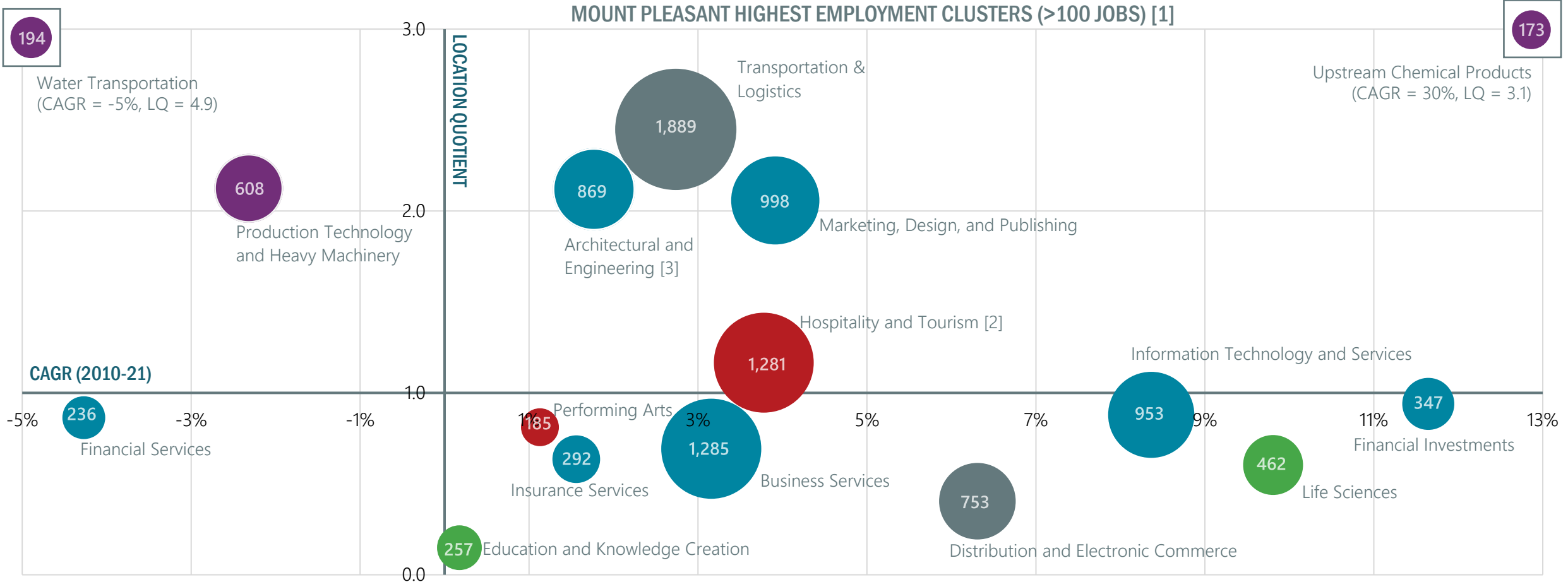
- Healthcare
- Engineering
- Research & Development
- Tourism

CRDA PRIORITY CLUSTERS (TO BE UPDATED IN 2022)

- Advanced Logistics
- Aerospace
- Automotive
- Information Technology & Services
- Life Sciences

MOUNT PLEASANT ECONOMIC COMPOSITION

Number of jobs, recent growth, and local specialization are indicative of priority clusters



[1] For Mount Pleasant ZIP codes 29464, 29465, and 29466
[2] Hospitality and Tourism CAGR calculated to 2019 instead of 2021 to reflect pre-Covid job growth trend
[3] Arch. and Engineering CAGR calculated from 2012 instead of 2010 to exclude period of decline from 2010-2012
Source: Emsi, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors

Number of Jobs (2021)

Manufacturing

Tourism & Entertainment

Knowledge & Research

Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities

Professional, Business & Consumer Services

CLUSTER RANKINGS

The majority of the Town's largest clusters are in Professional, Business & Consumer Services

Rank by Size	Cluster	Size of Cluster		Competitiveness			Economic Benefits	
		Jobs	GRP	Location Quotient	2010-21 Growth	% of Growth Due to Competitive Effect	Average Annual Wages	Economic Multiplier
1	Transportation and Logistics	1,889	\$149,467,704	2.45	30%	28%	\$56,513	1.32
2	Business Services	1,285	\$264,550,597	0.69	35%	-633%	\$75,310	1.45
3	Hospitality and Tourism	1,281	\$103,543,669	1.17	42% [1]	-1207%	\$28,954	1.28
4	Marketing, Design, and Publishing	998	\$192,224,825	2.06	43%	59%	\$59,829	1.50
5	Information Technology and Services	953	\$201,054,036	0.88	92%	-7%	\$102,056	1.40
6	Architectural and Engineering	869	\$111,952,191	2.12	19% [2]	-149%	\$83,580	1.43
7	Distribution and Electronic Commerce	753	\$152,290,020	0.40	69%	67%	\$64,899	1.56
8	Production Technology and Heavy Machinery	608	\$95,271,130	2.12	-26%	-115%	Not available	1.42
9	Life Sciences	462	\$98,493,929	0.60	108%	87%	\$117,173	1.55
10	Financial Investments	347	\$143,378,541	0.94	128%	95%	\$287,882	1.59
11	Insurance Services	292	\$69,536,218	0.64	17%	137%	\$94,554	2.21
12	Education and Knowledge Creation	257	\$18,664,906	0.15	2%	-499%	\$57,044	1.18
13	Financial Services	236	\$83,529,386	0.86	-47%	-66%	\$115,257	1.91
14	Water Transportation	194	\$27,547,575	4.86	-52%	-123%	Not available	1.45
15	Performing Arts	185	\$31,075,032	0.81	12%	-706%	\$34,229	1.39
16	Upstream Chemical Products	173	\$134,313,741	3.11	329%	101%	Not available	3.49

[1] Hospitality and Tourism CAGR calculated to 2019 instead of 2021 to reflect pre-Covid job growth trend

[2] Arch. & Engineering CAGR calculated from 2012 instead of 2010 to exclude period of decline from 2010-2012

Source: BLS, Emsi, SB Friedman

SB Friedman Development Advisors

Manufacturing

Knowledge & Research

Professional, Business & Consumer Services

Tourism & Entertainment

Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities

CLUSTER RANKINGS

Target clusters are selected due to local and regional competitiveness, growth, and economic benefits

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Source: BLS, Emsi, SB Friedman

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- Manufacturing
- Knowledge & Research
- Professional, Business & Consumer Services
- Tourism & Entertainment
- Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities

RECOMMENDED CLUSTERS

Five Target Clusters for the Town align with regional priorities or local strengths

CRDA PRIORITY CLUSTERS



INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY



LIFE SCIENCES

LOCAL COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



ARCHITECTURAL
& ENGINEERING



MARKETING,
DESIGN &
PUBLISHING

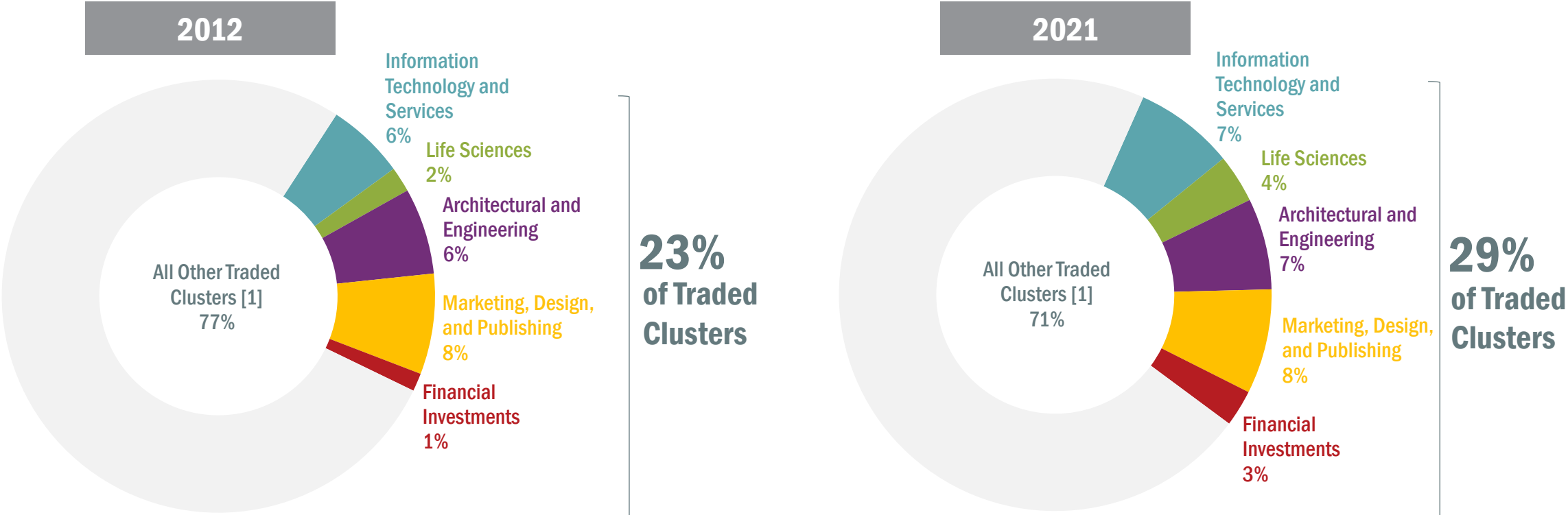


FINANCIAL
INVESTMENTS

RECOMMENDED CLUSTERS

The five Target Clusters account for a growing share of the Town employment base

CLUSTER JOBS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL TOWN TRADED CLUSTER JOBS^[1]



2012-2021 % CHANGE:
TARGET CLUSTERS: +32%
ALL TRADED CLUSTERS: +15%

[1] Excludes jobs in local clusters and Government
Source: Emsi, SB Friedman
SB Friedman Development Advisors

RECOMMENDED TARGET CLUSTERS

NAICS Codes

INFO. TECH. & SERVICES		LIFE SCIENCES		ARCHITECTURAL & ENGINEERING		MARKETING, DESIGN & PUBLISHING		FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS	
511210	Software Publishers	325412	Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing	541310	Architectural Services	511130	Book Publishers	522310	Mortgage and Nonmortgage Loan Brokers
518210	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	334510	Electromedical and Electrotherapeutic Apparatus Manufacturing	541320	Landscape Architectural Services	511140	Directory and Mailing List Publishers	523120	Securities Brokerage
541511	Custom Computer Programming Services	334516	Analytical Laboratory Instrument Manufacturing	541330	Engineering Services	511199	All Other Publishers	523140	Commodity Contracts Brokerage
541512	Computer Systems Design Services	339112	Surgical and Medical Instrument Manufacturing	541340	Drafting Services	541410	Interior Design Services	523210	Securities and Commodity Exchanges
541513	Computer Facilities Management Services	339114	Dental Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing			541420	Industrial Design Services	523910	Miscellaneous Intermediation
		339115	Ophthalmic Goods Manufacturing			541430	Graphic Design Services	523920	Portfolio Management
		423450	Medical, Dental, and Hospital Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers			541490	Other Specialized Design Services	523930	Investment Advice
		423460	Ophthalmic Goods Merchant Wholesalers			541613	Marketing Consulting Services	523999	Miscellaneous Financial Investment Activities
		541380	Testing Laboratories			541810	Advertising Agencies	525910	Open-End Investment Funds
		541713	Research and Development in Nanotechnology			541820	Public Relations Agencies	525990	Other Financial Vehicles
		541715	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)			541830	Media Buying Agencies		
		621511	Medical Laboratories			541850	Outdoor Advertising		
		621512	Diagnostic Imaging Centers			541860	Direct Mail Advertising		
						541870	Advertising Material Distribution Services		
						541890	Other Services Related to Advertising		
						541910	Marketing Research and Public Opinion Polling		

[1] Excludes NAICS codes with no jobs in Mount Pleasant in 2021

Source: Emsi, SB Friedman

SB Friedman Development Advisors

CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES & PROGRAMS

The Town can leverage its suite of existing incentives and programs to advance economic priorities

Existing economic development programs and incentives available through the Town include:

- Economic Development Incentive Grant Program
- Town Proud Certified Local Business Program
- Local Vendor Partnership Program
- Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony
- Mount Pleasant Business Appreciation Week
 - Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce Business and Community Expo

The majority of programs and incentives are managed on a case-by-case basis. The strategy moving forward should emphasize aligning and enhancing the existing programs to maximize the impact on attracting businesses within the Target Clusters.

CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Current use of economic development incentives is project-specific

The Town’s current Economic Development Incentive Grant Program is project specific and awarded on a case-by-case basis for projects that meet four criteria:

1. Create and/or retain substantial number of quality jobs
2. Add to the tax base
3. Minimally dependent (<30% of sales or income) on the Charleston region economy
4. Qualify as a compatible ED as defined by Town ED Strategy

The Town has awarded approximately \$400,000 of economic incentives to a dozen companies

Past awardees include Hubner Manufacturing, Levelwing (marketing agency), Westbrook Brewery, and Mediterranean Shipping

Incentive	Current Structure
Impact Fee	Full or partial waiver (one-time)
Building Permit Fee	Full or partial waiver (one-time)
Plan Review Fee	Full or partial waiver (one-time)
Business License Tax	5-year abatement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1-2: up to 100%• Year 3: up to 75%• Year 4: up to 50%• Year 5: up to 25%

MOUNT PLEASANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

Key stakeholders in the Town’s economic development strategy

The Town economic development ecosystem spans far beyond the influence of local staff. County, regional and state entities specializing in economic development, business development and infrastructure development are all critical players. The Town economic development strategy should not replicate the functions of other entities, rather fill in gaps not currently filled by partners.



KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONES

The four primary economic development zones in the Town have different strengths and challenges

 <p>Vacant commercial land (class code 952) 0.5 mile</p>	 <p>PATRIOTS POINT</p>	 <p>WANDO WELCH/LONG POINT RD</p>	 <p>JOHNNIE DODDS BLVD</p>	 <p>CAROLINA PARK</p>
VACANT LAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52 acres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 acres [1] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 acres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79 acres
STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trophy location with connectivity to Historic Charleston Peninsula and the region • Strong concentration of existing employers (e.g., Motley Rice, Merrill) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Wando Welch Terminal • Existing employers (e.g., Hubner Manufacturing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrally located within Mount Pleasant • Currently zoned for commercial development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The largest remaining development zone in Mount Pleasant
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future build-out of development sites is expensive and will take several years • Regional competition from North Charleston and Daniel Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development opportunities are very close to existing residential neighborhoods • Negative impact of freight traffic on neighborhoods and existing infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few vacant parcels, difficult to see development at scale • Limited near-term redevelopment potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far from regional center of gravity and connectivity • Development opportunities are close to new residential neighborhoods • Speculative development interest is driving up land prices

TOWN KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONES



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION

The Town economic development strategy is guided by a vision statement that articulates key priorities within the Town. All strategies are designed to advance the Town vision which articulates key themes such as maintaining quality of life and fiscal integrity, in addition to economic vitality.

THE VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNT PLEASANT:

The Town works to create a sustainable local economy that encourages economic vitality, promotes fiscal integrity, and increases the local standard of living while preserving and enhancing the quality of life in Mount Pleasant.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- 1 ESTABLISH MOUNT PLEASANT'S REPUTATION AS A REGIONALLY COMPETITIVE AND WELCOMING DESTINATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- 2 ATTRACT AND RETAIN BUSINESSES WITH HIGH-WAGE JOBS IN TARGET CLUSTERS
- 3 ENSURE CLARITY AND PREDICTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS
- 4 REMOVE BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT WITHIN TARGET CLUSTERS
- 5 EXPAND USE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES
- 6 PRIORITIZE QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT LOCAL WORKFORCE AND RESIDENTS

STRATEGY EVALUATION

Each strategy is evaluated using the following four criteria to assess compatibility, timing, and funding



VISION COMPONENT

- What component(s) of the Town’s economic development vision does the strategy fulfill?



Economic vitality



Fiscal integrity



Quality of life



KEY IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

- Who are the key implementation partners for the strategy?
- What degree of coordination is required?



Town staff



Town Council



Town business
community



Regional & state
entities



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

- What is the order of magnitude of the financial commitment required to implement the strategy?



Low financial
commitment



Mid-level financial
commitment



Substantial financial
commitment



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON

- Can the strategy be implemented in the near-term (within 1 year), mid-term (3-5 years) or long-term (5-10 years)?
- Does the strategy have a recurring, ongoing component or does it require a one-time commitment?



Near-term
(within 1 year)



Mid-term
(2-5 years)



Long-term
(5-10 years)



Recurring

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 1

1

ESTABLISH MOUNT PLEASANT'S REPUTATION AS A REGIONALLY COMPETITIVE AND WELCOMING DESTINATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIES

- 1.1 Conduct a branding exercise to improve Town's identity as a business-friendly community
- 1.2 Establish annual Council retreats specific to economic development to reaffirm or refine the Town vision for growth
- 1.3 Uphold a patient, long-term implementation strategy and consistency in zoning and entitlements to ensure clarity and predictability in growth and development

1.1 Conduct a branding exercise to improve Town's identity as a business-friendly community

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Stakeholders and prior planning documents both stress that Mount Pleasant lacks a consistent shared identity when it comes to the Town's relationship with attracting and retaining businesses and committing to economic development. A branding exercise is a near-term, low-cost initiative that can put forth a strong Town image while operationalizing its economic development vision.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town presently lacks a brand that speaks to the Town's economic goals. A lack of brand and identity reduces the Town's ability to clearly convey that the Town is open for business, especially when compared to the strong economic development identifies of other municipalities in the region and throughout the state of South Carolina.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Engage marketing firm to lead town branding exercise.
- Solicit input from key stakeholders, including the current business community, to ensure new brand addresses longstanding reputation challenges.

CASE STUDY: CITY OF GREENVILLE, SC

- In September 2021, The City of Greenville launched the ["From Here Greenville"](#) marketing initiative in hopes to encourage entrepreneurs to start, grow and keep their business in Greenville.
- The campaign offers resources to businesses highlighting available tools, accelerator programs, coaching opportunities, networking events, business resources, economic development organizations and coworking spaces.

**FROM
HERE**
you can change
THE WORLD

1.2 Establish annual Council retreats specific to economic development to reaffirm or refine the Town vision for growth

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Continuing annual Council retreats is a near-term initiative that provides an ongoing opportunity to align Council member viewpoints on the future of economic development within the Town, as well share data on initiatives from the prior year.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town sporadically conducts Council retreats, including a recent retreat in January 2022. Establishing the retreats on a regular annual basis allows for better coordination among Town Staff and Town Council.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Identify agenda items for a Town Council retreat among staff.
- Conduct annual retreat with Council members and necessary staff.

1.3 Uphold a patient, long-term implementation strategy and consistency in zoning and entitlements to ensure clarity and predictability in growth and development

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Town should adhere to existing plans, such as the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan and 2021 Economic Development Strategy to the extent possible. Municipal entitlement decisions and economic development initiatives should be informed by previously agreed upon strategies. Adhering to prior strategy documents will help provide clarity to the development community.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Stakeholders have indicated that past inconsistencies in the entitlement timeline complicate the predevelopment process and add uncertainty. The Town can take advantage of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, by using the plan as a blueprint for the long-term development vision.

ACTION ITEMS

- Review Existing zoning code and identify inconsistencies with the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan.
- Adopt new zoning code that ensures priority uses within target geographies are achievable.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 2

2

ATTRACT AND RETAIN BUSINESSES WITH HIGH-WAGE JOBS IN TARGET CLUSTERS

STRATEGIES

- 2.1 Dedicate Town resources to recruit and attract businesses in Architectural & Engineering; Marketing, Design & Publishing; and Financial Investments clusters
- 2.2 Align with regional strategies to attract and grow businesses in Information Technology and Life Sciences clusters
- 2.3 Increase connectivity with regional business community by dedicating Town staff to collaborate with Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and Charleston Regional Development Alliance on a recurring basis
- 2.4 Support development of a collaborative physical space as a hub for the local resident workforce

2.1 Dedicate Town resources to recruit and attract businesses in Architectural & Engineering; Marketing, Design & Publishing; and Financial Investments clusters

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Town should prioritize a percentage of Town economic development funds for the promotion and facilitation of growth in local competitive advantage clusters. The clusters have been identified as the fastest growing economic segments which also align with broader Town objectives.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Historically the Town recruitment efforts did not appear to have been focused on target clusters. Aligning resources to attract employers in the three local competitive advantage clusters is likely to generate the highest potential return on investment.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Prioritize use of existing economic development funds (available through MPW) to conduct outreach to businesses interested in Mount Pleasant by attending conferences, conducting research on potential employers, and promoting the municipality.
- Work with South Carolina Chamber of Commerce to provide information, when needed, for interested companies.

CASE STUDY: ARK INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT (ST. PETERSBURG, FL)

- In October 2021, New York-based ARK Investment Management announced a relocation to downtown St. Petersburg, FL. ARK expressed that St. Petersburg's commitment to science and innovation attracted them to the city over other locations in Florida.
- As part of the relocation, ARK committed to the development of a new 45,000 SF ARK Innovation Center, to be owned by Pinellas County and developed in partnership with [the Tampa Bay Innovation Center](#). The City of St. Petersburg donated the land for the development.



2.2 Align with regional strategies to attract and grow businesses in Information Technology and Life Sciences clusters

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Town currently has quarterly meetings with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) and meets with Charleston County sporadically. The Town should enhance collaboration with both the CRDA and the County by adopting policies which align with regional strategies to attract information technology and life sciences firms.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

While the Town maintains some level of coordination with regional economic development entities, the Town has not historically prioritized dedicating resources to attract employers within the target high-impact clusters that best align with the workforce composition, infrastructure and business community of Mount Pleasant.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Examine regional approaches to attracting growth and align Town initiatives.
- Review CRDA strategic plan and discuss local opportunities with the CRDA where the Town may augment regional efforts.

2.3 Increase connectivity with regional business community by dedicating Town staff to collaborate with Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and Charleston Regional Development Alliance on a recurring basis

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The economic development ecosystem spans far beyond the reach within the Town. To leverage the resources available through local and regional partners, the Town should regularly meet with staff at key partner organizations including the Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and Charleston Regional Development Alliance.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Dedicate specific staff members to attend respective regional Charleston Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Charleston Regional Development Alliance meetings.
- Schedule regular meetings with County Economic Development staff.

2.4 Support development of a collaborative physical space as a hub for the local resident workforce

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Collaborative physical spaces can be a valuable tool to connect industry leaders in a market and increase awareness of the local business ecosystem. These buildings, typically offices with event or coworking space, provide a central location for collaboration and innovation between workers across industries in the area. Providing opportunities for the workforce to gather will result in organic discussions which can eventually evolve into business opportunities.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town had a prior effort to develop an incubator office space, the Biz Inc. initiative. However, the initiative evolved into an entity that is no longer located within Mount Pleasant. Considering the recent rise in work-from-home and in-migration of residents from other parts of the country, there is a renewed opportunity to develop a physical space in Mount Pleasant which provides residents the opportunity to meaningfully, professionally engage with one another close to home.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Survey local residents to understand what needs a collaborative physical space should accommodate.
- Engage with federal and state partners to identify funding opportunities.
- Identify feasible sites for potential locations.

CASE STUDY: CHARLESTON TECH CENTER

- The 92,000 SF [Charleston Tech Center](#) was built to support the city's blossoming tech industry. The building includes a combination of office suites, amenity space, conference facilities and outdoor gathering spaces.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 3

3

ENSURE CLARITY AND PREDICTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

STRATEGIES

- 3.1 Update Town zoning code to reflect the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan and Town Economic Development Strategic Plan
- 3.2 Adhere to the preferred development outcome for each of the Town’s Key Economic Development Zones based on each area’s suitable uses and potential for job generation
- 3.3 Maintain and publish Town database of active development sites (listed for sale, lease or under construction) in commercial zones
- 3.4 Strategically annex properties for the development of commercial uses and to diversify the tax base

3.1 Update Town zoning code to reflect the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan and Town Economic Development Strategic Plan

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Both the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan and Town Economic Development Strategy outline development priorities and target geographies. The Town zoning code should be updated to reflect the new land use priorities identified in both planning documents. Updates to the zoning code will unlock development opportunities in the defined Key Economic Zones which can then accommodate users within the Target Clusters.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The completion of the 2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan represents an opportunity to update the Town zoning code to align the Town's land use with long-term community and development goals. The existing zoning code evolved over time and is no longer reflective of Town priorities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Amend Town zoning codes to reflect recent planning initiatives (2019-2029 Comprehensive Plan and Town Economic Development Strategic Plan).

3.2 Adhere to the preferred development outcome for each of the Town's Key Economic Development Zones based on each area's suitable uses and potential for job generation

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Economic Development Zones are an opportunity for the Town to attract the Target Clusters and grow its economic base. As the Target Clusters are primarily composed of high wage business service sectors, they are likely to require office space with nearby amenities including restaurants, cafes, and other retail in a walkable environment. The Town should establish and adhere to a preferred vision for these zones.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Interviewees mentioned the Town has historically changed zoning ordinances on a semi-regular basis, particularly in mixed-use and higher-density areas. Creating a clear market-based vision for transitioning or emerging Key Economic Development Zones, such as Johnnie Dodds Blvd. and Carolina Park, will signal the community goals for developers to execute.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Analyze the real estate market and create community driven master plans for Economic Development Zones that currently lack a clear vision.
- Uphold zoning within Key Economic Development Zones to increase likelihood of development of properties attractive to users in the Target Clusters.

3.3 Maintain and publish Town database of active development sites (listed for sale, lease or under construction) in commercial zones

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Town should continue to maintain an up-to-date list of active development sites in commercial zones. This information should be shared on a public webpage to expedite the site selection process by providing the most accurate real time data of available properties to prospective developers and buyers. The webpage would also be a valuable tool for regional economic development partners who require up-to-date information on the available land inventory while talking to prospective companies.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town does not currently maintain a publicly available inventory of active development sites in commercial zones. Developing a comprehensive inventory of available development sites streamlines the site selection process.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Publish an online record of active development sites in the Town.
- Share the website with economic development partners and interested members of the development community.

CASE STUDY: VILLAGE OF WINNETKA, IL DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY

The Village of Winnetka, IL maintains a developable land [inventory](#). The inventory is accessible by public entities along with members of the development community. In a municipality with very limited land available, the webpage quickly points prospective developers to the available land inventory.



3.4 Strategically annex properties for the development of commercial uses and to diversify the tax base

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Growth within the Town has predominately required annexation of unincorporated land over the past several decades due to the limited remaining land availability. Outside of the Key Economic Development Zones, there are additional opportunities for growth in unincorporated areas adjacent to the Town today. There are large segments of unincorporated land centrally located adjacent to existing incorporated property. Other unincorporated zones, including those along Highway 41 near the Wando River, are relatively larger sites that could be well-suited for development serving the Target Clusters.

The Town should proactively work with property owners to annex land into the Town as appropriate opportunities arise that align with the Town Economic Development Strategy. Annexed properties should have a positive fiscal impact and align with Town development priorities.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Historically, the majority of land annexation has focused on accommodating additional residential growth. Moving forward, the Town should also prioritize annexing land well suited for commercial or mixed-use developments that could accommodate users in Target Clusters.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Identify unincorporated properties adjacent to the Town that would be well-suited for development that could accommodate users within Target Clusters.
- Work with property owners as annexation opportunities arise to remove barriers to incorporation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 4

4

REMOVE BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT WITHIN TARGET CLUSTERS

STRATEGIES

- 4.1 Reduce use of variances
- 4.2 Define and uphold standard entitlements process to eliminate entitlement uncertainty
- 4.3 Expedite permitting for new developments suitable for businesses in target clusters

4.1 Reduce use of variances

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Variances are individual requests to deviate from current zoning practices. After the Town updates the zoning code to reflect recent planning initiatives, zoning variances should be kept to a minimum to convey consistency to the development community. Variances should only be granted in extenuating circumstances (e.g., if an opportunity arises consistent with the Town development priorities but inconsistent with the zoning code).

ACTION ITEMS:

- Establish a clear set of criteria for granting a variance, when required.
- Evaluate variance requests on a case-by-case basis, only allowing those which unlock development opportunities consistent with the Town economic development vision.

4.2 Define and uphold standard entitlements process to eliminate entitlement uncertainty

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Communities often seek to remove developer uncertainty by defining and upholding a standard entitlements process. Developers receive additional clarity when municipalities provide a direct point of contact during the review process, communicate a clear set of timelines and deadlines, and adhere to existing zoning.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Having a difficult entitlement process discourages proactivity within the development community prompting them to look elsewhere to develop.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Conduct discussions with stakeholders and City staff to identify opportunities to improve the entitlement process.
- Create new municipal policies and procedures that clearly articulate the entitlements process and timeline to third parties.

4.3 Expedite permitting for new developments suitable for businesses in target clusters

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Waiting on permits to get approved slows down the development process and adds cost. Town staff should aim to prioritize permits for new developments in identified target clusters by advancing the permits through the entitlements process faster than the baseline timeline. The expedition of these permits has the potential to encourage development activity within the Town by reducing the costs and time commitment for developers.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Establish criteria for designation projects as priority developments which should be fast-tracked.
- Identify a new policy for expedited permits that defines the maximum number of days to reach a permit decision for priority developments.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 5

5 EXPAND USE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

STRATEGIES

- 5.1 Focus use of economic development incentives on employers in target clusters that align with suitable uses in Key Economic Development Zones
- 5.2 Consider a five-year moratorium on business impact fee increases
- 5.3 Advertise full suite of local, county and state incentives on Town's economic development website

5.1 Focus use of economic development incentives on employers in target clusters that align with suitable uses in Key Economic Development Zones

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Given the limited incentives available at the municipal level, economic development incentives should be prioritized for developments well suited for employers within target clusters in Key Economic Development Zones. Available incentives may include reduced impact fees, tax increment financing or streamlined approvals. Prioritizing incentives for specific users clarifies who is eligible to third-parties considering development opportunities. The incentives would also make the Town increasingly competitive with employment centers elsewhere within the region seeking to attract the same development and willing to provide incentives.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town currently offers incentives on a discretionary basis without a clearly defined threshold for industry type, employer size and/or expected economic benefits. The existing Town scoring framework also does not account for priority geographies to increase the likelihood of development occurring in centralized locations.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Define criteria to determine qualifications needed to be considered for incentives, which could include industry type, location, employer size threshold and expected economic benefits.
- Prioritize incentives by scoring the potential impact developers can bring to the Town based on defined criteria.

5.2 Consider a five-year moratorium on business impact fee increases

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Impact fees are a valuable tool to ensure that new infrastructure users pay a proportionate fee to offset the additional cost for service provision their development triggers. However, impact fees also impact financial feasibility for developers seeking to underwrite developments within the Town. Impact fees can exceed 5% to the total development costs for a project within the Town, which reduces competitiveness relative to neighboring communities without comparable fee structures.

Holding impact fees constant for a defined period of time (e.g., 5 years) allows the Town to continue to receive impact fees while still adding developer certainty as they work to raise the required capital for projects.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

Between July 2017 and July 2018, the Town increased impact fees three times. While the increases were in response to additional infrastructure needs, the increases added uncertainty to developer project costs.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Conduct an impact fee study to assess the fiscal impacts of a five-year moratorium on impact fee increases.
- Define an appropriate base impact fee structure for the five-year moratorium period.

5.3 Advertise full suite of local, county and state incentives on Town's economic development website

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

An easily accessible list of all local, county and state incentives is convenient for developers and businesses interested in relocating to the region. Marketing incentives available on the Town economic development webpage communicates the full suite of tools available to prospective developers and businesses, not only those available through the Town. In addition to providing the information, the additional content conveys to third parties that the Town is working in lock-step with other partners in the economic development ecosystem.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town currently only advertises local incentives on the Town economic development website. Interested employers who may not already be aware of other incentives must invest time into researching other programs offered through Charleston County and the state of South Carolina.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Dedicate a staff member to work with Charleston County and state partners to prepare webpage content.
- Expand the current webpage to include detail on county and state incentives.

CASE STUDY: NORTH CHARLESTON, SC

The City of North Charleston, SC advertises the full suite of local, county, and state incentives on its economic development [website](#), offering an easy "one-stop shop" for interested employers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – OBJECTIVE 6

6

PRIORITIZE QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT LOCAL WORKFORCE AND RESIDENTS

STRATEGIES

- 6.1 Increase Town supply of attainable housing to reduce inflow of essential employees from other municipalities
- 6.2 Implement the Mount Pleasant Way to connect residents to commercial centers and amenitize Economic Development Zones
- 6.3 Explore partnerships with regional transportation providers to improve multimodal access to and within Mount Pleasant

6.1 Increase Town supply of attainable housing to reduce inflow of essential employees from other municipalities

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

There is currently a lack of attainable housing for the workforce, causing many workers to commute from other municipalities into the Town, increasing traffic congestion. Increasing the attainable housing supply will mitigate these issues by increasing the feasibility for essential employees to both work and live in Mount Pleasant.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

The Town has made some strides to increase the supply of attainable housing, for example allowing for the continued development of workforce housing despite the current multifamily residential moratorium. However, there have been very few workforce housing developments built over the past five years due to the cost of land, cost of construction, and community opposition.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Determine areas of the Town with the most need for attainable housing.
- Expedite permitting to developers looking to build attainable housing.
- Provide land or other public assistance, where appropriate, to increase the financial feasibility of developing attainable housing in priority areas.

6.2 Implement the Mount Pleasant Way to connect residents to commercial centers and amenitize Economic Development Zones

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The implementation of the Mount Pleasant Way is a great opportunity to connect the many bike paths throughout the Town, providing residents and tourists multimodal access to commercial centers, Town assets and key Economic Development Zones. Major infrastructure improvements frequently have catalytic impacts on the surrounding real estate market, as developers can market the amenity to prospective users. Additional use of the Mount Pleasant Way may also reduce traffic congestion, as some residents will elect to commute via bike.

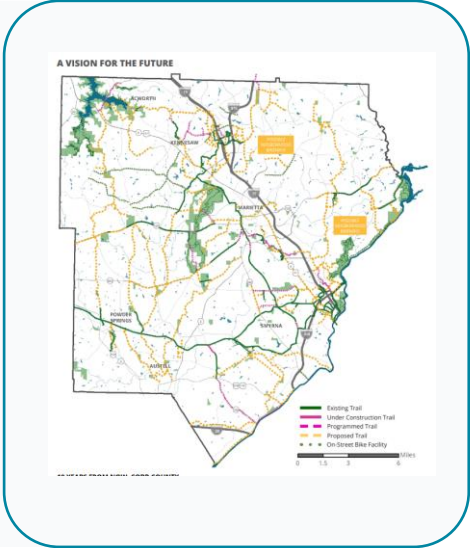
ACTION ITEMS:

- Prioritize roadway and sidewalk improvements that enhance the public right-of-way and increase connections to and within the Key Economic Development Zones.
- Identify potential local, state and federal funds that can be leveraged to implement priority projects.

CASE STUDY: COBB COUNTY GREENWAYS & TRAILS MASTER PLAN (COBB COUNTY, GA)

[The Cobb County Greenways and Trails Master Plan](#) is a comprehensive trail system that will connect existing schools, parks and residential neighborhoods to local and regional office parks, retail centers and public amenities.

When the system is complete (by 2030), 57% of the County's population will live within one mile of a trail.



6.3 Explore partnerships with regional transportation providers to improve multimodal access to and within Mount Pleasant

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE:

VISION COMPONENTS:



KEY PARTNERS :



FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:



IMPLEMENTATION HORIZON:



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Traffic congestion within the Town has been a common challenge for residents. Working with regional transportation providers to improve access to public transit alternatives will help relieve congestion while making the Town more accessible.

HOW STRATEGY DIFFERS FROM CURRENT TOWN PRACTICES

While the Town currently has CARTA bus service, current service may not offer sufficient connectivity and/or frequency to connect users within the Town to other destinations within the region. The Town can consider advocating for an expansion of CARTA services and/or alternative forms of regional transportation.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Organize semi-annual meetings with regional transportation providers to discuss opportunities to improve transit connectivity within the Town.
- Participate in regional boards and stakeholder group meetings pertaining to transit infrastructure expansion.
- Survey residents on where they would like to see transportation routes expanded.



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