

STRATEGIC SPARTANBURG: COMMUNITY INDICATORS VI



Community Improvement Plan (2006-2010)

*A Special Report of
The Spartanburg County Foundation & United Way of the Piedmont*

SUMMARY OF GOALS & PRIORITIES

PEOPLE

Goal 1: Our children and youth will excel academically. (pages 4-5)

- Increase student academic performance
- Decrease high school dropout rates/Increase high school graduation and retention rates
- Expand GED programs and encourage postsecondary training

Goal 2: Our citizens will have access to the education and training needed to compete in a global business environment. (pages 6-7)

- Increase enrollment and degrees awarded at Spartanburg Technical College and University of South Carolina Upstate

Goal 3: Our elderly citizens will receive support to enable them to live as independently as possible in their homes and connected to their communities. (pages 8-9)

- Provide senior-friendly transportation
- Provide specialized healthcare to seniors
- Provide senior-focused research and education
- Provide senior-friendly housing
- Advocate for senior-friendly change
- Develop programs to connect seniors to the community

FAMILY

Goal 4: Our families will be stable and nurturing. (pages 10-11)

- Reduce domestic violence
- Reduce adolescent pregnancies
- Reduce child abuse and neglect
- Decrease low-income and poverty levels

Goal 5: Our families will be healthy. (pages 12-13)

- Increase the percentage of adults at a healthy weight
- Decrease the percentage of low birth weight babies
- Increase the percentage of people who seek help for substance abuse

COMMUNITY

Goal 6: Our citizens will have the economic means to steadily improve their standard of living. (pages 14-15)

- Encourage local employment
- Support the availability of local employment
- Address homelessness
- Encourage family planning
- Improve neighborhood conditions
- Increase affordable, safe housing

Goal 7: Our communities will be economically viable places for our citizens to live. (pages 16-17)

- Develop a business climate survey

Goal 8: Our communities will be safe. (pages 18-19)

- Reduce the number of juvenile cases and commitments
- Reduce the number of fatal collisions

Goal 9: Our citizens will have opportunities for civic engagement that promote well-being and a higher quality of life. (pages 20-21)

- Improve voter registration and turnout
- Promote charitable giving
- Increase attendance at cultural events

PLACE

Goal 10: Our citizens will manage our natural resources in a way that will support current and future generations. (pages 22-23)

- Improve land use
- Improve air quality
- Increase recycling
- Conserve energy
- Improve water quality

A Letter to the Community



The Spartanburg County Foundation and United Way of the Piedmont are pleased to present the **2006-2010 Community Improvement Plan (CIP)**. This is the working document that follows **Strategic Spartanburg: Community Indicators VI** presented to you in February 2005.

Strategic Spartanburg: Community Indicators VI identified and examined the many key human service and social issues affecting Spartanburg County. Public, private and non-profit organizations were brought together to establish 10 community-wide goals to benchmark Spartanburg's progress and collaborate and focus resources against community needs.

The **Community Improvement Plan** is the result of a community-wide effort to look at the issues, prioritize the most immediate concerns, and identify the opportunities we have to improve. Ten task forces worked on the 10 goals during 2005 to select the strategies that could improve the indicators by 2010 and beyond.

A. Stan Davis, CIP project manager, and Clemson University assisted us during this project and noted some interesting commonalities:

- Socio-economic conditions (poverty, unemployment, racial composition, job opportunities and income levels) are contributing factors to most indicators.
- A strong family structure underlies many of the influence factors related to human capital development (health, education, crime and safety, and aging).
- A comprehensive/holistic approach involving cooperation among diverse private and public agencies will be needed because so many of the indicators have multiple influence factors.
- Long-term planning and long-term commitments will be required by the community.



Taking this project to this level could not have been accomplished without the financial support of our many community partners. These public, private and non-profit groups enthusiastically supported this project and saw the potential to make a difference in the community. Our heartfelt thanks go to all of them.

The **Community Improvement Plan** contains many well thought out strategies. Some are already underway and others are in the planning stages. Four guiding principles will lead us toward significant improvement by 2010: collaboration, leveraged resources, shared best practices and accountability in program selection and support. These strategies will strengthen Spartanburg's health and vitality. It is our hope that organizations and citizens-at-large will step up and find ways to participate in this effort. One way is to consider contributing to the **Community Indicators Fund** at The Spartanburg County Foundation, or a field of interest fund, to ensure that effective programs can be supported now and in the future. We hope you will share our sense of opportunity and help make Spartanburg a better place to live.

Sincerely,



Katherine A. Dunleavy
President/CEO
United Way of the Piedmont



John H. Dargan
President/CEO
The Spartanburg County Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Where Do We Go From Here?

Through our individual and collective efforts, armed with knowledge, we can become advocates for community change. The four guiding principles of collaboration, accountability, leveraged resources and shared best practices undergird the successful implementation of the strategies identified in the CIP.

In this next phase of implementation, we encourage public, private and non-profit organizations and agencies to form collaborations that address these challenges. By joining together we can address gaps in the systems, build efficiencies, gain understanding and better address our collective responsibilities to the community we share. On the opposite page are suggested Community Strategic Actions (continued)

The Spartanburg County Foundation and United Way of the Piedmont published *Strategic Spartanburg: Community Indicators VI* in 2005. This sixth edition spotlighted issues through the lens of 4 focus areas, 10 community goals and 60 Community Indicators. The report also established the criteria for using the data and information to significantly impact the quality of life in Spartanburg County for both the short-term and long-term. Developing a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was the next step.

The Purpose

The purpose of the *2006-2010 Community Improvement Plan* is to use the data in *Strategic Spartanburg: Community Indicators VI* to influence the improvement of Spartanburg and the quality of life for its citizens. This document includes many strategies that, if addressed, could greatly impact our county. By sharing this information it is our hope to provide a common ground for public, private and non-profit leaders to work together to address these and other related issues.

A Citizen-Driven Process

A structured, yet flexible planning guide led Spartanburg's base of strong community leaders through a four-month process to produce a workable CIP. This approach required a three-tiered operating structure to successfully manage the scope of the project:

Community Indicators Oversight Cabinet

The Oversight Cabinet consisted of seven key stakeholders who represented the sponsors of the CIP: The Spartanburg County Foundation, United Way of the Piedmont and Spartanburg County Community and Economic Development. The role of the Cabinet was to manage a community planning process and to produce a CIP.

Community Indicators Impact Council

The Impact Council consisted of 30 community leaders who represented each sector of the Spartanburg community. These leaders were selected by the Cabinet to plan, review and oversee the progress of the community planning process. The role of the Council was to identify leadership teams for 10 Community Indicator Taskforces. They were also responsible for establishing Taskforce membership and advising the Cabinet on implementation.

Community Indicators Taskforces

The Taskforce leadership was responsible for managing the planning process. This included assembling a diverse group of citizens to develop strategies and action plans for each of the 10 community goals. Each of the 10 Taskforces was responsible for delivering a comprehensive executive summary report to the Impact Council; these represent the core of the CIP.

Additional data and information was gathered from research conducted by Clemson University's Applied Economics and Statistics. This information included results of a community survey from 85 organizations representing 254 programs in Spartanburg County. Clemson's research also included information on the root causes of the Community Indicators along with known best practices currently addressing them.

Where do we go from here (continued)

that might launch our collective efforts for a better Spartanburg beginning in 2006:

- Continue to use the citizen driven process structure to communicate and implement the Community Improvement Plan.
- Continue to work with existing organizations to develop a comprehensive 20-year plan for Spartanburg County and link the CIP to that plan.
- Leverage the diversity of the Spartanburg community in decision making that impacts the quality of life in Spartanburg County.
- Identify a single source to gather, process and analyze data for the *Community Indicators Report* in order to simplify this process going forward.
- Develop a mechanism to balance the resources required to implement long-term, proactive strategies and short-term quick fixes.
- Conduct regularly scheduled leadership meetings to coordinate agendas around community improvement so that individual competing interests do not impede overall progress.
- Encourage all organizations and not-for-profits to participate in the ownership and implementation of the CIP strategies developed by the Taskforces.

The complete works of Strategic Spartanburg including *Community Indicators VI* and the *Community Improvement Plan* will be available at www.StrategicSpartanburg.org and maintained electronically on a web-based Communications Manager and document repository hosted by IBM/ Neighborhood America. Spartanburg County Community and Economic Development Department has committed to fund and support this critical aspect of Strategic Spartanburg.

The Taskforces were charged with sorting through all of the available information in order to develop priorities and opportunities for strategic action that would produce measurable impact for each goal within 5 years and significant impact within 10 years. Each Taskforce varied in size with the largest consisting of 26 members. Each group followed a structured planning process to conduct their work. Flexibility was designed into the process to allow natural innovation to emerge during the strategy development process. Each Taskforce summarized their work in an executive summary report addressing the following criteria:

- Indicator priorities and measurable targets for 2010 and 2020
- Recommended strategies to achieve progress
- Recommended “best practices”
- Possible collaborations to facilitate progress

Some Taskforces used a prioritization process to identify which Community Indicators to focus on first, while others used the same process to identify which strategies should be implemented first. Four of the Taskforces used public forums to gather community input prior to developing their final strategies, while others used key community experts to get the information they needed. This diversity of approaches allowed each Taskforce to customize their activities to fit the needs of the individual groups. **More than 300 Spartanburg citizens** contributed to the creation of the following plan that includes goals, an overview of the issues, priorities for addressing the issues and opportunities to make significant improvement. The complete, unabridged plan can be found at www.StrategicSpartanburg.org.

PEOPLE... academic success

Academic Success Goal

Our children and youth will
excel academically.

Overview

For our children and youth to excel academically, initiatives must start in pre-school and continue through high school, but must also be comprehensive and include educational programs for parents and child-care providers. Making academic success a priority means building a team of supporters including families, schools and colleges, businesses, libraries, non-profit organizations, the faith community and philanthropic organizations. The following are three priorities in this area:

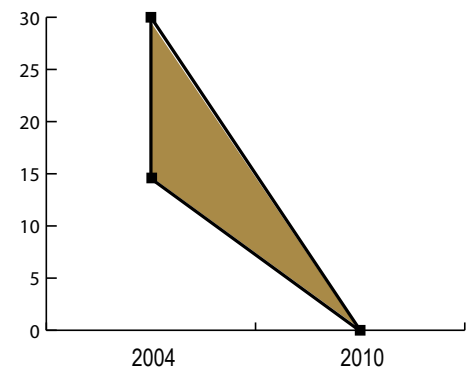
Priority: Increase the performance of students on achievement exams and standardized tests.

Spartanburg County plans to build an environment of academic success by increasing the performance of students on achievement exams and standardized tests. Results from the 2004-05 academic year show that between 15 and 30 percent of students (percents vary by subject and grade, see web site) are not meeting national standards on the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT). Other standardized tests on which Spartanburg County students can improve include the SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement Tests. By 2010, the goal is for 100 percent of students to meet or exceed national averages or standards on these tests. By 2010, all high school seniors should also pass their exit exam.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Establish a pilot project that addresses “very early literacy” in low-income neighborhoods that will help first-time caregivers understand the value of literacy in a child’s future academic success.
- Implement actions to help children enter school successfully such as offering support for families of preschoolers and private daycare and preschool programs.
- Focus on and reward schools and districts that increase student achievement.
- Encourage reduced class sizes in elementary schools.
- Encourage fathers to take a more active role in the education of their children.
- Provide access for at-risk children and their families to educational programs.
- Create a “college-going” culture for the community.

TARGET: Reduce the percent of students not meeting national standards on PACT to zero by 2010.



www.StrategicSpartanburg.org

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people... Academic Success

Priority: Reduce the county dropout rate while increasing the graduation and retention rates of our high school students.

Almost 28 percent of Spartanburg County students dropout of school between the 8th and 12th grades. By quitting school, they severely limit their opportunities for a prosperous future. Realizing that there is no single solution to this complex problem, the Academic Success Taskforce recommends diversity in collaborations as well as solutions. Keeping these students connected to school and continuously decreasing the dropout rate is a high priority for Spartanburg County.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Provide programs that help students transition from middle school to high school.
- Find ways to discourage teen pregnancy, but support teen mothers and encourage them to continue their education.
- Investigate and create flexible alternatives for educating high school students including distance learning, flexible hours, alternative programs, credit recovery programs, etc.
- Expand the role of business and industry in promoting high school completion (mentoring or adopt-a-school programs, etc.).
- Equip families with the skills needed to help their children succeed.
- Provide opportunities for high school students to participate in community service programs.
- Develop and implement incentive programs to encourage students to complete high school.

Priority: Expand the usage of GED programs for high school dropouts and encourage and prepare GED holders for future education.

According to US Census 2000, more than 45,000 people in Spartanburg County lack a high school diploma or GED. During 2004-05, however, only 303 people in the county earned a GED (*from GED Testing Office, South Carolina Department of Education*). Recognizing that a variety of factors influence dropout, retention and GED rates, Spartanburg County would like to focus on increasing the number of adult citizens (ages 25+) receiving GED certificates, but decrease the number of school-aged students (16-24 year olds) receiving GEDs.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Encourage communication and collaboration between adult education programs and postsecondary education programs.
- Provide assistance and support for adults transitioning from GED programs to technical schools or colleges.
- Encourage recent high school dropouts to return to school rather than seek a GED.
- Provide common incentives to GED holders to pursue postsecondary education and training.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used K-12 best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Consolidated the seven school district's data into county-wide data
- Utilized the indicator prioritization process
- Gathered public input from the seven school district superintendents
- Adopted six indicators (high school exit exams, SAT scores, ACT scores, GED certificates, high school graduates and teachers with advanced degrees originally listed under Goal 2 in Community Indicators VI

PEOPLE...

education & training

Education & Training Goal

Our citizens will have access to the education and training needed to compete in a global business environment.

Overview

South Carolina ranks in the bottom third in the nation in both the number of adults with bachelor's degrees and in median household income. These statistics from the US Census Bureau and *Postsecondary Education Opportunity* show the correlation between education and financial stability. To prosper in the global marketplace, Spartanburg must make higher education and specialized training a priority. The county is moving in the right direction. In the last 10 years, the number of high school graduates has increased. The number of these individuals who go on to attend college or technical school, however, varies from year to year and within each of the county's seven school districts. Helping Spartanburg (continued)

Priority: Increase enrollment and number of certificates, diplomas and degrees awarded at Spartanburg Technical College and USC Upstate.

Spartanburg is fortunate to have six colleges and universities within the county — Converse College, Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, Spartanburg Methodist College, Spartanburg Technical College, University of South Carolina Upstate and Wofford College. Of these six, two serve approximately 50 percent of the Spartanburg County high school graduates who enter postsecondary education in South Carolina — Spartanburg Tech and USC Upstate. These are economical options for Spartanburg County students who want to enter the bachelor's degree or other specialized training program. They, however, are affected by state and federal budget cuts.

OPPORTUNITIES:

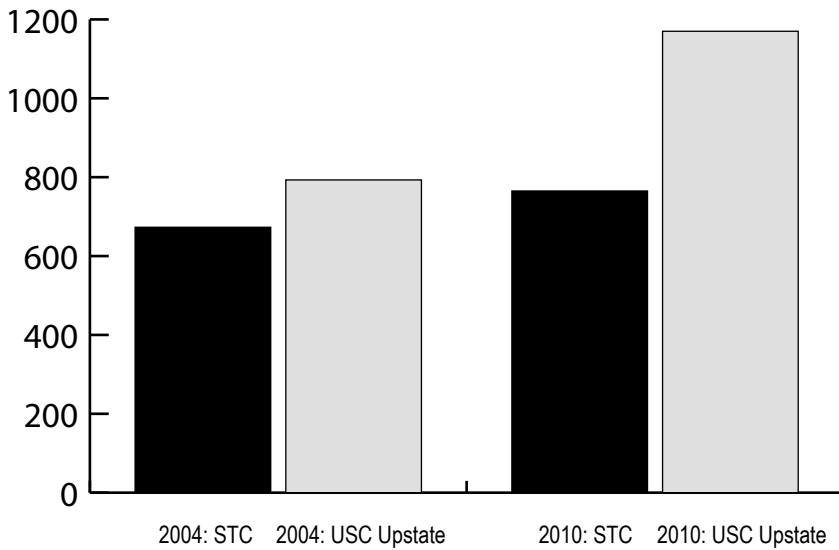
- Develop a proactive education awareness campaign that speaks to the positive benefits of higher education for Spartanburg citizens while also addressing the impact of higher education on economic development, home ownership, per capita income and disruption of the poverty cycle.
- Develop new programs and expand existing programs to support identified workforce development needs.
- Increase distance education courses.
- Develop continuing education programs that build on existing discipline-based majors.
- Strengthen relationships with high schools and consider transitioning initiatives for high school students.
- Implement scheduling practices that meet commuting student needs.
- Expand graduate, professional and certificate development and recruitment activities.
- Achieve high rates of placement in internships, field experiences, careers and post-graduate education.
- Improve classroom and academic environments.

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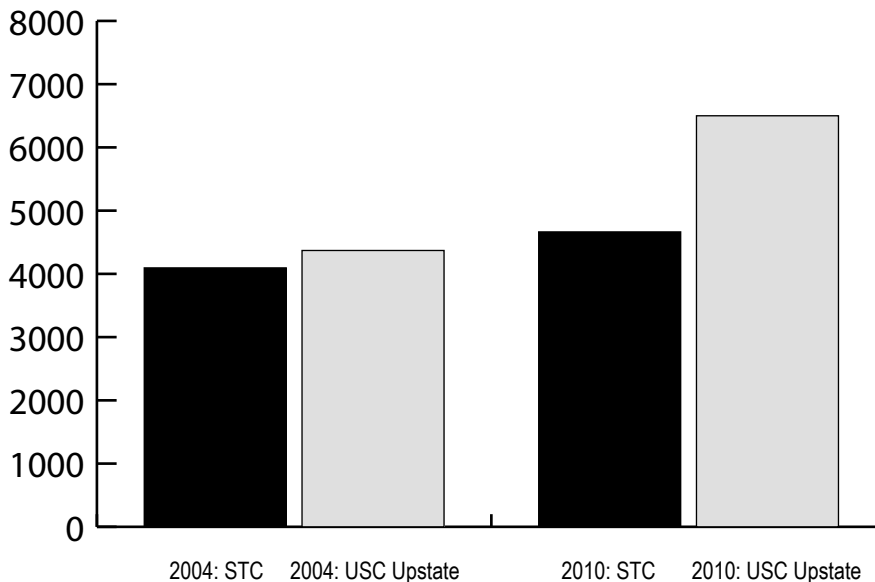
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people... Education & Training

TARGET: Increase the number of certificates, diplomas and degrees awarded at Spartanburg Technical College and University of South Carolina Upstate.



TARGET: Increase the number of students enrolled at Spartanburg Technical College and University of South Carolina Upstate.



Overview (continued)

youth and young adults make good choices with regard to education is essential to the county's future.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Agreed with the Academic Success Taskforce that the Education & Training Taskforce would focus solely on higher education issues such as Spartanburg Technical College enrollment and educational attainment
- Adopted strategies from existing strategic plans of Spartanburg Technical College and the University of South Carolina Upstate

PEOPLE...

elderly independence

Elderly Independence Goal

Our elderly citizens will receive support to enable them to live as independently as possible in their homes and connected to their communities.

Overview

Since 1950, the United States senior population has tripled while the total population has not quite doubled. With the Baby Boomer generation aging, the number of senior citizens will continue to grow generating an increased need for aging services beginning in the year 2010. As a group, seniors often face costly chronic illness, disability and long-term care decisions, all of which affect Medicare and Medicaid expenses and the need for additional senior services. Spartanburg County needs to prepare for its seniors in order to protect the overall economic and physical health of the county.

Strategic planning in this area is already underway to address senior issues from a proactive, collaborative effort (continued)

Priority: Provide an affordable and accessible senior-friendly transportation system.

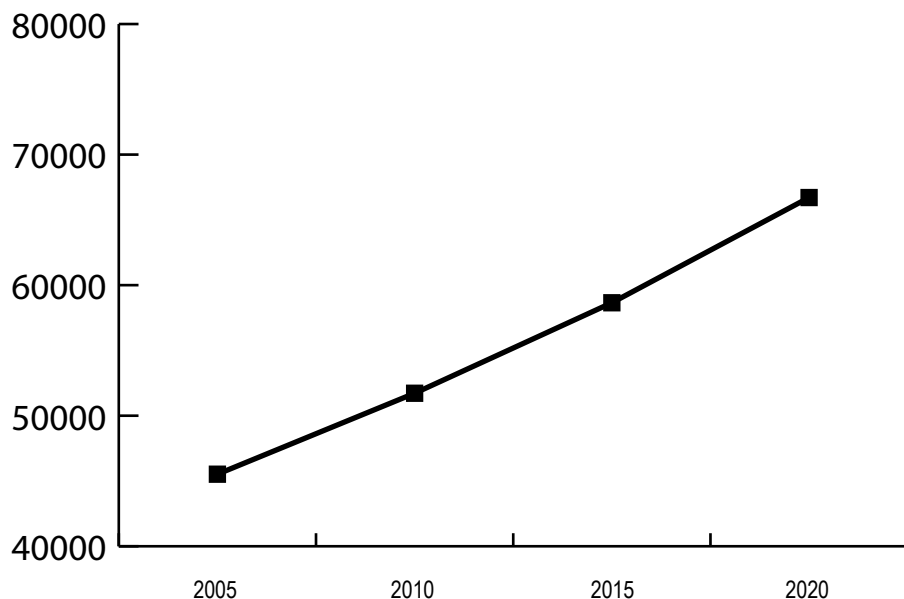
Priority: Provide accessible, affordable, specialized healthcare to seniors available in a timely manner in order to maintain and improve health, independence and quality of life in a safe environment.

Priority: Provide specialized senior-focused education and research to seniors, providers, families, caregivers and the community as a whole.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Establish a comprehensive assessment of programs and services addressing senior needs in each Spartanburg community in order to prepare for the increasing demand for senior services.
- Build on existing transportation services and find creative means of addressing the distinctive transportation limitations and needs of seniors.
- Develop proactive services focusing on wellness and prevention, ranging from the healthy senior to the chronically ill senior; expand the Parish Nurse Program.
- Develop a well-marketed, accessible life-long learning program that educates seniors, service providers, families, caregivers and the community on the aging process, available services and housing options.

Projected estimates for senior growth in Spartanburg County over the next 15 years.



people... Elderly Independence

Priority: Provide seniors access to safe, affordable and senior-friendly housing options.

Priority: Advocate, promote and facilitate policies and practices for positive change across the community focusing on “No Senior Left Behind.”

Priority: Develop processes and accessible programs to connect seniors with support, social groups for enrichment and services resulting in senior-friendly communities.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Develop a program that uses the “wisdom of seniors” to enhance the reading capability of school-aged children in low-income communities.
- Develop a senior coalition made up of seniors to serve as fund raisers, consultants, volunteers and support; support retired senior volunteer programs.
- Encourage the development of Care Connection, a community case management service.
- Develop and implement a “No Senior Left Behind” marketing campaign to promote senior advocacy both locally and state-wide.
- Consider adopt-a-grandparent and adopt-a-senior programs.

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Overview (continued)

that focuses on a holistic approach to keep seniors safe and independent. While collaboration is essential, careful consideration needs to be taken when merging the needs of seniors with the needs of other age levels. Historically, senior issues and needs are hidden when implementing solutions that cross age categories. The Elderly Independence Taskforce determined six critical elements (recommended to begin in 2006) that the county must address in this area. In addition, their overall strategic recommendation was to begin a “No Senior Left Behind” initiative that promotes the active involvement of seniors, both in “giving back” to the community with their talents and resources and in “receiving” the benefits of the senior service improvements.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Used the indicator prioritization process
- Gathered public input from six senior forums
- Agreed to focus on six critical elements impacting seniors

FAMILY...

stable & nurturing families

Stable & Nurturing Families Goal

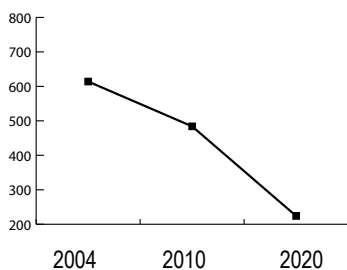
Our families will be stable and nurturing.

Overview

For all of Spartanburg's families to be stable and nurturing, the community needs to address the problems of teen pregnancy, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and the number of children under 18 living in poverty. All are complex problems with many contributing factors, and all require a comprehensive approach from the entire community (businesses, government, schools, non-profit organizations, the

(continued)

Target: Decrease the number of adolescent pregnancies.



Priority: Reduce the number of domestic violence incidences in Spartanburg County.

South Carolina currently ranks number six in the United States in the number of homicides of women as a result of domestic violence; this is a decrease from being number one the previous year. Spartanburg County currently ranks number five in South Carolina in the number of criminal domestic violence arrests; this is a decrease from being number one for several years. Spartanburg has the largest shelter in the state for domestic violence with 41 beds, and is the only large county without a turn-away rate because of a lack of space. Agencies are in place to address this issue and could provide expanded services with funding.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase positive attitudes toward non-violence, and encourage individuals to report family violence.
- Expand the involvement of the business community with this issue.
- Advocate for improvements in legislation and policies impacting the collection of child support, which would help to impact the underlying poverty issue.
- Expand accessibility of services for underserved population groups, which include internationals and refugees, gays and lesbians, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled, and the elderly.

Priority: Reduce the number of adolescent pregnancies in Spartanburg County from 614 in 2003 to 484 or less in 2010; and to 224 or less in 2020.

Using a base of knowledge and proven curricula about teen pregnancy and prevention, Spartanburg County must begin to target areas with high rates of teen pregnancy. The county zip codes, in descending order, with the highest rates of teen pregnancy are: 29303 (Spartanburg), 29306 (Spartanburg), 29330 (Cowpens), 29349 (Inman), and 29388 (Woodruff).

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Focus on positive aspects of human sexuality as well as on preventing negative consequences. Develop or find model lessons, resources and training that frame sexuality within the universal values of love, committed relationships, choice, respect and responsibility.
- Broaden adult support for developmentally appropriate, science-driven sexuality education.
- Broaden youth support for abstinence and protective behaviors.
- Increase quantity and quality of parent/child (and other trusted adult/child) communication regarding sexuality and related issues before and after the child becomes sexually active.

family... Stable & Nurturing families

Priority: Reduce the number of child abuse and neglect incidences in Spartanburg County.

Teen pregnancy, domestic violence and children living in poverty all contribute to the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. The Department of Social Services, law enforcement, hospitals and schools work together in dealing with reports of abuse and neglect. There is a need for more programs that focus on prevention of child abuse and neglect, as well as a need for more foster homes. There are currently 221 children in foster care in Spartanburg, with only 100 licensed foster homes.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop educational campaigns that encourage good parenting.
- Create parenting education programs in high schools with a high incidence of teen parents.
- Initiate home visiting programs that provide support and assistance to expecting and new mothers.
- Support mentoring programs or after-school programs for youth at risk.

Priority: Decrease the number of low-income families and those living below the poverty level by 2010 and significantly decrease this category by 2020.

Following a national trend, Spartanburg County has seen an improvement in the number of families living in poverty since 1969. While South Carolina has 21 percent of its children living below the poverty level, Spartanburg County has 16 percent. The rate for minorities is 29 percent. The federal poverty level is \$18,850.00 for a family of four. Families need an income equal to two times the poverty level (\$37,700.00) to meet their most basic needs. Forty percent of children live in low-income families or families that do not earn enough to meet their basic needs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Advocate for changes in laws that promote greater opportunities for families to decrease their poverty level.
- Increase public awareness of the severe outcomes for families with children living in poverty in Spartanburg County.
- Support the strengthening of in-kind safety net programs to better meet the needs for adequate food, housing and medical care for all low-income families.
- Encourage the upgrading of job skills for working adults.

www.StrategicSpartanburg.org

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Overview (continued)

judicial system, faith-based organizations, healthcare providers, etc.). Making services accessible to all people, regardless of disability or language barrier, is a challenge as is focusing programs on prevention rather than on response. On the positive side, our community has many proven and promising programs to address the welfare of our families.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Used indicator prioritization process
- Used key program experts from the community to develop strategies

FAMILY... healthy families

Healthy Families Goal

Our families will be healthy.

Overview

Spartanburg will increase the number of healthy families in the county by using best practice strategies that have measurable results and encourage collaboration. Creating a community of healthy families involves addressing the issues of obesity, low birth weight, and drug and alcohol admissions, both for adults and teens.

Many of the strategies for improvement in these areas involve opportunities for collaboration. Other strategies focus on environmental and policy change. Access to care and the need for primary prevention/disease management and health insurance are challenges that our community must meet if Spartanburg is to have healthy families.

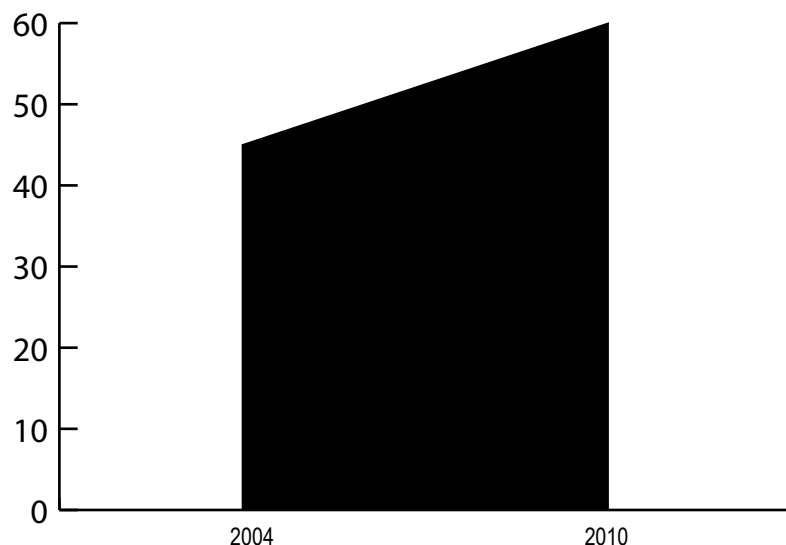
Priority: Increase the percentage of adults at a healthy weight in Spartanburg County by implementing the South Carolina Coalition for Obesity Prevention Efforts (SCCOPE) state plan.

Only 45 percent of adults in Spartanburg County are at a healthy weight, with a body mass index between 18.5 and 25. By 2010, Spartanburg's goal is to have at least 60 percent of adults at a healthy weight.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Encourage the organization of a Spartanburg County obesity council to drive the implementation of the SCCOPE plan.
- Support nutrition and physical activity efforts of local school districts as they work to make the school environment one that fosters healthy lifestyle habits.
- Increase public awareness of the importance of good nutrition and regular physical activity as the most effective way to address the obesity problem.

Target: Increase the number of individuals at a healthy weight from 45 percent to 60 percent between 2004-2010.



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family... Healthy Families

Priority: Decrease the percentage of low birth weight babies born in Spartanburg County.

In Spartanburg County almost 8 out of 1,000 babies who survive birth die before their first birthday. Because adequate birth weight is one of the best indicators of infant survival, reducing the occurrence of low birth weight is an important issue. While demographic (age) and biomedical (previous pregnancies) factors cannot be changed, they are useful in helping to identify high-risk women. Behavioral and environmental factors, however, can be changed. The following suggestions are made to impact inadequate prenatal care, inadequate gestational weight gain, and exposure to cigarette smoke.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Encourage a Spartanburg County taskforce to address issues of low birth weight. Taskforce representation should be broad and include those who address or are impacted by low birth weight issues.
- Increase opportunities for prenatal smoking cessation and for pregnant women to obtain adequate prenatal care.
- Support prematurity and low birth weight campaigns.

Target: Decrease the percentage of low birth weight babies from 10.2 percent in 2004 to 5 percent in 2010.



Priority: Improve the percentage of individuals who seek assistance for drug and alcohol abuse.

One in every 10 persons in the United States has a diagnosable problem with alcohol. Only about 3,000 individuals seek assistance each year from the Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (SADAC). In addition, too many of our teens have experimented with controlled substances, and many now have a serious problem with abuse. Barriers to substance abuse treatment include stigma, transportation issues, lack of knowledge about services and denial.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Improve customer engagement and retention at the Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (SADAC).
- Increase awareness among the Spartanburg community regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.
- Develop and implement policy changes on the local as well as the state level to support restrictions of alcohol and tobacco use/access within the community.
- Provide enforcement and compliance related to established policies and restrictions.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Used indicator prioritization process
- Gathered public input from community forum
- Used key program experts from the community to develop strategies

COMMUNITY...

economic means

Economic Means & Standards of Living Goal

Our citizens will have the economic means to steadily improve their standard of living.

Overview

While Spartanburg County offers lower than state averages in the cost of renting or owning a home and higher than state averages in per capita income, the standard of living is still not where it needs to be. Locally, 15.3 percent of minority families own and occupy their own home, as compared with 84.7 percent of white families. In addition, the county must decrease the number of people living in unsound dwellings and find ways to accurately report and respond to the homeless population.

The Taskforce stresses the critical and immediate need to address housing and job readiness issues in Spartanburg and seek local efforts to provide relief for our distressed neighborhoods and low-income households.

(continued)

Priority: Encourage people to take advantage of local employment opportunities.

Priority: Support the availability of employment opportunities within the county.

Priority: Encourage family planning initiatives.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Leverage the awareness and utilization of the Earned Income Tax Credit in order to increase income opportunities for low-income citizens.
- Develop job readiness strategies that assess and prepare individuals who have been identified as long-term unemployed.
- Encourage a local business resource center that provides support for small business establishment and expansion.
- Establish partnerships with local businesses and public schools to create internships and promote education completion.

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community... Economic Means

Priority: Discourage blighted conditions in neighborhoods.

Priority: Preserve existing and increase the availability of “affordable,” safe and sanitary housing.

Priority: Address the social influences of homelessness.

Overview (continued)

Homeownership is beneficial for creating wealth and stabilizing neighborhoods, but it is not the solution for all households. Housing strategies should be tailored to local market conditions, and housing policies should be regional.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Synchronize community development planning at the Spartanburg County level by assuring that emerging housing markets contain mixed-use opportunities for low-income and senior citizens.
- Develop local strategies to enhance affordability of homeownership and rental through programs of sweat equity and other non-traditional approaches.
- Increase availability and comprehensiveness of services for homeless.

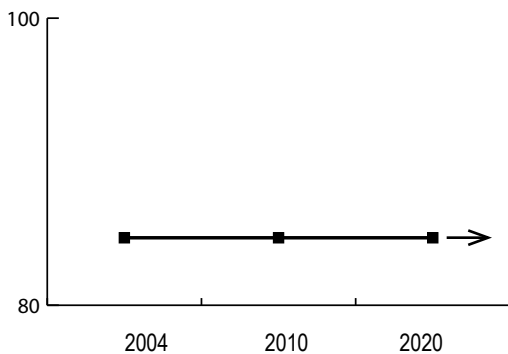
Comparison of owner-occupied homes: 84.7% white, 15.3% minority.



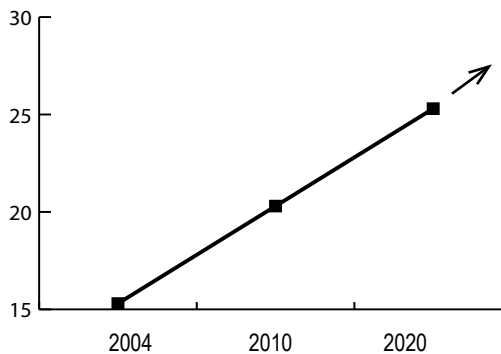
Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Used indicator prioritization process
- Gathered public input from community forum

Maintain 84.7% average of white-owner occupied housing.



Increase percentage of minority owner-occupied housing.



COMMUNITY...

economic viability

Economic Viability Goal

Our communities will be economically viable places for our citizens to live.

Overview

This goal relates directly to wealth creation, in other words, to employment by sector, the creation of new jobs, and the total number of jobs available in the county. According to credible measures of economic vitality, Spartanburg County's economic development is stagnant. To create a "turnaround plan," existing economic development organizations must unify their approach and leverage their respective resources. Additionally, they should pay close attention to the sectors (or clusters) that currently exist versus those that are desirable for sustained economic viability.

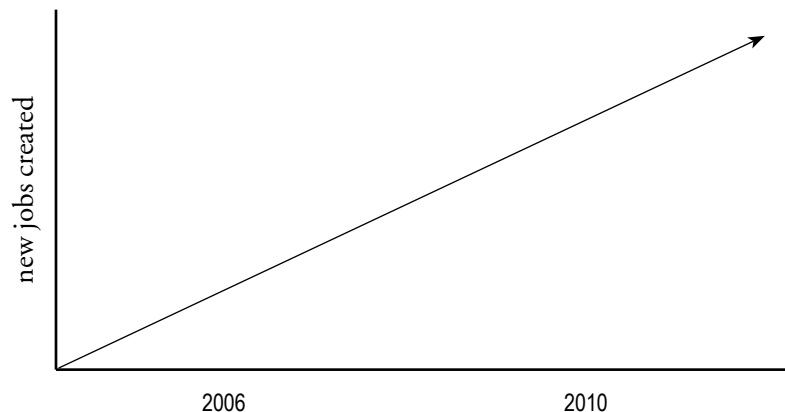
Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Agreed to focus on "wealth creation" and more accurate indicators of economic viability

Priority: Develop and complete a special Spartanburg County "Business Needs and Success Indicators Survey."

- Initiate a better understanding of roles, responsibilities, outcomes and collaboration demonstrated by existing economic development organizations.
- Develop a unified, comprehensive economic development strategy and plan for Spartanburg County. The business climate survey will serve as a fundamental cornerstone for this plan.
- Develop a strong marketing effort to brand and position Spartanburg for the future.

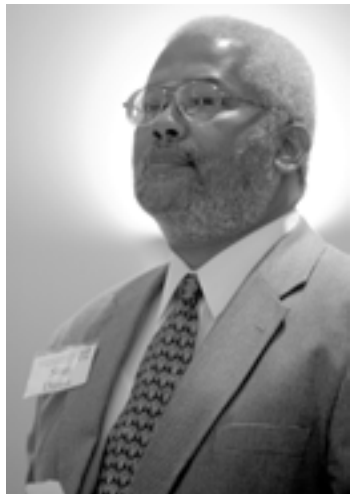
Improve economic viability in Spartanburg County by increasing employment by sector and the creation of new jobs.



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COMMUNITY... at work on the CIP



COMMUNITY...

community safety

Community Safety Goal

Our communities will be increasingly safe.

Overview

The taskforce recommends that Spartanburg strive to increase community safety by implementing strategies and programs that impact juvenile cases and commitments, the reduction of traffic accidents, the reduction of adult crime and the improvement of re-entry efforts.

While community safety discussions focused on juvenile issues and traffic, several other ideas arose during the project. Spartanburg County has a high recidivism rate among convicted criminals because of the lack of a program to re-orient criminals to society once they have been released from prison. The committee discovered the need for halfway houses and vocational training programs that teach basic life skills. Another strategy to deter recidivism is to have some school children visit the county jail for a tour

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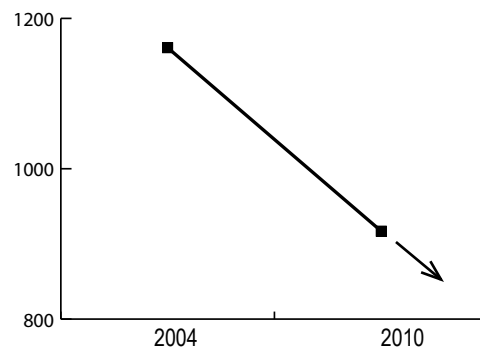
Priority: Reduce the number of juvenile cases and commitments by developing stronger partnerships and programs.

In 2003, 1,161 juvenile cases went to court with 139 commitments. By immediately beginning the opportunities for improvement listed below, the goal is to reduce the number of cases and commitments by 21 percent (917 and 110, respectively) by 2010. The county should see a 32 percent decrease by 2020.

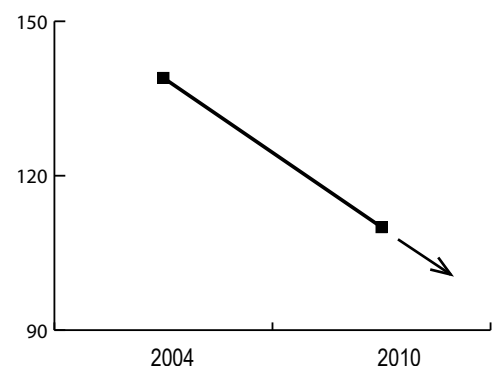
OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide parenting classes for the parents of juveniles.
- Continue arbitration and pre-trial intervention programs and work to secure more volunteers.
- Improve youth athletics programs and the involvement of juveniles in these programs.
- Work on “restorative justice” programs such as a “victim impact program.”

Target: Decrease the number of juvenile cases.



Target: Decrease the number of juvenile commitments.



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community... Community Safety

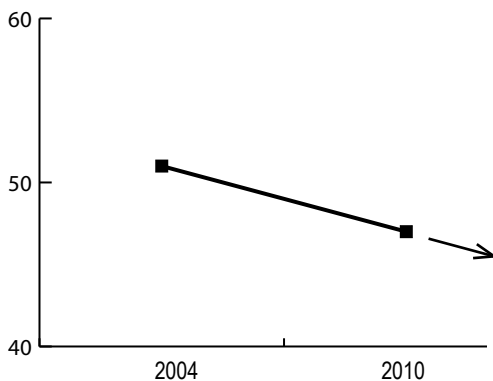
Priority: Reduce the number of fatal collisions and persons killed in Spartanburg County by improving roads and improving driving skills.

In 2003, Spartanburg County reported 51 fatal collisions with 55 resulting deaths. By immediately beginning opportunities for improvement listed below, the goal is to reduce the number of fatal collisions and deaths by 8.5 percent (47 and 50, respectively) by 2010. The county should see a 13 percent decrease by 2020.

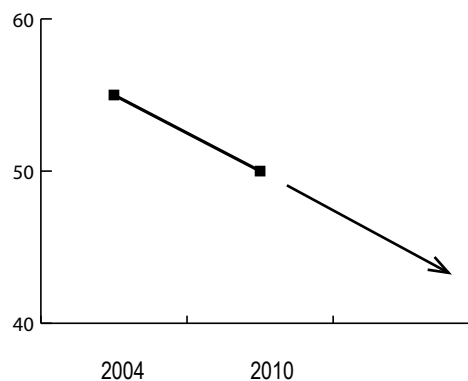
OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a system to better track data for accidents and their locations.
- Encourage state, county and city government to learn from the data and make changes accordingly.
- Develop better communication between state, county and city government officials.
- Improve the development standards to require impact fees to be paid by developers. This would require traffic studies and require developers to pay for improvements based on the studies.
- Explore the use of traffic calming devices.
- Provide greater education for younger and older drivers.

Target: Decrease the number of fatal collisions.



Target: Decrease the number of traffic fatalities.



Overview (continued)

when appropriate. The ideal time for the trip is middle school. The experience will help the students see that there are consequences to every action. They will see jail as a place they do not want to revisit in the future.

The community needs to continue to enhance, support and embrace the concept of community-oriented policing. The idea flourishes in communities where “news-making crimes” have recently occurred, but the principles need to be practiced in areas across the county during good times as well. Communities have been proven to be safer with good lighting, protected sight lines and common sense construction practices. The neighborhood watch programs need to continue to be strengthened.

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices
- Used indicator prioritization process
- Gathered public input from community program experts

COMMUNITY...

civic engagement

Civic Engagement Goal

Our citizens will have opportunities for civic engagement that promote well-being and a higher quality of life.

Overview

Improved voter registration turnout, increased charitable giving, and greater attendance at cultural events should collectively help move the community forward in realizing its goal for civic engagement. The taskforce recommends more comprehensive indicator baselines be developed that would reflect more accurately the broad spectrum of civic engagement in Spartanburg County. Strategies to accomplish this range from incorporating per capita spending and volunteer hours as further expressions of charitable giving to partnering with a research-based organization such as the Non-profit Center at University of South Carolina Upstate to generate more consistent, comprehensive data.

Priority: Voter Registration Turnout.

There is no highly visible organization to centralize and coordinate efforts to address voter registration, turnout and communication. This may or may not be a major issue; voter apathy, however, is. In some cases, this apathy can be attributed to the difficulty in getting clear, accurate and early information about issues and candidates. Another issue is monitoring the accountability of elected officials.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Encourage and support the League of Women Voters in collaborative efforts focusing on voter education and awareness.
- Promote absentee voting to the general public.
- Support strategies to impact literacy.
- Through the Spartanburg Voter Registration office, develop a realtors/renters voter change of address form that could be given to new home owners/renters to facilitate voter registration and re-registration.
- Build a campaign to change election day for local and state elections to Saturday (network with League of Women Voters statewide to facilitate).
- Urge the development of an educational initiative to inform people about the impact of erratic and confusing voter district lines on people getting out to vote and encourage a redrawing of district voting lines in simpler, more consistent ways.

Priority: Charitable Giving.

Charitable giving is not only an issue of money, but also of volunteer time and skills.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop a new indicator to track volunteer hours.
- Develop a new indicator to track the per capita giving in Spartanburg County.
- Work with the new Non-profit Center at University of South Carolina Upstate to develop a mechanism for getting data from all non-profits in Spartanburg County.
- Establish criteria for and develop a “What it Takes to be a Good Citizen” campaign to increase awareness of and communicate the responsibilities of a good citizen at various civic levels.
- Promote workplace giving campaigns for United Way and The Arts Partnership to businesses and corporations in Spartanburg as a norm for good corporate citizenship and as a way to broaden the opportunity for all donors to contribute to the community.
- Establish a “Good Citizen Day” in the schools to discuss and have information about what it takes to be a good citizen.
- Establish a “Good Citizen” recognition at various levels in the community, from the schools to businesses to volunteers.

community... Civic Engagement

Priority: Attendance at Cultural Events.

Taskforce members and public forum participants recognized a mindset in the county that believes that there is little to do in Spartanburg. Changing this mindset is a major challenge.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Show the ratio of attendance against total population figures for the county within the indicator showing attendance at cultural events.
- Support the efforts of The Arts Partnership of Greater Spartanburg, which has, as part of its long-range plan, the development and support of opportunities for citizens to attend cultural events.
- Support local efforts to strengthen the network and cooperation among those doing events and those “getting the word out” about events.
- Develop mechanisms to impact the mindset of Spartanburg residents to take a more positive outlook on Spartanburg and things to do here.

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Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices
- Gathered public input from community forum

PLACE...

management of natural resources

Management of Natural Resources Goal

Our citizens will manage our natural resources in a way that will support current and future generations.

Overview

A major component of our quality of life for now and for the future is dependent upon the priorities we assign to the stewardship of our natural resources. Air and water purity are priceless assets to any community. Land and its use is a vital asset for any growing population and its economy. But they are finite. As a community we must understand that as we grow we must do so within the context of our finite environment. To do so, citizens, businesses and governments must collectively take a responsible role in the sustainable use of our natural resources with an awareness that we are sharing with the future. Providing leadership that consistently elevates environmental awareness

(continued)

Priority: Land Use.

The primary theme of the land use priority is to refine and implement the recommended strategies in the Spartanburg County Comprehensive Plan 1998-2015. By directing development toward growth areas and giving “teeth” to policies that would formalize designated land use category areas, we can encourage growth while conserving Spartanburg’s rural character.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Reinvest in neglected communities, rehabilitate abandoned properties and provide more housing opportunities to strengthen its metropolitan centers.
- Encourage new development or redevelopment in already built-up areas to create a greater degree of neighborhood mix in homes, shops and offices.

Priority: Air Quality.

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires that air quality in every state meet federal health-based limits called the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Communities that fail to meet standards risk a variety of serious economic consequences.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide air quality information and educate citizens on the implications of failure to meet national standards.
- Educate citizens on how personal actions can have a positive or negative impact on Upstate air quality.

Priority: Solid Waste & Recycling.

The proper management of the solid waste (normally generated and disposed of by households and industry) in our community is essential to the long-term environmental well-being of Spartanburg County. The strategies outlined in this section follow the long-standing principles of reduce, reuse and recycle.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Attain a waste generation rate equal to or below the EPA’s current estimate of the national waste generation rate, which is 4.3 pounds per person per day.
- Attain an annual recycling rate of 20 percent. (According to the EPA the national recycling rate in 2000 was 30%. The state goal under the South Carolina Solid Waste Management Act is a recycling rate of 35%. Spartanburg’s current rate is 9%.)
- Attain a waste disposal rate of 3.75 pounds per person per day.

place... Management of Natural Resources

Priority: Energy Consumption.

Energy conservation needs to become a driving force in every American community. Spartanburg can do so by developing a Spartanburg Energy Plan.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Reduce Spartanburg's energy demand by promoting, supporting and implementing energy efficiency and conservation programs and measures.
- Develop an educational advocacy program about energy conservation, renewable energy sources, public and private energy-related programs, and rebates.
- Support and develop ordinances, policies, programs and legislation that promote energy conservation.
- Develop financial possibilities and incentives to promote energy conservation.

Priority: Water Quality.

Water quality standards are set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Presently, of the 37 sampling sites of the Broad River drainage basin located in Spartanburg County, 30 do not meet the criteria established for their intended use. Of the 30 sites, 24 were found to be impaired solely due to the presence of fecal coliform, an indicator organism used to determine the presence of bacteria from intestinal tracts of warm-blooded animals. Potential sources of fecal coliform are storm water runoff, malfunctioning septic tanks, sanitary sewer overflows, and improperly treated municipal/industrial wastes. Animals can have a significant impact on fecal coliform concentrations in streams and lakes depending on near-field land use practices. An assessment of water quality data collected by SCDHEC in the Broad River Basin is published every five years. The last report was published in 2001, and it is anticipated that the next report will be released in 2006.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve water quality in area-streams through compliance with state-mandated stream-use classifications.
- Provide education and public outreach to citizens concerning water quality status of area streams and lakes.

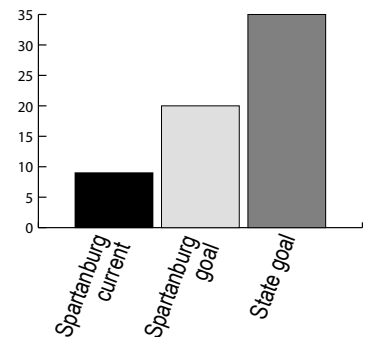
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Overview (continued)

and the development and implementation of environmental initiatives will be an ongoing challenge.

Target: Increase the county recycling rate from 9% to 20%. The state goal is 35%.



Over-arching OPPORTUNITY

Develop a quarterly *Natural Resources Report Card* to inform Spartanburg of the status of key environmental measurements for energy usage, air and water quality, land use and solid waste management

Taskforce Methods & Processes

- Used best practices and Clemson University Research Reports
- Used key program experts from the community to develop strategies

Acknowledgements...

Sincere thanks to our community leaders who devoted their time and energy to making this Spartanburg community improvement planning process a comprehensive community effort.

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