

The Status of Civic Engagement in Spartanburg County

An Evaluation of Goal 9 of 10

spartanburg 
community indicators
 project

Inspiring dialogue, strategy and change.

The Status of Civic Engagement in Spartanburg County

An Evaluation of Goal 9 of 10

Spartanburg Community Indicators Project

A collaboration of:

**The Spartanburg County Foundation
United Way of the Piedmont
Spartanburg County Government
The University of South Carolina Upstate**

Data collected and prepared by:

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Metropolitan Studies Institute at The University of South Carolina Upstate, © 2009**

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A Letter to the Community

As collaborators in the Spartanburg Community Indicators Project; The Spartanburg County Foundation, United Way of the Piedmont, Spartanburg County Government, and the University of South Carolina Upstate are pleased to provide you an in-depth assessment of another Indicator Goal. Produced by the Metropolitan Studies Institute of The University of South Carolina Upstate, this document builds upon previous Community Indicator reports by providing a quantitative, comprehensive examination of Indicator Goal 9: "Our citizens will have opportunities for civic engagement that promotes well-being and higher quality of life.

The information contained in this report is informed by the many subject matter experts in our community who influence the achievement of this goal. Please take the opportunity to review this information and consider its observations relative to the civic engagement in our County. In the coming months, community discussions focused on the findings of this report will be initiated. At these meetings you will be asked to not only contribute your commentary but also to help engage the appropriate action in response to the data and discussion.

This report could not have been accomplished without support from all of the community partners, funders, and experts in our community who commit the time and effort to advance understanding of the issues that affect our County. We would also like to thank Dr. Kathleen Brady at the Metropolitan Studies Institute of The University of South Carolina Upstate for her work to produce this report. This document represents more than just data. It represents a fundamental advancement in our Community Indicator effort. Valid, objective data underpinning discussion of issues in our community profits us all. A report for each Indicator goal will be produced by the MSI so that our community remains fully informed of the measures that reflect upon our progress. These reports are our gift to the community and represent the inspiration for dialogue, strategy, and change.

Sincerely,



John Dargan
President/CEO
The Spartanburg County Foundation



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



D. Glenn Breed
County Administrator
Spartanburg County



John C. Stockwell, Ph.D.
Chancellor
The University of South Carolina Upstate

Strategic Spartanburg Goals

- Goal 1:** Our children will excel academically through the provision of quality education.
- Goal 2:** Our citizens will obtain the degrees and training to equip them to compete in a knowledge-based workforce.
- Goal 3:** Our senior population will be able to live independently in so far as possible with necessary support from their communities.
- Goal 4:** Our families will be stable and nurturing.
- Goal 5:** Our citizens will be healthy.
- Goal 6:** Our citizens will have access to living wage jobs.
- Goal 7:** Our communities will be viable.
- Goal 8:** Our communities will be increasingly safe.
- Goal 9:** Our citizens will have opportunities for civic engagement that promotes well-being and higher quality of life.
- Goal 10:** Our citizens will manage our natural resources in a way that will support current and future generations.

The University of South Carolina Upstate

The University of South Carolina Upstate defines itself as a “metropolitan university.” It is a member of the international Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities; and, similar to the missions of its fellow members, The University of South Carolina Upstate regards its relationship to Spartanburg and Greenville and to the Upstate’s I-85 corridor communities as of fundamental importance to its purposes and future.

Our recent establishment of “The Metropolitan Studies Institute” as a regional research enterprise is a direct expression of that relationship.

As one of the fastest growing universities in South Carolina over the past 10 years reflecting the growth of the Upstate, and enrolling the second largest number of South Carolina students among the State’s 10 comprehensive universities, The University of South Carolina Upstate aims to be regarded as one of the leading metropolitan universities in the Southeast.

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The Metropolitan Studies Institute at The University of South Carolina Upstate

The mission of The University of South Carolina Upstate’s Metropolitan Studies Institute (MSI) is to support research efforts between The University of South Carolina Upstate and the community, enhancing relationships, promoting the reciprocal flow of information and ideas, assisting community and economic development, and increasing the strategic use of The University’s scholarship and outreach capabilities. The MSI engages in selected community-based research and assessment projects, notable among them the Spartanburg Community Indicators Project, and partners with community agencies to undertake program evaluations, needs assessments, feasibility studies, and data management projects.

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Spartanburg Community Indicators Project

Content

Executive Summary	5
Strengths and Challenges	6
Voting	7
Voter Registration.....	7
Voter Turnout.....	7
Charitable Giving/Philanthropy	10
Charitable Capacity	13
Volunteerism.....	15
Cultural Vitality.....	17
Parks and Recreational Facilities.....	19
Spartanburg City Parks and Recreation Department.....	19
Spartanburg County Recreation Commission.....	19
Libraries	20
Sources and References	23
Tables and Figures.....	24
Appendix I: Goal 9 Indicators.....	25
Appendix II: Local Arts Organizations.....	26

Executive Summary

In 2005, the Spartanburg County Foundation and United Way of the Piedmont released *Community Indicators VI: Strategic Spartanburg*. The sixth edition was a culmination of many hours of discussion and research, which has resulted in a community-wide project focused on the quality of life for all citizens in our community. Transitioning the data collection and assessment component of the Community Indicators Project to the Metropolitan Studies Institute has allowed for a more comprehensive assessment of the status of each goal, via examination of a wider variety of indicators.

Originally, the Community Indicators Project identified seven indicators relative to Goal 9, "Our citizens will have opportunity for civic engagement that promotes well-being and higher quality of life." In the current iteration, indicators for Goal 9 have been added and broadened to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the status of civic engagement in Spartanburg County and now include six indicators and several sub-indicators. Indicators have been included or excluded based on their assessed strength, accessibility, or validity of the information they provide. Each of these indicators is thought by subject matter experts, representatives of local organizations and agencies whose missions are driven by these indicators, to be a useful and valid reflection of Goal 9, providing assessment of civic engagement in Spartanburg County in as comprehensive fashion as possible. This report is the first in the Civic Engagement cluster of the Community Indicators goals for 2009.

For comparison purposes, state, regional and national data, as well as data from communities with similar population demographics are supplied where possible; however, measures of civic engagement do not lend themselves easily to comparison.

Results of indicator analyses demonstrate that civic engagement is vital in Spartanburg County. The county fares well on most measures, including trend measures. Implications are significant for the community in terms of quality of life and economic and social viability. Generally, trend data indicate increasing civic engagement for Spartanburg County.

Strengths And Challenges

Upon examination of the data for each indicator and other data relevant to the status of civic engagement in Spartanburg County, there are a number of positive findings. Primary among these are:

- Turnout for presidential elections has increased consecutively in 2000, 2004 and 2008 in S.C.
- From 2004 to 2008, the number of eligible voters casting ballots in S.C. rose by almost 12%, making South Carolina's increase in turnout the second highest of all 50 states
- Nationally, turnout among blacks and Hispanics is increasing and youth turnout is increasing
- In 2003, South Carolina ranked 13th among states for Itemized Charitable Contributions, and in 2004 the state moved to 12th place
- In 2003, Spartanburg County was the most "generous" of S.C. counties, as its residents gave 9.3% of their discretionary income to charity
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy rated Spartanburg as one of the most generous large counties in America
- Four "primary funders" and a number of other local foundations make significant contributions to the quality of life in Spartanburg County
- An estimated 83.9 million adults formally volunteered approximately 15.5 billion hours in 2000
- The formal volunteer workforce represented the equivalent of over nine million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion
- About 22% of people in their 70s and 80s volunteer on a weekly basis
- Volunteerism in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties has consistently increased
- The Spartanburg County Recreation Commission and the Spartanburg City Parks and Recreation Department support numerous parks, facilities, and programs in the City of Spartanburg and throughout the county
- The direct and indirect contributions of the arts and cultural activities in Spartanburg are significant
- The Chapman Cultural Center, for example, has brought a wide range of social and economic benefit to Spartanburg County
- The total direct and indirect return on investment for every \$1 expended on the state's public libraries by S.C. state and local governments is \$4.48 or 350%
- Spartanburg County Public Libraries offer numerous services
- There are 11 public libraries and five academic libraries in Spartanburg County

Assessment of the indicators also results in a number of negative findings. These are:

- Voter turnout in S.C. is low compared with other states
- Educational attainment, especially beyond the bachelor's degree, has a large impact on charitable giving, especially to secular causes (Spartanburg County's low educational status is a predictor of low charitable giving)
- 68% of volunteers are college graduates (Spartanburg County's low educational status is a predictor of low volunteer rates)
- 62% of volunteers have incomes of at least \$75,000 per year (Spartanburg County's low per capita income is a predictor of low volunteer rates)
- Nationally, after adjusting for inflation, the total deductions for charitable contributions fell 1.4% in 2006 -- the first decline since 2002
- In 2006, there were 2.44 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in Spartanburg County - the national average is 6.25 acres per 1,000 residents
- There is no comprehensive inventory of cultural opportunities throughout the county

Voting

“We know that democracy flourishes only when citizens claim the power to address the issues that most affect them. Civic abdication leads to social atrophy.” – MDC Inc.

Voter Registration

Engagement in the political process frequently begins with registering to vote. Since January 1, 2008, registered voters in South Carolina increased by 10%, or 310,000 new registered voters. The largest increase demographically was 20% among voters ages 18-24. There were approximately 2,552,000 registered voters were eligible to vote in the 2008 general election, a record high in South Carolina. Also, more than 350,000 absentee ballots were issued throughout the state, far surpassing the previous record of 169,000 absentee ballots issued before the 2004 General Election.

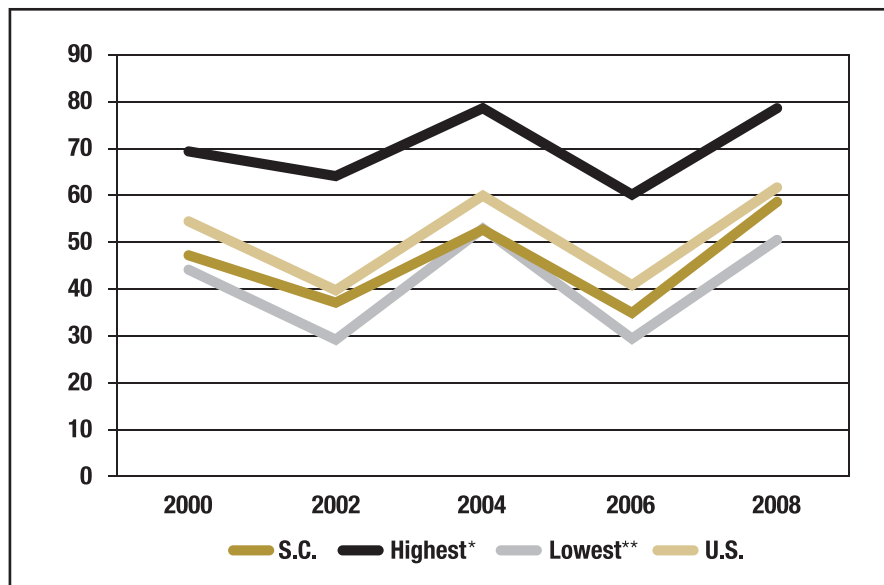
Voter Turnout

If engagement in the political process begins with registering to vote, exercising the right to vote is the next step. Voter turnout is the percentage of the Voting Eligible Population (VEP) that cast a ballot that was counted on or before election day. Nationally, more than 130 million people turned out to vote in the 2008 presidential election, the largest number ever to vote in a presidential election. This constituted 62% of the electorate, the highest percentage in 40 years since the Kennedy / Nixon election which yielded a 64% turnout. However, among countries where elections are held, the U.S. ranks poorly in terms of voter turnout. In 2001, the U.S. ranked 120th among these countries.

Nationally, turnout among blacks and Hispanics is increasing and youth turnout is increasing. In the 2008 election 52% of the eligible youth voting population cast ballots, and blacks and Hispanics constituted 17% each of the youth electorate.

Figure 1 illustrates that turnout in presidential election years and state / congressional election years is traditionally higher than in local election years, and that S.C. turnout is below the U.S. average.

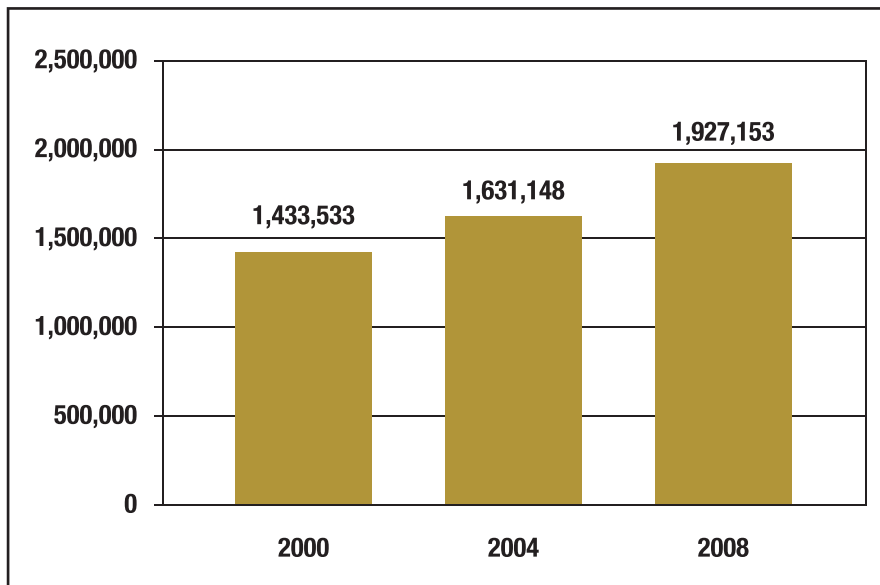
Figure 1. VEP Turnout Rate (% of Eligible Voters Who Voted)



* State with highest VEP turnout rate. ** State with lowest VEP turnout rate.

Although voter turnout in S.C. is low compared with other states, turnout for presidential elections has increased consecutively in 2000, 2004 and 2008 (Figure 2). In fact, from 2004 to 2008, the number of eligible voters casting ballots in S.C. rose by almost 12%, making South Carolina's increase in turnout the second highest of all 50 states.

Figure 2. Total Ballots Cast in S.C., Last Three Presidential Elections



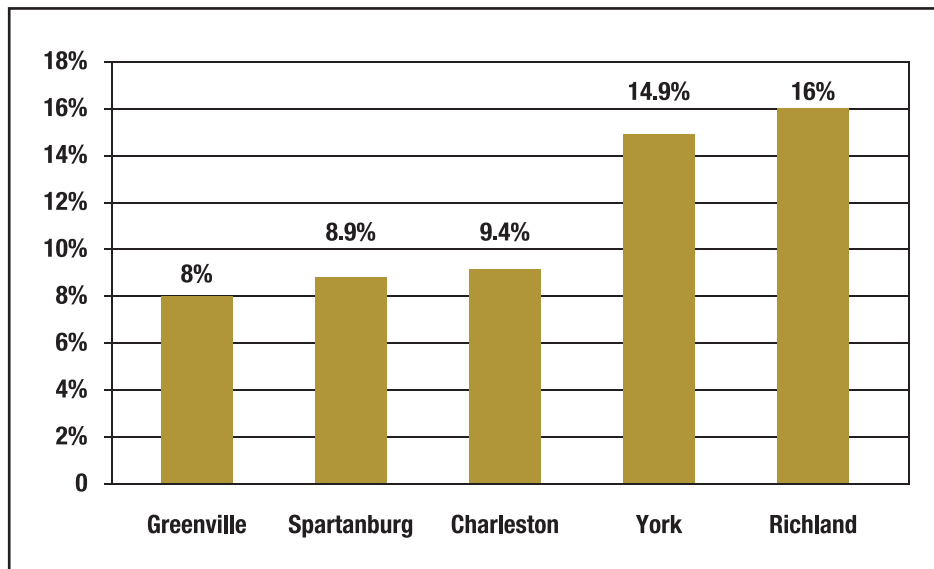
Voting (Cont.)

Voter Turnout (cont.)

Among S.C. counties, Richland and Greenville had the biggest increase in numbers of residents voting between 2004 and 2008. Each of these counties increased numbers of ballots cast by more than 25,000.

Among the state's five largest urban counties, percentage increase in voter turnout between 2004 and 2008 was highest in Richland, York and Charleston (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage Increase in Ballots Cast 2004 to 2008*



* Adjusted for population growth.

Data reported by the S.C. Election Commission shows that voter turnout by county for the 2008 general election ranged from 68.97% in Marlboro County to 81.81% in McCormick County. Among peer counties, Spartanburg had the lowest voter turnout at 73.78%, while Greenville had the highest at 76.54% (Table 1).

Table 1. Voter Turnout, General Election 2008

	Population 18+ (2007)	# Registered Voters (2008)	# Voting (2008 general election)	% Registered Voters who voted
Spartanburg	275,534	147,003	108,459	73.78
Greenville	428,243	250,646	191,868	76.54
Richland	357,734	218,046	164,986	75.66
Charleston	342,973	207,506	156,254	75.30
S.C.	4,407,709	2,552,472	1,930,352	75.62

ACOG / InfoMentum

Charitable Giving/Philanthropy

“We know that democracy flourishes only when citizens claim the power to address the issues that most affect them. Civic abdication leads to social atrophy.” – MDC Inc.

Healthy communities are characterized by generosity, both charitable and philanthropic. Although related, charity and philanthropy have distinctive differences. Charity focuses on relieving immediate distress, and philanthropy addresses causes of distress and invests in longer-term solutions (Gaudiani, 2003). Of course, research can measure charitable giving, not generosity itself, as generosity shows itself in countless ways in a community, many of them over and above charitable giving.

Researchers at the Center on Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College (2007) have found that economic, social, demographic, and religious factors are important in understanding regional differences in giving. Substantial variation in patterns of giving from state to state and from region to region is due to religious affiliation and religious practices. Charitable giving and philanthropy follow certain patterns including:

- Nationally, about half the total household donations are to religion, and most of the donations from lower- and middle-income households are to religion.
- At a national level, charitable giving is nearly equally split between religious and secular giving. There are major regional differences in this split, however. In New England, the Middle Atlantic, and Pacific Coast states there is more secular giving than religious giving. In the Great Plains, the South, the Midwest, and most of the Rocky Mountain region, religious giving outpaces secular giving.
- Residents of the 18 largest consolidated metropolitan areas donate 35% of all household religious contributions and 51% of all household secular contributions in the nation.
- Educational attainment, especially beyond the bachelor's degree, has a large impact on charitable giving, especially to secular causes.
- Occupation also has a pronounced impact on charitable giving. Heads of household working in professional and administrative occupations give more to charity, especially to secular causes, as compared with heads of households working in other occupations, even taking income differences into account.
- Industry of occupation also has a large additional impact on charitable giving. Heads of households working in high technology (mostly information/computer, biomedical, pharmaceutical, nanotechnology, robotics, and renewable energy), higher education, finance, professional (e.g., medical, legal, architectural), and business services give more to charity, especially to secular causes, than heads of households working in other industries.

Charitable Giving/Philanthropy (Cont.)

Some regional differences in giving are illustrated in Table 2.

Division of Country	Average Income	Average Net Worth	Overall Giving Participation Rate	Average % of Income Given	Average % of Net Worth Given	Religious Giving Participation Rate	Secular Giving Participation Rate
New England	\$77,131	\$399,965	84.57%	1.72%	1.11%	51.15%	78.60%
Middle Atlantic	\$70,064	\$280,726	72.68%	1.81%	1.30%	49.70%	64.69%
East North Central	\$55,218	\$206,397	63.80%	2.25%	1.23%	42.64%	53.53%
West North Central	\$57,547	\$249,545	70.04%	3.00%	2.09%	54.88%	54.98%
South Atlantic	\$60,512	\$266,477	72.25%	2.55%	1.67%	50.53%	58.99%
East South Central	\$50,165	\$188,096	68.00%	3.16%	1.58%	49.59%	53.44%
West South Central	\$51,148	\$172,372	65.82%	2.68%	2.41%	51.74%	51.54%
Mountain	\$64,254	\$293,457	72.98%	3.92%	1.74%	43.02%	63.02%
Pacific	\$66,089	\$364,677	67.25%	2.33%	2.39%	37.51%	55.59%
Nation	\$61,125	\$267,533	69.76%	2.51%	1.75%	47.10%	58.14%

Center on Wealth and Philanthropy

The 2007 State of the South report on Philanthropy as the South's "Passing Gear" documents that the South lags the nation in critical indicators for income, education, and personal and community health. However, southern states have consistently ranked high in charitable giving, with all but three Southern states exceeded the U.S. average in 2003 for individual charitable giving. That year, South Carolina ranked 13th among states for Itemized Charitable Contributions, and in 2004 the state moved to 12th place (Catalogue for Philanthropy, 2009). The Catalogue for Philanthropy measures generosity annually by how much people give relative to their incomes, resulting in a "Generosity Index." In 2004, South Carolina ranked 8th among states on the Generosity Index.

In 2003, the Chronicle of Philanthropy's analysis of giving in America's counties found that, in S.C., Spartanburg County was the most "generous" as its residents gave 9.3% of their discretionary income to charity. Further, the Chronicle rated Spartanburg as one of the most generous large counties in America (see Table 3).

Table 3. South Carolina Giving by County, 2003

County	Average Discretionary Income	Average Charitable Donation	Percent
Spartanburg	\$48,156	\$4,501	9.3
Greenville	\$52,815	\$4,523	8.6
Richland	\$53,478	\$4,385	8.2
Charleston	\$59,467	\$3,843	6.5
Horry	\$50,961	\$3,257	6.4
Detroit (highest in U.S.)			
			12.1
Miami (lower in U.S.)			
			5.6

Any comparative data should be interpreted with caution. Because of the myriad variables that influence the nature and scope of charitable giving and philanthropy, geographic peer comparisons are difficult. The Center on Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College (2007) cautions that "It is simply inaccurate to characterize the entire population of a state or a city as more or less generous than the population of another state or metropolitan area. Our findings show that such sweeping characterizations are based on an overly blunt analysis that masks and ignores the true, underlying dynamics of caring and the generous nature of most of the people of each state and each metropolitan area."

Charitable Giving/Philanthropy (Cont.)

Charitable Capacity

As of March 2009, Spartanburg County was home to 680 501(c)(3) organizations, inclusive of 626 public charities and 54 private foundations (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2009). Again, with cautious interpretation, Table 4 provides comparison with peer counties.

Table 4. Charitable Organizations by County, 2009						
Country	# Registered Organizations	S.C. %	Total Revenue	S.C. %	Assets Reported	S.C. %
Registered 501 (c)(3) Organizations						
Greenville	1,392	8.6	1,339,138,627	12.4	2,994,692,038	12.8
Spartanburg	680	4.2	379,923,363	3.5	1,166,083,266	5.0
Richland	1,887	11.6	2,717,407,659	25.3	7,498,901,535	32.0
Charleston	1,387	8.6	1,529,501,770	14.2	3,420,409,286	14.6
S.C.	16,206	100.0	10,760,557,944	100.0	23,399,979,539	100.0
Public Charities						
Greenville	1,274	8.3	1,284,235,952	12.4	2,746,666,315	12.6
Spartanburg	626	4.1	353,677,269	3.4	992,146,383	4.5
Richland	1,745	11.4	2,659,733,579	25.6	7,317,323,653	33.5
Charleston	1,269	8.3	1,502,573,420	14.5	3,267,929,339	14.9
S.C.	15,318	100.0	10,393,576,051	100.0	21,867,690,851	100.0
Private Foundations						
Greenville	118	13.5	54,902,675	15.0	248,025,723	16.3
Spartanburg	54	6.2	26,246,094	7.2	173,936,883	11.4
Richland	140	16.0	57,427,917	15.7	180,894,285	11.9
Charleston	117	13.4	26,928,350	7.4	152,479,947	10.0
S.C.	876	100.0	365,727,840	100.0	1,525,477,354	100.0
<i>National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2009</i>						

Nationally, after adjusting for inflation, the total deductions for charitable contributions fell 1.4% in 2006 -- the first decline since 2002 (IRS, 2008). Americans deducted \$186.6 billion in charitable gifts in 2006, 1.8% more than the \$183.4 billion in charitable deductions they claimed in the 2005 tax year. The average total contributions claimed on tax returns increased to \$4,504 in 2006, a 1.6% increase over the 2005 figure of \$4,432. The percentage of tax returns that included write-offs for donations also fell slightly, from 30.8% of filings in 2005 to 29.9% in 2006.

According to the 2007 State of the South report, in order to bring itself into social and economic parity with the rest of the country, the South must meet two overarching imperatives for organized philanthropy: reducing inequity and bolstering competitiveness.

In Spartanburg County, there are four primary “funders” of non-profit programs and organizations. These four funders are:

- **The Mary Black Foundation:** The mission of the Mary Black Foundation is to improve the health and wellness of the people and communities of Spartanburg County. The Foundation devotes the majority of its resources to efforts that foster complete physical, mental and social well being through addressing the underlying causes of poor health outcomes in Spartanburg County. The Foundation works to achieve its mission by concentrating its grant-making in two priority areas, active living and early childhood development. In addition to its two priority areas, the Foundation also awards grants through its Community Health Fund.
- **The Spartanburg County Foundation:** By offering a variety of charitable funds, The Spartanburg County Foundation enables people to support the issues they care about in Spartanburg County. Each fund is professionally managed, and endowed assets continue to grow over time. The Spartanburg County Foundation is one of over 600 foundations nationwide, created by the citizens of a local area as a tax-exempt public charity to help people accomplish their philanthropic goals.
- **The Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System (SRHS) Foundation:** The SRHS Foundation is a charitable corporation whose primary mission is to benefit the Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System through direct support of the SRHS and also through its support of community programs and services that share the SRHS mission of delivering quality health care to the community. In November 2008 the Foundation awarded a total of \$287,947 to 13 organizations. Projects ranged from educational opportunities for community members and physicians, to organizations seeking to implement advanced technology.
- **United Way of the Piedmont:** A private, not-for-profit organization governed by a local board of volunteers, United Way of the Piedmont's mission is to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another. Services cover Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union Counties. Currently, United Way of the Piedmont funds 132 programs in 70 agencies, fosters partnerships to address community issues, promotes and coordinates volunteerism, increases the community's knowledge about available community services, and works with businesses and individuals to ensure that funding is available for the most efficient programs that address critical community issues.

In addition, there are a number of other local foundations including the J.M. Smith Foundation, the Phifer-Johnson Foundation, and the Milliken Family Foundation. These foundations make significant contributions to the quality of life in Spartanburg County.

A notable organization in Spartanburg County, Youth Voices, created in 2005, is a group of young people ages 12-17 that meet regularly to discuss issues, ensure that youth opinions and ideas are heard, and participate in youth-led initiatives. Although they participate in many youth initiatives during the year, their largest project is the Youth in Philanthropy Project (YIP). In the YIP Project, these young members of the Spartanburg Youth Council raise funds, receive grant proposals from member organizations, and decide how best to distribute these funds to serve Spartanburg non-profits that benefit youth and education. In the last grant cycle, Youth Voices donated over \$12,000 to area non-profits.

Volunteerism

“Volunteerism is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds.” – Bill Clinton

A study of giving and volunteering in the United States (Independent Sector, 2001) found that, for the 1.23 million charities, social welfare organizations and religious congregations in the U.S., the resources they obtain through volunteerism are central to their ability to serve their communities. Specifically, the study found that:

- 44% of adults over the age of 21 volunteered with a formal organization in 2000. Of these formal volunteers, 63% reported they volunteered on a regular basis, monthly or more often.
- Volunteers to formal organizations averaged just over 24 hours per month of volunteer time.
- An estimated 83.9 million adults formally volunteered approximately 15.5 billion hours in 2000.
- The formal volunteer workforce represented the equivalent of over nine million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion (estimated hourly value of volunteer time = \$15.40).
- 50% of all people were asked to volunteer. Individuals who were asked to volunteer were much more likely to volunteer (71%) than were those who had not been asked (29%).

Notably, researchers at the University of Chicago have found that senior citizens are more likely to volunteer than their younger counterparts (Adams, 2008). In fact, about 22% of people in their 70s and 80s volunteer on a weekly basis, compared to 17% of those in their older 50s. People in their 70s and 80s are about 36% more likely to volunteer on at least a weekly basis than people in their 50s. The researchers speculated that increased volunteerism is not necessarily a function of older Americans having more time, but likely they are more proactive than younger adults in establishing ties to the community. In fiscal year 2007-2008, senior citizens volunteered more than 30,000 hours to help organizations in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties (United Way of the Piedmont, 2009).

Other studies (Bryan, 2005) have found that:

- 57% of American adults volunteered for a charitable cause in 2004, an increase of 9% over the proportion who volunteered in 2003.
- 75% of those who volunteer cited their own moral values as the main factor in their decision to volunteer, 47% said they were motivated by the opportunity to gain new experiences, 42% said they felt an obligation to volunteer because they had received help from a volunteer, and 39% said they volunteered as a way to meet new people.
- People who live in the South are more likely to volunteer; 62% of Southerners had volunteered .
- 68% of volunteers are college graduates.
- 62% of volunteers have incomes of at least \$75,000 per year.

There are numerous private and public agencies, groups, and organizations that benefit from volunteers in Spartanburg County. United Way of the Piedmont's Volunteer Connections program coordinates individuals and groups with volunteer service opportunities in more than 200 human service organizations in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties. Table 5 shows the number of volunteer contacts, coordinated hours, and value of volunteer time since 2005.

Table 5. Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties Volunteer Data				
	FY 2005-2006	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008	FY 2008-2009
Volunteer Contacts	2,126	2,853	3,147	1,730
Volunteer Hours Coordinated	26,499	32,654	52,211	52,932
Value of Volunteer Time	\$465,057	\$590,712	\$980,009	\$993,528

**July 1, 2008 through April 30, 2009 United Way of the Piedmont*

Clearly, volunteerism in these three counties has consistently increased.

In addition to volunteer data reported by United Way of the Piedmont, Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System reports that, over the three year period 2006-2008, volunteers donated 106,796 hours in service to the hospital (Table 6).

Table 6. Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Volunteer Data		
Year	# Volunteers	# Hours
2006	219	33,824.75
2007	236	35,129.50
2008	276	37,841.75

Subject matter experts agree that volunteerism is widespread in Spartanburg County but that there is no comprehensive way to identify or track the exact number of volunteers or volunteer hours provided to the community.

Cultural Vitality

“Communities, institutions, and their citizens are best defined not by their deficiencies and shortcomings, but by their assets, strengths, and creative imagination” – MDC Inc.

Community leaders are increasingly turning to the work of Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (2002) in which he promulgates the theory that human creativity is the ultimate economic resource, and harnessing and cultivating it is essential to the prosperity of the community. Florida describes the creative class as being comprised of scientists, engineers, artists, musicians, designers and knowledge-based professionals. Innovative people cluster together and increase each other's productivity to drive energetic and exciting communities, so without them, the community will stagnate. The creative class comprises about one-third of the work force but accounts for half of all wages and salaries and three quarters of all discretionary purchasing power. In addition to setting the “tone” of a community (what Florida describes as the “soul of the city – its sound, a signature, the way it looks, the way it feels”), existence of a creative class is largely responsible for the economic success of a community. The cities and regions that have done the best during a recession have been the ones that have the largest creative class. The cities that have suffered the most have been the ones with the least creative class.

The Urban Institute defines cultural vitality as “a community's evidence of creating, disseminating, validating, and supporting arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life.” Three domains of measurement track cultural vitality – presence of opportunities for cultural participation, cultural participation itself, and support for cultural activities. The Urban Institute characterizes these measurement domains by the following sub-indicators:

Presence of Opportunities for Cultural Participation

- Nonprofit, public, and commercial arts-related organizations (with a particular focus on size and function within the cultural and broader community context)
- Retail arts venues – bookstores, music stores, film theaters, craft and art supply stores
- Non-arts venues with arts and cultural programming – parks, libraries, ethnic associations, societies, and centers
- Indigenous Venues of Validation – churches, libraries, and other venues where cultural vitality / activities take place but might not be considered in the same category as traditional venues
- Festivals and parades
- Arts-focused media outlets (print and electronic, including web-based venues)
- Art schools
- Art galleries

Participation

- Amateur art-making
- Collective / community art-making
- Arts education K-12
- Arts after-school programs
- Audience participation
- Purchase of artistic goods (materials for making art as well as art products)
- Discourse about arts and culture in the media

Support

- Public expenditures in support of the arts in all sectors (nonprofit, public, and commercial)
- Foundation expenditures in support of the arts (nonprofit, public, and commercial)
- Volunteering and personal giving to the arts
- Presence of artists (professional artists as well as people who are tradition-bearers but may not make money from their arts practice)
- Integration of arts and culture into other policy areas (e.g. community development, education, parks and recreation, etc.)

A growing body of studies demonstrates the positive economic benefits of the arts within communities; however, there have also been vigorous debates about the feasibility and efficacy of economic analyses. Economic impact indicators, formulas and interpretation of data vary widely from study to study. The case for impact measurement, however, has become sufficiently robust in recent years, in terms of economic development, such that a number of models are beginning to emerge through a developing discipline of cultural economics. It is likely that this will lead to standardization of research methodology and establishment of a national framework for arts impact analysis.

There are two principal categories of the economic benefits of the arts:

- Direct economic benefits that result from the arts as an economic activity and include such measures as employment, tax revenues, and primary and secondary spending in local economies.
- Indirect economic benefits that result when individuals and employers are attracted to areas where the arts are available. Typically, particular classes of workers (skilled) and employers (high value-added) are those who are attracted to arts communities. Non-quantifiable economic benefits such as the general edification and education of the local population are also indirect economic benefits.

Subject matter experts indicate that the direct economic benefit of the arts and cultural activities in Spartanburg are beginning to be quantified. Although the indirect (aesthetic, social and cultural) contributions of the arts and cultural activities in Spartanburg cannot be quantified at this time, these contributions are obviously significant. Intuitive understandings that the arts add significantly to the quality of life in a community lead us to know that they are key to economic development of a community. The presence of the Chapman Cultural Center, for example, has brought a wide range of social and economic benefit to Spartanburg County that is difficult to measure. New residents are drawn to communities with wide cultural amenities, just as they are drawn to communities with good schools. The number of new residents to the Upstate who are drawn to Spartanburg County, in part, because of the Chapman Cultural Center, is unknown.

Although there is no comprehensive inventory of cultural opportunities throughout the county, a sampling of local arts organizations can be found in Appendix II. Because cultural opportunities directly affect the status of other community indicators such as education, economy and viability, an assessment of the breadth and range of local cultural opportunities is viewed by subject matter experts as being a project that should be undertaken in the short term.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

“Often, we spend time in our different corners of the city. We’re in different places like silos, which prevent us from interacting with one another very often on a one-on-one level. This is not associated with anything but the idea of community. If we can build that opportunity to get to know each other in a common space, that is tremendous.” – Andrew Stephens

Local subject matter experts and a variety of stakeholders in Spartanburg County view public investment in recreation and recreational facilities as vital to the economic well-being of the county. According to the Spartanburg County Recreation Needs Assessment 1999-2009, “Participation in recreation and leisure activities can elevate the quality of life of Spartanburg citizens. Recreation is not an amenity to be afforded only by the affluent, but is a basic necessity which benefits individuals, their community, the environment and economy. . . . Recreation must not be viewed as an optional expense but as necessary investment in the future viability of the Spartanburg community.”

Parks and public recreation within the limits of the City of Spartanburg are administered by the City Parks and Recreation Department, whereas parks and public recreation outside of the city limits are administered by the Spartanburg County Recreation Commission.

Spartanburg City Parks and Recreation Department

The City’s Parks and Recreation Department maintains four recreation centers, including one swim center. Each of these centers provides special programs throughout the year, including after school programs, team and individual sports, and programs for senior citizens. Further, the City of Spartanburg maintains over 350 acres of parkland, 10 basketball courts, seven playgrounds, seven baseball fields, four tennis courts, eight picnic shelters, four walking trails, four gymnasiums, one swimming pool, two amphitheaters, one football field and a baseball stadium. The City’s inventory also includes the Hub City Art Park and newly built Hot Spot Skate Park. The City’s Parks, Recreation and Special Events Department also coordinates a wide variety of festivals, concerts, activities and special events for all ages, including Music on Main, Jazz on the Square, Spring Fling Weekend, Spartanburg International Festival, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Celebration, and Shamrocks on the Square.

With a budget of approximately \$2.3 million and 28 full and part-time staff members, the City Parks and Recreation Department partners with multiple agencies, including the Spartanburg Housing Authority and School District Seven, to provide comprehensive programs. Most programs are free, although there may be some registration fees for certain sports and activities.

Spartanburg County Recreation Commission

In 2006, there were 2.44 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in Spartanburg County. The national average is 6.25 acres per 1,000 residents. According to the Spartanburg County Recreation Needs Assessment 1999 – 2009, this includes 51 public parks (6 mini parks, 17 neighborhood parks, 4 recreation complexes, 3 community parks, and 21 special purpose parks). In addition, the State of South Carolina owns and operates Croft State Park which spans approximately 7,054 acres, 200 of which are available for public use. It is the goal of the Spartanburg County Recreation Commission to have a regional park site within 15 minutes of every county resident.

County public parks encompass a variety of facilities including 32 baseball / softball fields, 3 basketball courts, 4 community centers, 2 miles of multi-use trail, 5 gymnasiums, 17 playgrounds, 8 picnic shelters, 21 soccer fields, 1 volleyball court, 22 tennis courts, 1 Disc Golf course, and a BMX track.

A survey of county residents two years ago indicated that the top five preferences for county recreational amenities were related to outdoor activities. As a result, the Recreation Commission shifted focus from recreation center activities to increased outreach oriented event programming, including special programming for senior citizens and outdoor activities. Current offerings include:

- LEAF outdoor recreation program - offers opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, kayaking, family campouts, and youth adventure camps
- After School Youth Development and Summer Day Camps
- Events such as the Stump Jump Mountain Bike Race, the Tame the Tyger River Kayak Race, the Great Easter Egg Scramble, and All American Soap Box Race
- Facilities, fields and equipment rental

The Recreation Commission has recently channeled efforts to supporting access to county waterways and has set aside \$2 million for trails that will connect neighborhoods and promote county-wide “active living.” In keeping with these efforts, the Spartanburg County Recreation Commission’s mission statement is “Practicing responsible stewardship, we will strive to enhance the lives of Spartanburg County citizens by providing diverse leisure opportunities that promote healthy lifestyle choices, a sense of community, and an appreciation of our natural resources.”

Libraries

Library Facts:

- Libraries hold 16 billion volumes worldwide – that’s about 2.5 items for each person on earth.
- At an average price of \$45 per book, the worldwide library book inventory approaches nearly three-quarters of a trillion dollars
- There are 139,800 libraries in the U.S.
- One out of every six people in the world is a registered library user
- Five times more people visit U.S. public libraries each year than attend U.S. professional and college football, basketball, baseball and hockey games combined.
- U.S. public library cardholders outnumber Amazon customers by almost five to one, and each day U.S. libraries circulate nearly four times more items than Amazon handles.

~ Online Computer Library Center ~

Libraries *(Cont.)*

Nationally there has been a shift in the role of public libraries during recent years, from passive recreational reading and research institutions to active agents of economic development, addressing such pressing urban issues as literacy, workforce training, small business vitality and community quality of life (Urban Libraries Council, 2007). Libraries have positioned themselves to help communities make the transition from manufacturing and service economies to high tech and information economies, largely through providing the public access to digital information and technology, by playing an active role in entrepreneurial activity, and by being seen as central to vibrant, livable places. A study by the Urban Institute (Urban Libraries Council, 2007) found that libraries make cities stronger by achieving benefits for individuals, agencies and the community at large in four areas:

- Early literacy services are contributing to long-term economic success.
- Small business resources and programs are lowering barriers to market entry.
- Public library buildings are contributing to stability, safety and quality of life in neighborhoods.

A 2005 study of the economic impact of public libraries in South Carolina (University of South Carolina, 2005), shows that the total direct economic impact of S.C. public libraries is estimated to be \$222 million, while the actual cost of these services to the state and local governments is \$77.5 million. This means that for every \$1 spent by state and local governments on public libraries, the return on investment is \$2.86. The indirect economic impact of S.C. public library expenditures (wages, supplies, books and related materials, construction, etc.) on the state's economy is almost \$126 million. This means that for every \$1 expended by S.C. public libraries, the state receives \$1.62 of indirect economic impact. Thus, the total direct and indirect return on investment for every \$1 expended on the state's public libraries by S.C. state and local governments is \$4.48 or 350%.

The same study included a survey of library patrons throughout the state. Statements from selected patrons of the Spartanburg County libraries included:

- "I'm a single mom of two small children. I'm able to help them increase their love for learning and reading. As well as the enjoyment I receive from reading. I can't afford to buy us many books. The library provides new books to our family each week. I am also able to use the computer services and Internet."
- "I'm retired. The library has been a major recreational source contributing to both my emotional and intellectual well-being."
- "I check out movies weekly. Either for my family's enjoyment or for instruction on a specific topic. I could not be able to afford to buy or rent this quantity of movies or videos otherwise."
- "We often use the library's computer, as we can't afford one of our own at this time. The library is integral to our lives as we know them here in Inman."

Spartanburg County Public Libraries offer numerous services, including:

- Free access to check out books, movies, CDs, and more
- Free access to online databases such as DISCUS, Grolier, ReferenceUSA, HeritageQuest and more
- Free internet and wireless access
- Access to materials from other libraries nationwide
- The ability to request materials from your home computer
- Free computer classes, readers clubs, activities for teens including video games, other classes and activities
- Bookmobile
- Homebound services for people who are disabled and have difficulty reaching the library
- Library store
- Exhibits
- Volunteer opportunities
- Spanish language interface
- Photocopiers
- Microfilm Machines
- Word processors
- Story times

Public Library Locations in Spartanburg County are:

- Headquarters Library, downtown Spartanburg
- Boiling Springs Library
- Chesnee Library
- Cowpens Library
- H. Carlisle Bean Law Library, downtown Spartanburg
- Inman Library
- Landrum Library
- Middle Tyger Library, Lyman
- Pacolet Library
- Westside Library, Oak Grove Rd. Spartanburg
- Woodruff Library

In addition to public libraries in Spartanburg County, the county is home to five academic institutions with libraries of significant circulation and interlibrary loan activity.

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Tables and Figures

List of Tables

Table 1. Voter Turnout, General Election 2008	9
Table 2. Giving Patterns by Census Division (2002 Dollars)	11
Table 3. South Carolina Giving by County, 2003	12
Table 4. Charitable Organizations by County, 2009	13
Table 5. Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties Volunteer Data	16
Table 6. Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Volunteer Data	16

List of Figures

Figure 1. VEP Turnout Rate (% of Eligible Voters Who Voted)	7
Figure 2. Total Ballots Cast in S.C., Last Three Presidential Elections	8
Figure 3. Percentage Increase in Ballots Cast, 2004-2008	9

Appendix I

Goal 9 Indicators

Because Spartanburg is a dynamic community, the issues that impact the growth, health and quality of life for its citizens are in flux. Since the 2005 iteration of the **Community Indicators VI** report was presented to the community, it has become necessary or beneficial to change a number of the indicators for various goals. The subject matter experts who have advised on these changes were representatives of agencies and other organizations whose missions are driven by these indicators. The rationale for the revised indicators for Goal 9 is provided below. A number of indicators were expanded to provide a more comprehensive picture of the status of civic engagement in Spartanburg County. In the current iteration, data were provided for comparison where possible and frequently with caution.

Indicators for Goal 9	
Community Indicators VI	Current Iteration
Voter Registration Turnout	Expanded as "Voting"
Charitable Giving	Expanded as "Charitable Giving / Philanthropy"
Attendance at Cultural Events	Expanded as "Cultural Vitality"
	Added: Parks and Recreational Facilities
	Added: Libraries
	Added: Volunteerism

Appendix II: Local Arts Organizations

HUB-BUB, together with its sister organization the **Hub City Writers Project**, is part of a 501(c)3 organization called **HubCulture Inc.**, whose mission is to build community through dynamic arts and ideas. HUB-BUB offers more than 100 nights of art, culture and entertainment a year, including progressive art exhibits, film, experimental theatre, workshops, community forums and more. HUB-BUB also hosts emerging young artists from all over the country through its Artist-in-Residence programs, supporting their art-making and interaction with Spartanburg in inventive ways.

The Hub City Writers Project is focused on the literature of place. A non-profit independent press and literary arts organization, Hub City publishes place-based books and sponsors readings, writing seminars and contests.

The Arts Partnership of Spartanburg was originally founded in 1968 as the Spartanburg Arts Council and now serves as the official local arts agency for Spartanburg County. Its mission is to provide cultural leadership for Greater Spartanburg by developing, strengthening and promoting the excellence, scope of educational role of the arts, humanities and sciences and furthering their financial strength, as well as their significance in the life of our community and the lives of its citizens. In its effort to make the arts accessible to people in a number of ways, the Arts Partnership funds and implements programs and supports nine community arts and cultural organizations:

Artists' Guild of Spartanburg

The mission of the Artists' Guild of Spartanburg is to serve as a source for creative visual arts in the community by promoting and encouraging knowledge of the visual arts and of local artists. It shall continue to provide enrichment and artistic education for its members as well as the community at large, and thus encourage a deepening appreciation and love of art among the citizens of Spartanburg and the surrounding area.

Ballet Spartanburg

Ballet Spartanburg's mission is to promote dance appreciation in Spartanburg County and surrounding areas by providing quality dance presentation, education, and outreach.

Carolina Foothills Artisan Center

The Carolina Foothills Artisan Center is organized and shall operate exclusively as a nonprofit corporation to develop the educational, artistic, cultural and economic growth of the Upstate by providing means for North and South Carolina artists to demonstrate the creative process and to showcase the products of their talents to a wide variety of citizens and by providing a place for citizens to learn about and purchase the work of Carolina artisans.

SAM – Spartanburg Art Museum

Spartanburg Art Museum is a regional museum promoting the visual arts by: supporting educational programming, sponsoring diverse exhibitions, acquiring, displaying and conserving a permanent collection, and providing appropriate places for outreach opportunities.

Spartanburg County Historical Association

The mission of the Spartanburg County Historical Association is to explore and preserve our region's history by collecting and sharing the stories of the people who shaped that history by: engaging visitors in unique living history programs and events in the city and county of Spartanburg; inspiring learners of all ages to investigate the history that begins in their own backyard at our historic sites and regional museum; and involving the community in the preservation of our shared past.

Spartanburg Little Theatre & Spartanburg Youth Theatre

The mission of the Spartanburg Little Theatre is to activate, cultivate and educate our community through quality theatrical experiences.

Appendix II: Local Arts Organizations *(Cont.)*

Spartanburg Science Center

The Spartanburg Science Center is a magical world of science, nature and technology that fosters an appreciation of and respect for the environment and the world of science.

The Music Foundation of Spartanburg

The Music Foundation of Spartanburg's mission is to educate, entertain and enrich people's lives through music.

The Spartanburg Repertory Company

The Spartanburg Repertory Company explores, develops, and celebrates the music of the human voice as it finds expression through professional quality productions

These organizations do not fully represent the scope and variety of cultural and arts initiatives in Spartanburg County; however, they are the "pillar" organizations that are particularly significant in fostering diverse cultural activity and participation.

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Sincerely,



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Spartanburg Community Indicators Project is a collaboration of The Spartanburg County Foundation, United Way of the Piedmont, Spartanburg County Government, and The University of South Carolina Upstate. It reports on progress of key issues that are the clearest indicators of quality of life in the County of Spartanburg, South Carolina. Its goal is to report on data and community initiatives to inspire dialogue and strategy that leads to change within the community.

www.StrategicSpartanburg.org