

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES  
November 15, 2023**

Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a Work Session.

Notice of the meeting was duly advertised, as required by law.

**PRESENT:** Todd Johnson, Chairman  
Les Hipp, Vice Chairman  
Karl Sease, Council Member  
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member  
Travis Reeder, Council Member  
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member  
Leon Fulmer, Council Member Elect  
Jeff Shacker, County Administrator  
Joanie Winters, Interim County Attorney  
Eric Nieto, I.T. Director  
Rick Farmer, Economic Development Director  
Katie Werts, Director of Planning and Development Services  
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. Presentation of the proposed Natural Resources, Priority Investment and Resiliency elements of the draft Comprehensive Plan – Cheryl Matheny, Planning Consultant, The Matheny-Burns Group.
  - Ms. Matheny presented a PowerPoint presentation, as attached in the minutes, detailing the three mentioned elements.
  - Regarding the Natural Resources element, Ms. Matheny covered Land Resources; Soils, Slope and Elevation, Residential Development Limitations (including that of septic tank absorption ratings); Prime

Farmland; Agriculture and Forestry; Recreation Resources; Water Resources; Recreation on the Water; Water Quality; Impaired Waters and TMDL Sites; Lake and River Planning and Protection; Wetlands.

- Regarding Resiliency, Ms. Matheny said this was a new element they brought to the plan. This element includes an inventory of existing resiliency conditions; promotes resilient planning, design, and development; and is coordinated with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.
- For Resiliency, Ms. Matheny covered Natural and Public Risks; Natural Systems Risks and Hazards; Transportation; Energy and Utilities; Cybersecurity and Communications; Hazardous Materials; Nuclear Power Plant Emergency Planning Zones (EPZ); Public Health and Social Vulnerability; Economic Stability and Resilience; Local Capacity and Coordination; State and Federal Assistance; Funding Sources; and Notifications.
  - Mr. Hipp asked Ms. Matheny where the information for funding sources came from. Ms. Matheny said she would get back to council with that information.
- For Priority Investment, Ms. Matheny covered Intergovernmental Coordination; Adjacent and Relevant Agencies; County Capital Investment Priorities; Capital Improvement Sales Tax Plan; Planned County Capital Facilities Projects; Notifications and Considerations.

## 2. Executive Session

### a. Economic Development Matter(s):

- i. Discussion of matters related to *Project Artemis* pursuant to SC Code of Laws Section 30-4-70(a)(5).
- ii. Discussion of matters related to *Project Cavalier* pursuant to SC Code of Laws Section 30-4-70(a)(5).

- Mr. Johnson requested whoever made the motion to go into executive session to invite Mr. Fulmer to join them in executive session, as that is permitted under statute.
- Mr. Shealy made a motion to go into executive session and to invite future Councilman Leon Fulmer to attend. Mr. Hipp provided the second and the motion as approved 6-0.
- Council went into executive session at 5:24 p.m.
- At 6:04 p.m., Mr. Shealy made a motion to come out of executive session; Mr. Sease provided the second. The motion was approved 6-0.
- Mr. Johnson said Newberry County Council went into executive session for the aforementioned reasons and no action was taken by council.

3. Adjournment.

- At 6:05 p.m., Mr. Shealy made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Hipp provided the second. The motion was approved 6-0.

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL**

  
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**Todd Johnson, Chairman**

  
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**Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council**

Minutes Approved: Dec. 6, 2023

# Newberry County Comprehensive Plan

Natural Resources, Resiliency, and  
Priority Investment Elements for  
County Council Review and  
Adoption

November 15, 2023

# The Comprehensive Plan

Introduction

# What is our Role in the Plan?

- Review and discuss element drafts
- Provide any edits needed to Katie in writing
- Discuss any major edits as needed
- Consider Planning Commission recommendation, review entire document and make changes as needed
- May approve individual elements
- Vote to adopt entire Plan by ordinance

# Comprehensive Plan

## Plan Elements

Population

Housing

Economic

**Natural Resources**

Cultural Resources

Community Facilities

Transportation

**Resiliency (new)**

**Priority Investment**

Land Use

## Planning Process

Inventory

Needs & Goals

Implementation

## Implementation

Zoning Ordinance

Subdivision Regs

Capital Improvements

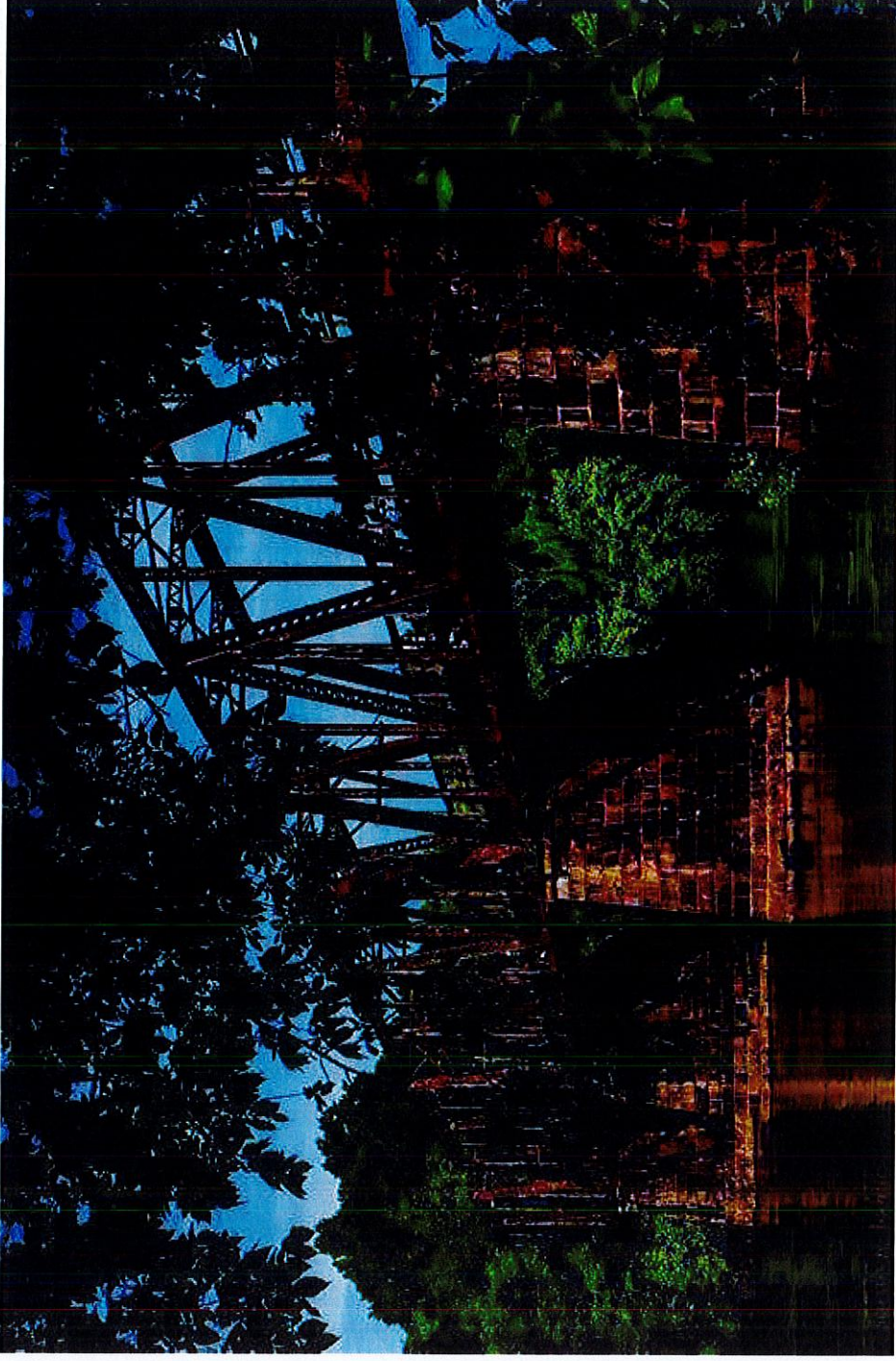
Zoning Map

Policies and Procedures

# What is Required for each Element?

- Inventory of existing conditions
- Statement of needs and goals
- Implementation strategies with timeframes

# Natural Resources Element



# What is the Natural Resources Element?

- Provides information on local:
  - Geographic and geologic conditions
  - Climate
  - Agricultural and forest lands
  - Plant and animal habitats
  - Unique parks and open space
  - Scenic areas
  - Wetlands and flood plains
  - Air and water quality
  - Other factors that impact the natural environment and shape future development

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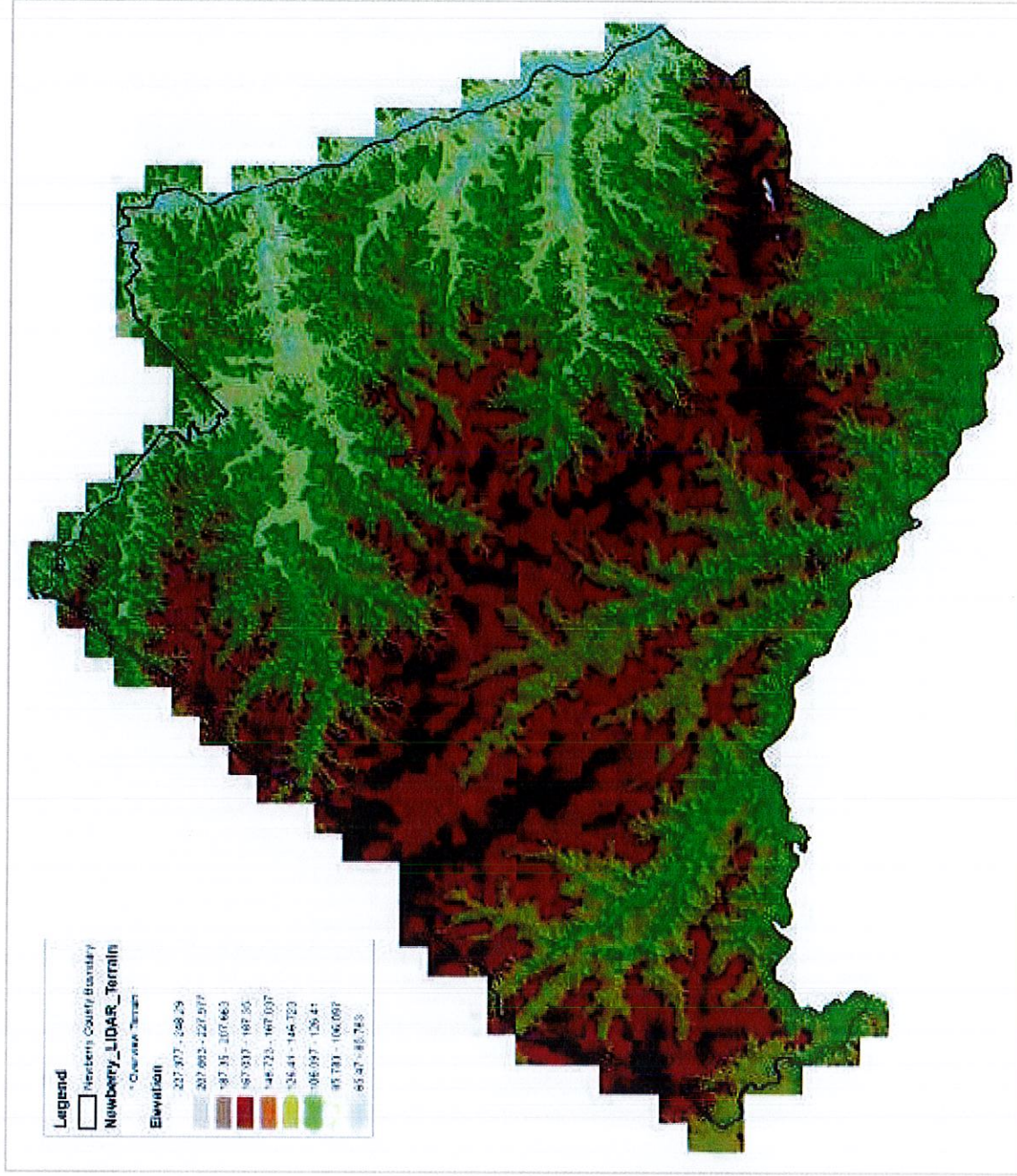
## Land Resources

- County is 647.32 square miles in area, ranks 25<sup>th</sup> largest in S.C.
  - 16.5 square miles of the County are water, including Lake Murray, Lake Greenwood, Parr Reservoir, and the Broad and Saluda Rivers
  - County situated above the Fall Line in the Southern Piedmont
-

# Soils, Slope, and Elevation

- Soil properties influence building and infrastructure costs, agricultural activities and productivity, and location and design of septic tanks
- Primarily well-drained soils of varying slopes and permeability in County
- County topography largely conducive to all types of development
- Only 1.2% of land area (4,787 acres) has slope greater than 25% and is not well-suited for commercial or industrial development
- 54.4% of land area (218,813 acres) has slope of 8% or less and is suitable for all types of land uses

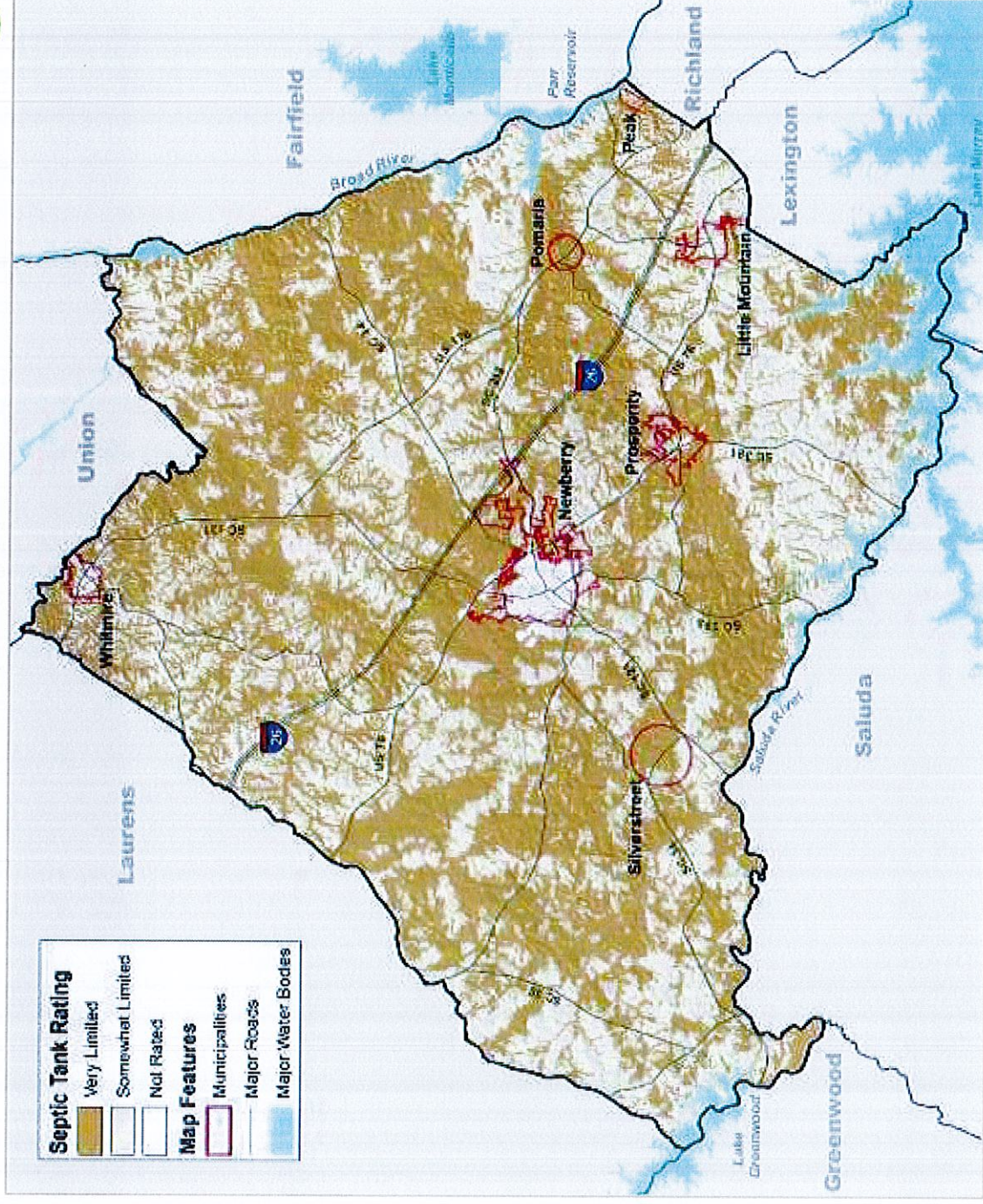
# Elevation



# Residential Development Limitations

- Wastewater treatment limited to 4 providers
- Residential development in much of the County must rely on septic tanks
- State law requires that a property proposed for septic tank is capable of proper operation, including a drain field
- More than half of land for which soil data is available in the County (215,144 acres) is rated as very limited for septic tank soil absorption, could result in poor performance and high maintenance

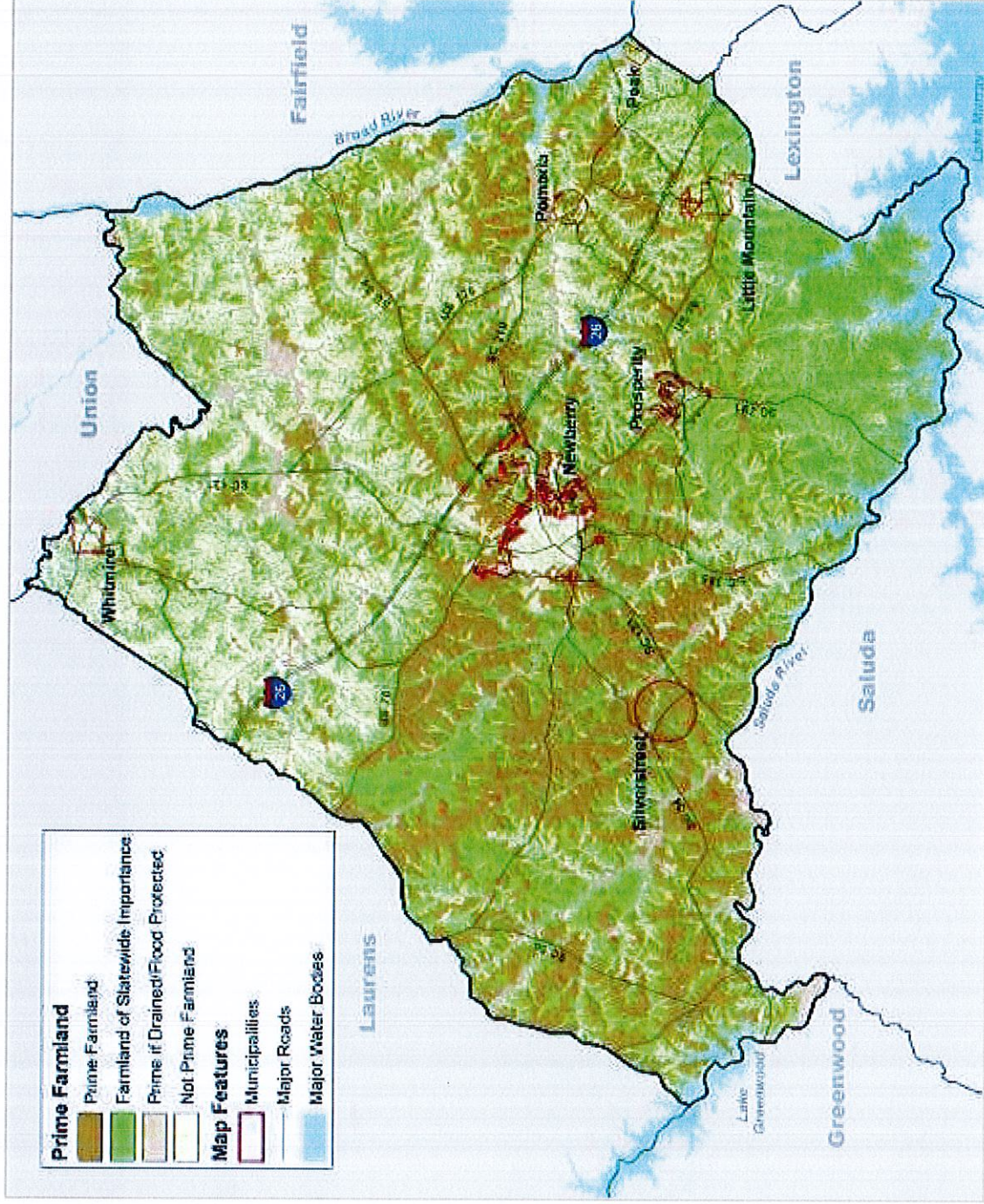
# Septic Tank Absorption Ratings



# Prime Farmland

- More than 1/3 of County land area (141,323 acres) is prime farmland
- Prime farmland is land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing crops
- Prime farmland soils produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources and least environmental damage
- An additional 28% of County soils (116,735 acres) have statewide importance for production of crops

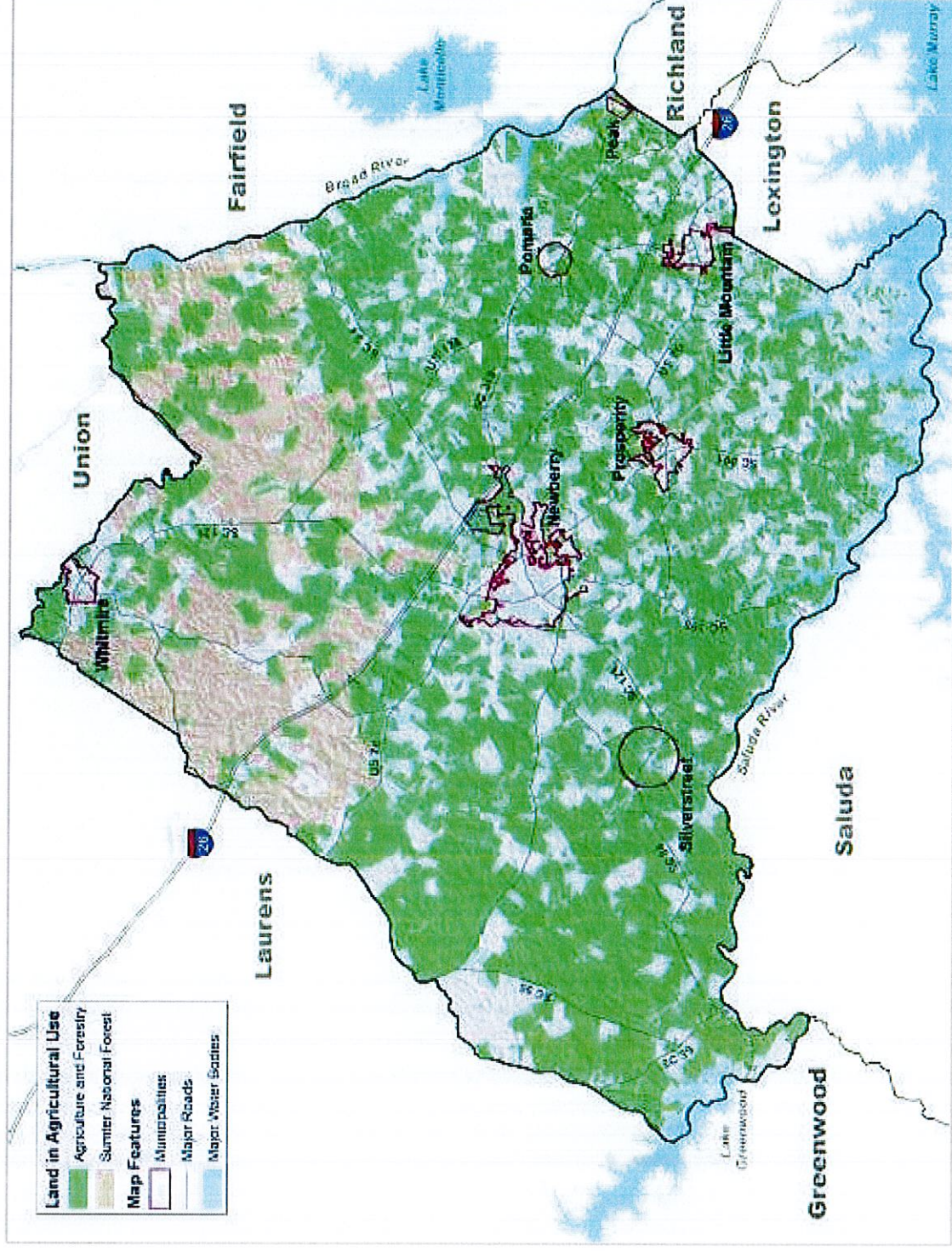
# Prime Farmland



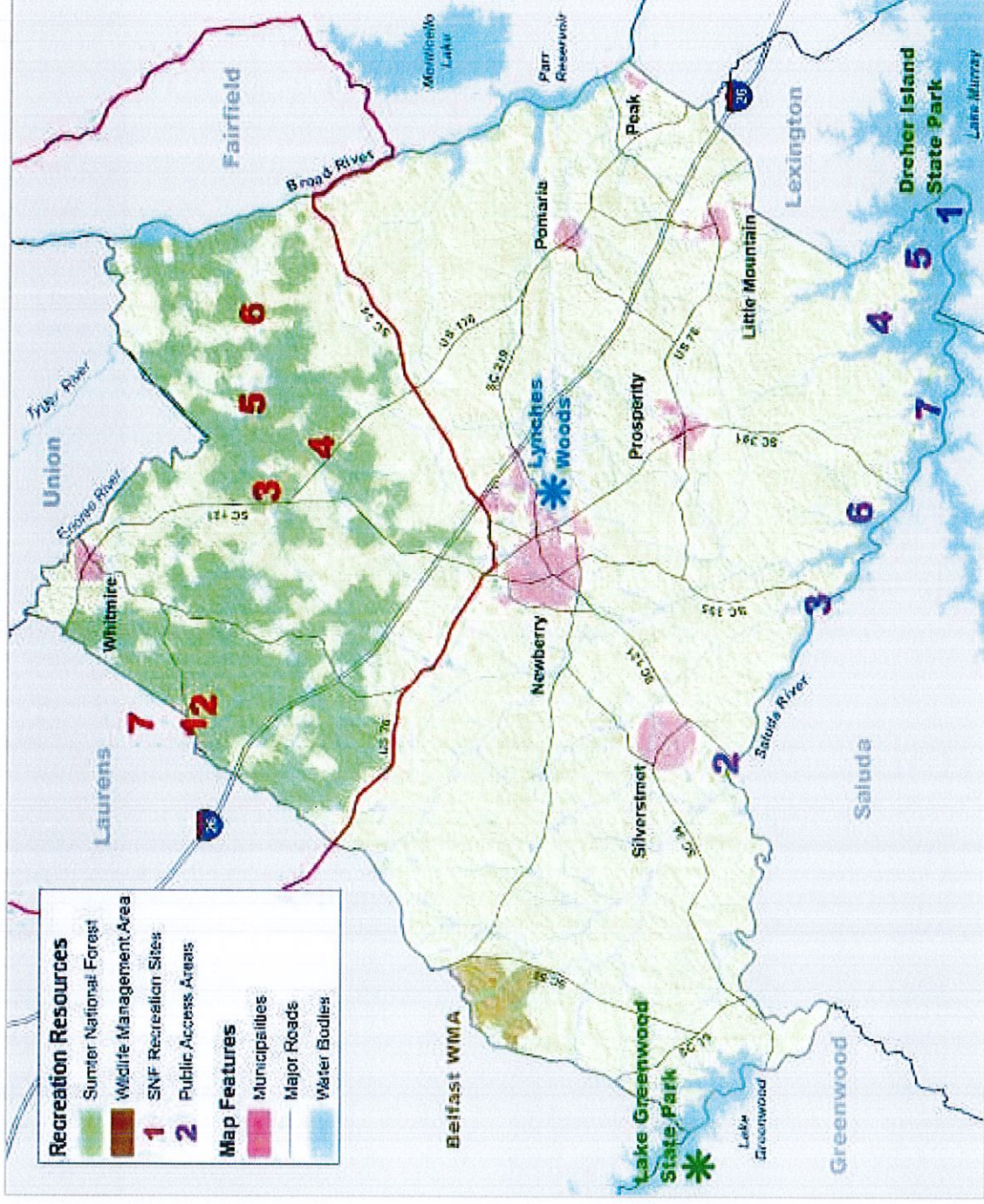
# Agriculture and Forestry

- County ranks:
  - 6<sup>th</sup> statewide in farm marketing of crops and livestock
  - Majority of sales in livestock and livestock products (4<sup>th</sup> statewide)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> in milk production, 4<sup>th</sup> in cattle and calves, 5<sup>th</sup> in poultry and egg production
  - 11<sup>th</sup> highest in delivered value from timber harvests
- More than 209,680 acres designated and taxed as land in agricultural use

# Agricultural Lands

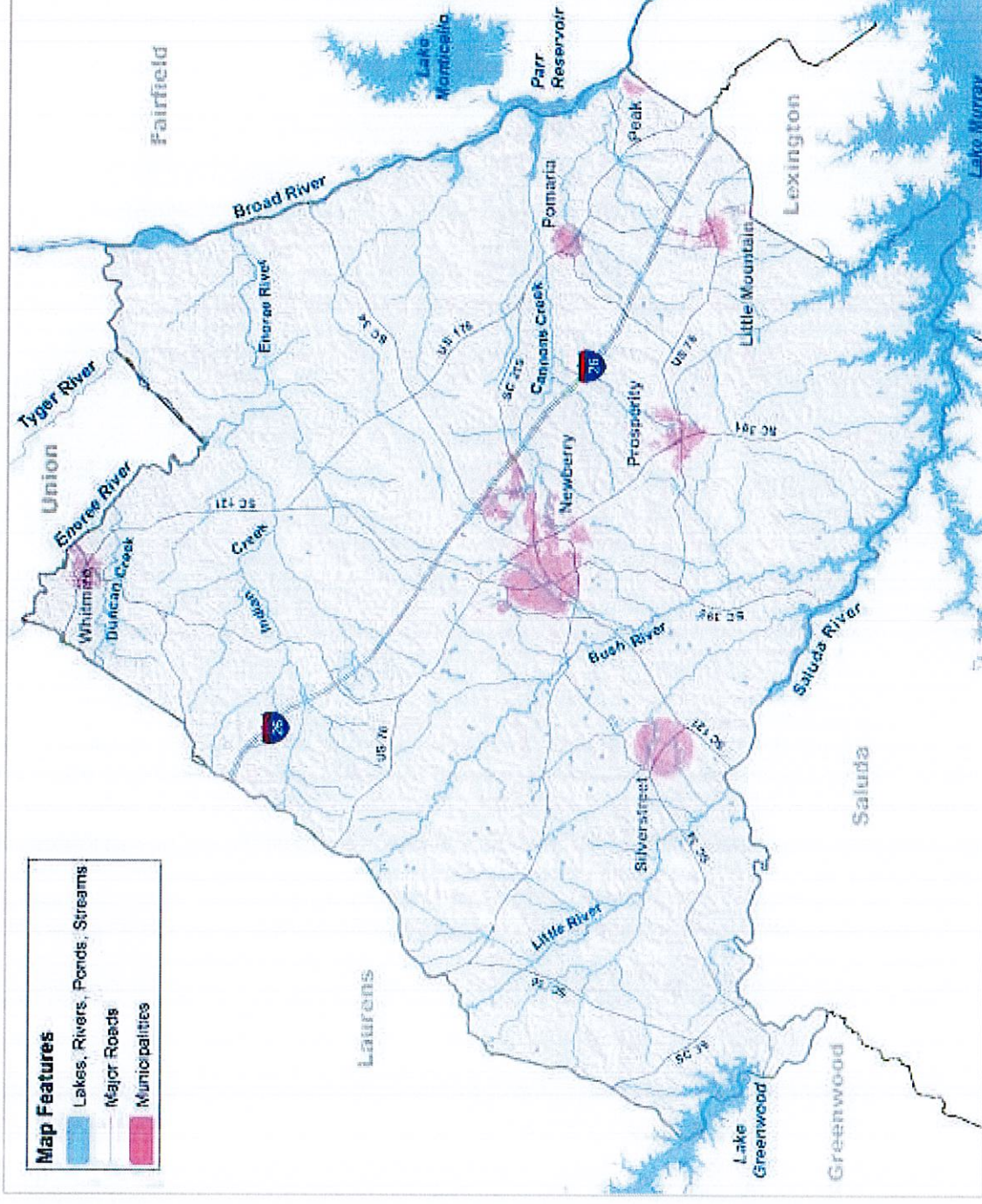


# Recreation Resources



- Sumter National Forest
- 2 State parks
- State WMA
- 46 public parks
- 7 public boat ramps
- 4 sections of Palmetto Trail
- 260-acre Lynch's woods

# Water Resources



- Lake Murray  
– 3<sup>rd</sup> largest

- Lake Greenwood  
– 12<sup>th</sup> largest

- Broad, Saluda, Enoree, Tyger Rivers

- Parr Reservoir

# Recreation on the Water

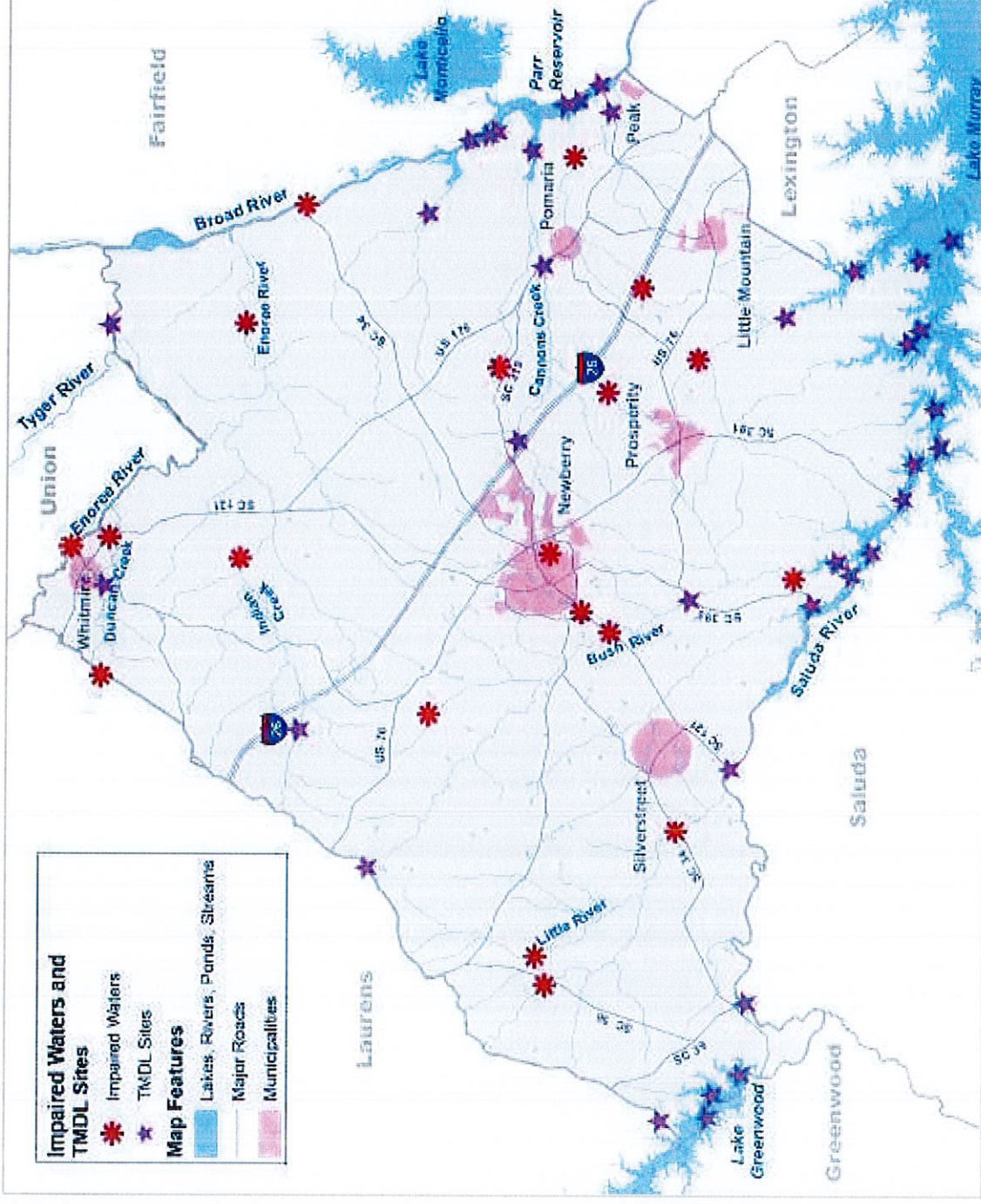
- Lake Murray
  - 50,000 acre man-made lake with more than 500 miles of shoreline
  - 5 recreation sites in County including Billy Dreher Island and 4 boat ramps, future sites planned at Big Creek and Simpson's Ferry
- Lake Greenwood
  - 11,400 acre lake with several miles of scenic shoreline within the County, access available at Buzzards Roost Dam and nearby Lake Greenwood State Park
- Broad, Saluda, Enoree and Tyger Rivers
- Parr Reservoir

# Water Quality

- CMCOG responsible for Water Quality Management of 5-County region including 208 *Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP)*
- WQMP administered by designated agencies – City of Newberry, Town of Whitmire, NCWSA
- SCDHEC maintains Watershed Water Quality Assessment. All waters in County classified as Fresh Water, are suitable for swimming, boating, fishing, industrial/agricultural uses, drinking water supply

# Impaired Waters and TMDL Sites

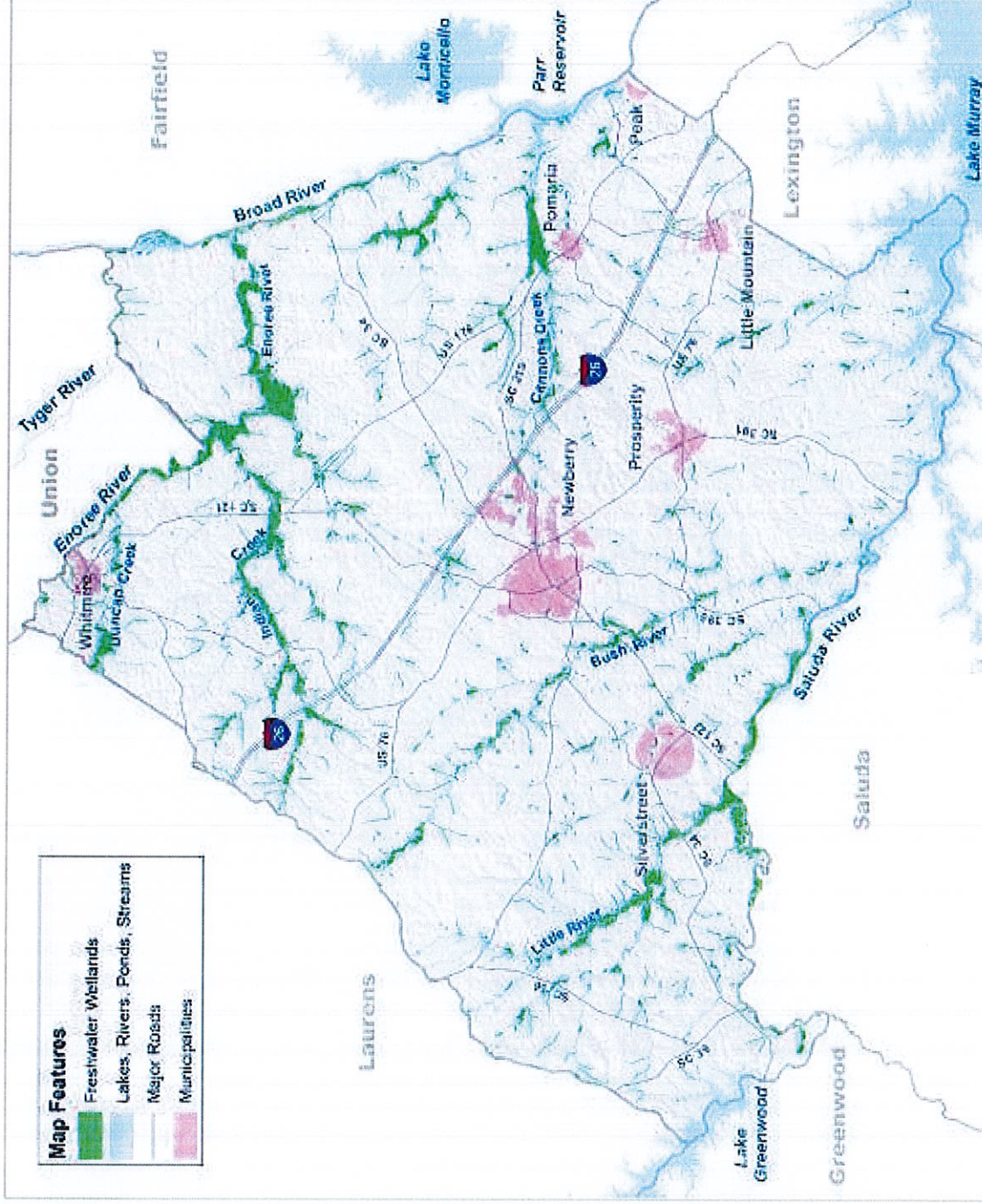
- TMDL sites – total maximum daily load (36 sites)
- Impaired water-bodies don't meet DHEC standards (19 sites)



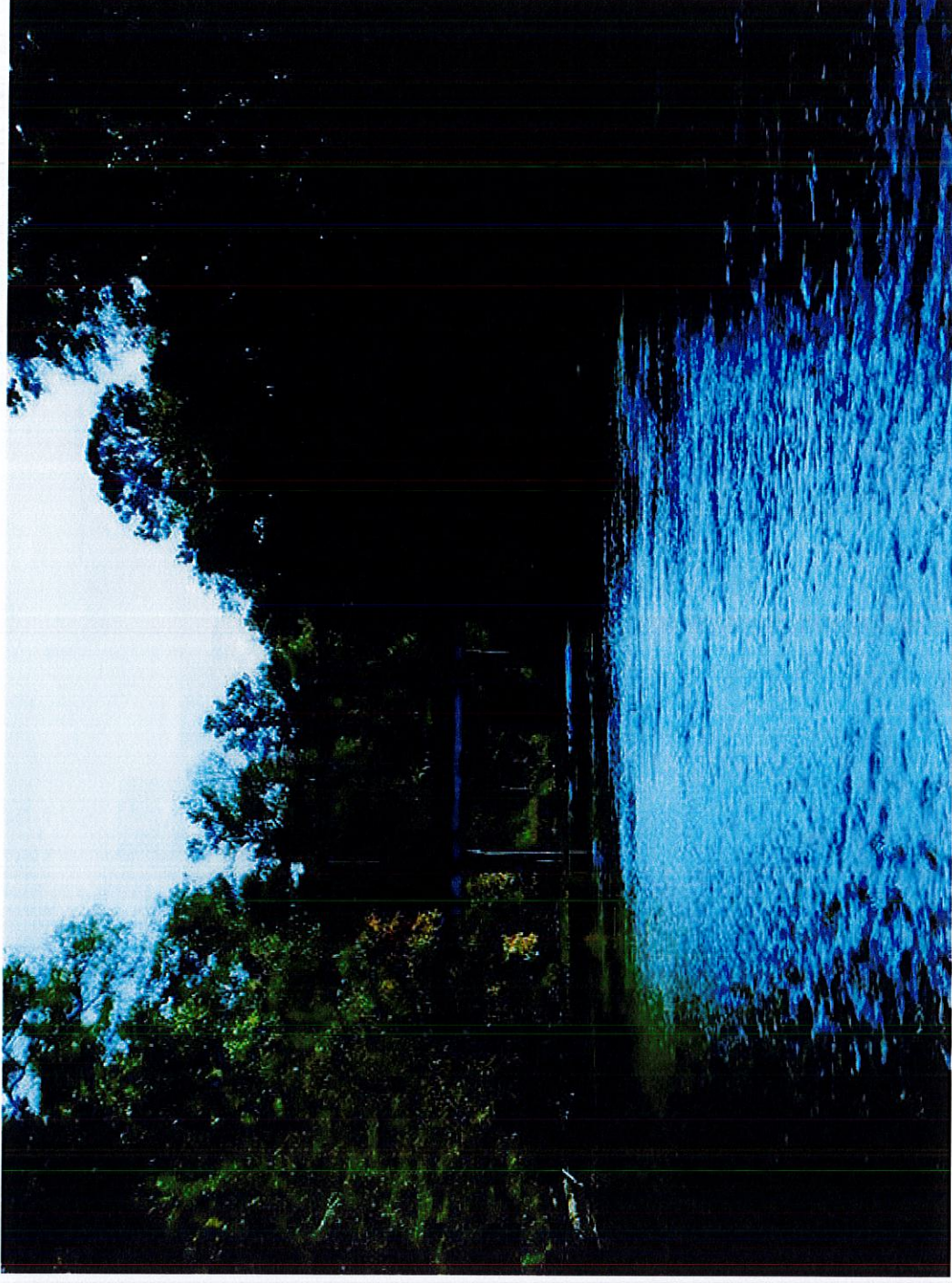
## Lake and River Planning and Protection

- Lake Murray Shoreline Management – Dominion administers/enforces the Shoreline Management Plan - permitting for docks, ramps, boat lifts, erosion control, shoreline stabilization, excavation, commercial and residential irrigation withdrawals
- Lake Greenwood Shoreline Management – Greenwood County administers/enforces Shoreline Management Plan - issues dock and marina permits, works with SCDNR to identify and protect critical habitat

# Wetlands



# Resiliency



## What is the Resiliency Element?

- New - required by the 2020 amendment to S.C. *Enabling Act*
- The ability of S.C. communities, economies, and ecosystems to anticipate, absorb, recover, and thrive when presented with environmental and natural hazards
- Considers impacts of flooding, highwater, and natural hazards on individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, economic development, public infrastructure and facilities, and public health, safety and welfare

# Resiliency

- Includes inventory of existing resiliency conditions; promotes resilient planning, design, and development; and is coordinated with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies
- Closely linked with all other planning elements:

| PLAN ELEMENT      | IMPACT ON RESILIENCY  |
|-------------------|---|
| Natural Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Identify, preserve, and enhance protective features of wetlands and flood plains</li><li>□ Identify forest management resources to mitigate the chance of wildfires</li><li>□ Identify and adopt flood plain management tools</li><li>□ Designate preservation and expansion of greenspace and greenways for energy conservation</li><li>□ Identify new green and blue infrastructure development opportunities</li></ul> |

# Natural and Public Risks

Newberry  
County  
Natural and  
Public Risks



# Natural Systems Risks and Hazards

- Though rare, the County experiences a range of natural emergencies
- County ranks 12<sup>th</sup> lowest statewide in number of past natural hazards
- County ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> highest in state in terms of future probability of the occurrence of all natural hazards
- Of the 14 hazards identified as risks for Newberry County, only Fog and Earthquakes are not forecasted to change in coming years, and Winter Storms and Extreme Cold are predicted to decrease – all others expected to increase

# Natural Systems Risks and Hazards

- Most frequent hazards are extreme cold (59%), thunderstorms (24%), extreme heat (21%), and wind (8.9%)
- Direct losses due to natural hazards totaled more than \$80 million from 1960 to 2020, highest was winter storms at \$21.8 million followed by drought (\$16 million) and extreme cold (\$14.8 million)
- By far the most loss causing events were attributed to wind - 198 events from 1960 to 2020

# Transportation

- Transportation – vehicle crashes, train derailments, hazardous waste spills along major corridors and primary rail lines; plane crashes at local and regional airports
- I-26 and major federal and state roads through the County mean higher risk of multi-vehicle accidents and incidents involving the transport of hazardous materials
- Two rail lines pass through Newberry County – statewide chemicals comprise 23% of shipped volume on CSX lines and 14% inbound and 4% of outbound tonnage on Norfolk Southern lines

# Energy and Utilities

- Growing reliance on electricity increases vulnerability and strain on electrical grid
- Extended outages can cut off fuel supplies, limit medical care, hamper communications, damage equipment, close employers and schools, and endanger residents
- Larger scale interruptions caused by intentional electromagnetic interference, electro magnetic impulse, geomagnetic disturbance caused by the sun, and cyberterrorism are a growing threat
- Water providers also vulnerable to cyber attacks, power failures, biological and chemical contamination

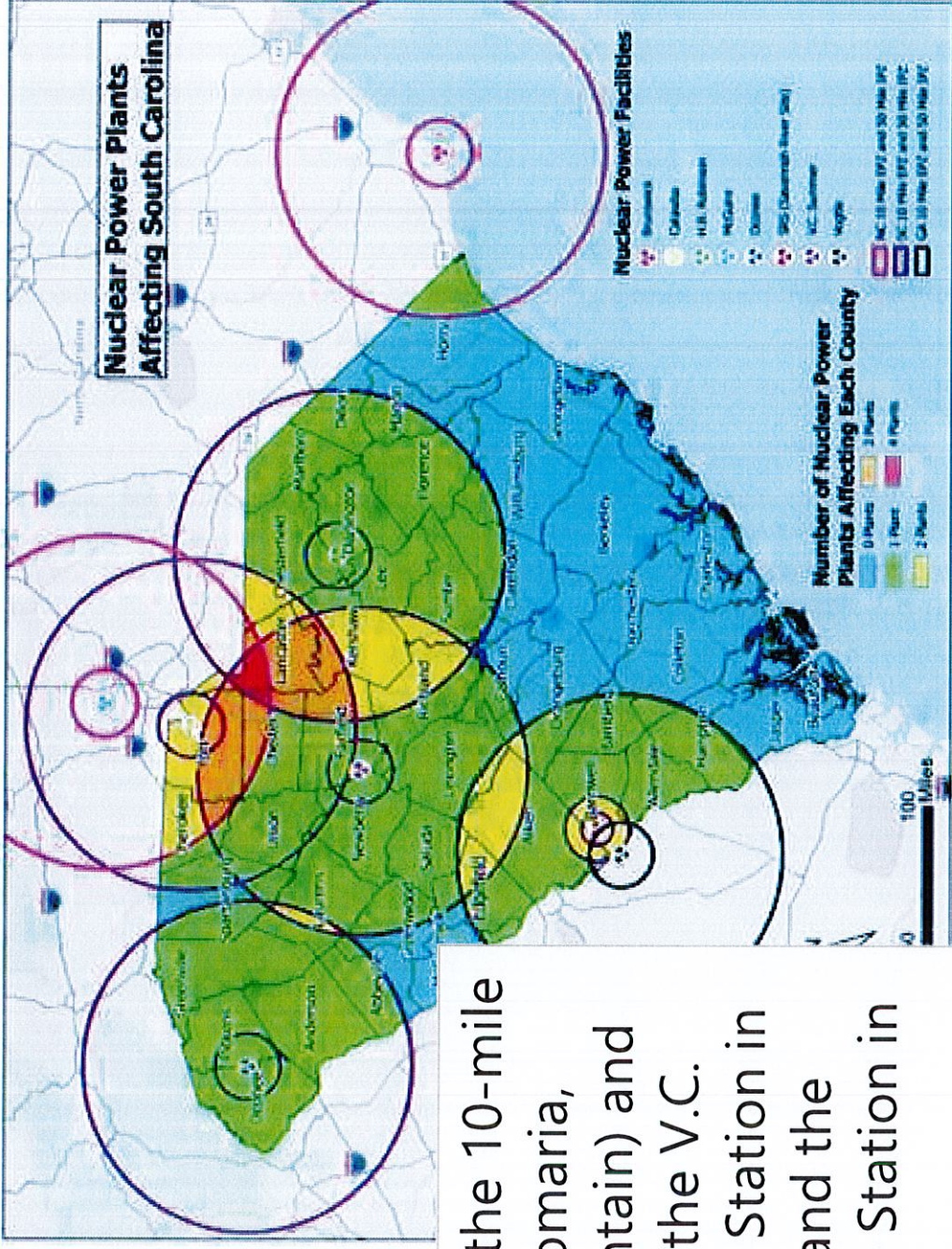
# Cybersecurity and Communications

- Cyberattacks are a primary threat to nation's critical infrastructure
- Automated controls and increased interconnectivity of communication networks heighten exposure and vulnerability of utilities, financial services, medical care, education, public safety, telecommunications, and transportation systems
- Cyber attacks have intensified in recent years
- Maintaining communications prior and during an event is key to preventing and mitigating loss and coordinating rescue and recovery efforts

# Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT)

- HAZMAT can be released through spills, explosions, leaks, etc., or used intentionally by terrorists or foreign adversaries
- County has numerous sites where hazardous materials are stored for industrial or agricultural uses – 11 regulated facilities.
- Nearly 2/3 of chemical releases from 2012 and 2021 have been into the air, 35% released through off-site disposal

# Nuclear Power Plant Emergency Planning Zones (EPZ)



County is within the 10-mile EPZ (including Pomaria, Peak, Little Mountain) and 50-mile EPZs for the V.C. Summer Nuclear Station in Fairfield County and the Catawba Nuclear Station in York County

# Public Health and Social Vulnerability

- Disasters and accidents have an even greater impact on vulnerable populations – elderly, low income, chronically ill, homeless, disabled
- Mass casualty events such as a crash or explosion, or a pandemic, can overwhelm hospitals and other care services and deplete supplies, equipment, and pharmaceuticals
- Vulnerability rankings indicate that County's special populations have a very high susceptibility to adverse impacts to natural hazards compared to the rest of the Nation and the State
- Estimated 9.8% of County residents are food insecure, lacking access at times to enough food for an active, healthy life

# Economic Stability and Resilience

- County's ability to leverage public and private resources to help restore affected employers and business operations quickly is essential to mitigating economic disruption - large employer closures, industry-specific shocks, recession, natural disasters, and public health hazards
- County has strong manufacturing and agricultural base, diversity in economic clusters that helped stabilize the economy and speed rebounds post pandemic
- How to strengthen economic resilience: small business and workforce development, infrastructure upgrades, broadband expansion, recruitment of higher wage/higher tech jobs, and support for business continuity planning for disasters

# Resiliency Resources

- Element lists many plans and resources including:
  - Central Midlands Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021) provides detailed vulnerability and mitigation information for 4-county region. Plan identified 34 specific hazard mitigation strategies for unincorporated area of County to address multiple risks
  - Newberry County Emergency Operations Plan (2019) is coordinated with the State Comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan and provides specific delegation of responsibilities of County and municipal agencies in the event of major disasters. EOP details activities in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery

# Local Capacity and Coordination

- County ordinances and participation
  - Hazardous Substances Ordinance
  - Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Ordinance
  - Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
  - National Flood Insurance Program
  - Stormready® community
- County coordinates with municipalities, state agencies, neighboring counties to provide mutual aide for a range of fire, police, hazardous material, public utilities emergencies

# State and Federal Assistance

- S.C. Emergency Management Division has a statewide mutual aid process and agreement in place for emergency and disaster response and recovery
- Disaster response at State and Federal levels further supported by the Emergency Support Function system – two dozen ESF cross-functional response teams ranging from transportation and energy/utilities to health and medical services and business and industry. Maintains formal agreements with nonprofit and faith-based groups such as Salvation Army, Red Cross

# Funding Sources

- Every \$1 invested in federal hazard mitigation grants provides an estimate return on investment of \$6
- County received less than \$400,000 in Federal funding between 2000 and 2021, with one grant for hazard mitigation planning and a second for purchase of generators
- Element lists numerous funding sources available for local governments for preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and resilience

# Notifications

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- The County has identified adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies during the development of the Resiliency Element
  - These agencies were asked to participate in the Element Stakeholder Committee
  - The Resiliency Element draft has been distributed to the identified entities for review and comment
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# Priority Investment



## What is the Priority Investment Element?

- Required by 2007 amendment to SC *Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act*
- Encourages planning for long-term major capital improvement needs and financing
- Provides direction for implementing recommended capital improvement strategies of other elements of the Comprehensive Plan
- Encourages stronger intergovernmental planning and coordination

## What is the Priority Investment Element?

- Provides an assessment of the County's Capital Investment Priorities, including:
  - Intergovernmental coordination
  - Future capital improvement needs and funding sources including:
    - Newberry County Capital Project Sales Tax
    - Transportation and roads
    - Public schools and higher education
    - Water and wastewater facilities
  - Notification and coordination

# Intergovernmental Coordination

- Priority Investment Act requires coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies:
  - Adjacent counties
  - Municipalities within the County
  - Public service districts
  - School districts and higher education institutions
  - Public and private utilities
  - Transportation agencies
  - Other affected public entities

# Adjacent and Relevant Agencies

- Includes nearly 40 jurisdictions and agencies:
  - State agencies
  - Central Midlands COG
  - Newberry College and Piedmont Technical College
  - School District of Newberry County
  - Newberry County Memorial Hospital
  - Central SC Alliance
  - Newberry County Council on Aging
  - Newberry County Water and Sewer Authority
  - USDA Forestry Service
  - Municipalities and neighboring counties
  - Utility providers

# County Capital Investment Priorities

- Provide and maintain, and make improvements to, public facilities to accommodate the needs of residents and businesses, update and improve services, and meet applicable local, federal, and state requirements
- Expansion of water and sewer to service existing residences and enable future residential, commercial, and industrial development
- Construction of a new County Public Safety Complex
- Expansion and improvement of the Detention Center

# County Capital Investment Priorities

- Expansion, improvement, and maintenance of transportation facilities and service to meet the needs of County residents
- Promotion of economic development to create jobs, increase sustainability, and strengthen the local tax base
- Expansion, improvement, and maintenance of emergency services and facilities to increase public safety and protect properties

# Capital Improvement Sales Tax Plan

- 2022 CPST Master Plan and Sales Tax Commission identified, and voters approved, 12 projects to be funded by the 1% sales tax
- Bonds will be issued for \$35.25 million to provide primary funding for the projects
- Remaining amount will be funded through the interest on bond revenues and taxes, along with funds remaining from previous projects

# 2022 CPST Referendum Projects

- Newberry County Public Safety Complex
- Improvements to the City's Recreation Complex
- Improvements to Prosperity's parks
- New cell block building and facilities upgrades to the Detention Center
- Improvements to Little Mountain Reunion Park
- Downtown Newberry amphitheater and pavilion support building
- Upgrade and expansion of NCWSA Cannons Creek WTP

# 2022 CPST Referendum Projects

- Renovation of Old Gallman High School as a community center
- IT/network/security improvements at the Courthouse
- Roof replacement and HVAC improvements at the Newberry Museum
- Improvements to the Town of Pomaria's Old Pomaria School community Center
- Improvements to the Town of Whitmire's City Gym

# Planned County Capital Facilities Projects

| ESTIMATED YEAR*     | PROJECT DESCRIPTION  | ESTIMATED COST* | ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCE*              |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| <b>PUBLIC WORKS</b> |  |                 |  |
| 2023-2033           | Assess and prioritize replacement of approximately 16 wood bridges to concrete to support future development | \$8 million     | Infrastructure/<br>Transportation Grant  |
| 2025                | Transfer station – expand and refurbish to meet the needs of the County                                      | \$5 million     | Long-term contract with service provider |

*\*Estimated project year, cost, and anticipated funding sources are subject to change*

# Notifications

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- Identified adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies have been consulted throughout the development of the Priority Investment (PI) Element and have been asked to participate in the PI Element Committee
  - The PI draft has been distributed to identified entities for review and comment
  - Per the *S.C. PI Act*, County will notify and coordinate with identified entities when recommending projects for the expenditure of funds for public infrastructure and facilities
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# Considerations

- Budgets continue to be tight at public and private levels
- Limited funding is available from Federal, State, and private sources
- Must maximize resources, create partnerships, and seek innovative ways to meet capital improvement needs

# The Comprehensive Plan

Goals, Objectives, and  
Implementation Strategies

# Goals and Objectives

- **Goals** – broad based ideals which are intended to guide the future of the community
- **Objectives** – more specific elaboration of the goals which provide a sense of direction
- Goals and objectives together to outline the framework for the Comprehensive Plan
- Basis for detailed **implementation strategies**

# The Comprehensive Plan

What is the Next Step in the  
Process?

# Review and Adoption

- Review elements
- Provide any questions and/or edits to Katie
- Approve elements individually or as a group
- Hold a public hearing on Comprehensive Plan as a whole when entire draft is completed
- Review and request edits per feedback from public hearing as needed
- Adopt Comprehensive Plan by ordinance

# Contacts

- Questions about any of the Elements?
  - Cheryl Matheny
  - 803-356-9475
  - [cmatheny@sc.rr.com](mailto:cmatheny@sc.rr.com)
- Please send all edits to Katie Werts
  - [kwerts@newberrycounty.net](mailto:kwerts@newberrycounty.net)
  - 803-321-2166