

# Economic Development Element

Understanding existing economic conditions and trends is vital to the development of planning policies that will address the needs of residents and businesses alike. Changing economic conditions can impact an array of issues ranging from community growth and development, to quality of life, to travel patterns. Key economic data assists decision makers and stakeholders in making sound decisions regarding the future of the Sumter community.

## Notable

### Existing Conditions & Trends

1. The manufacturing sector holds the largest percentage of (non-military) jobs in Sumter County.
2. Shaw A.F.B. is the largest employer in Sumter County and results in a significant economic impact for the community.
3. Total Labor Force numbers are trending downward.
4. Unemployment percentages peaked during the COVID pandemic, but returned to pre-pandemic levels by 2022.
5. Overall median household income has steadily increased, but not at levels that account for the rising cost of goods and services. Median household income for both the City and County are below that of the state as a whole.
6. Poverty rates remain higher in the City and County than compared to the state as a whole.



Photo: New Economic Development Building Grand Opening

### SUMTER COUNTY TARGET INDUSTRIES

And while we are set to serve many, our talent pool is especially groomed for:

- ▶ Advanced Manufacturing
- ▶ Aviation and Aerospace
- ▶ Agribusiness and Food Processing
- ▶ Logistics/Distribution Facilities
- ▶ Data Centers
- ▶ Medical and Pharmaceutical
- ▶ Retail and Hospitality

Source: Sumter Edge

Table ED-1

Top Individual Employers

Employer	Sector
Shaw Air Force Base	Military Base/US Department of Defense
Sumter School District	Education
Prisma Health Tuomey	Healthcare
Thompson Construction Group	Construction
Continental Tire of the Americas	Tire Manufacturing
Pilgrim's Inc.	Food Processing
Eaton Electrical	Electrical Equipment Manufacturing
Becton Dickinson & Co.	Medical Manufacturing
Sylvarno	Paper Manufacturing
SKF	Equipment Manufacturing
Sumter Packaging Corporation	Packaging Product Manufacturing

Source: (Various - Sumter Edge, Company Websites, Industry Announcements, etc.)

### Shaw Air Force Base

Shaw Air Force Base is a critical economic driver for the Sumter area. The base employs approximately 7,200 active duty military and approximately 1,000 civilians. Additionally, according to a recent study conducted in 2022 by the South Carolina Military Task Force, the base provides approximately \$2.1 billion in direct and indirect economic impact for the Sumter area. Both the City and County have adopted policies that help protect the ongoing mission of this community asset.

## Shaw Air Force Base

**\$2.1 Billion Annual Economic Impact**

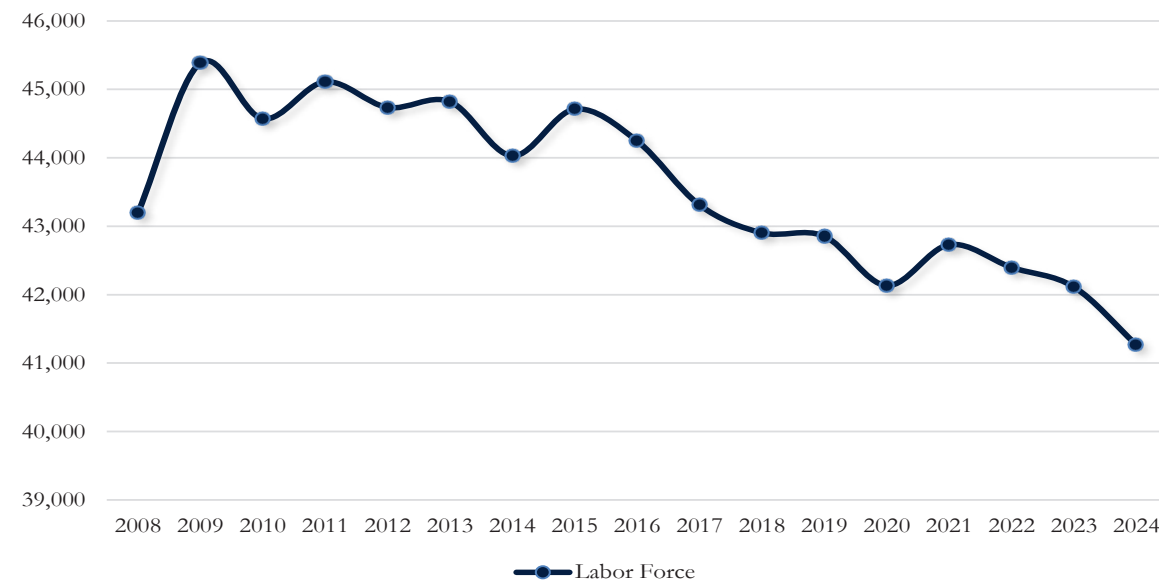


Source: The Economic Impact of South Carolina's Military Community (June 2022) - SC Department of Veterans Affairs

## Labor Force

Total labor force numbers in Sumter County have been on a downward trend for almost a decade. This trend may be a result of slow population growth and of an aging workforce reaching retirement age.

Figure ED-1 Total Labor Force

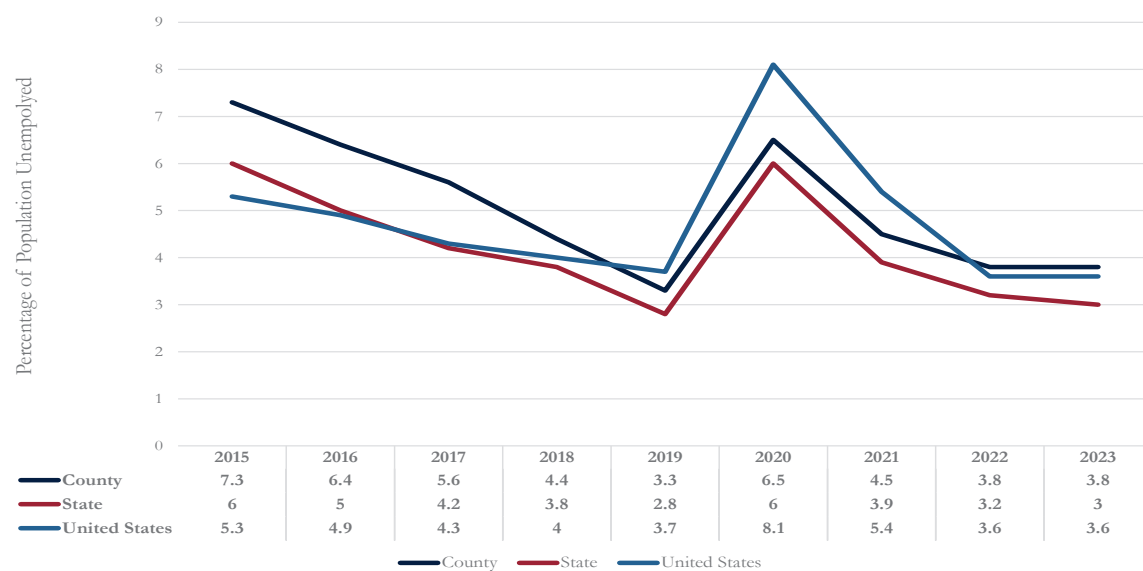


Source: SC DEW Data  
Note: Data reflected for each year is for the month of January

## Unemployment

Unemployment in Sumter County steadily declined from 2015 - 2020. Unemployment peaked in 2020 as a result of the COVID pandemic, but declined to pre-pandemic levels by 2022. This is consistent with current national and state trends.

Figure ED-2 Unemployment



Source: SC DEW Data

## Commuting Patterns

Commuting pattern data shows the relationships that exist between where people live and work within the City, County, and region as a whole. Twenty five percent more residents live and work within the County than commute outside of it for employment. The amount of workers who commute into Sumter County from other places is slightly less than the amount of Sumter County residents who work outside of it.

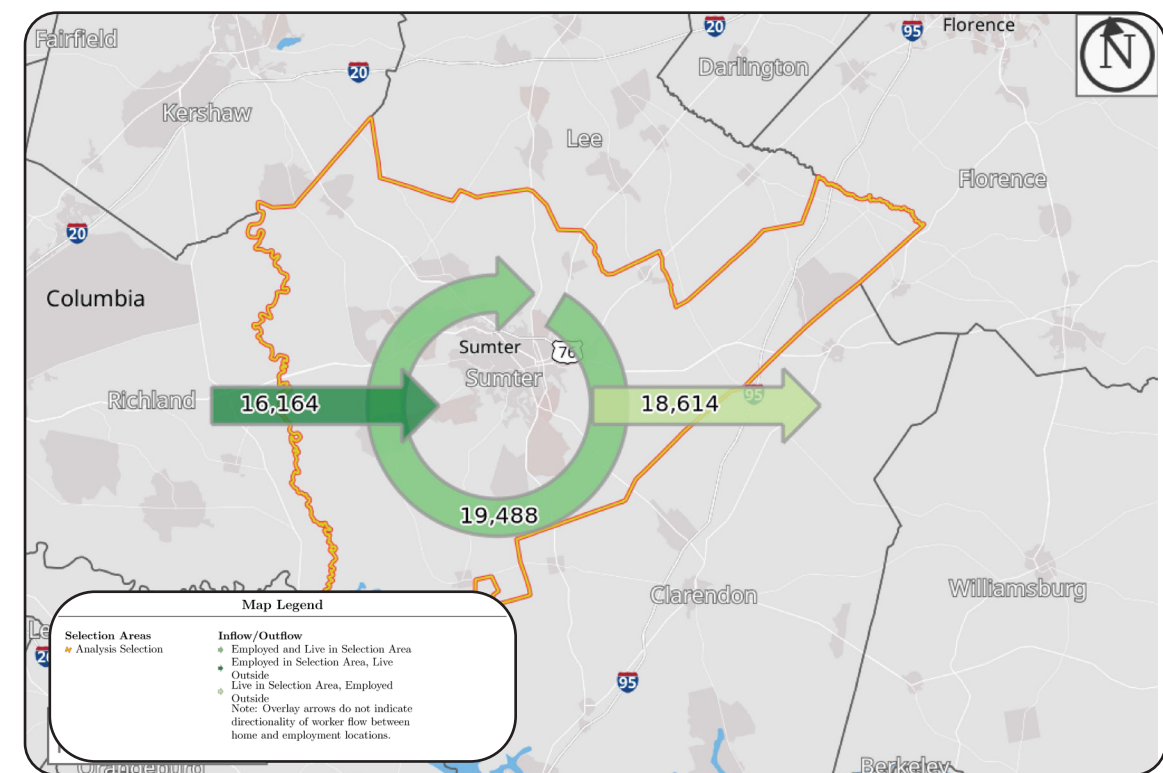
For residents that commute outside of Sumter County, a much stronger relationship exists between Richland County to the west than compared to any other adjacent county. For workers that live outside of Sumter County and commute in, a stronger relationship exists between Richland County to the west and Clarendon County to the south than compared to any other adjacent counties.

Table ED-2

Sumter County Commuting Patterns Workforce Inflow/Outflow			
Commuting in from		Commuting out to	
County	#	County	#
Richland County	2,321	Richland County	5,051
Clarendon County	2,015	Lexington County	1,759
Lexington County	939	Florence County	1,424
Kershaw County	914	Kershaw County	946
Florence County	776	Clarendon County	869

Source: US Census Bureau - On the Map

Map ED-1 Sumter County Commuter Inflow/Outflow Map



Source: US Census Bureau - On the Map

Note: Directional arrows shown on map are totals only and not meant to reflect specific origin and destination locations.

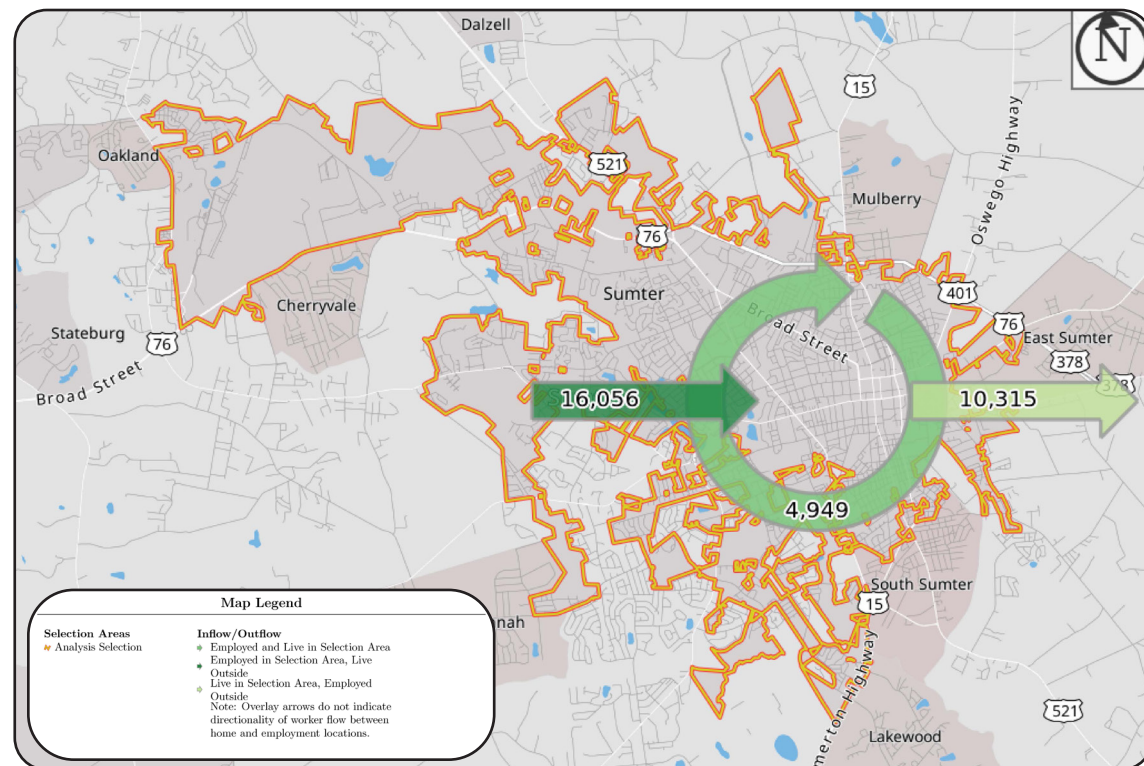
Overall, 16,000 workers commute into the City to work. About 30 percent of City residents within the labor force live and work within the City of Sumter. This indicates that many residents commute outside the jurisdiction for employment. Top employment destinations for out commuting City residents include established industrial areas just outside of City limits and to a smaller degree the City of Columbia.

A key factor in Economic Development is understanding how many individuals are employed in the area and from where they commute. This is important because this reflects whether a place can attract and retain workers locally. If workers are also residents, then their disposable income circulates locally, otherwise a place does not see the the full impact of that job in the local economy.

### Income

Steady income growth has been experienced across the State, County, and City from 2000-2022. Significant income growth has occurred across these geographies since 2020. However, these increases have been coupled with significant increases in inflation. Median household income is the measurement being used to display this trend, however; this trend holds true when analyzing other available income measures such as per capita income and family income. The current median annual household income in the City is \$48,900, as compared to \$53,970 for the county as a whole, and to \$63,623 for the state as a whole. Geographically, higher income levels are present in the western areas of the City, with lower income levels present in the northern, eastern, and southern areas of the City. Higher income levels are generally present in the northern central area of the County and in the southern area of the County along the US Hwy 15 corridor. Lower income levels are present in the largely rural eastern and northwestern portions of the County.

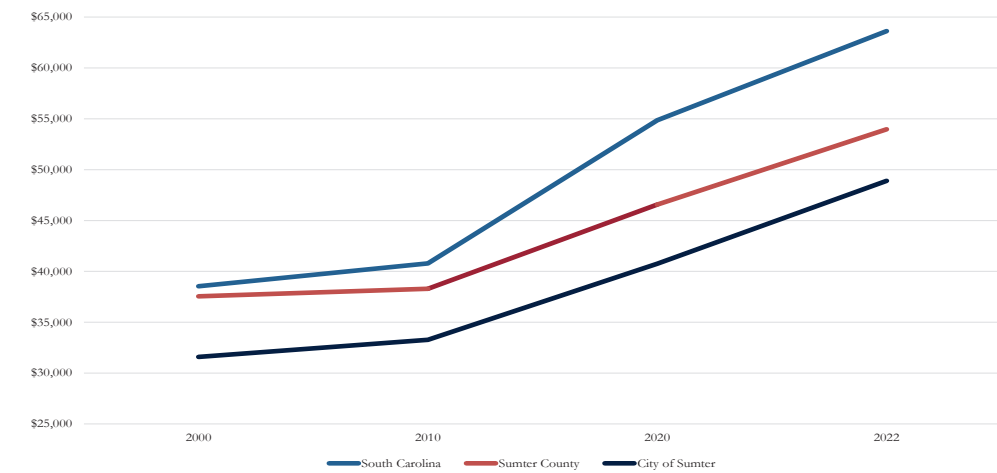
Map ED-2 City of Sumter Commuter Inflow/Outflow Map



Source: US Census Bureau - On the Map

Note: Directional arrows shown on map are totals only and not meant to reflect specific origin and destination locations.

Figure ED-3 Median Household Income

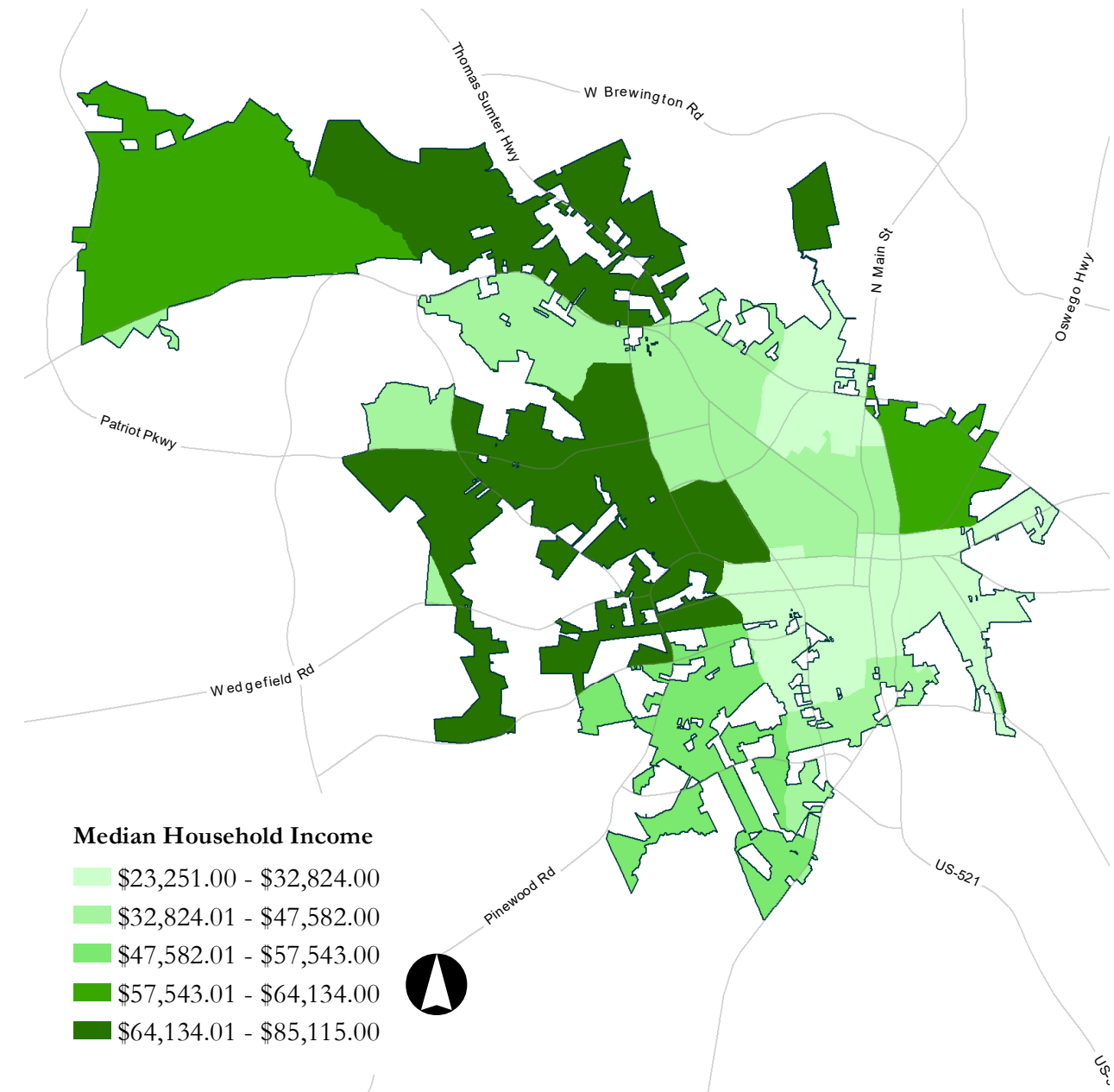
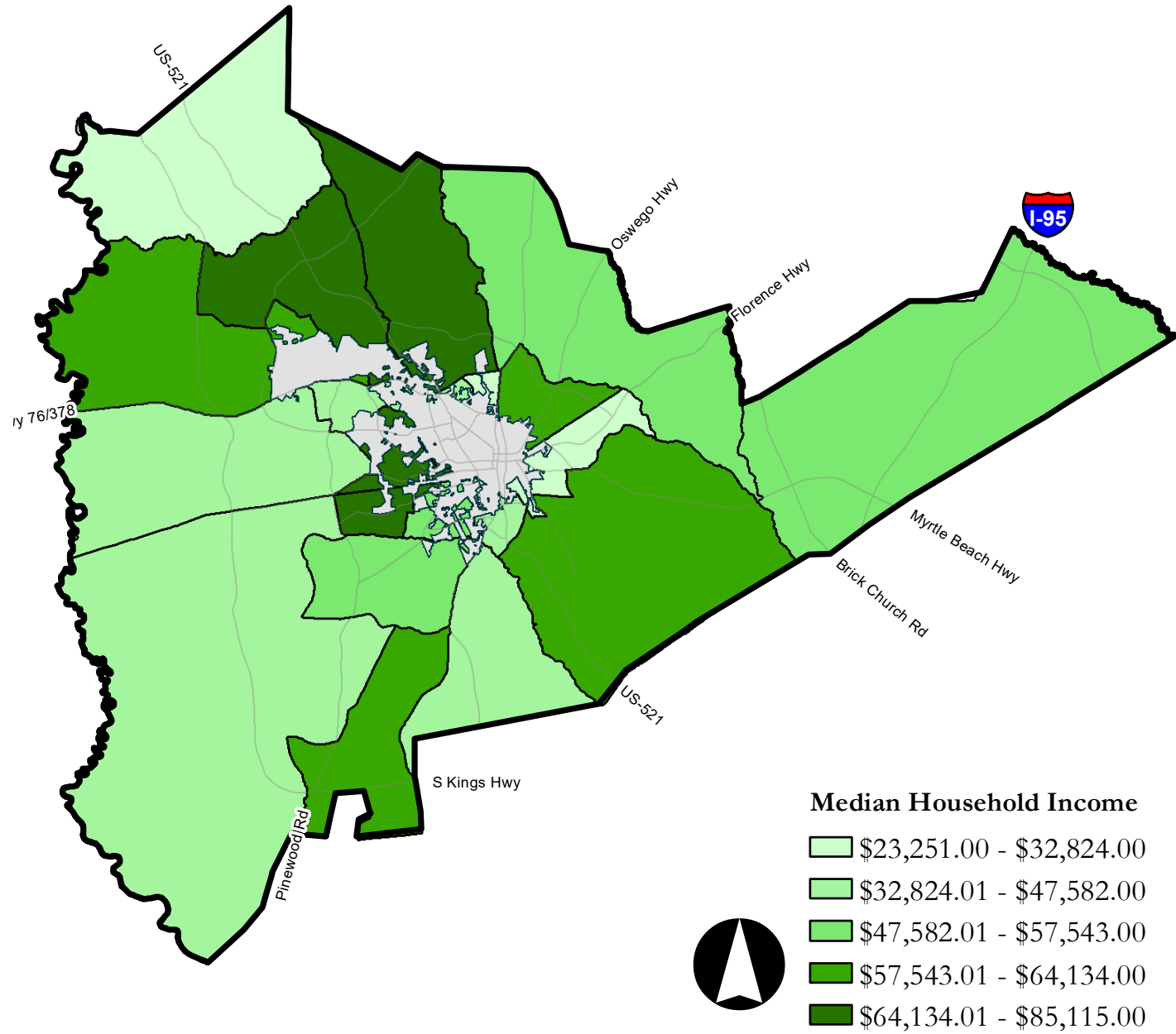


Source: US Census Bureau 2000 & 2010 Data. 2016 & 2022 ACS Data.



Photo: Central Carolina Technical College (CCTC) Advanced Manufacturing Technology Training Center

# Median Household Income by Census Tract



Source: 2022 ACS Data

## Cost of Goods & Services

While income levels are rising, so are the costs of goods and services. Generally, recent income and wage growth has not been enough to offset decreases in purchasing power. According to Consumer Price Index data, the purchasing power of \$1 in the year 2000 is equal to the purchasing power of \$1.86 today.

Figure ED-4 Consumer Price Index Comparison

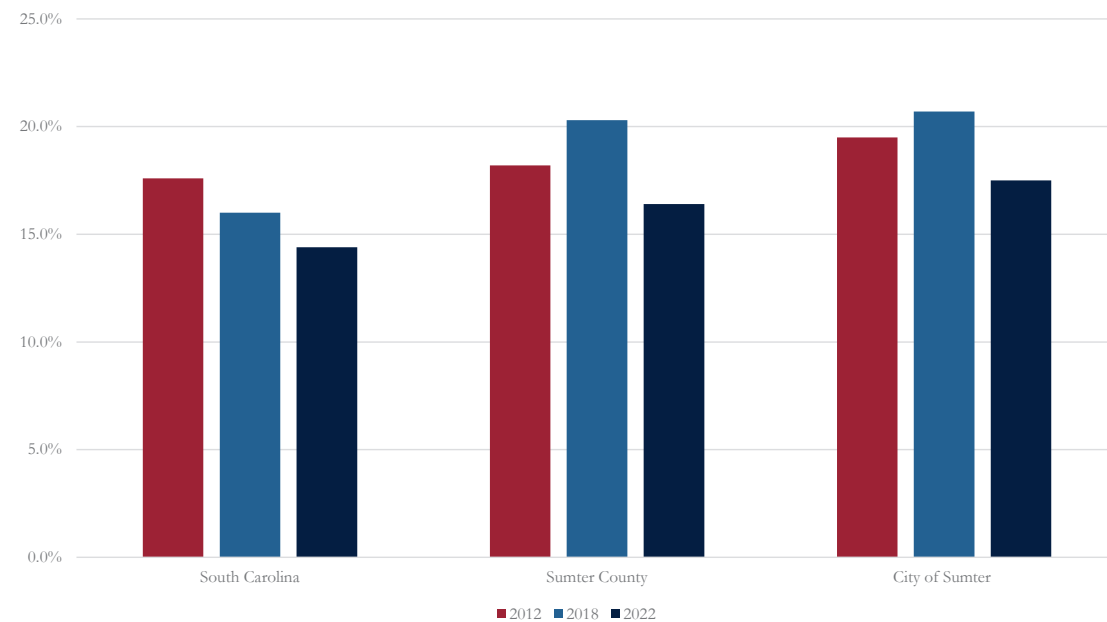
**\$1.00**  
**2000** = **\$1.86**  
**2024**

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI (Consumer Price Index) Data

## Poverty

The percent of residents living below the poverty line has decreased in the City and County since 2018. Poverty percentages are higher in both the City and County than compared to the overall percentage for the State.

Figure ED-5 Percent of Population Below the Poverty Line

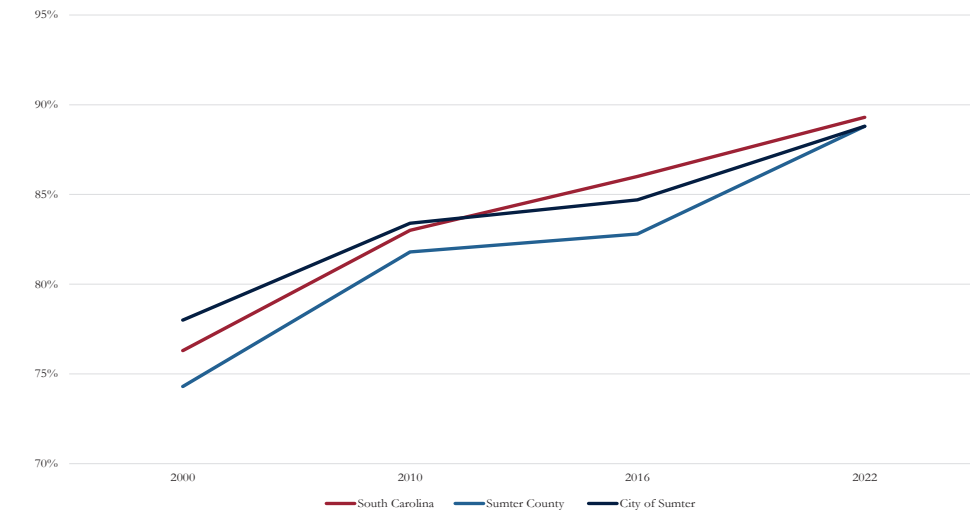


Source: 2012, 2018, & 2022 5 Year ACS Data

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels have steadily increased in both the City and County since 2000. This is reflected in the percent of the population that has obtained at least a High School Diploma, as well as the percent of the population that has obtained at least a Bachelor's degree. Generally, the City's educational attainment levels are on par with levels seen across the state. The County's educational attainment levels are below those of the City and state.

Figure ED-6 Percent of Population with HS Diploma or Higher



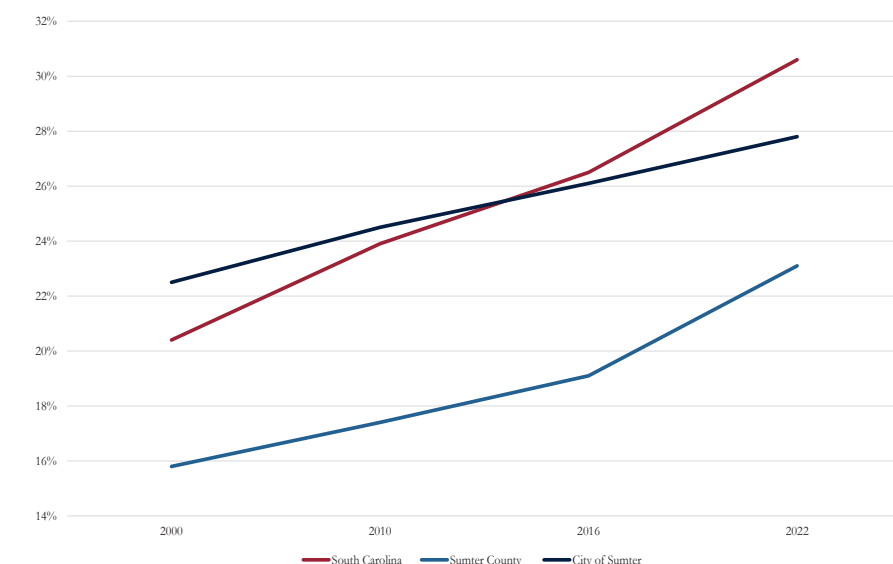
Source: 2000 - 2010 US Census Bureau Data & 2016, 2022 5 Year ACS Data.

Table ED-3 Sumter County Median Earnings by Educational Attainment

No High School Diploma	High School Diploma	Some College or Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
\$25,729	\$32,777	\$40,253	\$47,060	\$73,005

Source: 2022 5 Year ACS Data

Figure ED-7 Percent of Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher



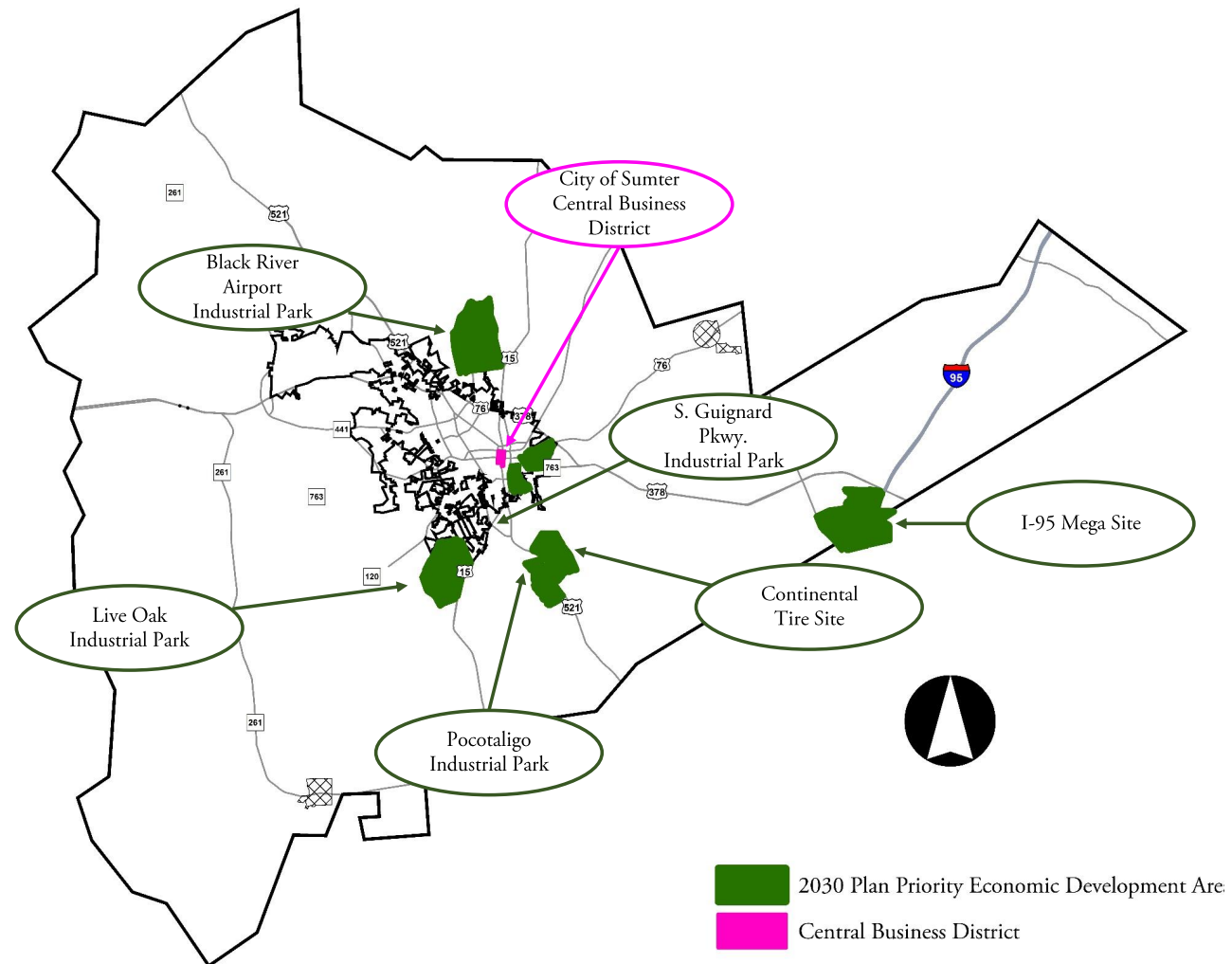
Source: 2000 - 2010 US Census Bureau Data & 2016, 2022 5 Year ACS Data.

## Existing Priority Economic Development Areas

Economic Development projects are encouraged throughout the City and County, in new or previously established areas. The Sumter 2030 Comprehensive Plan identified specific Economic Development nodes as Priority Economic Development Areas. This designation offers protection to existing industrial parks and significant sites, as well as identifies additional Priority Economic Development locations based on input from the Sumter County Development Board. Major job creators, including industrial operations, manufacturing facilities, and campus style office headquarters are encouraged within these areas.

Significant economic development activity has occurred since the establishment of Priority Economic Development Areas in the the Sumter 2030 Comprehensive Plan. This includes the construction of a 3 million square foot Continental Tire Manufacturing facility, as well as several significant expansions to other existing facilities. These identified Priority Economic Development Areas are carried forward into the Sumter 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Map ED-4 Existing Priority Economic Development Areas



Source: Sumter GIS

## Opportunity Zones

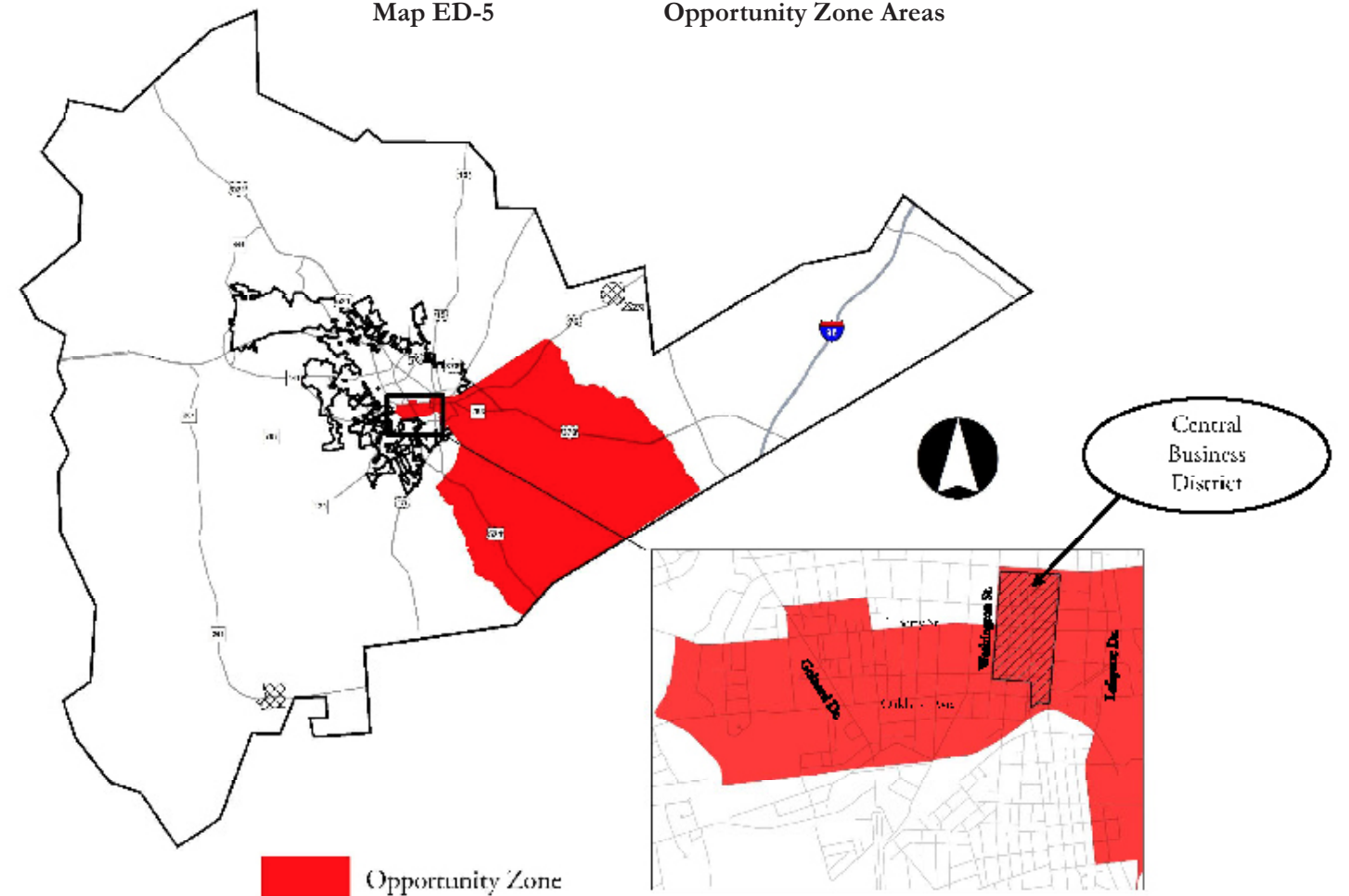
Opportunity Zones were established by Congress as a part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. These areas have been designed to encourage long-term private investments in low income census tracts. Opportunity Zones were designated by the governors of each state, with a maximum of 25% of the qualifying census tracts in each state allowed to receive the designation.

In Sumter County, three census tracts were designated (census tracts 6, 11, and 13). These tracts include significant areas on the eastern side of Sumter County, as well as eastern and central portions of the City of Sumter. Notably, the Sumter Central Business District is located within an Opportunity Zone census tract.

The Opportunity Zone program allows investors to receive capital gains tax incentives by investing in Opportunity Funds. These Opportunity Funds are established to provide direct investment in designated census tracts. Increased capital gains tax incentives are provided the longer an investor holds onto to an investment within an Opportunity Fund.

The program has potential to provide new revitalization opportunities in areas of the City and County which have generally experienced a past pattern of disinvestment, decline, and blight.

Map ED-5 Opportunity Zone Areas



Source: Sumter GIS

## Sumter Central Business District

The Sumter Central Business District (i.e., Downtown Sumter) represents the historic center of government, commerce, spirituality, and health care for both the City and County of Sumter. In the past, disinvestment has occurred in this critical area due to auto-centric suburban style development patterns. This trend is reversing, and in recent years Downtown Sumter has seen significant investment in new buildings, improvements to existing buildings, and improvements to public spaces. While more work is certainly needed, Downtown Sumter is beginning to reclaim its rightful place as an active, lively, 24-hour centerpiece for all facets of community life.

The City completed a Downtown Master Plan in 2019 which provides detailed recommendations and policies to guide future decision making and investments in this critical area. The Downtown Master Plan is incorporated by reference into this document.



Photo: New Downtown Economic Development Building



Photo: New Downtown Hyatt Place Hotel

### Main Street South Carolina

Main Street South Carolina is a designation bestowed upon communities who meet certain standards and commit to using the Main Street Four-Point Approach to revitalize their historic central business district areas. The City of Sumter has long held this designation.

### Main Street Four-Point Approach

**Organization:** Involves building a framework that is well represented by businesses, property owners, bankers, citizens, historic preservationists, entrepreneurs, public officials, chambers of commerce, and other local economic development organizations.

**Promotion:** Involves creating excitement and energy about the downtown area. This includes marketing, downtown festivals, parades, retail events, etc.

**Design:** Involves enhancing the look and feel of downtown and can include historic building rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, street-scaping improvements, signage, visual merchandising and lighting.

**Economic Vitality:** Involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions, recruiting new businesses, creatively converting unused space for new uses, and increasing the competitiveness of traditional downtown merchants.

## Economic Development Policies

### Goal 1 - Invest in Marketable Sites and Parks

Identify and prepare Sumter's preferred economic development locations by officially certifying the site and providing the necessary public infrastructure.

### Goal 2 - Redevelop Marginal Industrial Sites Into Productive Use

Direct economic development opportunities into existing, under-valued locations with permanent, existing public infrastructure.

### Goal 3 - Create an Ongoing Speculative Building Program

Create a stronger competitive advantage through the development of an ongoing shell building program in identified economic development locations and/or a virtual shell building program.

### Goal 4 - Improve and Enhance Area Workforce Development

#### Initiatives

Collaborate with other local and state service providers to deliver a Sumter County workforce whose skills, knowledge, productivity, and work ethic are globally competitive.



Photo(s) - Sumter Industrial Parks



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