

A large water tower in the shape of a peach with a green leaf on top, set against a backdrop of rolling hills and a forest.

Cherokee County

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**ADOPTED
JULY 15, 2024**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

County Council

District 1 - Councilman Lyman Dawkins III

District 2 - Councilman Billy D. Blanton

District 3 - Councilman Quay Little (Vice Chairman)

District 4 - Councilman Timothy F. Spencer (Chairman)

District 5 - Councilman Elliott Hughes

District 6 - Councilman David Smith

District 7 - Councilman Tracy A. McDaniel

Planning Commission

Will Bowers

Michael H. Falls

Johnny (Jay) Huffstetler

Richard Lavender (Chairman)

Terry Medley

Mike Patterson

Shannon Redish

County Staff

Marvin "Merv" Bishop, County Administrator

Amanda Walker, Assistant Administrator

Doris Pearson, Master Clerk to Council

Abigail Reid, Administration Specialist

Dale Gibert, Building Official, Ordinance Administrator

Comprehensive Planning Consultant

Benchmark Planning

Adoption Date

July 15, 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section One : Introduction

- Overview 1
- Legal Authority 1
- How to Use This Plan 1
- Planning Process..... 3
- Vision Framework..... 5
- Guiding Principles..... 6
- Implementation Strategies..... 8
- Future Land Use Map.....15
- Growth Areas Identified for Zoning.....18

Section Two : Plan Elements

- Plan Elements.....21
- Population23
- Economic Development..... 37
- Natural Resources.....49
- Cultural Resources..... 61
- Community Facilities.....69
- Housing83
- Land Use.....93
- Transportation 103
- Resiliency 111
- Priority Investment..... 121

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

A comprehensive plan is a foundational document for a community to use as it grows and develops over time. A plan provides guidance on long-range strategies to elected and appointed officials, as well as administrative staff, as they develop programs, policies, and projects in the County. South Carolina law requires that a comprehensive plan be updated every ten years, with an interim review every five years. The required reviews and updates help ensure that the information contained within the Plan remains relevant and the Plan's direction aligns with community goals.

The Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan is designed for government agencies, residents, private developers, property owners, and private organizations to use while planning the County's future growth, development, and preservation. The Plan is considered a "living document" that establishes a set of guidelines and procedures for implementing the long-range vision, goals, and strategies for the community.

Legal Authority

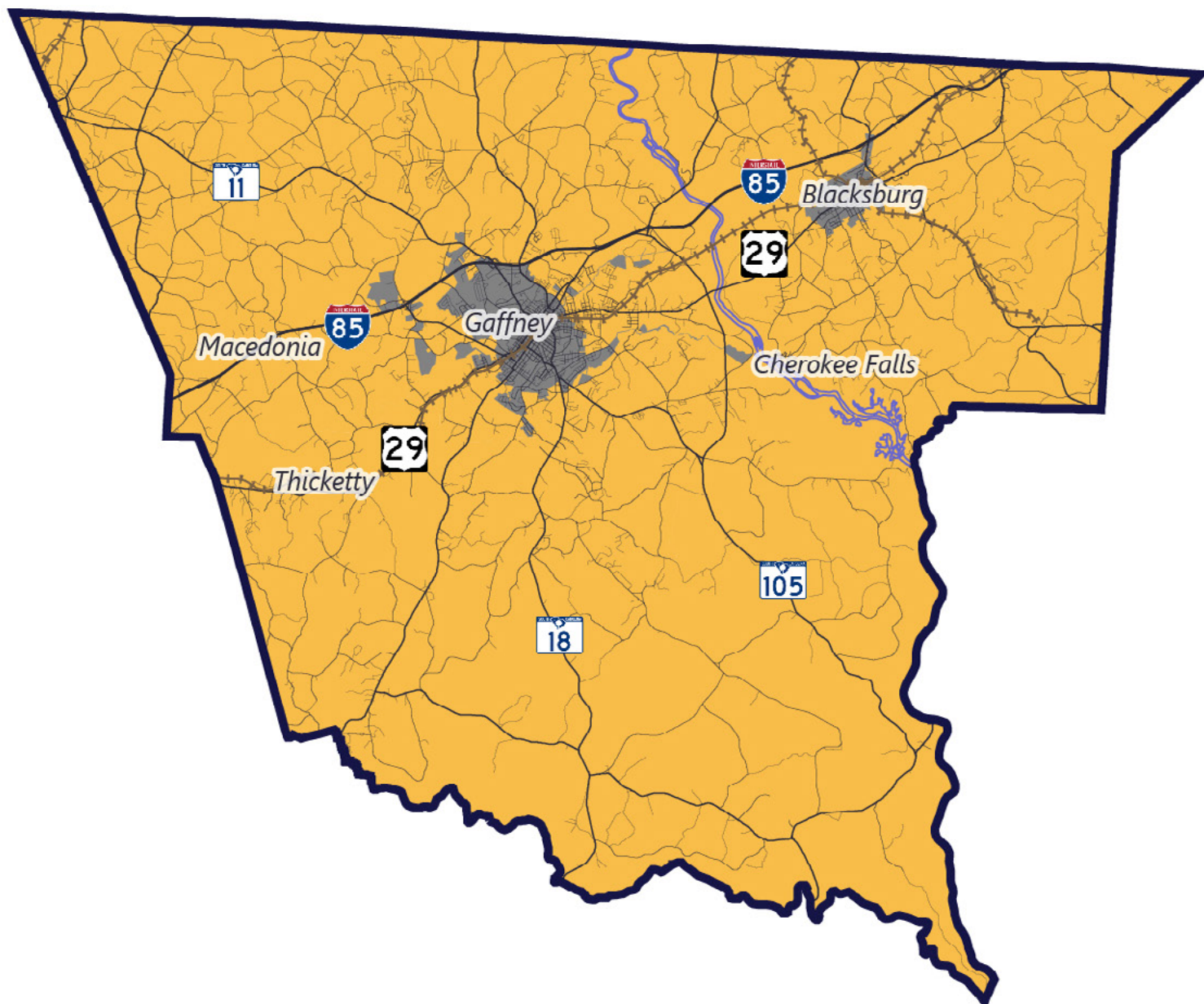
In 1994, the South Carolina Legislature passed the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, which granted authority to local governments to prepare and maintain comprehensive plans, as set forth in the South Carolina Code of Laws Title 6, Chapter 29. The Act consolidated formerly separate state legislative acts regarding local authority to create comprehensive plans. The Planning Enabling Act requires that all comprehensive plans in the State include an inventory and analysis of ten specified planning elements, which are detailed in Section Two of this Plan. The Act also sets the requirement for the ten year update and five year review, but the Plan may be updated as often as necessary.

Although the Comprehensive Plan is not a legally binding "ordinance," it does inform land use and development ordinances and regulations as the Planning Commission and County Council carry out their duties in guiding and facilitating development in the County.

How to Use This Plan

This Plan should be used as a guide for both public and private sector decision making concerning future growth and land development in Cherokee County. The County Council and Planning Commission should use the Plan to provide consistency in evaluation of development proposals or policy changes; ensuring that any approved development or policy change works toward achieving the vision of the Plan. The Plan should also be used to guide capital improvements, development regulations, and coordination efforts with other government agencies and partners on issues of mutual interest. In relation to the private sector, the Plan provides guidance to land owners and developers of the County's expectations for future growth.

Comprehensive Plan Study Area



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Cherokee County |  Unincorporated Cherokee County |
|  Railroad |  Municipalities |
|  Roads | |



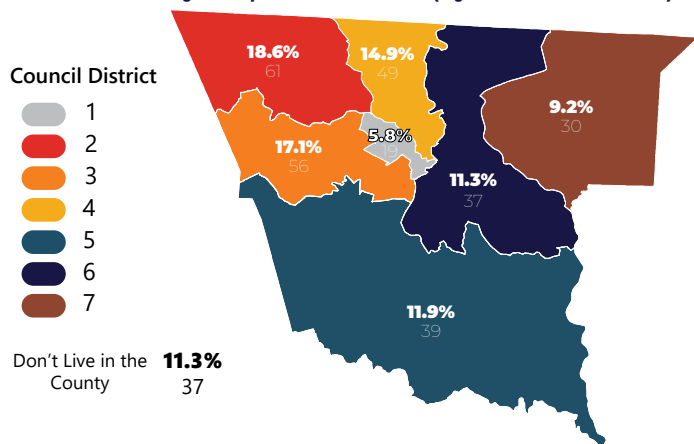
Planning Process

This Comprehensive Plan was developed over the course of 2023 and the first half of 2024. The spring of 2023 featured the kickoff of the project, initial background research, and listening sessions with a broad range of community stakeholders. In the fall of 2023, the Plan was kicked off with the public through a meeting in October, and an online community survey that was available from mid October through the entire month of November 2023. The graphic below provides a highlight of who took the survey and the high level responses received.

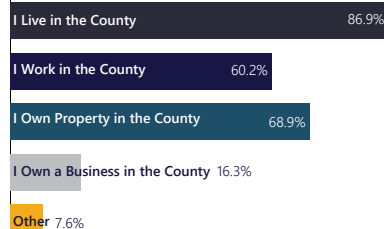
Who Took the Survey?

348 total respondents

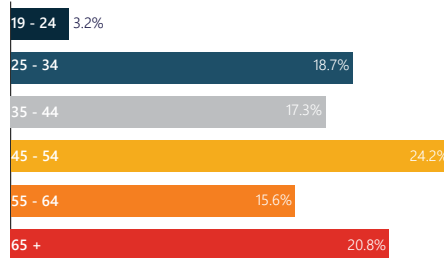
Where Survey Respondents Live (by Council District):



Respondents' Affiliation with County



Age of Survey Respondents



What Did They Say?

Please describe your vision for the County's future



Which issues within Cherokee County concern you the most?

- #1 GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT
- #2 SCHOOLS / EDUCATION
- #3 PUBLIC SAFETY
- #4 TRAFFIC CONGESTION
- #5 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

What are the most important topics for a long-range plan?

- #1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- #2 POPULATION GROWTH
- #3 LAND USE
- #4 HOUSING
- #5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Planning Commission reviewed an assessment of the background research, the listening sessions, and community survey results to develop a draft vision and guiding principles. As part of the process the Planning Commission also developed a map displaying the potential area for the application of zoning within the County. This information was presented at a public drop-in meeting held in February 2024. The meeting was advertised through the County's social media pages, in the local newspaper, and on the project website. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting, asking questions, providing feedback, and sharing their interests.

Public Drop-In Meeting



The Planning Commission utilized the feedback received from the public meeting and other comments submitted online to develop implementation strategies, a future land use map, and a public meeting draft of the Comprehensive Plan. The public meeting draft of the Plan was presented at a special called meeting of the Planning Commission on April 30 for public comment and consideration of adoption.

(Text regarding the adoption process will be inserted here when completed)



Vision Framework

The vision for Cherokee County sets the direction for all major land use and development decisions in the coming years. The vision is realized through a set of guiding principles and related implementation strategies, as illustrated below.

VISION STATEMENT

Cherokee County will leverage its many assets to provide a high quality of life and prosperous future for its residents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Plan for development and manage growth



Preserve our rural character and lifestyle



Expand recreational resources and amenities



Protect our natural resources



Cultivate strong local and regional partnerships



Expand and improve our economy



Create a family friendly community

Guiding Principles

The vision described on the previous page will be implemented through a set of seven guiding principles, each of which has a specific leading statement. While the graphic on the previous page listed the general vision statement, the following pages provide more specific details on each of the guiding principles, and how they tie back to the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. These guiding principles also tie directly to the implementation strategies, which are shared in the following sub-section.

The Comprehensive Plan Elements highlighted in blue with white font indicate those elements directly related to each guiding principle.



PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT & MANAGE GROWTH

We recognize our opportunity for growth and intend to implement policies that position Cherokee County for the best possible outcomes in the future. We will take full advantage of our assets and investments by guiding growth to those areas of the County where existing and planned infrastructure is available to support sustainable and resilient development.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
------	------------	-----------	--------------	------------	---------	----------	------------	--------	------------------



PRESERVE OUR RURAL CHARACTER & LIFESTYLE

We will preserve and protect the history and character of our rural and agricultural communities through policies that limit the density and intensity of development outside of designated growth areas.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
------	------------	-----------	--------------	------------	---------	----------	------------	--------	------------------



EXPAND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES & AMENITIES

We will plan for and develop a wide range of public parks and recreational facilities that serve the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
------	------------	-----------	--------------	------------	---------	----------	------------	--------	------------------



PROTECT OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Our natural environment and resources cannot be replaced. We will implement policies to protect them for future generations.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
------	------------	------------------	--------------	-------------------	---------	----------	------------	---------------	-------------------------



CULTIVATE STRONG LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

In order to more efficiently and effectively provide services for Cherokee County's residents in the future, we will work closely with our partner local governments and our many local, regional, and state organizations, agencies, and nonprofit entities.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
------	------------	------------------	--------------	-------------------	---------	----------	------------	---------------	-------------------------



EXPAND AND IMPROVE OUR ECONOMY

We will seek to diversify our economy by attracting a broad array of commercial and industrial enterprises to provide employment opportunities for our residents and make our local economy more resilient.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
-------------	-------------------	-----------	--------------	-------------------	---------	----------	------------	---------------	-------------------------



CREATE A FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

We will dedicate our resources to making Cherokee County a more attractive destination for young families through policies and investments that support their social, cultural, educational, and economic needs.

CORRESPONDING PLAN ELEMENTS:

Pop.	Econ. Dev.	Nat. Res.	Cultur. Res.	Comm. Fac.	Housing	Land Use	Transport.	Resil.	Priority Invest.
-------------	-------------------	------------------	--------------	-------------------	---------	----------	------------	---------------	-------------------------

Implementation Strategies

The vision and guiding principles described previously set the direction and the guiding tenants of all recommendations within this Plan. The implementation strategies provide specific action items the County should pursue in the coming years in order to reach our desired vision. Specific responsible agencies and potential funding sources are identified for each of these implementation strategies in the Priority Investment Element of this Plan. The icons beneath each strategy identify which guiding principles they relate to, with each icon explained below:



**PLAN FOR
DEVELOPMENT &
MANAGE GROWTH**



**PRESERVE OUR
RURAL CHARACTER
& LIFESTYLE**



**EXPAND RECREATIONAL
RESOURCES &
AMENITIES**



**PROTECT OUR
NATURAL
RESOURCES**



**CULTIVATE STRONG
LOCAL & REGIONAL
PARTNERSHIPS**



**EXPAND & IMPROVE
OUR ECONOMY**



**CREATE A FAMILY
FRIENDLY
COMMUNITY**

Implementation Strategies

1. Direct higher intensity development to the areas of the County identified on the Future Land Use Map as I-85 Corridor and Primary Growth Area.

Significant public investments have been made in water, sewer, and highway infrastructure to support growth and development in the County. The County should utilize the Future Land Use Map to direct growth and development to the areas of the County that have the infrastructure to support it, helping to protect public investments in infrastructure while maintaining the rural character of the areas of the County that cannot support growth.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



2. Prepare and adopt a zoning ordinance and map for the area identified in the Plan.

During the planning process, the Planning Commission reviewed existing land use and growth patterns, infrastructure service areas, and public input to help identify areas of the County with the highest growth potential. The identified area includes locations along Interstate 85, the Board of Public Works sewer service area, SC 150 in the Grassy Pond community, the SC 11 corridor to the Spartanburg County line, and the NC 5 corridor extending to York County. The adoption of a Zoning Ordinance and map in this identified area will allow the County to establish regulations that separate uses into different districts to promote compatible growth and responsible economic development. A typical zoning ordinance will have districts that accommodate residential uses, commercial uses, and industrial uses, with different standards and regulations for the various districts.

The County currently enforces Land Development Regulations that are applicable throughout the unincorporated area of the County. The current regulations primarily establish minimum lot sizes and infrastructure standards for the subdivision and development of land but do not permit or prohibit any specific type of use based on its location. With only the current Land Development Regulations in place, the County does not have any authority to prohibit a potentially noxious industry or heavy traffic-generating commercial development from being built in an established residential area of the County. As more development comes to the County, and the area along the I-85 corridor and other areas with high growth potential become more attractive to developers, a Zoning Ordinance will allow for more orderly growth in locations that can support it while minimizing the burden on existing development, to the extent possible. Additional staff capacity will be needed to administer and enforce the zoning ordinance and map.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



3. Continue to coordinate with the Board of Public Works, SCDOT, and other infrastructure providers to ensure there is sufficient capacity in the identified growth areas.

In addition to the development of the zoning ordinance and map, the County should continue coordination efforts with all infrastructure and service providers to help facilitate and maximize the use of those facilities and services in the areas identified for growth on the Future Land Use Map.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



4. Conduct an assessment of the existing and future county-wide emergency services needs.

During the process, concerns were raised regarding the long-term capacity for the provision of public safety services throughout the County. The County should conduct a study that examines the public safety and emergency services needs county-wide to ensure it meets the existing and future service demands for residents, businesses, and other entities.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



5. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to forecast funding needs and priorities over the long-term.

On an annual basis, the County should evaluate and plan for the funding of priority capital projects to meet the needs of the County's residents and businesses.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



6. Coordinate with the Cherokee County Economic Development Board and other partners to strengthen existing businesses and industries in the County, while encouraging the development of new employment and commerce opportunities in a variety of industry sectors.

The County should continue to work closely with county-wide, regional, and state economic development partners to identify ways to retain existing businesses and industries while attracting new employment-generating uses and opportunities in the areas identified on the Future Land Use Map. Specific areas of coordination include the implementation of land use policy through zoning to help protect existing and future employment-generating uses and continued collaboration with educational partners to develop high-demand workforce training and education opportunities to increase the wage earning and employment capacity of the existing and future workforce.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



7. Evaluate opportunities to develop small business support infrastructure, programs, and seed funding for the establishment and growth of local entrepreneurs and business founders.

Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy. Just as a community often provides funding for the extension of a sewer line or road to an economic development project, small business support infrastructure, such as a business incubator or makerspace, can provide the needed resources for a local entrepreneur to start and grow a business in the County. The County can continue partnering with Spartanburg Community College and Limestone University to provide opportunities for the younger workforce and recent graduates to establish roots and grow an idea into a thriving business. The strategy also provides opportunities for members of the established workforce to pursue a new direction in their careers.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



8. Encourage the sustainment and viability of the agricultural economy.

Utilize the Future Land Use Map to direct development away from the rural agricultural areas of the County to prevent negative impacts from incompatible development around existing farming operations. In addition to land use and zoning policies, the County can work with local and regional agricultural extension services to develop a number of farm protection tools and strategies that can be implemented to help conserve farmland and strengthen the agricultural economy.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



9. Develop a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Plan to meet the needs of the existing population and help to make Cherokee County a more desirable community for young families.

Residents expressed a desire for improved recreational opportunities within the County. The development of a parks, recreation, and trails plan will help identify the recreational needs of County residents and put in place long-range plans for facilities and amenities that will serve existing and future residents of the County. Once adopted, the plan can be utilized to solicit grant funding, such as the South Carolina Recreation and Tourism Grants, to assist in implementing the recommended recreation facilities and related improvements.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



10. Expand and improve recreational access along the Broad River.

The Broad River is designated as scenic river by the State from Ninety-Nine Islands Dam to the confluence with the Pacolet River. The river corridor includes areas of undeveloped riverfront with Piedmont forests and pasturelands, which are home to diverse plant and animal species. The river is an important asset to the County and should continue to be protected. Areas should be identified to improve access to the river, which will provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy the scenic river, including additional opportunities for canoe/kayak access points, adjacent hiking trails, and potential greenways.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



11. Monitor the health and long-term sustainability of the County's natural resources and endangered species.

The County has a number of natural and environmental resources and endangered species that should be protected. The County should work closely with existing regional and state partners to identify policies, projects, and programs that help maintain the integrity of these natural resources and endangered species for their long-term viability and survival.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



12. Continue to work with local, regional, and state partners to implement the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

As identified in the Resiliency Element and the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan, there are numerous natural and man-made hazards that may have negative impacts in the future. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the community, the County should continue to monitor and plan for these hazards. Additional opportunities to educate residents about hazard mitigation and resilience practices should also be pursued.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



13. Identify strategies to develop and expand the tourism economy of the County..

The County has many unique and valuable tourism attractions that can be made more widely known to residents and surrounding communities. Of particular note are the Kings Mountain State Park, the Kings Mountain National Military Park, the Cowpens National Battlefield, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, the Cherokee County History and Art Museum, the Visitor Center and Art Gallery, the Gaffney Little Theater, and the South Carolina Peach Festival. Many other smaller-scale attractions and historic buildings and sites can add interest for visitors seeking the larger and more popular attractions.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



14. Continue to promote and protect the historic and cultural resources that exist in the County.

The County has many cultural and historic resources that enrich the lives of its residents and provide opportunities to learn about its past. The County should coordinate with local, regional, and state partners to expand and improve the marketing of its local resources, connecting them with the more widely known sites and places. The County can also make educational materials available for anyone interested in preserving historic sites and structures on their privately owned properties.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



15. Identify opportunities to expand civic and cultural events in the County.

A number of residents expressed the desire for a venue, facility, and/or place to hold a wide range of community events and entertainment opportunities. The County should further evaluate the needs and consider identifying opportunities to partner with local entities to develop additional civic and cultural events and potential facilities for events that appeal to younger families, students, and other target areas of the population. The development of a wide variety of events and places to hold events will help develop a stronger sense of community and overall quality of life for all residents of the County.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



16. Identify ways to collaborate with the School Board to improve educational opportunities.

Many residents expressed the need to improve the educational opportunities for school aged children in the County. The County should work closely with the School Board to identify potential areas for collaboration and improvement of educational opportunities to meet the existing and future needs of the County's children.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



17. Develop targeted facilities, events, and programs for children and young adults in the County.

The County should identify opportunities to develop amenities that meet the needs of children and young adults. One example is the establishment of a children's museum or children's library to enhance the quality of life for young families raising children in the County. In addition to younger-aged children in the community, identifying opportunities to create amenities and attractions for the college-aged and young adult population can help retain recent high school graduates, and graduates from Spartanburg Community College and Limestone University. The County should coordinate with the City of Gaffney and community organizations to identify ways to embrace the younger segments of the population, encouraging them to settle in the community.

Corresponding Guiding Principles:



Future Land Use Map

As noted in the implementation strategies, the Future Land Use Map provides a general direction for how the County would like to grow in the future. This map identifies generalized areas for future development, as well as areas which should maintain a rural character. Unlike a zoning map, the Future Land Use Map is not a regulatory tool, meaning that it is not directly enforceable. However, the Planning Commission and County Board of Commissioners are required by State Statutes to consider the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map when reviewing all proposed developments and rezonings. Should a proposed development or rezoning be incompatible with the Future Land Use Map, the County's elected and appointed officials should closely examine whether or not such a development should be permitted. As change occurs in the future, the County will need to continually reconsider and update this Future Land Use Map to ensure that it aligns with their intended direction for the future.

There are eight generalized future land use categories and these are described in detail below and on the following pages.

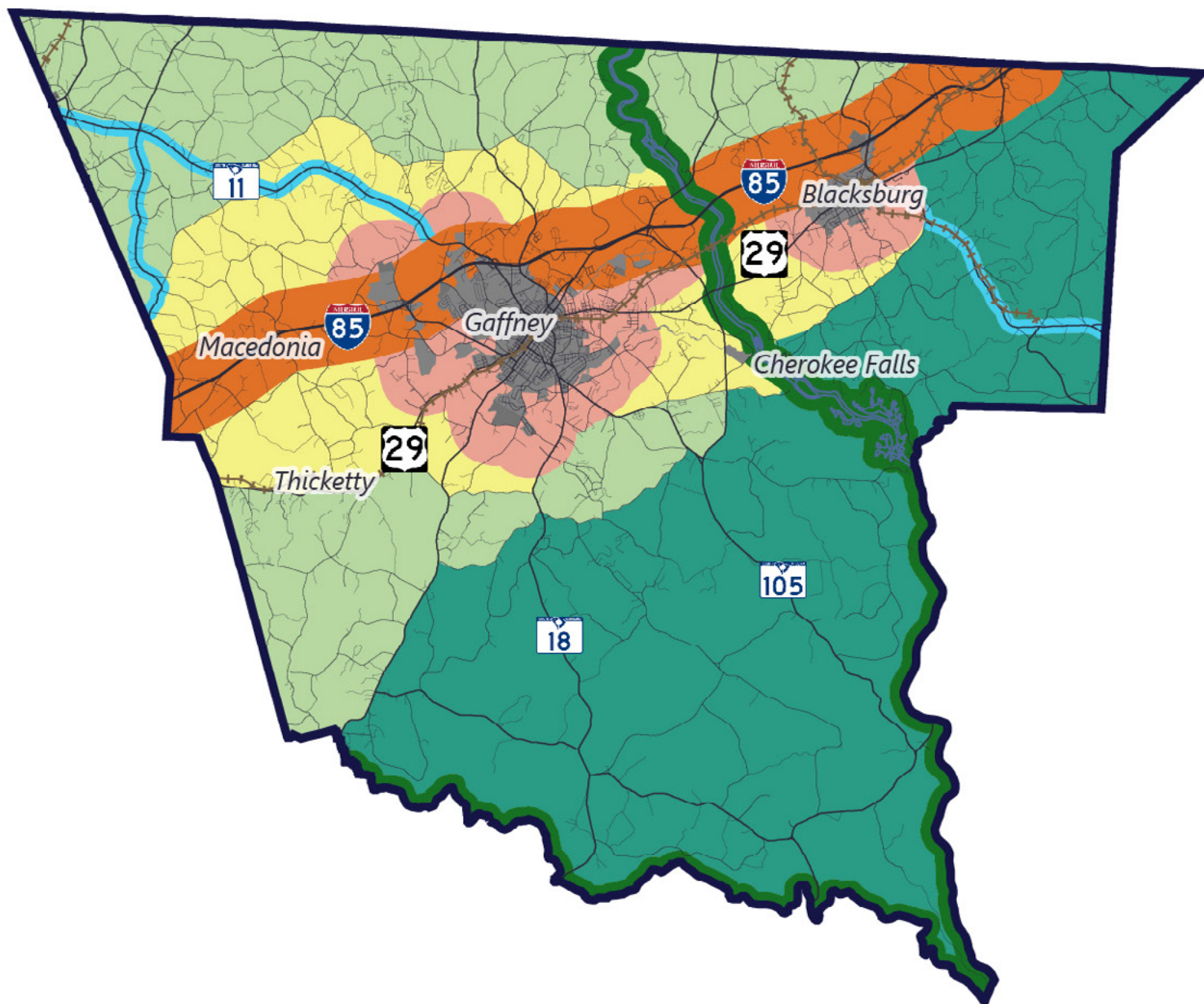
I-85 CORRIDOR

The I-85 Corridor land use classification is applied to areas of Cherokee County that are situated within one mile of the interstate. The intent of this land use classification is to define the area of primary economic development focus. Higher intensity land uses, including significant employment generating uses are a key component of the corridor adjacent to the interstate, especially in areas that are most proximate to the County's nine interchanges with I-85. Land suitable for new economic development opportunities, as well as existing industrial, manufacturing, logistics, and similarly used properties in the corridor should be zoned in a manner that protects them from incompatible adjacent development, while also ensuring that an adequate number of appropriately zoned sites are available for major economic development initiatives.

Those portions of the I-85 corridor that are within one mile of a municipality should be considered as part of the Primary Growth Area of the nearby municipality. These areas are anticipated to be developed in an urban manner with higher intensity commercial and residential land uses as outlined in the Primary Growth Area classification. Land suitable for large economic development projects, however, should be reserved for that purpose through appropriate zoning designation so that limited land resources are used most efficiently.

Land in the vicinity of interchanges that is not suitable for economic development purposes should be designated for commercial development, while land outside of the immediate vicinity of the interchanges that is not suitable for economic development purposes should be designated for low density residential development (1-2 dwelling units per acre), based on the availability of utilities.

Future Land Use Map



LEGEND

	I-85 Corridor		Agriculture / Countryside Residential
	Primary Growth Area		Rural Reserve
	Suburban Growth Area		Scenic Byways
			River Corridors
			Municipal Jurisdiction



PRIMARY GROWTH AREA

The Primary Growth Area land use classification is applied to areas within one mile of the municipal limits of the City of Gaffney and the Town of Blacksburg. The purpose of this land use classification is to define areas where urban development at the scale and intensity of the associated municipality is appropriate and generally expected due to the proximity of existing urban development and the availability of utilities and related services.

Development in these areas should be coordinated between the County and nearby municipality to ensure that compatible growth patterns are fostered. Commercial development and higher density residential development should be directed to land in the Primary Growth Area where annexation by one of the respective municipalities is possible. Residential development in the Primary Growth Area that will foreseeably remain in unincorporated Cherokee County should not exceed four dwelling units per acre.

SUBURBAN GROWTH AREA

The Suburban Growth Area land use classification encompasses the majority of the Gaffney Board of Public Works wastewater service area that is not designated with the I-85 Corridor or Primary Growth Area land use classifications. The purpose of this land use classification is to provide for a transition between the higher intensity development patterns of the Primary Growth Area / I-85 Corridor and rural areas of the County, where such transition is possible. Development patterns in this area should remain primarily residential, with development density not exceeding four dwelling units per acre, based on the availability of utilities.

AGRICULTURE / COUNTRYSIDE RESIDENTIAL

The Agriculture / Countryside Residential land use classification is intended to help sustain the viability of the County's agricultural economy while also providing opportunities for low density residential development. Agricultural enterprises and associated support businesses are permitted and encouraged throughout this area, along with small-scale convenience retail and service uses at crossroads to serve rural residents. Residential development should not exceed one dwelling unit per acre in major subdivisions, with larger lot sizes required outside of major subdivisions.

RURAL RESERVE

The Rural Reserve land use classification is applied to areas of the County that generally lack utility service, and, due to poor soil suitability for onsite wastewater disposal, have limited development potential. The Rural Reserve is generally characterized by concentrations of land in parcels greater than 50 acres in size, many of which are planted in commercial timber and held by entities engaged in forestry operations. Small-scale retail and service uses are permitted at crossroads to serve rural residents. Residential development should not exceed one dwelling unit per three acres within major subdivisions, while other forms of land subdivision should be required to meet the statutory exemption minimum five-acre parcel size.

SCENIC BYWAYS

This land use classification is applied to the Cherokee Foothills byway (SC 11), the Cowpens National Battlefield byway (SC 110), and SC Highway 5 east of Blacksburg. The intent of this land use classification is to maintain a rural / scenic character along these routes. This is primarily intended to be accomplished through the application of a zoning overlays. It is anticipated that such overlay districts would restrict uses that are incompatible with the intent of the classification and, potentially, modify development standards to improve the aesthetic appeal of permitted development within the corridors.

RIVER CORRIDORS

The River Corridors land use classification is applied to areas within roughly one-half mile of the banks of the Broad River and Pacolet River. The intent of the land use classification is to identify lands that influence the visual appeal of the rivers, provide opportunities for access and recreation along the rivers, and that will influence the overall health of the rivers if developed in a manner that is not respectful of proximity to the river. Land development and zoning standards (where applicable) should be oriented to support and maintain the natural beauty of these important resources.

MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION

The Municipal Jurisdiction land use classification is intended to identify lands that are outside of the scope of applicability of Cherokee County's Future Land Use Map. Incorporated municipalities include Gaffney, Blacksburg, Chesnee, and Smyrna.

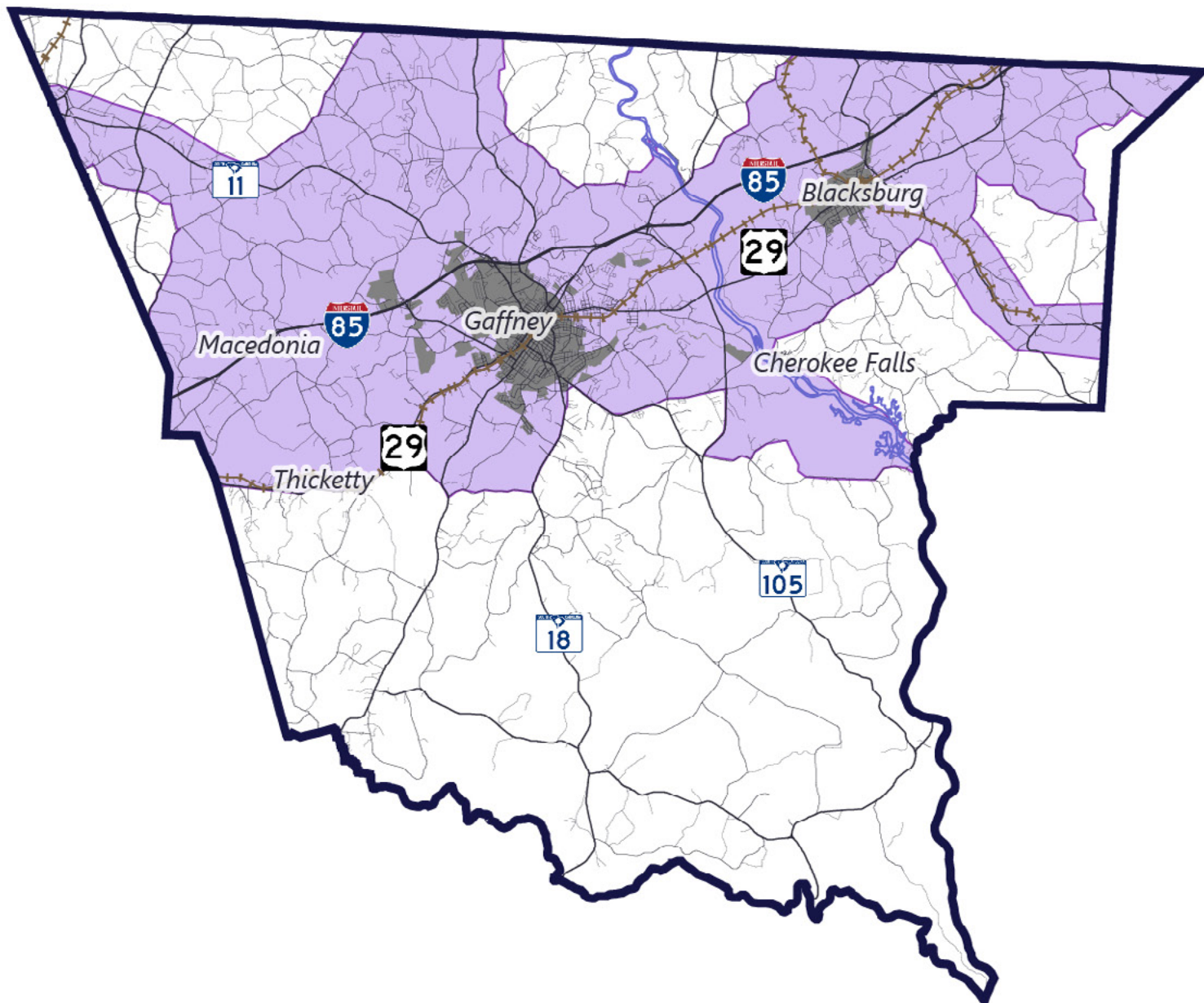
Growth Areas Identified for Zoning

Though the Future Land Use Map is not regulatory in nature, one of the recommendations of this Plan is to adopt a Zoning Ordinance and related Zoning Map. During this planning process, a number of potential zoning strategies were examined and it was determined that the County should establish zoning regulations only in portions of the County which are likely to have significant development pressure. The remainder of the County, the un-zoned portion, would continue to be regulated by the Land Development Regulations, which should also be improved following the adoption of this Plan, but will not have any specificity in terms of which land uses will be permitted where.

The map on the following page shows the portion of the County which should be zoned in the near future. Following the adoption of this Plan, a Zoning Ordinance will be developed to establish specific zoning districts and a Zoning Map will lay out the land uses permitted throughout the area.

Beyond this area, property owners can request zoning but the intent would be for them to remain un-zoned in the near future. As additional development occurs and other factors change, the County may consider expanding the zoned area in the future.

■ Growth Areas Identified for Zoning



LEGEND

-  Cherokee County
-  Growth Areas Identified for Zoning
-  Roads

SECTION TWO

PLAN ELEMENTS

Plan Elements

As mentioned previously, the State of South Carolina requires that all comprehensive plans must include, but not be limited to, a set of planning elements. These elements, which are contained in this section, are listed and described below:

-  **Element 1: Population**
Considers historic trends and projections, household and population characteristics
-  **Element 2: Economic Development**
Considers labor force characteristics, employment, and the economic base
-  **Element 3: Natural Resources**
Considers slopes, agriculture and forest land, habitats, and environmental resources
-  **Element 4: Cultural Resources**
Considers historic buildings and structures, districts, and unique resources
-  **Element 5: Community Facilities**
Considers public utilities, public services, and public facilities
-  **Element 6: Housing**
Considers location, type, age, condition, and characteristics of housing
-  **Element 7: Land Use**
Considers existing and future land use by categories
-  **Element 8: Transportation**
Considers all modes and characteristics of transportation facilities
-  **Element 9: Resiliency**
Considers impacts of natural hazards and resiliency conditions
-  **Element 10: Priority Investment**
Analyzes likely funds available to support recommendations and regional partners

ELEMENT 1

POPULATION

Population

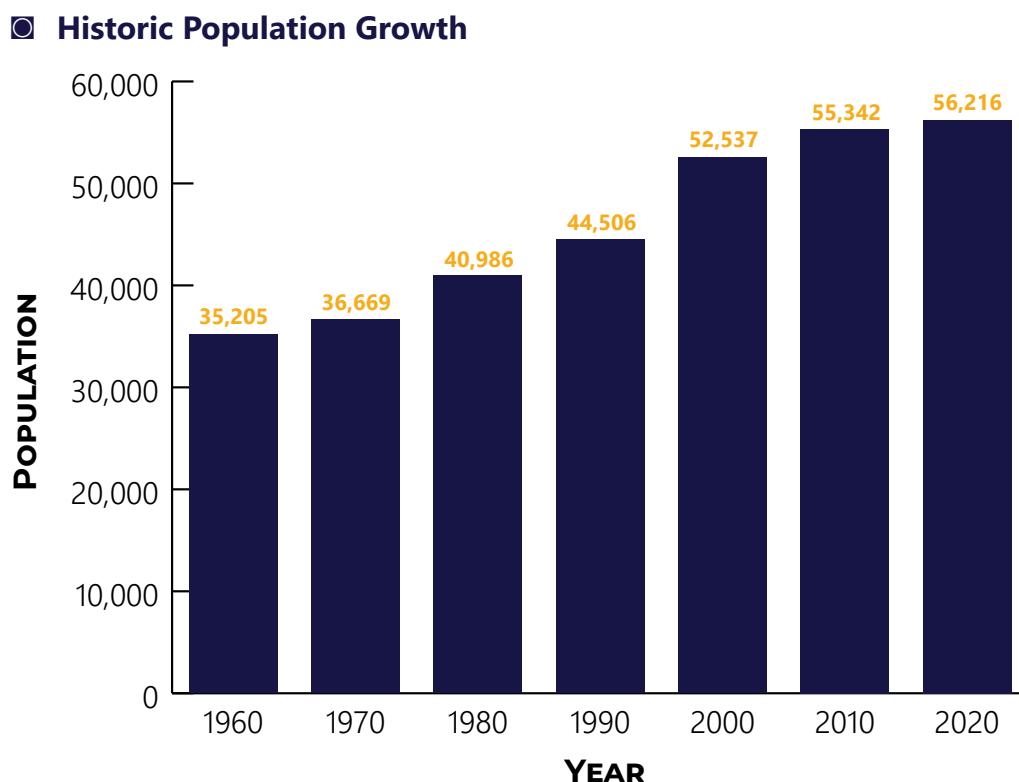
The Population Element considers historic trends and projections, household numbers and sizes, and similar population characteristics.

Historic Trends

Since 1960, Cherokee County has experienced consistent growth, increasing from just 35,205 people in 1960 to 56,216 people in 2020. It is likely that the County's population is just over 60,000 today, and continues to grow. However, as can be seen in the graph below, the rate of growth within the County has been relatively slow and stable.

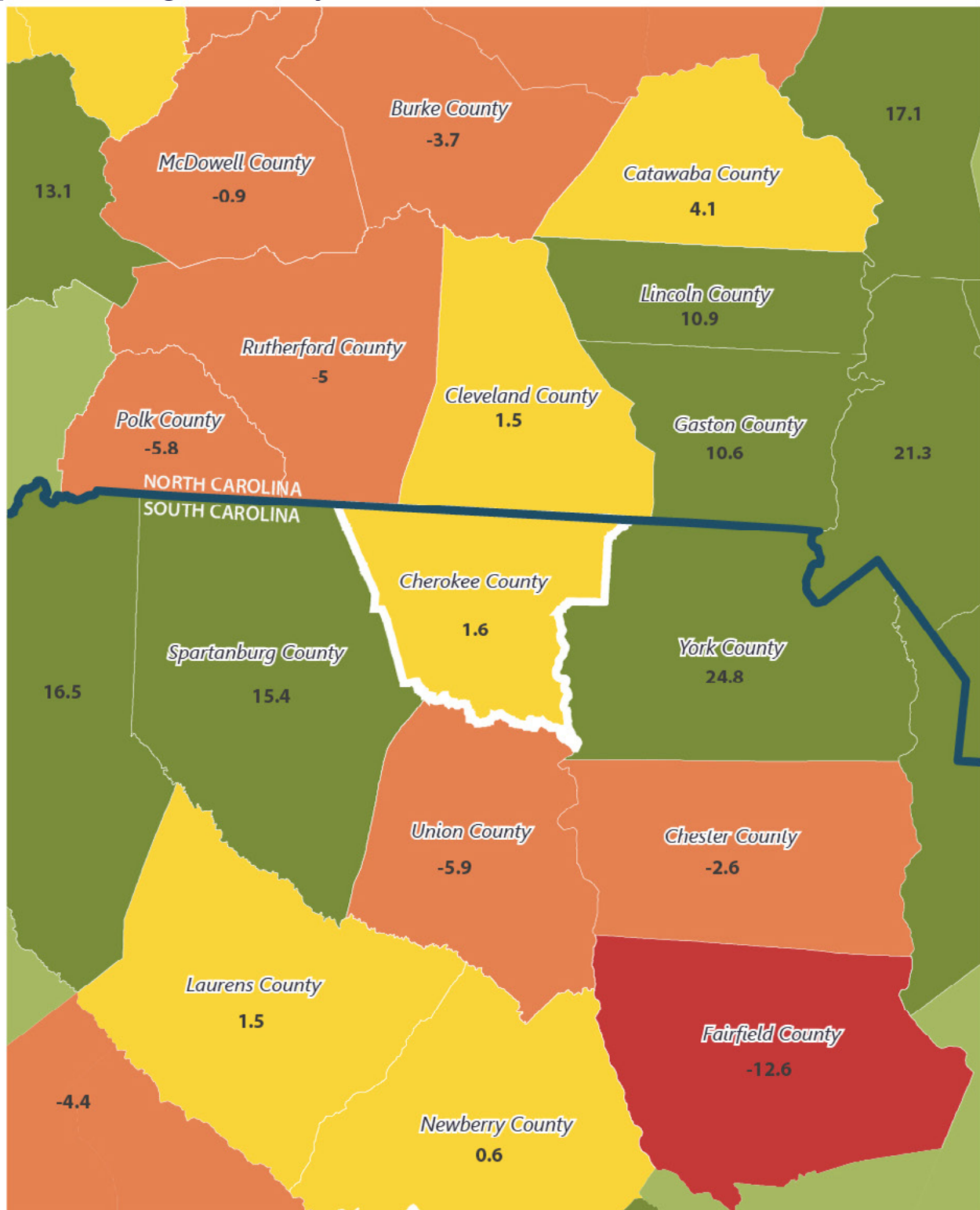
The map on page 16 shows how populations have changed in counties throughout the region over the last decade. As shown, Cherokee County has grown at a slower rate than the majority of its neighbors in the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area, as well as at a lower rate than Spartanburg County to the west. Cherokee County and the counties just north and south of it seem to form a line of slower growth, stacked between the more significant growth occurring in surrounding metropolitan areas of Charlotte, NC and Greenville, SC. However, it has grown at a higher rate than the counties southward, including Union, Chester, and Fairfield Counties.

With the continued growth and increased cost of living in these surrounding metropolitan areas, it is possible that Cherokee County will see a more significant rate of growth in the coming years.



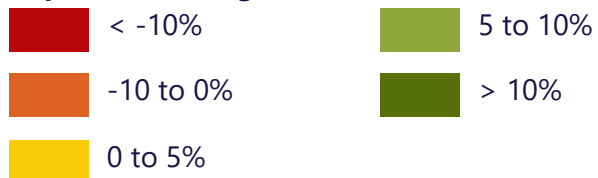
Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (1960 - 2020)

Population Change Per County (2010 - 2020)



LEGEND

Population Change 2010-2020



Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2010 - 2020)

Population Density

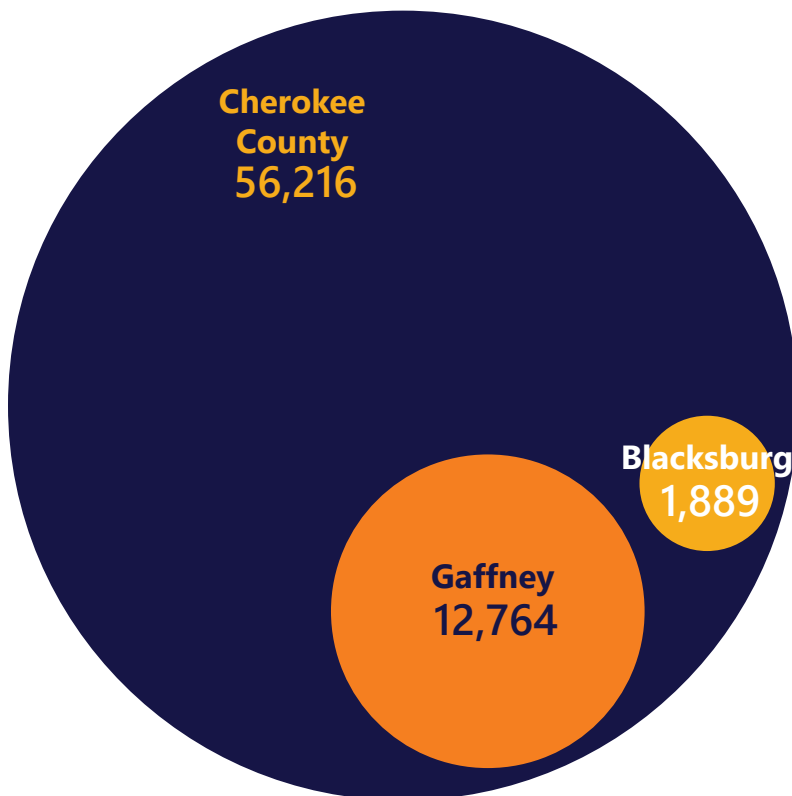
The majority of the County's population resides in unincorporated Cherokee County, with just under 13,000 people (22.7% of the County population) living in Gaffney and almost 2,000 people (3.4% of the County's population) living in Blacksburg. The map on the following page shows the number of people per census tract throughout the County, identifying the east side of Gaffney as the most dense, and the west side of Gaffney as second most-dense.

These most dense areas in and around Gaffney are also the locations which have experienced the greatest population loss in the last decade. More rural areas just south of there have also experienced a loss of population. The map on page 19 shows the areas of the County which experienced growth since 2010.

Generally speaking, the southern portion of the County is the least dense, with less than 100 residents per square mile in many of the areas south of US-29. These areas have experienced different amounts of growth or loss of population since 2010, with the greatest population loss happening southeast of Gaffney, and the greatest population gain happening in a belt southwest of Gaffney between Interstate 85 and the eastern County boundary. The most southern edge of the County experienced a slight decrease in population during this time.

Taken together, it seems that the County has experienced a level of suburbanization over the past decade, like much of the United States. While downtown Gaffney has witnessed some revitalization which has

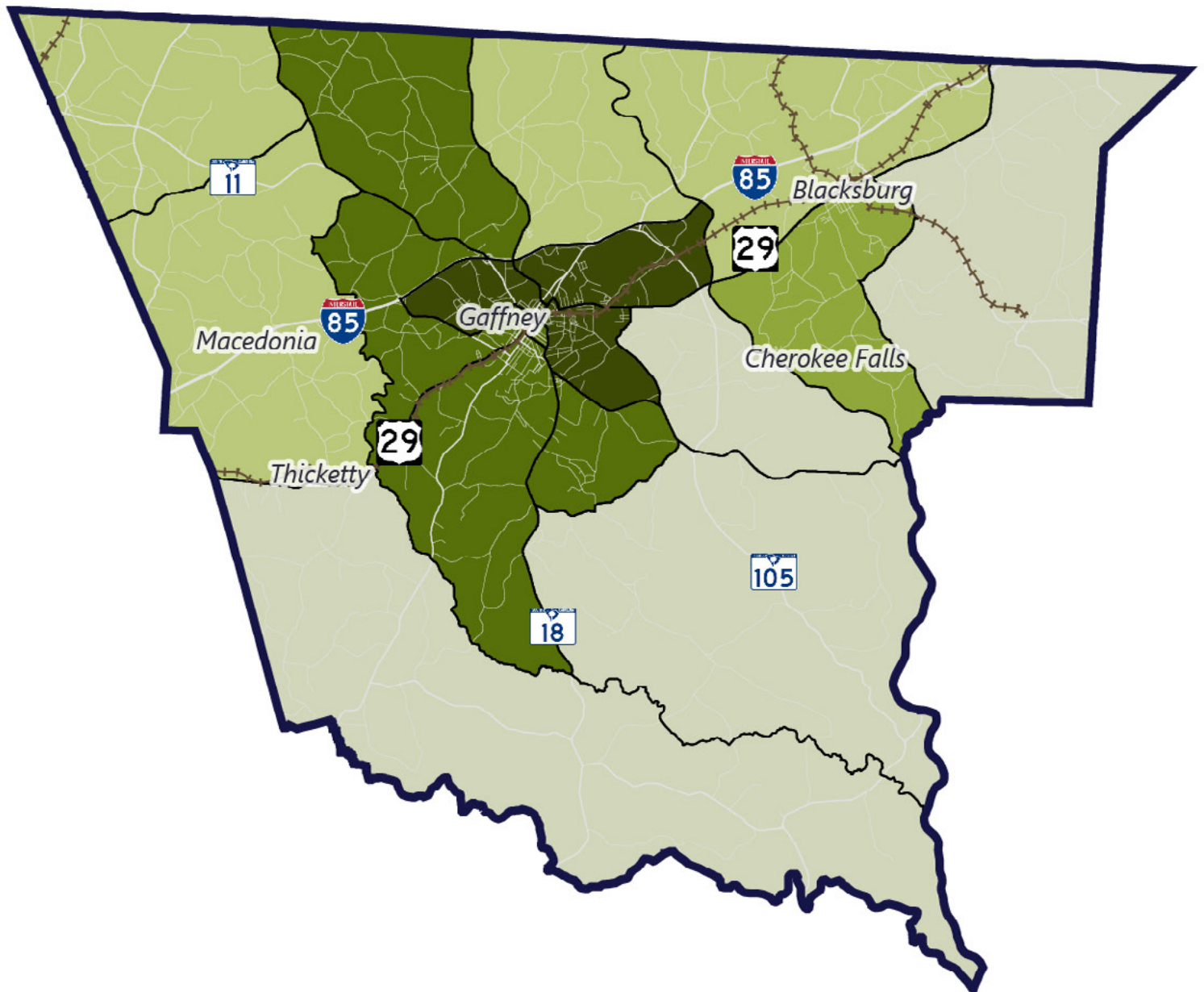
■ Population Distribution in County



led to an increase in population in that part of the City, many of the other more urban portions of the County have lost population, leaving vacant or underutilized buildings in their wake. New development and growth in population has generally occurred just outside these urban areas, in the form of new subdivisions. This type of growth has also occurred in some of the more rural portions of the County, many of which have active farms and agricultural enterprises.

Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (1960 - 2020)

Population Density



LEGEND

 Cherokee County

 Railroad

People per Square Mile (2020)

 Less than 100

 100 - 150

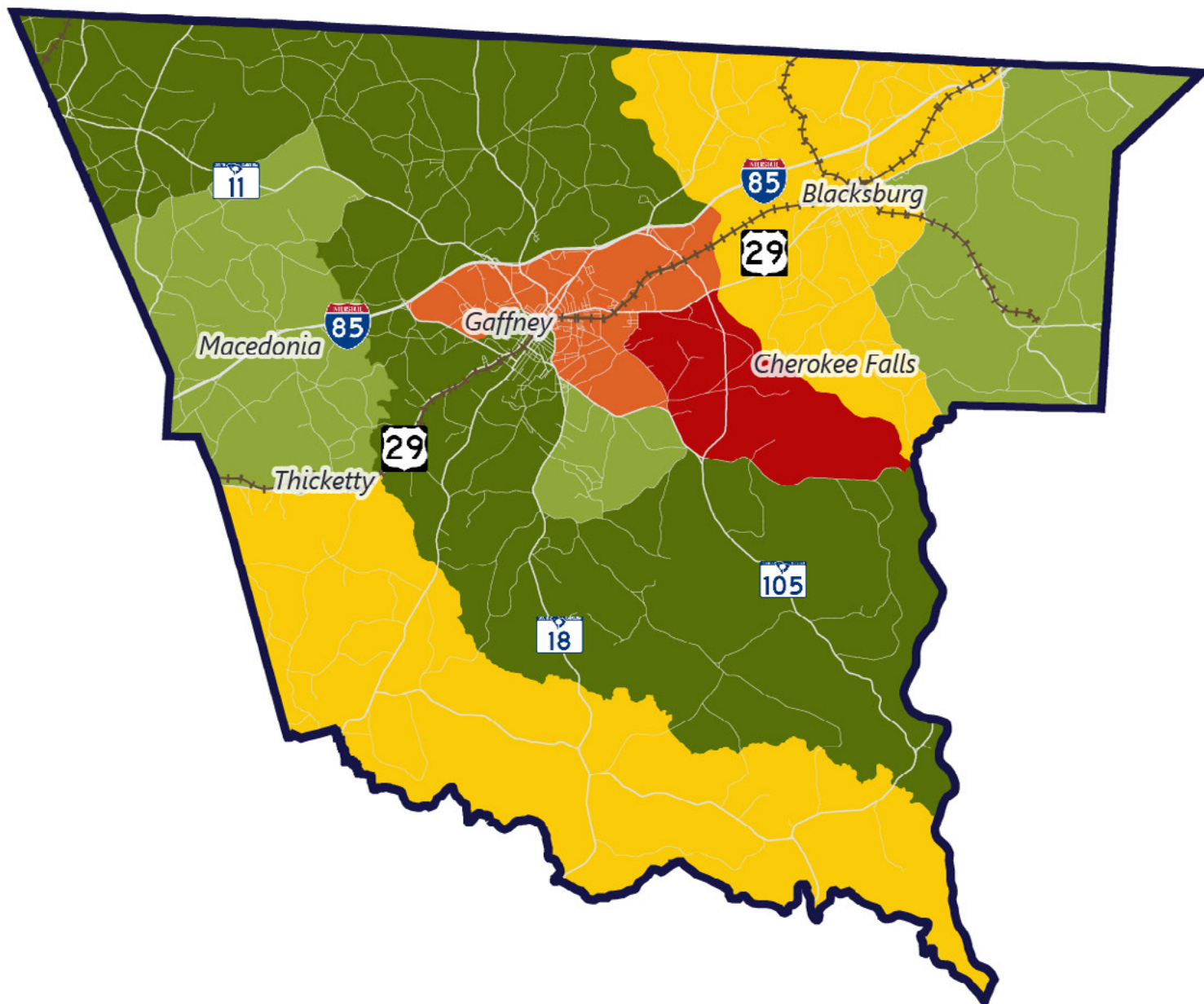
 151 - 200

 201 - 500

 Greater than 500

Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020)

Population Change by Census Tracts (2010 - 2020)



LEGEND

Cherokee County

Railroad

Population Change 2010-2020

< -10%

-10 to -5%

-5 to 0%

0 to 5%

> 5%



Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2010 - 2020)

Recent Population Change

While the overall County population has experienced steady growth over the past 60 years, that growth has not been consistent across the County. As shown on the map on the previous page and on the table below, much of the County's growth has been occurring in the unincorporated portion of the County, at least since 2000. In fact, between 2000 and 2010, the populations of Blacksburg and Gaffney (the only incorporated communities in the County) experienced a slight decrease in population. Over the last decade, these two municipalities have experienced slight growth, reaching approximately the same populations they had in 2000. During this same time period, Cherokee County has grown by almost 4,000 new residents. The County has not grown as quickly as the State of South Carolina, and while the State's rate of population growth dropped from 15.3% to 10.7% in the last decade, Cherokee County's rate of growth dropped from 5.3% to 1.6%. It is likely that these numbers are skewed lower due to limited reporting in the United States Census.

Population Projections

Population Growth Rates

GEOGRAPHY	2000 POPULATION	2010 POPULATION	GROWTH RATE (2000-2010)	2020 POPULATION	GROWTH RATE (2010 - 2020)
South Carolina	4,012,012	4,625,364	+ 15.3%	5,118,425	+ 10.7%
Cherokee County	52,537	55,342	+ 5.3%	56,216	+ 1.6%
Blacksburg (Town)	1,922	1,848	- 3.7%	1,889	+ 2.2%
Gaffney (City)	12,945	12,414	- 4.1%	12,764	+ 2.8%

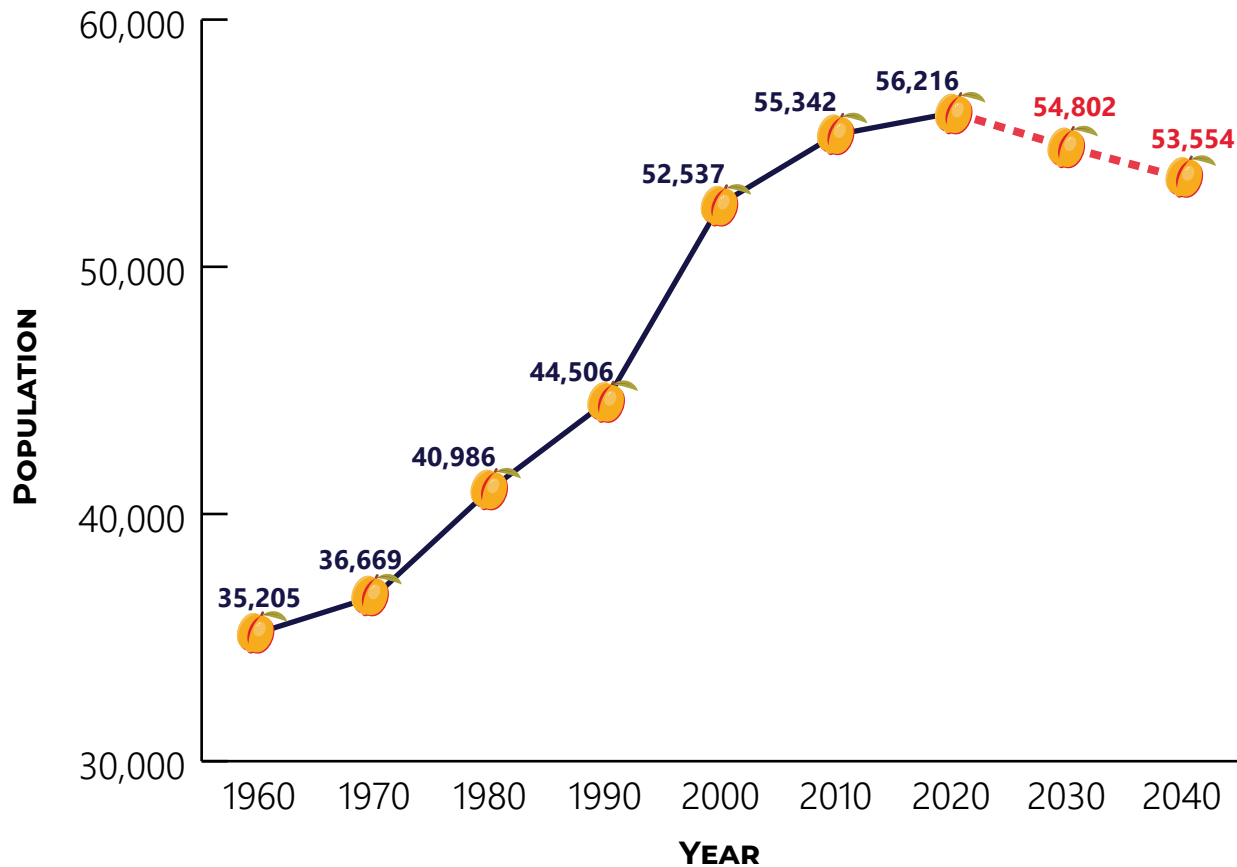
The South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office develops population projections which are intended to demonstrate a likely scenario if future events unfold in a manner that reflects previous trends observed in the County. The State's model does not account for unprecedented events that may significantly alter an area's demographic composition in the future. These possible events include large factory openings or closings, changes in technology, public health crises, environmental events, changes in the economy, or other conditions that could affect birth rates, death rates, or domestic and international migration.

According to the State, Cherokee County's population is anticipated to decrease in the coming decades, dropping below 54,000 by 2035. This is largely based on the decreasing rate of population growth in the County. Another major factor influencing the State's projection for Cherokee County is the age cohorts within the County. Since 2014, the population of children and young adults as steadily decreased while the population over 65 years old (unlikely to bear new children) has increased notably. This shift toward an older population may contribute to short-term population growth through in-migration but will have a prolonged effect of reducing overall populations (by death rates out-pacing birth rates).

However, there a number of factors which may not be considered in the State's projection that may alter the actual outcome. While the United States Census has shown a reduced rate of growth over the past couple of decades, the County's Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) records indicate a greater increase. It is possible that a large number of undocumented residents or residents living in mobile

Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000 - 2020)

State Population Projection



homes or trailers are not being considered in the Census estimates. Another recent change is significant construction on Interstate-85. While this construction has made travel to the County treacherous in recent years, it is almost complete and will make it much easier to commute out of the County for work and other trips. This major infrastructure improvement, coupled with a number of changes to the economy and lifestyle trends due to the recent pandemic, may result in an influx of new residents. Lastly, the amount of development currently occurring in the County is much higher than recent years, resulting in a number of changes to development policies and procedures. Given these factors, it is possible that the County will in fact continue to grow at a gradual rate. Additional data on DMV and building permits would be necessary to estimate the potential increase in population by 2040.

Source: South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office

Population Characteristics

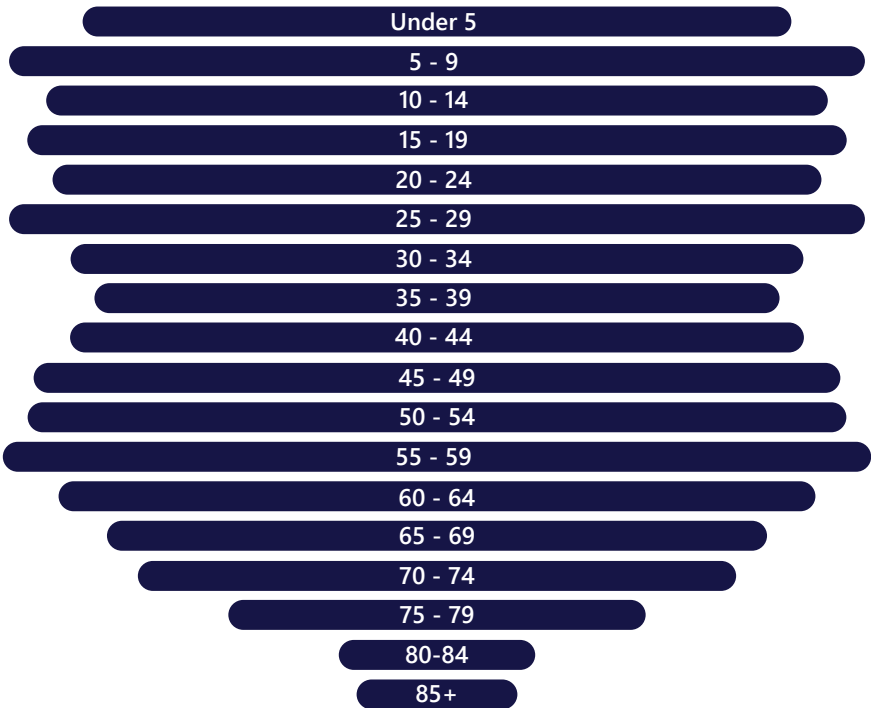
AGE COHORTS AND MEDIAN AGE

One of the primary factors contributing to the State’s low population projections is the relatively flat, or stationary, population pyramid, which is shown below. A population pyramid shows the portion of a total population divided into separate age cohorts. In communities where populations are growing very quickly, these tend to resemble pyramids, and in communities where little growth is occurring, they tend to be more rectangular. The population pyramid for Cherokee County is fairly square, showing that there are about an even number of each population (barring those over 80 years old).

A component of this pyramid is the age cohorts that may seem more important in terms of regional service needs, as shown on the following page. About 60% of the County’s total population is “working-aged,” between 18 and 64 years old. Almost 20% of the population is “school-aged,” between the ages of 5 and 17 years old, and almost 6% are children under 4 years old. Almost 17% of the population is over 65 years old.

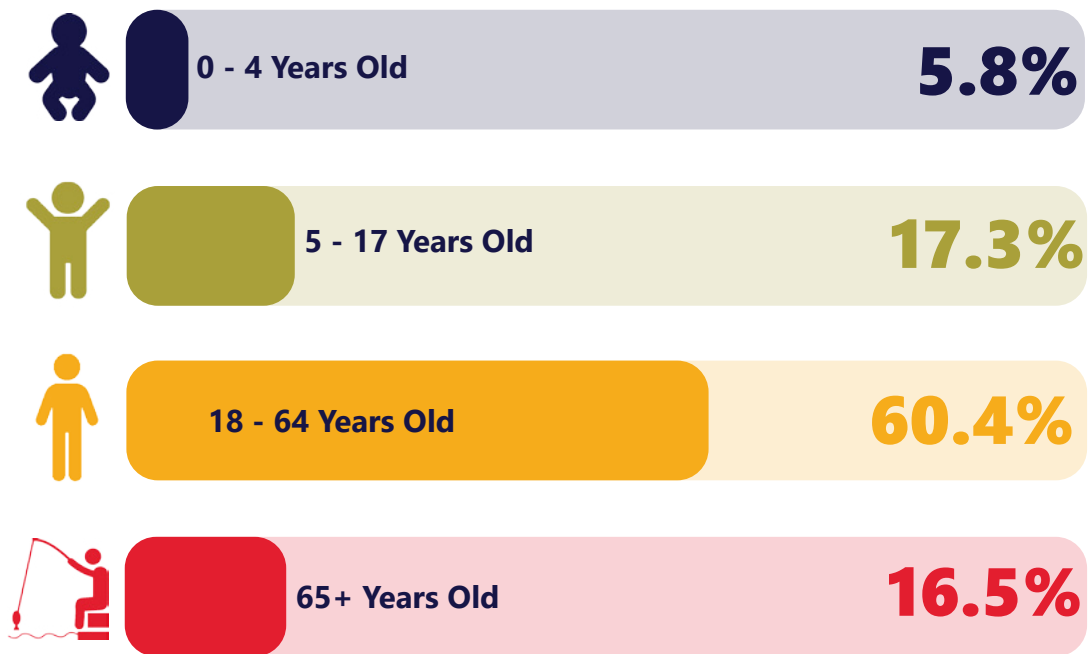
The median age in Cherokee County is 39.2, which is comparable to the State and country’s median age. The United States Census uses these age estimates to determine “age dependency,” which is aimed at measuring the portion of a population which is dependent on those “working-aged” people. In Cherokee County, the age dependency ratio is a little high, around 65.5.

Population Pyramid (Age Group Distribution)

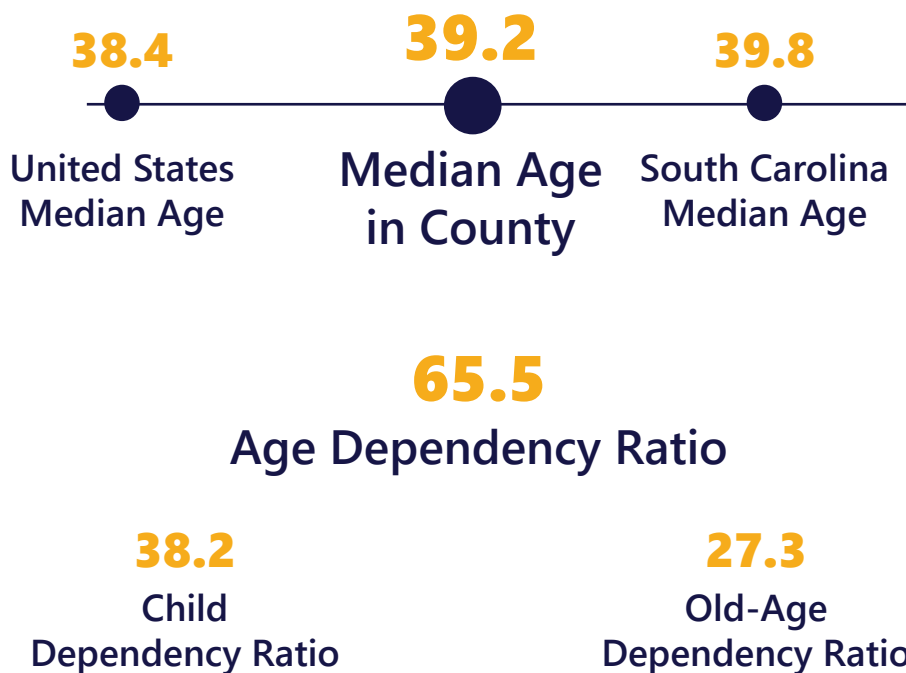


Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Age Cohorts



Median Age and Age Dependency



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

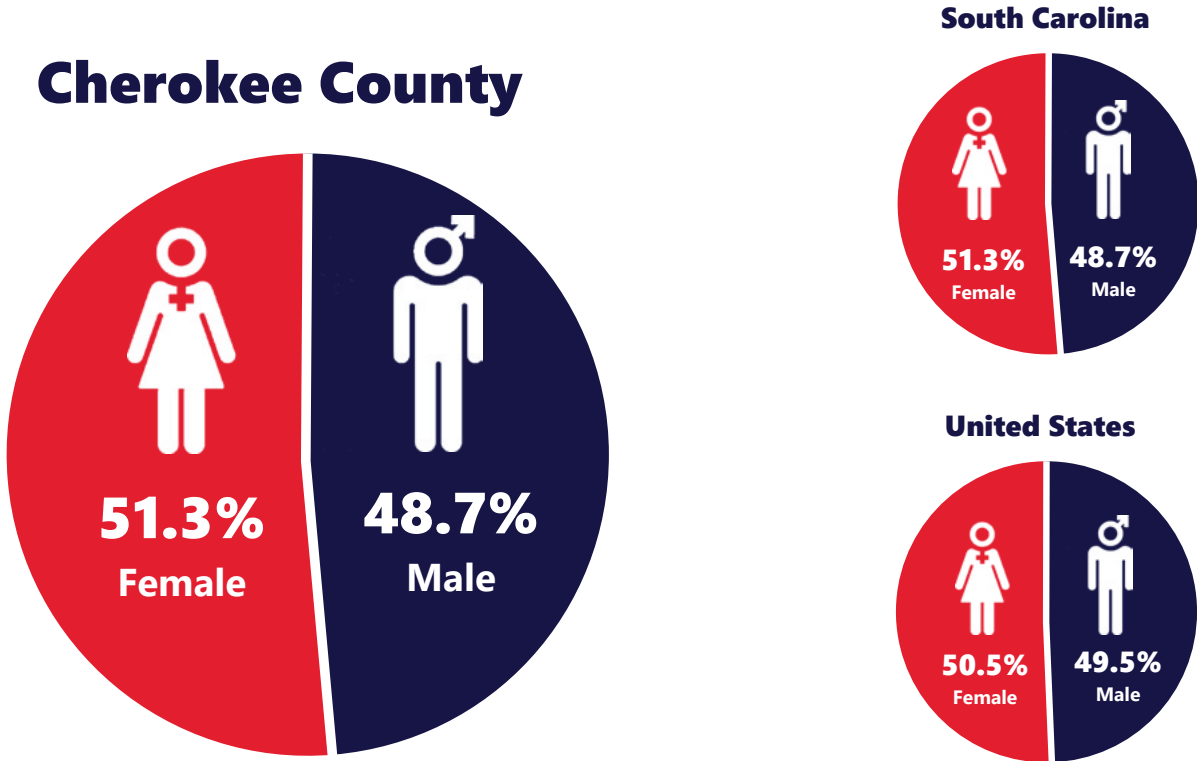
GENDER, RACE, AND ETHNICITY

The gender, race, and ethnicity of residents in Cherokee County is very similar to that of the State. Genders are almost evenly divided, with slightly more female than male residents. Approximately 70% of residents identify as White, with 20% identifying as Black / African American, 5% as Hispanic / Latino, and 3.3% as Two or More Races. Small percentages of residents identify as Asian, American Indian / Alaskan, Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander, or some other race.

MARTIAL STATUS

Almost half (43%) of residents over the age of 15 are married. More than one-third (35.9%) are single, while 13.1% are divorced or separated and 8% are widowed. These ratios are relatively similar to the national averages; though the United States population has a slightly higher married population (48% total). This is generally because the national average portion of residents who are widowed, divorced, or separated is slightly lower than in the County. Regardless, there is nothing particularly jarring about the marital status of residents in Cherokee County.

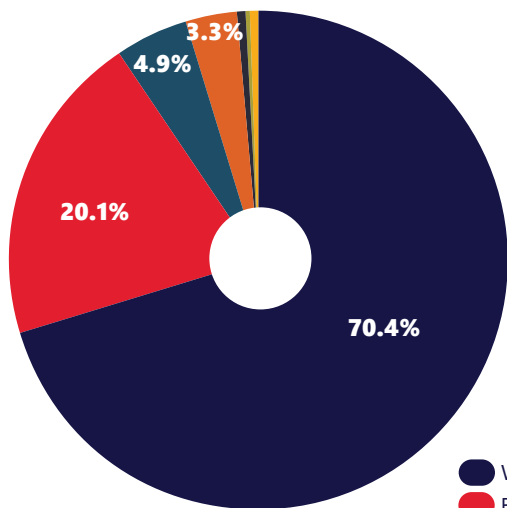
Gender



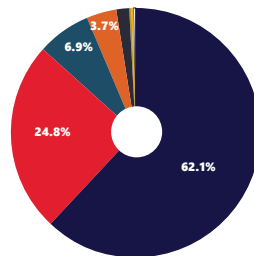
Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020) and American Community Survey (2021)

Race and Ethnicity

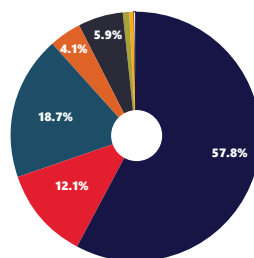
Cherokee County



South Carolina



United States



Marital Status (population 15 years and older)



Married
43.0%



Single
35.9%



Divorced / Separated
13.1%

8.0% Widowed

Household Characteristics

There are more than 21,000 total households in Cherokee County. More than half of these are family households, which are defined as residences where two or more people are related to one another (through blood or marriage). While there are a variety of different family households, one of the most common is a married couple with children. This generally creates a family household size larger than the average household size, as exists in the County. The average household size overall (which includes many people who live by themselves) is 2.63. The average family size is slightly larger, at 3.58 people per home.

An interesting note about Cherokee County's population is that only about one-quarter of households include children, which is slightly lower than the national average of around 30%. The portion of households with someone over the age of 65 years old, at 31.3% is on-par with the national average, though the portion of those over 65 living alone is slightly higher than average. In fact, the portion of the population living alone (almost 40%) is much higher than the national average of 28.3%. This may also contribute to the State's population projections for the County. Despite the high portion of people living alone, family sizes remain proximate to the State and national averages. This suggests that a number of larger families may be having a great influence on the average household size in the County. Since only 25% of homes include children under 18, this likely includes less-traditional family situations (adult children, aging parents, siblings, non-immediate relatives, and similar household dynamics).

Households



Average Household Size



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Household Types



24.9%

Households with
Children



31.3%

Households with
People over 65 Years Old



37.8%

Householders
Living Alone



13.6%

Householders
Over 65 Living Alone

Population Summary

While the County has experienced moderate growth over the last 60 years, there are a number of population characteristics which have caused the State to project a loss in population in the coming decades. A number of recent economic, social, and physical trends will likely cause the population to continue growing; however it is difficult to determine by how much. Additional data on population counts and building permit information should be examined to better predict future population trends in Cherokee County.

Key Observations

- The County's population experienced its most dramatic rate of increase from 1990 to 2000.
- Since 2000, the County's population has slowed down and is projected by the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to decrease through the year 2040.
- Several census tracts outside of the municipalities have experienced slight increases in population from 2010 to 2020; however, several census tracts within and around Gaffney and Blacksburg have had decreases in population over that same time frame.
- The greatest concentrations of population in the County are along the Interstate 85 corridor in Gaffney and Blacksburg, extending northward to the County boundary.
- The County's median age, race, and ethnicity is similar to the State's.
- Only one-quarter of households include children, which is slightly lower than the national average of around 30%.
- The number of people over the age of 65 years old living alone is slightly higher than the national average.
- The total number of people living alone is 40%, which is much higher than the national average of 28%.

ELEMENT 2

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development

The Economic Development element considers labor force characteristics, employment by place of work and residence, and an analysis of the economic base. Specific industry employment metrics and factors which contribute to economic development are also considered.

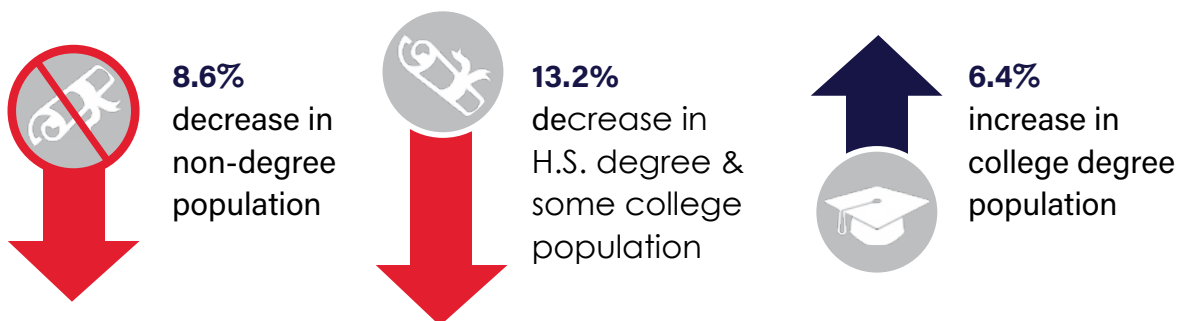
Educational Attainment

Often times, educational attainment influences the types of industries which are attracted to communities. Educational attainment is also reflective of the types of employment residents may be qualified for. In Cherokee County, educational attainment is below average. There is a high proportion of residents who did not finish high school or who only graduated high school (collectively 54.1% of the total population). The portion of residents who have some college with no degree or an associates degree is about the same as State and national trends. Yet, only 14.6% of the adult population has a bachelors degree or higher level of education (as compared to 29.8% in the State and 33.7% in the country). However, these trends are changing, with significant decreases in the portion of the population without a degree or with just a high school degree over the past decade. During this same time period, there was almost a 9% increase in the portion of the Cherokee County population with a college degree.

■ Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION	CHEROKEE COUNTY	SOUTH CAROLINA	UNITED STATES
No High School Degree	16.6%	11.2%	11.1%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	37.5%	28.7%	26.5%
Some college, No Degree	20.7%	20.2%	20.0%
Associates Degree	10.6%	10.0%	8.7%
Bachelor's Degree	8.3%	18.6%	20.6%
Graduate / Professional Degree	6.3%	11.2%	13.1%

■ Educational Trends (Net Change 2011 - 2021)



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2011, 2021)

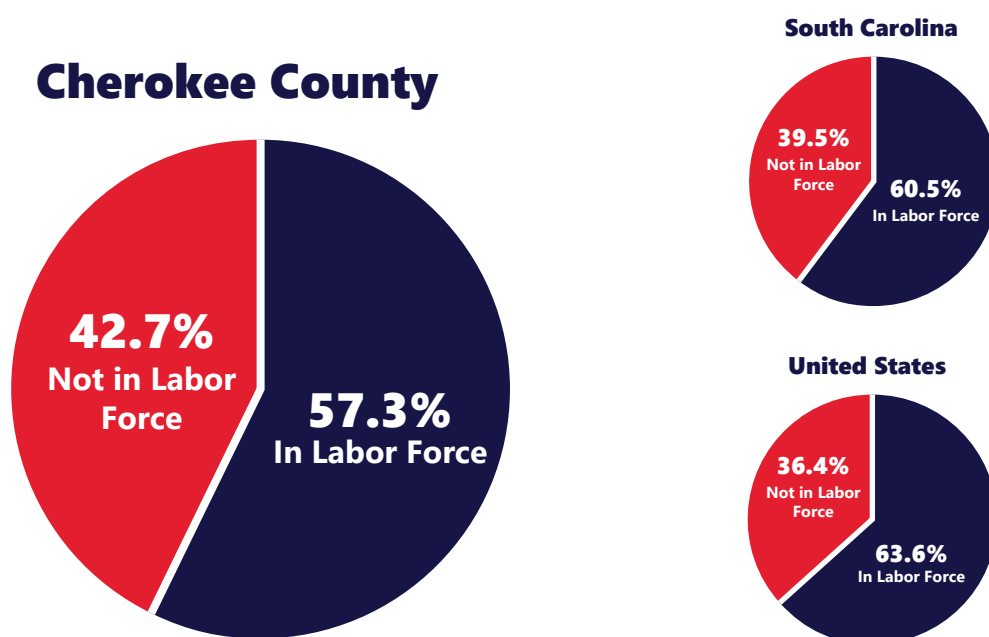
Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Labor force participation measures the portion of the adult, employable population that is either actively employed or actively seeking work, as compared to the portion of the adult, employable population who is neither employed nor actively seeking work. Labor force participation in Cherokee County is slightly low (57.3% of the total adult, employable population is either employed or actively seeking work). This compares to just over 60% of the adult population in South Carolina and almost 64% of the adult population in the United States.

The low labor force participation rate may be related to a historically high unemployment rate. Since 2000, the County has had an unemployment rate higher than the State and country. However, the gap has decreased notably since 2019, when the County's unemployment rate dropped below the national average. As of 2022, the unemployment rate in Cherokee County is comparable to that of South Carolina and the United States.

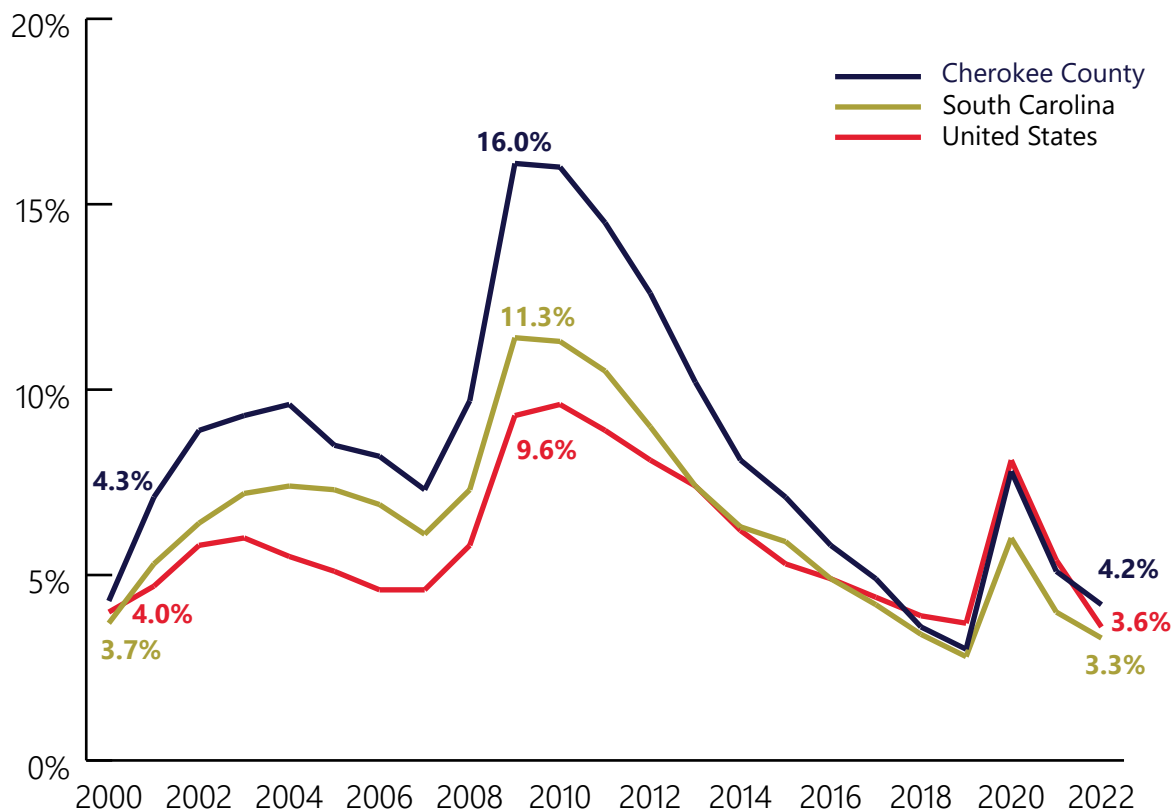
Of those employed, almost 27% are in management, business, science, and arts occupations. Another 27% are in production, transportation, and material moving occupations. Almost 20% of the County's employed population is in both service occupations and sales / office occupations. The fewest portion of the employed population, just over 10%, is in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.

■ Labor Force Participation Rate (Population 16 Years and Older)



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

■ Unemployment Rate Trends



■ Occupations of Cherokee County Residents

OCCUPATION	PERCENT OF WORKFORCE
Management, Business, Science, Arts	26.4%
Service	18.6%
Sales and Office	18.6%
Natural Resources, Construction, Maintenance	10.1%
Production, Transportation, Material Moving	26.4%

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data (2000 - 2022), and American Community Survey (2021)

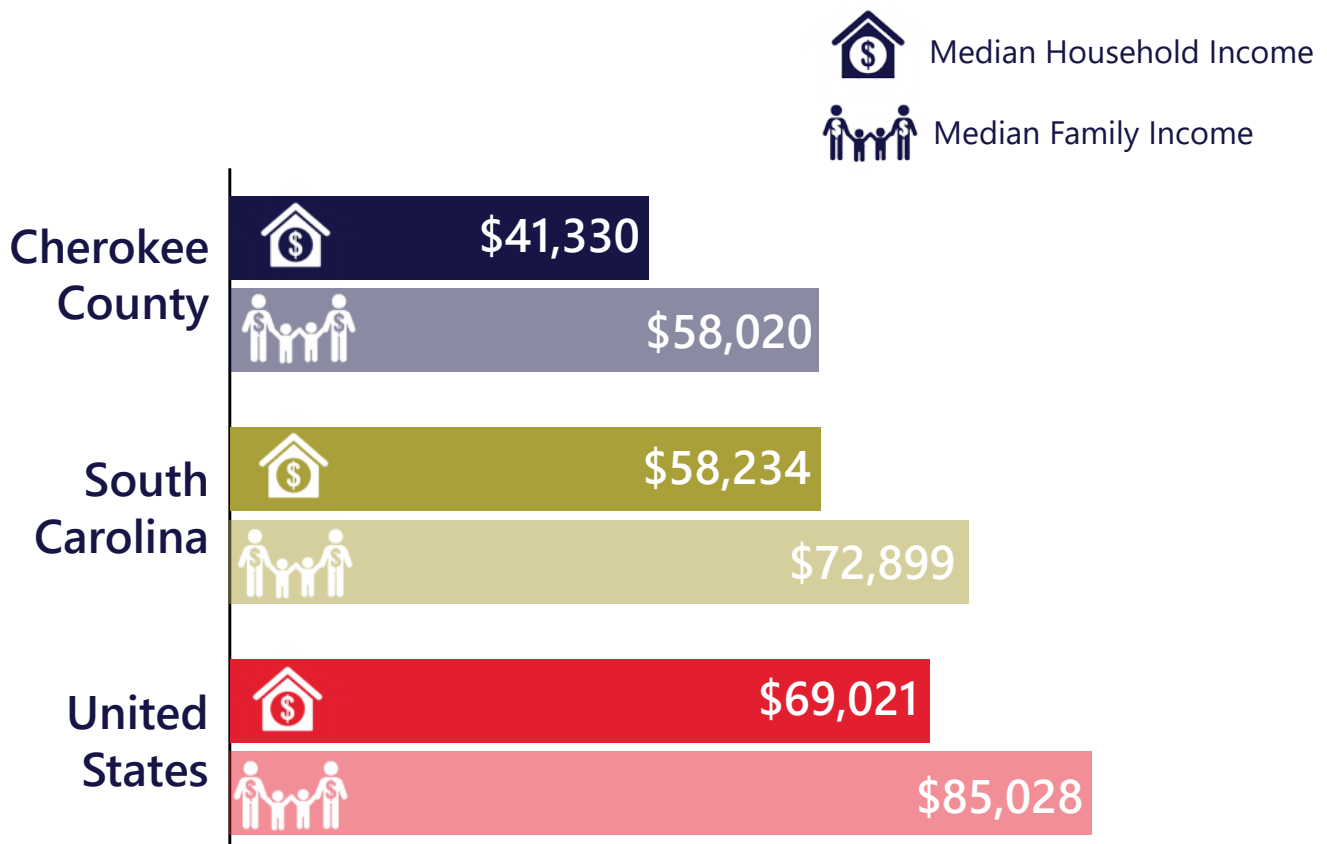
Income and Industry Sectors

Income, which is closely associated with educational attainment and the labor force, is slightly lower in Cherokee County than it is in the State of South Carolina and in the country. Median household incomes in the County average just over \$40,000 (as compared to \$58,000 and \$69,000 in the State and country, respectively). A similar comparison exists for median family incomes. In Cherokee County, the median family income is \$58,020 (as compared to \$72,899 in South Carolina and \$85,028 in the United States).

Since 2011, the median household, family, and per capita incomes in Cherokee County have increased from between 18% and 33%. However, they have not kept pace with the State and nation, where incomes have increased from between 30.6% and 37.6%. The median incomes in Cherokee County are likely related to an equally lower cost of living.

While the previous page illustrated the portion of the employed population in each type of occupation, the Industry Sectors chart shows the actual industries residents are employed in. The most common industries are manufacturing (23.7%); educational services, health care, and social assistance (18.4%); and retail trade (12.3%). Very few residents are employed in information, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, or mining.

Median Income Comparisons



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Median Income Trends

	CHEROKEE COUNTY	SOUTH CAROLINA	UNITED STATES
Median Household Income (2011)	\$35,025	\$44,587	\$52,762
Median Household Income (2021)	\$41,330	\$58,234	\$69,021
Change (2011 - 2021)	+ 18.0%	+ 30.6%	+ 30.8%
Median Family Income (2011)	\$45,513	\$55,220	\$64,293
Median Family Income (2021)	\$58,020	\$72,899	\$85,028
Change (2011 - 2021)	+ 27.5%	+ 32.0%	+ 32.3%
Median Per Capita Income (2011)	\$17,910	\$23,854	\$27,915
Median Per Capita Income (2021)	\$23,828	\$32,823	\$37,638
Change (2011 - 2021)	+ 33.0%	+ 37.6%	+ 34.8%

Industry Sectors Cherokee County Residents are Employed In

INDUSTRY	PERCENT OF WORKFORCE
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	0.6%
Construction	7.0%
Manufacturing	23.7%
Wholesale Trade	2.2%
Retail Trade	12.3%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	6.5%
Information	0.4%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	3.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administration	7.6%
Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance	18.4%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodations	8.6%
Public Administration	4.0%
Other Services	5.2%

Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2011, 2021)

Location Quotients

A location quotient is an analytical statistic that measures a region's industry specialization relative to a larger geographic unit. In this instance, the location quotients shown on the following page are comparing the employment in Cherokee County to that of the United States. In any instance, a location quotient that is above 1.0 indicates an industry in which the County specializes, or has a higher portion of employees or wages dedicated toward it.

The employment location quotient specifically designates those industries in which a large number of people (larger than the national average) are employed in Cherokee County. For private employment, the County appears to specialize in goods-producing and manufacturing industries. For federal government employment, Cherokee County specializes in leisure and hospitality.

The wage location quotient often reflects the employment location quotient. If a lot of people are employed in a specific industry (like those which are goods-producing), then there are also a lot of wages dedicated to these industries. However, there are some industries which are more competitive in certain regions, and in these cases, they may have a higher wage location quotient than an employment location quotient (because they are also paying more). For instance, while the wage location quotients that are above 1.0 in Cherokee County are essentially the same as the employment location quotients, it can be seen that the wage location quotients for federal government leisure and hospitality industries is 3.29 (as compared to an employment location quotient of 2.07). While these are both notable numbers, the employment location quotient explains that about twice as many people are employed in this industry than most similarly-sized counties in the United States. At the same time, the wages paid toward this industry are almost 3.5 times as much as is typical, indicating that the wages are also above average in this industry. There are a few industries in Cherokee County (highlighted in light beige) that do not have a high employment location quotient, but do have a wage location quotient slightly above 1.0. These include construction, leisure, and hospitality (for private employment and wages). Trade, transportation, and utilities also has a high federal government wage location quotient (but not a high federal government employment location quotient).

SPECIALIZED INDUSTRIES



Manufacturing



Administrative Support



Arts & Entertainment

Annual Private Employment and Wage Location Quotients

INDUSTRY SECTOR	EMPLOYMENT LOCATION QUOTIENT	WAGE LOCATION QUOTIENT
Manufacturing	3.54	4.23
Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation	2.04	1.42
Transportation and Warehousing	1.39	1.77
Educational Services	1.33	1.40
Utilities	1.16	1.55
Retail Trade	1.12	1.26
Accommodation and Food Services	0.91	1.04
Wholesale Trade	0.85	0.67
Other Services	0.67	0.62
Construction	0.66	0.93
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	0.61	0.53
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	0.34	0.34
Finance and Insurance	0.30	0.24
Health Care and Social Assistance	0.30	0.28
Information	0.10	0.05

Annual Government Employment and Wage Location Quotients

HIGH LEVEL INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT LOCATION QUOTIENT	WAGE LOCATION QUOTIENT
Federal Government		
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2.39	3.56
Transportation and Warehousing	0.83	1.23
Public Administration	0.06	0.09
Local Government		
Public Administration	0.90	0.88

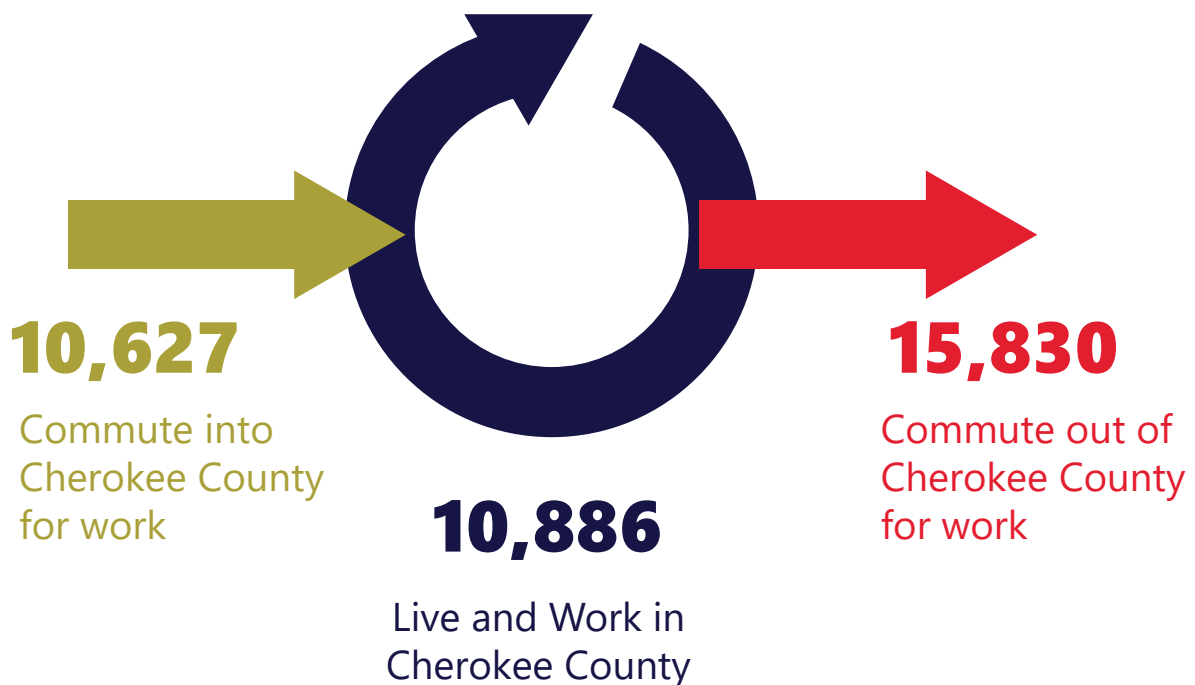
Source: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022)

Commuting

More than half of employed Cherokee County residents (15,830) commute out of the County for work. Given its location proximate to two major metropolitan areas, many of these residents commute to Spartanburg, Greenville, and Charlotte. Though, as shown on the map on page 36, many also commute to surrounding communities of Gaston (NC), Richland (SC), and Lexington (SC) counties. There seems to be a larger shift toward the Greenville-Spartanburg area than Charlotte, likely because it is an easier commute. However, there is a great dispersion of work locations. Almost 11,000 residents live and work in the County, also shown on the map, and almost as many commute into the County from other places for work.

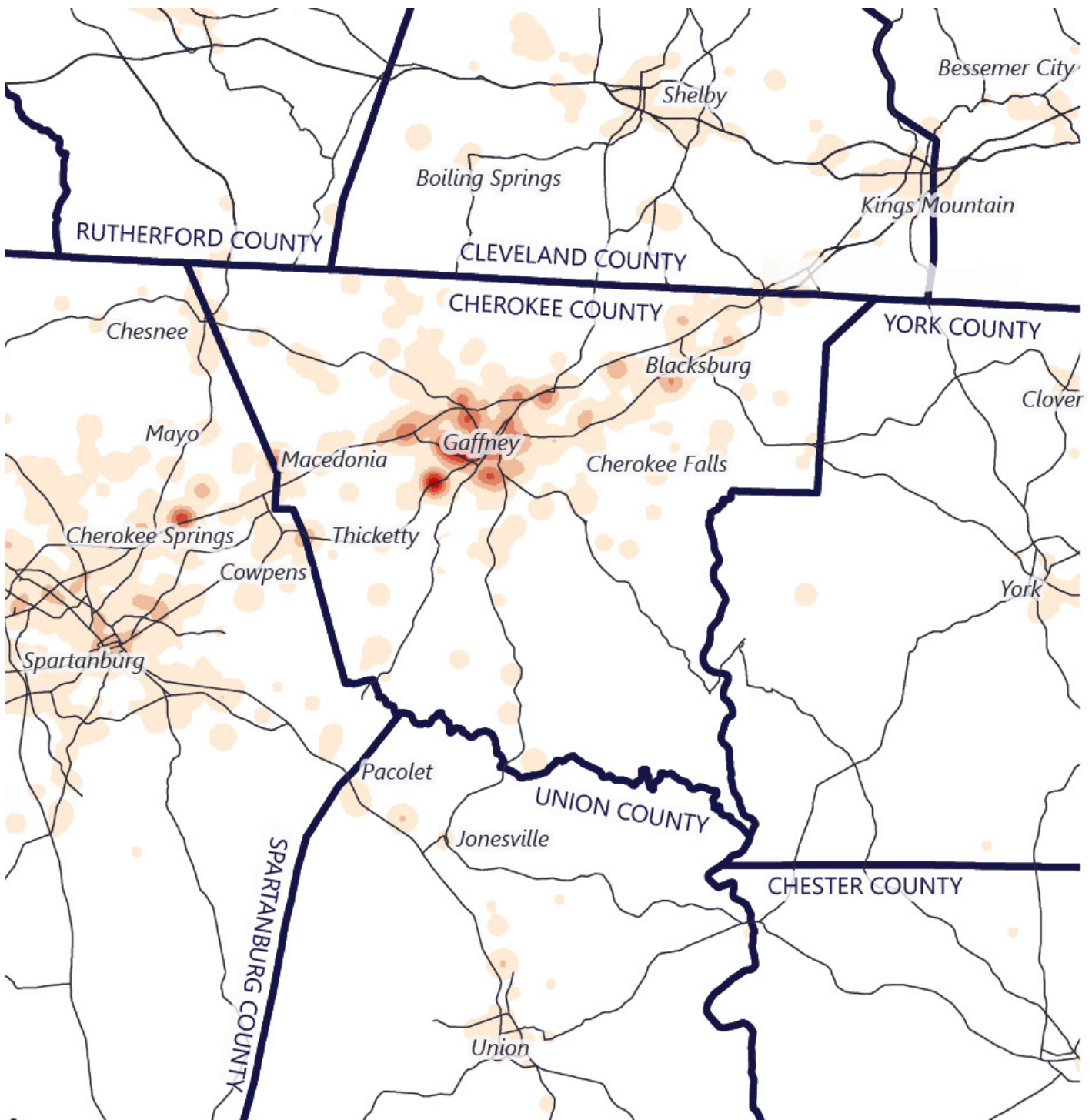
The majority of residents who are employed (83%) commute alone via private automobile. Just over 11% carpool to work, while almost 5% work from home and almost 2% use another mode (likely walking or biking). The average commute time in the County is 25.4 minutes, which is comparable to the State and national averages.

■ Employment Inflow and Outflow



Source: United States Census Bureau, OnTheMap (2019)

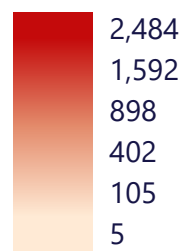
Where Residents Commute to Work (2020)



LEGEND

- County Boundaries
- Major Roads

Number of Jobs



Source: United States Census Bureau, OnTheMap (2020)

Mode of Transportation to Work



83.0% DROVE ALONE



11.2% CARPOOLED



0.0% USED PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION



1.5% OTHER



4.3% WORKED
FROM HOME



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Economic Development Summary

Employment and educational trends in the County have shifted notably in recent decades. While the County continues to have a low labor force participation rate and lower than average educational levels, positive shifts have occurred in this sphere. As the region grows, economic development characteristics are anticipated to trend in a positive direction.

Key Observations

- Although there has been an increase in the population with a college degree, the number of people with a Bachelor's degree (8.3%) is significantly lower than the state (18.6%) and national (20.6%) averages.
- The labor force participation rate is lower than the state and national rates, which is influenced by the number of retirees and students enrolled in college.
- Historically, the unemployment rate has fluctuated in a similar pattern to that of the state and nation; although, it was slightly higher than the state and nation in 2022.
- Approximately 53% of the population is employed within two occupational categories; management, business, science, and arts (26.4%), and production, transportation, and material moving (26.4%).
- The median household income, median family income, and median per capita income have all increased since 2011; however, the median income levels are much lower and have increased at lower rates than the state and nation.
- County residents are primarily employed in the Manufacturing (23.7%), and the Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance (18.4%) industrial sectors.
- Both the manufacturing sector and administrative support sector are above average sectors of employment in the County when compared with national averages.
- More than half of the County's workforce commutes outside of the County for work.

ELEMENT 3

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources

The Natural Resources element considers slope characteristics, prime agricultural and forest lands, plant and animal habitats, parks and recreation areas, scenic views and sites, wetlands, soil types, and similar environmental characteristics.

Soil and Slope Characteristics

The maps on the following pages display soil characteristics throughout Unincorporated Cherokee County. Much of the soil which is suitable for residential development is in the northwestern corner of the County, towards Spartanburg and Rutherford Counties. There are additional high quality soils in southern portions of the County, as shown in green on the first map, particularly around Macedonia and Thicketty.

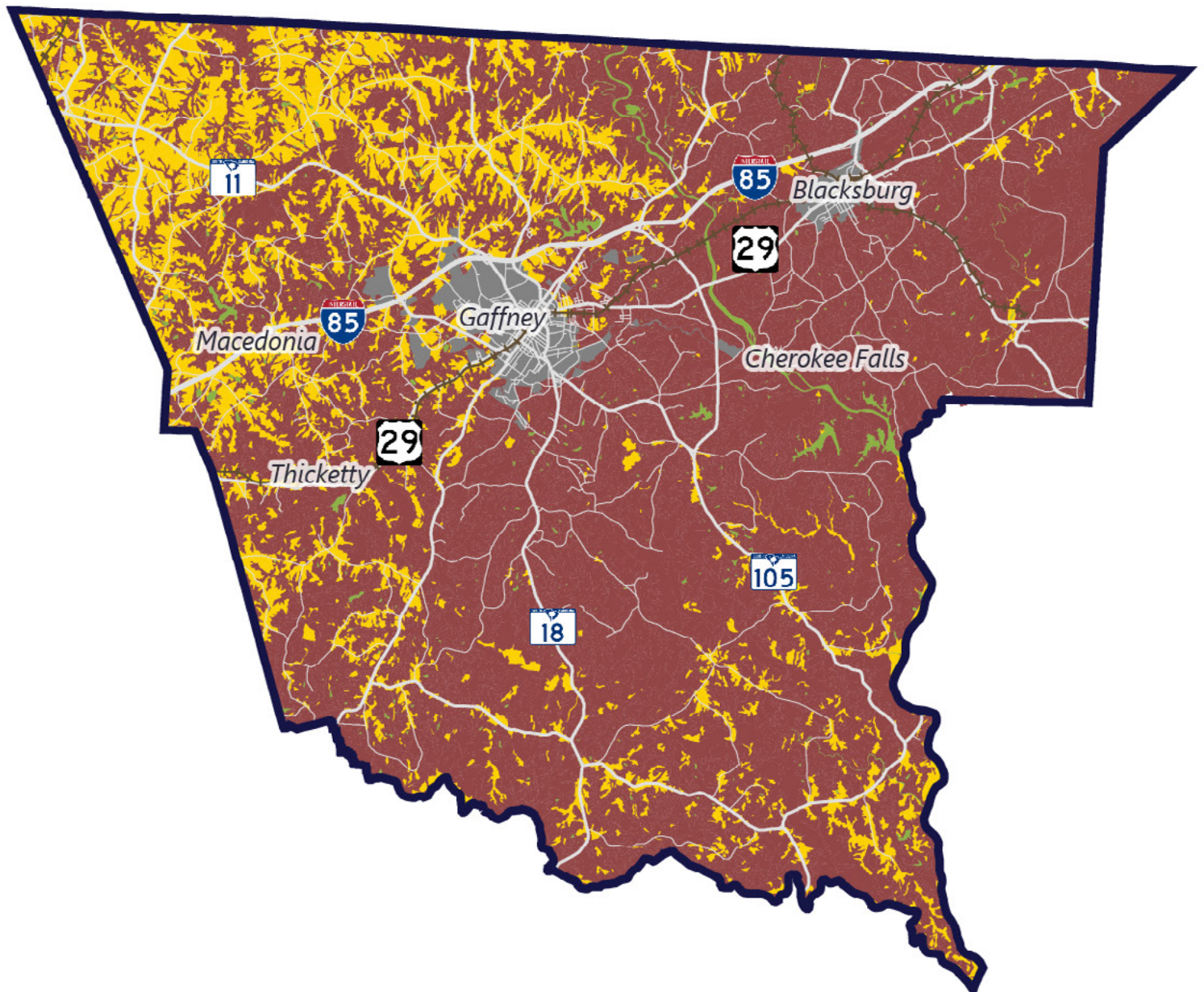
These same soils are also prime farmland, meaning that they have quality nutrients and can generally produce economically high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. On the prime farmland soils map, those areas shown in light green are soils of statewide importance. This includes soils which are almost to the high degree of quality as prime farmland soils, but do not quite meet the nutrient standards. However, these soils are still important for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oil seed crops.

There are some significant slopes in Cherokee County, with elevations ranging from 396 feet to more than 1,250 feet. The highest elevations are in the northwestern portion of the County, as well as along ridges just northeast of Blacksburg and around Cherokee Falls. The lowest elevations are in the southern portion of the County, particularly along major rivers and streams.

Land Cover

A significant portion of Cherokee County remains forested land and grassland. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) utilizes the National Land Cover Database to provide the capability to assess national land cover changes and trends across the United States. The most recent land cover data set for Cherokee County (2022) is shown in this section. It is simplified to show developed lands, grassland, forest, cropland, wetland, and water. As seen, the majority of the developed land is concentrated in the municipalities of Gaffney and Blacksburg, as well as along the Interstate 85 corridor. Much of the crop land is concentrated in the northwestern portion of the County, as well as on the most southern stretches of the County. Looking back at 2012 land cover data, there has been a significant increase in development along the interstate and spreading out from the municipalities of Gaffney and Blacksburg.

Soil Limitations for Wastewater



LEGEND

Cherokee County

Municipalities

Railroad

Soil Suitability for Disposal by Irrigation

Very Limited

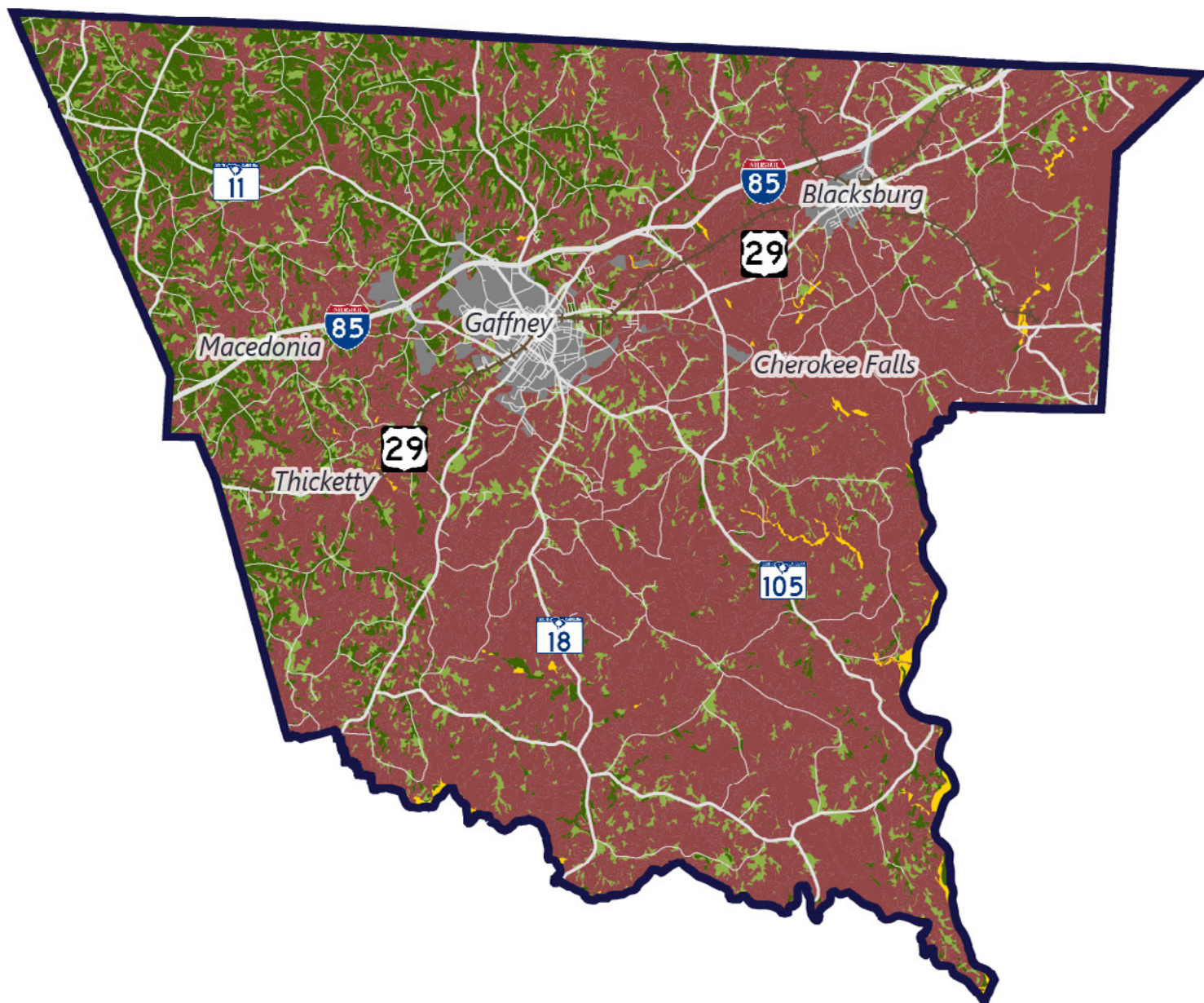
Somewhat Limited

Not Rated



Source: United States Department of Agriculture (2021)

Prime Farmland Soils and Soils of Statewide Importance



LEGEND

Cherokee County

Municipalities

Railroad

Soil Farmland Classification

Not Prime Farmland

Prime Farmland if protected from flooding

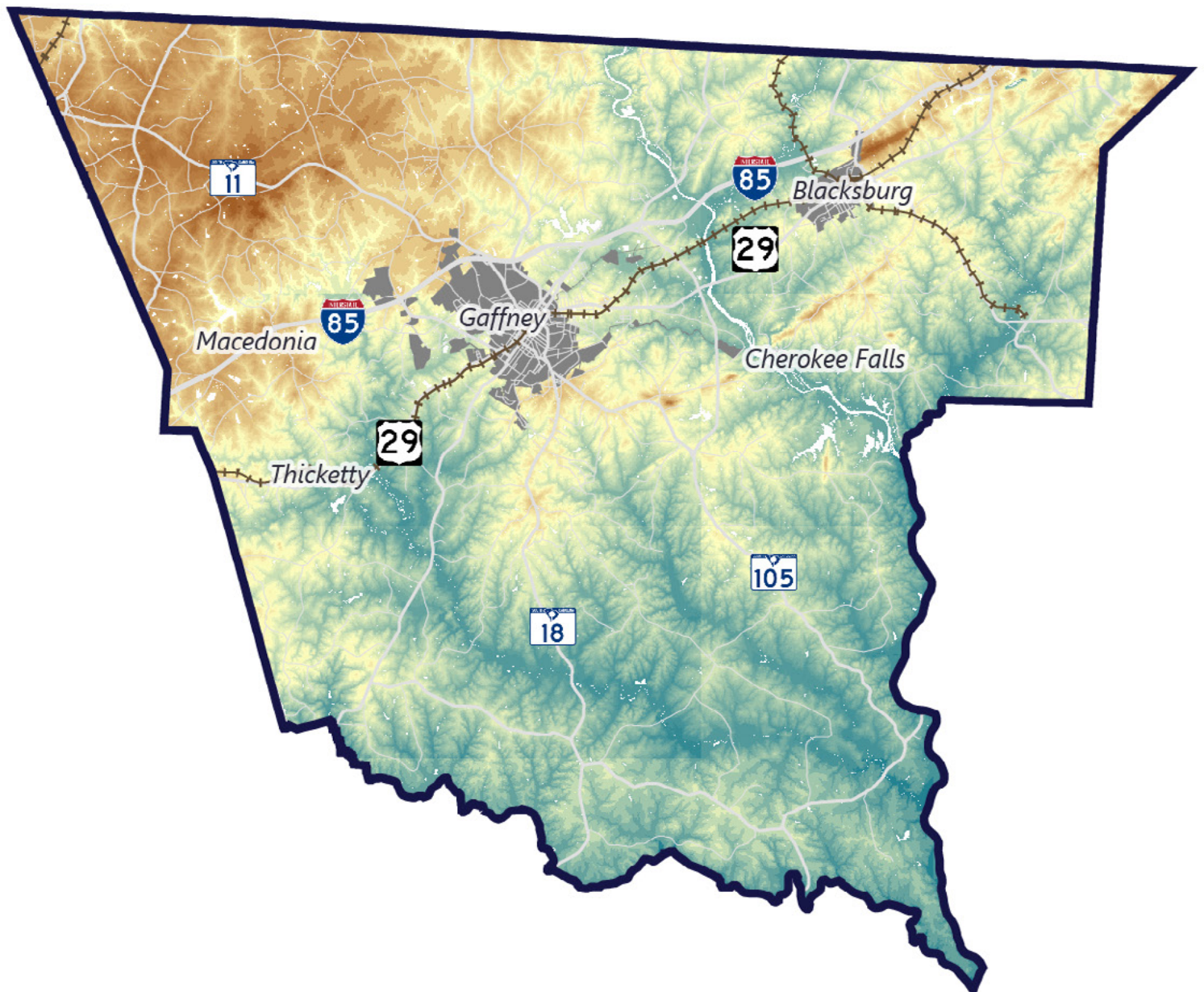
Farmland of Statewide Importance

All areas are Prime Farmland



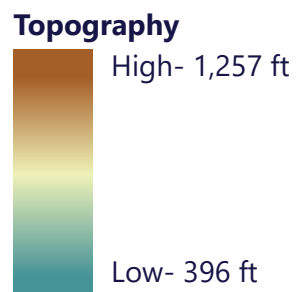
Source: United States Department of Agriculture (2021)

Topography

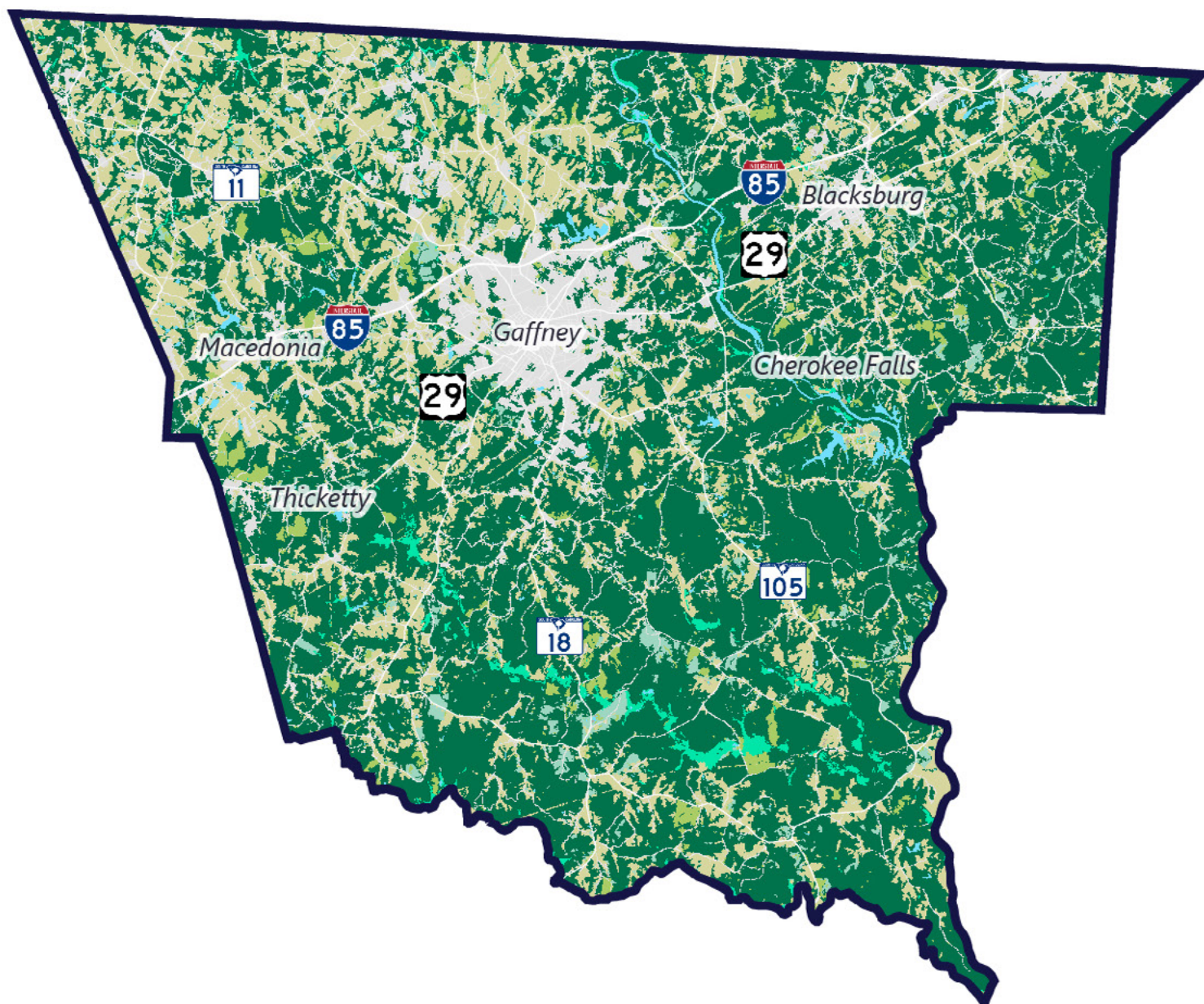


LEGEND

-  Cherokee County
-  Municipalities
-  Railroad



Source: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (2021)



LEGEND

 Cherokee County	 Developed Land	 Water
 Municipalities	 Forest	 Agriculture / Cropland
 Railroad	 Grassland	 Scrubland
	 Wetland	

Source: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (2021)

Wetlands

The map on the following page displays wetlands in Cherokee County. Wetlands occur generally along the Broad River in the northern portion of the County and along Thicketty Creek in the southern portion of the County, though there are a number of small wetlands spread throughout the County. Many of these small wetlands branch off of the major river and creek bodies.

Water Supply and Watersheds

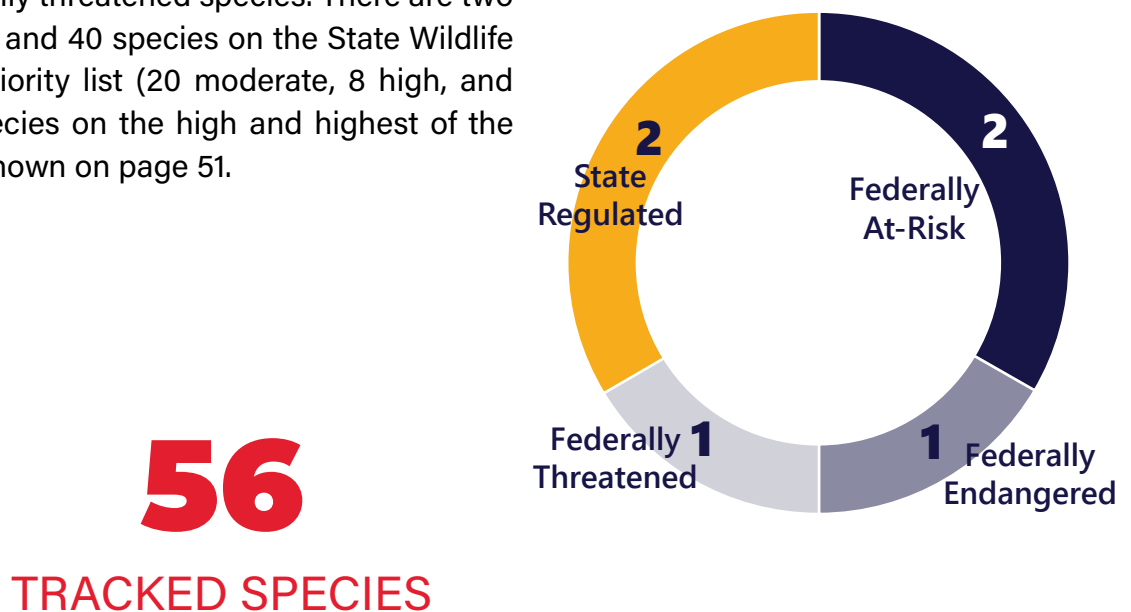
Lake Whelchel and tributaries of the Broad River provide public water supply within the County. There are also a number of public wells on the northeastern edge of the County. All of these sources of public water are within the Broad River watershed, as shown in the maps on the following pages. A large portion of the County, south of Gaffney, is within the Thicketty Creek watershed, and the edges of the County are within the Pacolet River watershed. There are additional public water supply protection areas on the most southeastern edge of the County, within the Pacolet River watershed.

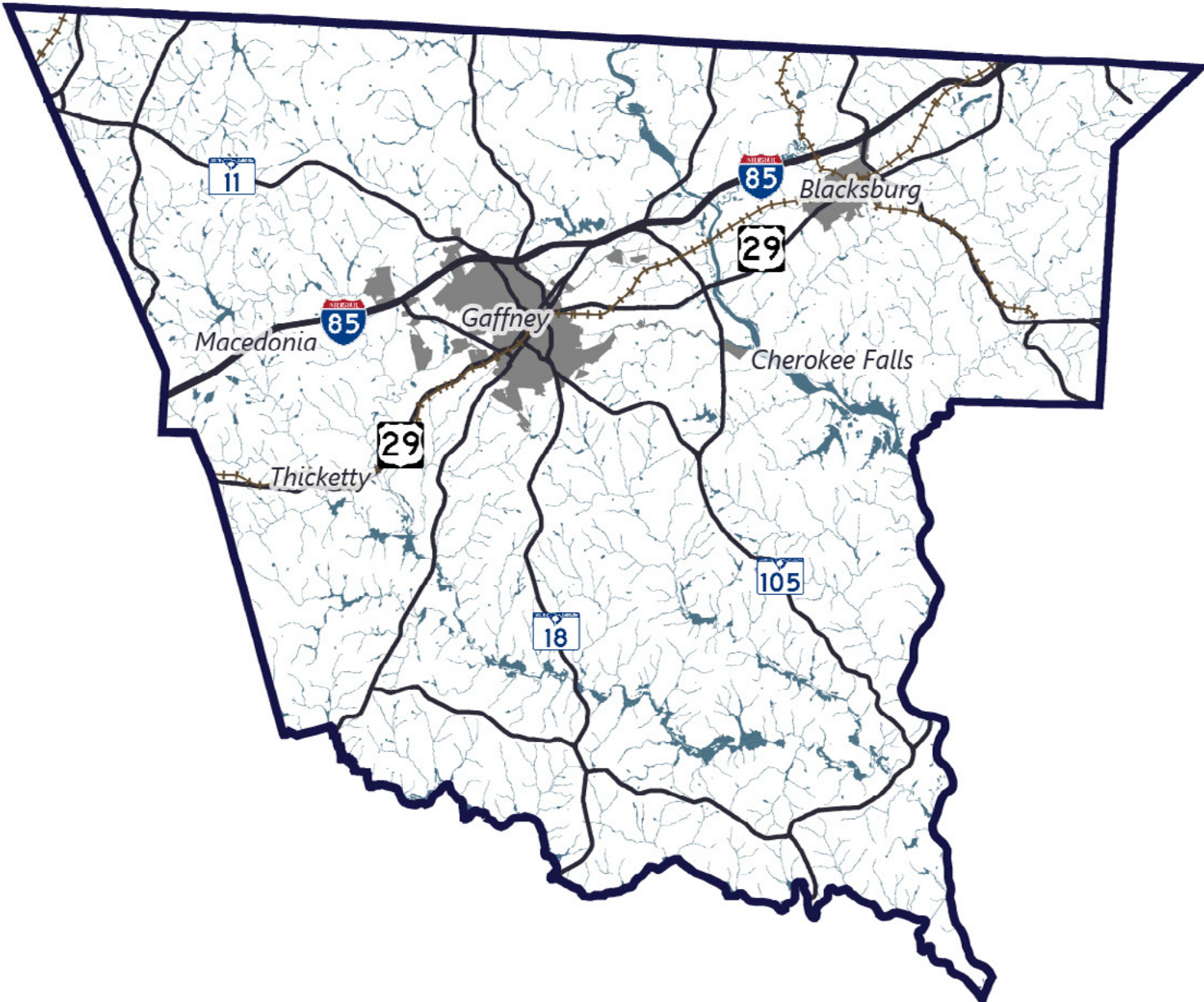
Parks and Recreation

According to the 2022 Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, there are twenty parks and recreational facilities within the County, eleven of which are in unincorporated areas. This includes passive and active parks, baseball and football fields, youth sports complexes, playgrounds, skate parks, and similar recreational amenities. There are five facilities within the Town of Blacksburg and four facilities within the City of Gaffney. The full list of parks and recreational facilities is shown in the chart at the end of this section.

Endangered Species

According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (as of April 2023), there are 56 tracked species in Cherokee County. There is one proposed federally endangered species, two federally at-risk species, and one federally threatened species. There are two state regulated species and 40 species on the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) priority list (20 moderate, 8 high, and 12 highest). The 20 species on the high and highest of the SWAP priority list are shown on page 51.





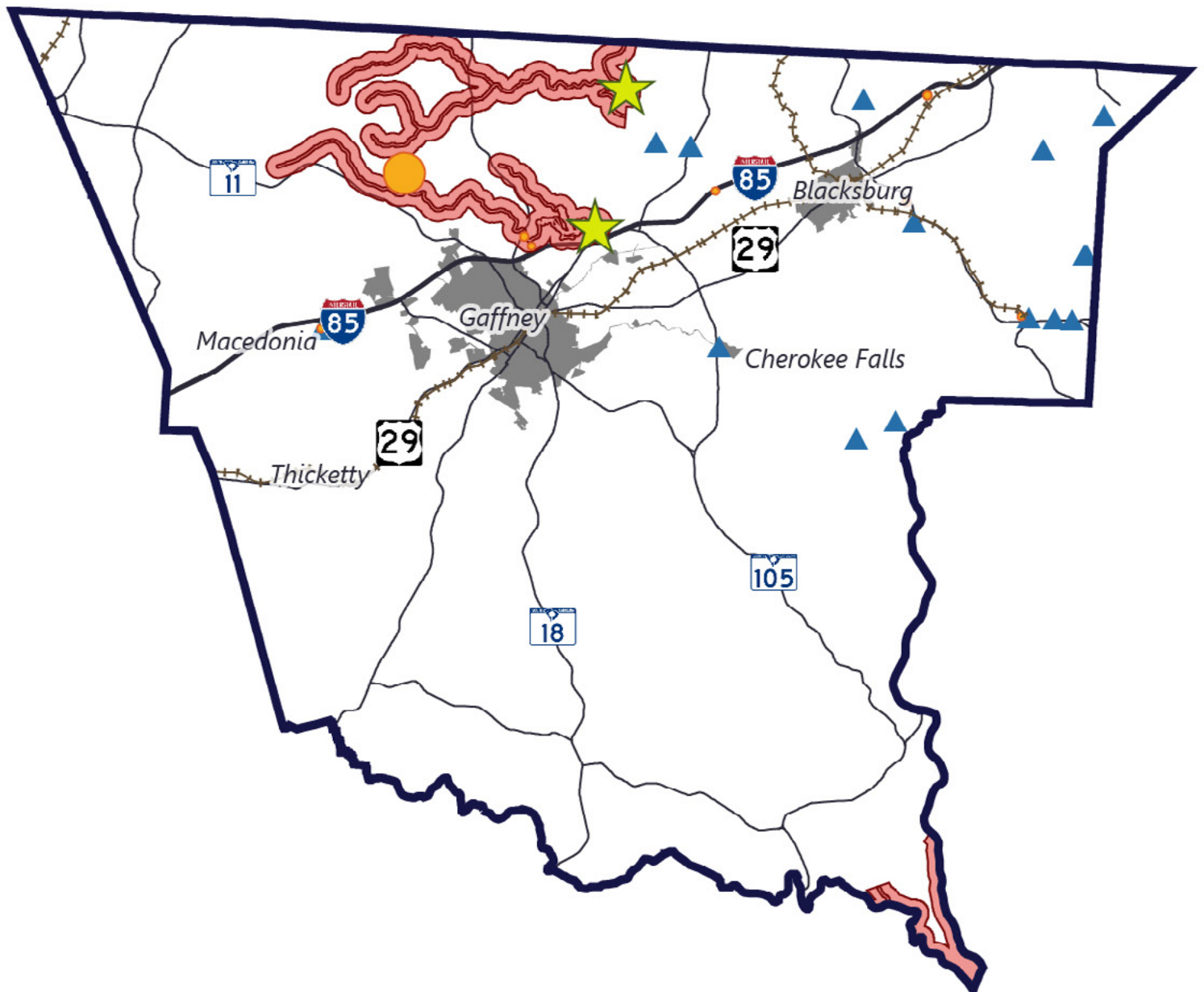
LEGEND

- Cherokee County
- Wetlands
- Municipalities
- Railroad



Source: United States Fish and Wildlife Service (2022)

Public Water Supply



LEGEND

- Cherokee County
- Municipalities
- Railroad
- Public Source Water Protection Area
- Public Ground Water Protection Area
- Public Water Well
- Public Water Supply Intake



Source: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (2023)

Approved TDML Watersheds



LEGEND

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Cherokee County |  Broad River |
|  Municipalities |  Thicketty Creek |
|  Railroad |  Pacolet River |



Source: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (2023)

Cherokee County Parks and Recreation Locations

NAME	ADDRESS	MUNICIPALITY
J. Lowry Love Football Field	533 Twin Lakes Road	County
Commissioners Field	538 Twin Lakes Road	County
Babe Ruth Field	533 Twin Lakes Road	County
Irene Skate Park	310 W. Montgomery Street	Gaffney
Thompson Park	601 S. Limestone Street	County
Frederick Street Skate Park	198 Willow Street	County
Mayberry Park	1410 Old Georgia Highway	Gaffney
South Johnson Street	906 S. Johnson Street	County
Old Ford Road Complex	771 Ford Road	County
Park Place	603 Lyman Street	County
Youth Sports Complex	230 Midway Road	County
McCluney Park	510 Granite Drive	Gaffney
Azell Robbs Park	203 Gaffney Avenue	Gaffney
Fuller Field	550 Twin Lakes Road	County
Troublefield	413 W. Pine Street	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Youth Baseball Field	310 E. Lime Street	Blacksburg
Hershell Porter Park	820 W. Lime Street	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Playground	302 W. Clairborne Street	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Football Practice	200 Hill Street	Blacksburg
Silas Steps Playground	121 Public Works Drive	County

Source: Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

Natural Resources Summary

There are many natural resources within Cherokee County, with a particular concentration of high quality soils and water resources in the norther portion of the County. As development continues in the future, particularly in close proximity to these resources, their protection will be paramount to the long-term health and viability of the County.

Key Observations

- The elevation ranges from 396 feet to more than 1,250 feet across the County with the highest elevations in the northwestern portions of the County and the ridges just northeast of Blacksburg.
- A large portion of the County, primarily south of Interstate 85 is classified as forest land.

SPECIES NAME	FEDERAL STATUS	SWAP PRIORITY
Grasshopper Sparrow	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Highest
Red Burrowing Crayfish	Not Applicable	Highest
Big Brown Bat	Not Applicable	Highest
American Kestrel	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Highest
Dwarf-Flower Heartleaf	Federally Threatened	Highest
Loggerhead Shrike	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Highest
Eastern Red Bat	Not Applicable	Highest
Bartram's Bass	Not Applicable	Highest
Southeastern Bat	Not Applicable	Highest
Tricolored Bat	Federally Endangered (proposed)	Highest
Bachman's Sparrow	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	Highest
Georgia Aster	Not Applicable	Highest
Flatrock Draba, Open-Ground Whitlow-Grass Sun-Loving Draba, Granite Whitlow-Wort	Not Applicable	High
Carolina Quiltback	Not Applicable	High
Santee Chub	Not Applicable	High
Carolina Fantail Darter	Not Applicable	High
Seagreen Darter	Not Applicable	High
Four-Toed Salamander	Not Applicable	High
Piedmont Darter	Not Applicable	High
May White Azalea, Eastman's Azalea	Not Applicable	High

Source: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (2023)

- The northwestern area of County is comprised of a significant amount of agriculture and cropland.
- The County is part of three watershed areas, the Broad River, Thicketty Creek, and the Pacolet River.
- The County is home to over 56 endangered species that are tracked by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.
- Approximately 20 parks and recreation facilities are located across the County and within the municipalities.

ELEMENT 4

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural Resources

The Cultural Resources element considers historic buildings and structures, commercial and residential districts, unique natural or scenic resources, archaeological features, and other cultural resources.

Historic Buildings and Structures

According to the South Carolina ArchSite, there are eight National Register Historic Districts, six National Register Structures, and 101 potential historic points in Cherokee County. Of the 101 historic points, 47 are either eligible for National Register recognition, contribute to an eligible National Register Historic District, or contribute to a listed National Register Historic District. The historic districts and structures are detailed below and on the following pages.

NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS

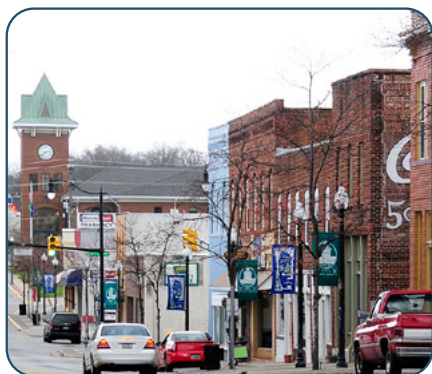


The County has two National Register Historic Districts which are partially within the County: Kings Mountain National Military Park and Kings Mountain State Park Historic District. Both of these are on the northeastern corner of the County, just northeast of Blacksburg. **Kings Mountain National Military Park** preserves the Battle of Kings Mountain, which was fought on October 7, 1780. This battle was an important victory during the Revolutionary War, involving only Americans and serving as the first major patriot victory to occur after the British invasion of Charleston in May of that same year.

Kings Mountain State Park Historic District is significant for its association with the Civilian Conservation Corps and other New Deal conservation programs in the State. It is also significant as one of seventeen state parks developed in South Carolina during the 1930s, and one of two “Recreational Demonstration Areas” developed by the National Park Service in the State.



Cowpens National Battlefield is a Revolutionary War site commemorating where Daniel Morgan and his army turned the flanks of Banastre Tarleton's British army in January of 1781. It marks the location of the only successful double envelopment in the American Revolution, and one of only a few in history. It became known as the turning point of the war in the South, and part of a chain of events leading to the Patriot victory at Yorktown.



Gaffney Commercial Historic District is located in Downtown Gaffney and consists of a total of 67 resources, with 41 contributing resources. Most of the buildings were built between 1900 and 1930, and retain their historic character. The district primarily consists of commercial vernacular interpretations of the Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, Art Deco, and Neo-Classical styles of the turn of the century. A number are notable for their excellent detailing and craftsmanship.



Gaffney Residential Historic District contains 111 contributing resources in an 18 block area just southeast of Downtown Gaffney. Although some infill has taken place over the past 50 years, the majority of the resources were built between 1890 and 1930 on large urban lots, oriented towards wide, tree-lined streets. Homes are generally frame or brick construction with examples of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical, Victorian, and Bungalow styles.



Limestone Springs Historic District is a significant collection of properties reflecting the history of the area in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a popular resort, center for female education, and point of lime production. The focal point is the Limestone College Campus, which contains nine buildings constructed between 1837 and 1941. The buildings are oriented towards a central lawn and fountain, and include Gothic Revival and Neo-Classical styles. A limestone quarry that was mined during this period is also in the district.



Magness-Humphries House is a 192-acre property (home and farm) settled by James Judson Magness in 1871 in the Grassy Pond community, approximately five miles north of Gaffney. The original house was destroyed by fire and the one standing today was established in 1904. It is an excellent example of a late Victorian farmhouse that merges Queen Anne style details with Classical Revival symmetry. The house remains one of the few nineteenth century farming homesteads in existence in the area today. Other buildings on the site include a barn, smokehouse / potato house, and gear room (1871); a chicken / hen house (1918); a dibby house and pump house (1940s); and several other buildings erected in the 1950s.



Nuckolls-Jefferies House is an example of a rural mid-nineteenth century Greek Revival plantation house with late-nineteenth century Neo-Classical alterations. The house was built in 1843 and significantly altered in the 1870s and 1880s. The Neo-Classical elements of the paired Doric portico piers on the facade give the house a unique appearance, unlike anything in the region. Additional contributing structures on the site include a small log gable-front building that served as the farm's smokehouse and two frame gable-front barns.

NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC STRUCTURES



Carnegie Free Library was built in 1913 - 1914, as one of fourteen public libraries funded by Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie Foundation and built in South Carolina. It is significant as both an example of Classical Revival public architecture and for its role as Gaffney's first public library.



Settlemyer House was built in 1922 and is an excellent example of the Japanese influenced Bungalow design, in the Craftsman tradition of the early 1920s. It was likely a mail order design from an architect or catalog home book, though the exact source has not been identified. While these types of homes were popular as early as the 1910s, few were built in the Southeast and this is one of the best remaining examples in the State.

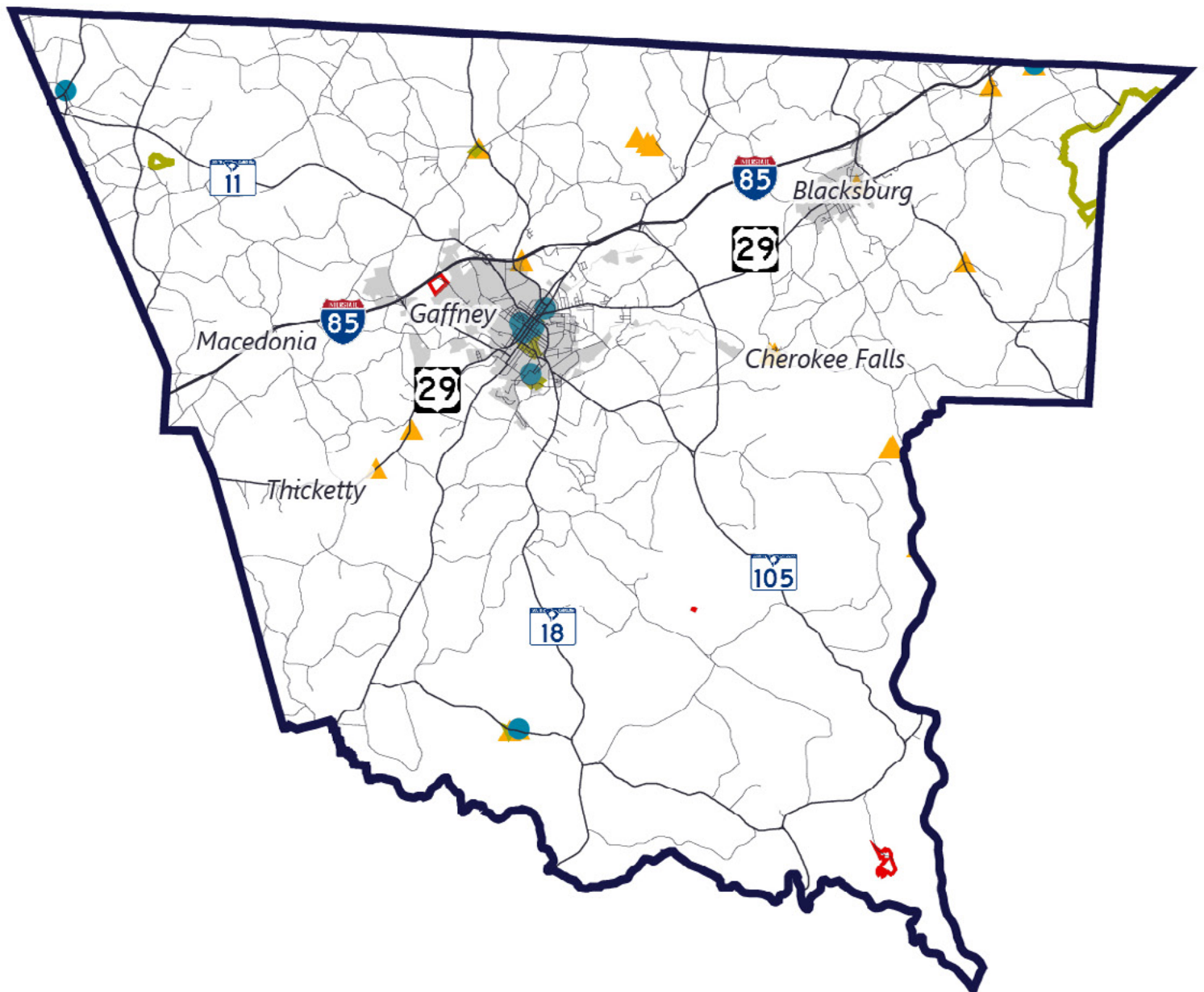


Jefferies House is one of the oldest and most significant residences remaining in Gaffney. It was built by a local builder, Leander Baker, and is the best example of the residential Italianate style in the City. It was built in 1884 for prominent planter and landowner, Colonel Samuel Jefferies.



Irene Mill Finishing Plant is significant for its association with the Irene Mill, a textile firm that played an important role in the development of Gaffney in the early twentieth century. The Irene Mill was founded in 1904 and produced damask, which was shipped to New England for finishing. In 1915-1916, the Irene Mill Finishing Plant was constructed, enabling the mill to produce finished damask products. In this plant, the cloth was washed, soaked, boiled, bleached, and calendered. An addition was attached to the building in the 1950s.

Historic Districts and Buildings



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Cherokee County |  Historic Areas |
|  Municipalities |  National Register Areas |
|  Railroad |  Historic Structures |
| |  National Register Points |

Source: SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology and SC Department of Archives and History (2023)



Winnie Davis Hall was constructed in 1904 on Limestone College's campus. It is an excellent example of the late Gothic Revival style. It was designed as a depository for records related to the Civil War and served as a center to promote the study of southern history and literature. In 1930, a gabled dormer window was added to each side of the building. An octagonal skylighted well extends from the basement to the third floor.



Mulberry Chapel is a Methodist church, built around 1880 and significant for its association with African American heritage in the upcountry during Reconstruction. It is also significant for its vernacular form of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Prior to the Civil War, Black slaves in the surrounding area attended the Asbury Methodist Church. By 1870, most Blacks and Whites worshiped in separate churches. Mulberry Chapel is one of few extant African-American churches in South Carolina dating from the first twenty-five years after the Civil War and is a rare example in the South Carolina upcountry. The property also contains a historic cemetery with headstones dating from 1888 to the 1960s.

Scenic Rivers

The Scenic Rivers Program was established in 1989 by the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Act. It is administered by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and intended to promote conservation of the State's river heritage while protecting the "unique or outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic, or cultural values" of selected rivers or river segments in the State.

In May of 1991, the Broad River, from 99 Islands dam to the confluence with the Pacolet River, was officially recognized by the South Carolina General Assembly as a State Scenic River. It was determined that the riparian forest is home to diverse plant and animal life, including the State's endangered wild ginger. Further, bluffs on the Broad River offer a breathtaking view of spring wildflower. With this designation, the SCDNR conducts a voluntary, cooperative river management program that supports a partnership amongst landowners, river uses, and government agencies to promote responsible use and stewardship of the river. Protection of riparian lands is a primary goal on all designated scenic rivers, and this goal is pursued by encouraging the use of best management practices to avoid or minimize development impacts to river resources, acquiring management rights through land purchases or conservation easements, and enforcing existing laws intended to protect natural resources.

Other Cultural and Historical Resources

In addition to those sites and buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are a number of historical and cultural resources in the County. These are detailed below and on the following page.

The Cherokee County History and Art Museum is located in Gaffney and is operated by a non-profit organization, the Cherokee Historical and Preservation Society, inc. The organization operates the museum, which includes exhibits on the County's history, a kids zone, an accessible repository and research center, and a sports hall of fame and training room. Educational programming also takes place at the museum. In 2014, the organization also purchased Fort Thicketty, the site of a 1780 standoff between Patriots and Loyalists during the American Revolution. The site is now preserved and is currently undergoing rehabilitation.

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail is a 330-mile trail through four states (South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia). It traces the route used by patriot militia during the Kings Mountain campaign in 1780. Each September and October, a Commemorative March takes place in Cherokee County. From the National Park, one can follow the campaign by utilizing a Commemorative Motor Route which uses existing highways marked with the distinctive trail logo, or walk on the 87 miles of pathways.

The Gaffney Visitors Center and Art Gallery is a welcoming point for visitors to receive tips on where to stop in the City of Gaffney. The Visitors Center is also home to the Cherokee Alliance of Visual Artists (CAVA), a non-profit organization compiled of Cherokee County artists. The gallery located in this facility features rotating exhibits of works by local artists and often displays the work of visiting artists.

The Gaffney Station Farmers Market is located in the parking lot of the Gaffney Visitors Center & Art Gallery. Items sold at the Market include fresh fruits, vegetables, and other produce, as well as other raw agricultural products and artisan handicraft or handmade artisan craft items. The Market is seasonal, operating on Saturdays during April through November.

The Gaffney Little Theater is an educational and literary organization whose purpose is to stimulate interest in art, music, literature, and dramatics through active participation in all aspects of amateur productions for the enjoyment and entertainment of the entire community. The theater puts on a number of plays each year.

The South Carolina Peach Festival started out as a weekend event in 1976 as a salute to the peach industry. Each year, it has taken place in July, during peak peach season. Events include a truck and tractor pull, concerts, entertainment, games, food, arts / craft shows, talent competitions, and a peach parade. This year, the events will be spread out over five days, spanning two separate weekends.

South Carolina Peach Festival



Cultural Resources Summary

Cherokee County is home to a variety of cultural and historic resources, many of which are well protected and appreciated by the community. The South Carolina Peach Festival is one of the most notable annual events, growing into a large production in recent years.

Key Observations

- The County has eight National Register Historic Districts and six National Register Structures.
- Cowpens National Battlefield and Kings Mountain National Military Park are two National Register Historic Districts that recognize important Revolutionary War sites in the County.
- The County has 101 documented potential historic points with 47 of those that are either eligible for National Register recognition, contribute to an eligible National Register Historic District, or contribute to a listed National Register Historic District.
- The Broad River is recognized as a State Scenic River.
- Other cultural and historic resources in the County include a museum, visitors center, art gallery, and a theater.
- Since 1976, the County has been home to the annual South Carolina Peach Festival.

ELEMENT 5

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities

The Community Facilities element considers water supply, treatment, and distribution; sewage systems and wastewater treatment; solid waste collection and disposal; fire protection; emergency medical services; general government facilities; education facilities; libraries; and other cultural facilities.

Administration

The Cherokee County Administration Building is located in Gaffney, at the site of an old mill. The state-of-the-art building houses County executive offices and eighteen County agencies, including County Council Chambers, Tax and Veterans Services, Voter Registration, Building Safety, and Recorder of Deeds. The 88,000 square foot building has over 8,000 square feet of meeting space, a 160-seat auditorium, and several dining areas.

Animal Control and Animal Shelter

Cherokee County operates an Animal Control division in the County's Sheriff's Office. Animal Control enforces the County's tethering ordinance and investigates and picks up nuisance animals. The County owns and maintains an Animal Shelter that accepts strays, surrendered lost and found animals, and tries to return them to their owners.

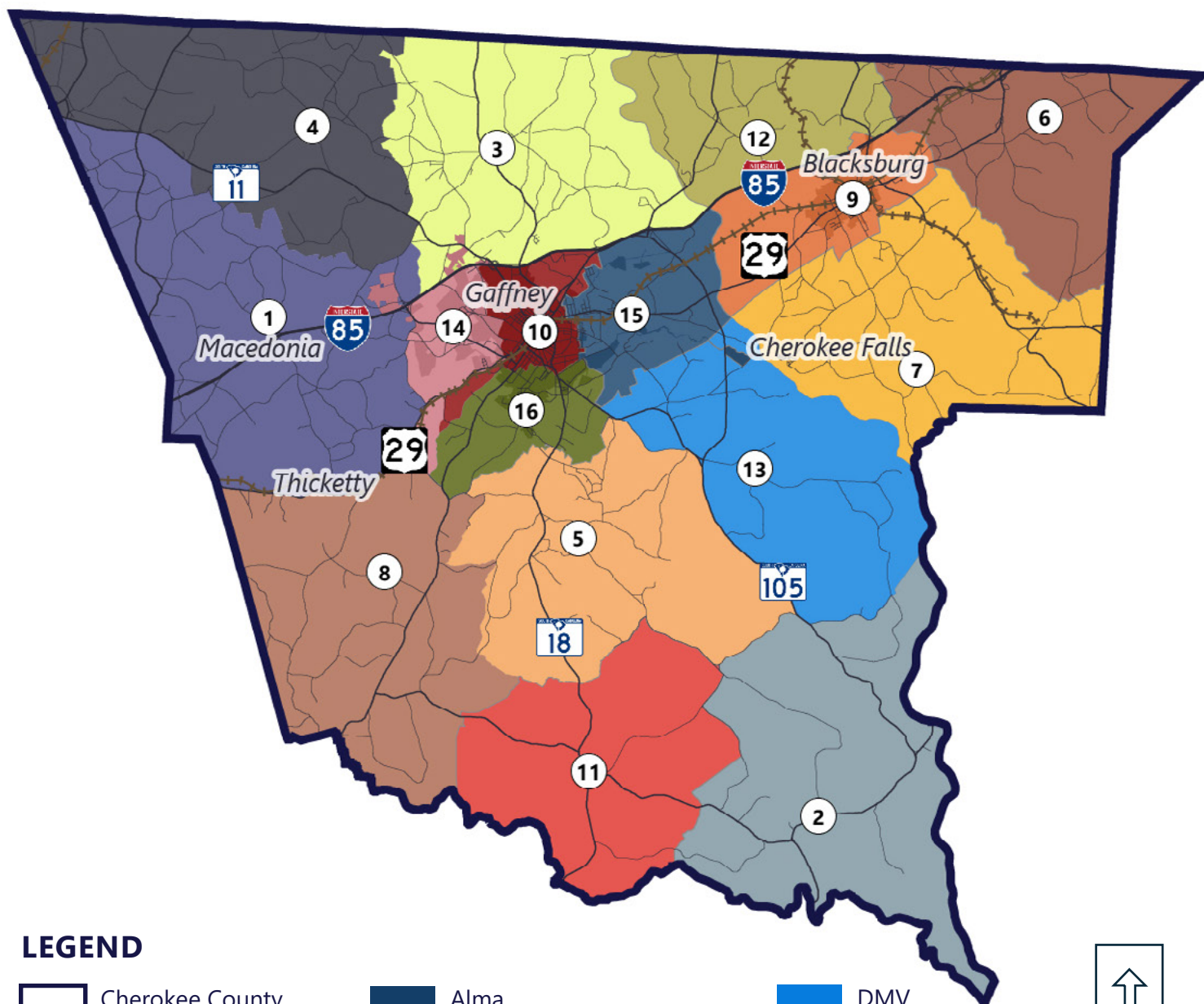
Courthouses and Coroner's Office

There are three County Courthouses: the Cherokee County Clerk of Court on Floyd Baker Boulevard, the Cherokee County Magistrate Office on Frederick Street, and the Cherokee County Probate Court on Railroad Avenue (in the County Administration Building). All three of these courthouses are in Gaffney and operated by the County. The City of Gaffney also operates a Municipal Court downtown. The Coroner's Office is in a small building off Administrative Drive.

Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management was created by the Cherokee County Council to ensure the complete and efficient utilization of all County facilities to combat disaster. It is the coordinating agency for all activities connected to emergency management, including the E-911 communications, sheriff and police protections, and fire service. The Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, Gaffney City Police, and Blacksburg Police work together to provide police protections throughout the County. Information on the County Sheriff's Office and Fire Departments are provided in this section of the Plan.

Fire Districts and Fire Stations



LEGEND

-  Cherokee County
-  Municipalities
-  Railroad
-  Major Roads

-  Alma
-  Antioch
-  Asbury Rebob
-  Blacksburg
-  Buffalo
-  CKC
-  CherCreek
-  Corinth

-  DMV
-  GaffneyCity
-  GoucherWP
-  Grassy Pond
-  Maceonia
-  Overbrook
-  Thomp Street
-  Twin Rivers



Source: Cherokee County GIS (2023)

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The primary mission of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office is to provide a safe and secure environment for the residents and visitors of the County. The office receives around 34,000 calls per year, runs road patrols, responds to emergency situations, and also maintains a detention center in Gaffney. There are typically six sheriff's deputies operating per shift, which is below average for a County of its size. In addition to an issue with recruiting new officers, the detention center is severely over-crowded. The County spends about \$6 million per year on Sheriff protection, which does not include the costs of the detention center, animal shelter, or law enforcement center.

The City of Gaffney and the Town of Blacksburg have their own police departments.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

There are sixteen fire districts within Cherokee County, with stations in each one. Many of these are rural volunteer fire departments, which have a hard time retaining staff.

Since 2010, the County has had an agreement with the City of Gaffney whereby the City provides fire protection in a defined fire protection area outside the City limits in exchange for the County providing monthly payments to the City for the cost of providing fire protection on a cost per call basis. The per call fee is to be adjusted annually based on actual cost of the previous fiscal year provided the maximum amount to be paid by the County to the City will not exceed the amount of taxes generated by the millage assessed in the Gaffney Fire Protection Area. The total amount the County paid under this agreement for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 was \$1,010,929. During the year a public referendum authorized an increase in the millage for this Fire Protection Area to 16 mills, which was assessed, billed and collected with the tax notices that went out in the fall of 2020. A new agreement was entered into in November 2021 that provides for an initial ten year term beginning January 1, 2022, with additional successive five year terms with the agreement of both parties.



Solid Waste Collection

The County operates local resident household trash pickup, including curbside garbage collection for residents in Gaffney, Blacksburg, and unincorporated Cherokee County. The County's solid waste collection system includes two Class Two landfills (one permitted to the County and one permitted to the City of Gaffney), one wood chipping / wood grinding site, one transfer station, and one recycling center. The recycling program includes curbside recycling for schools and local businesses in designated areas of the County. Residents are encouraged to recycle at County-owned and operated drop off centers. The County has a Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill which opened in the mid-1990s, following the closure of the old Municipal Solid Waste landfill.

Public Works

The Cherokee County Public Works Department is responsible for power, water, and the upkeep of roadways and bridges. The Department will pick up brush and limbs, white goods, and other bulk garbage that is left in the public right of way, depending on availability.

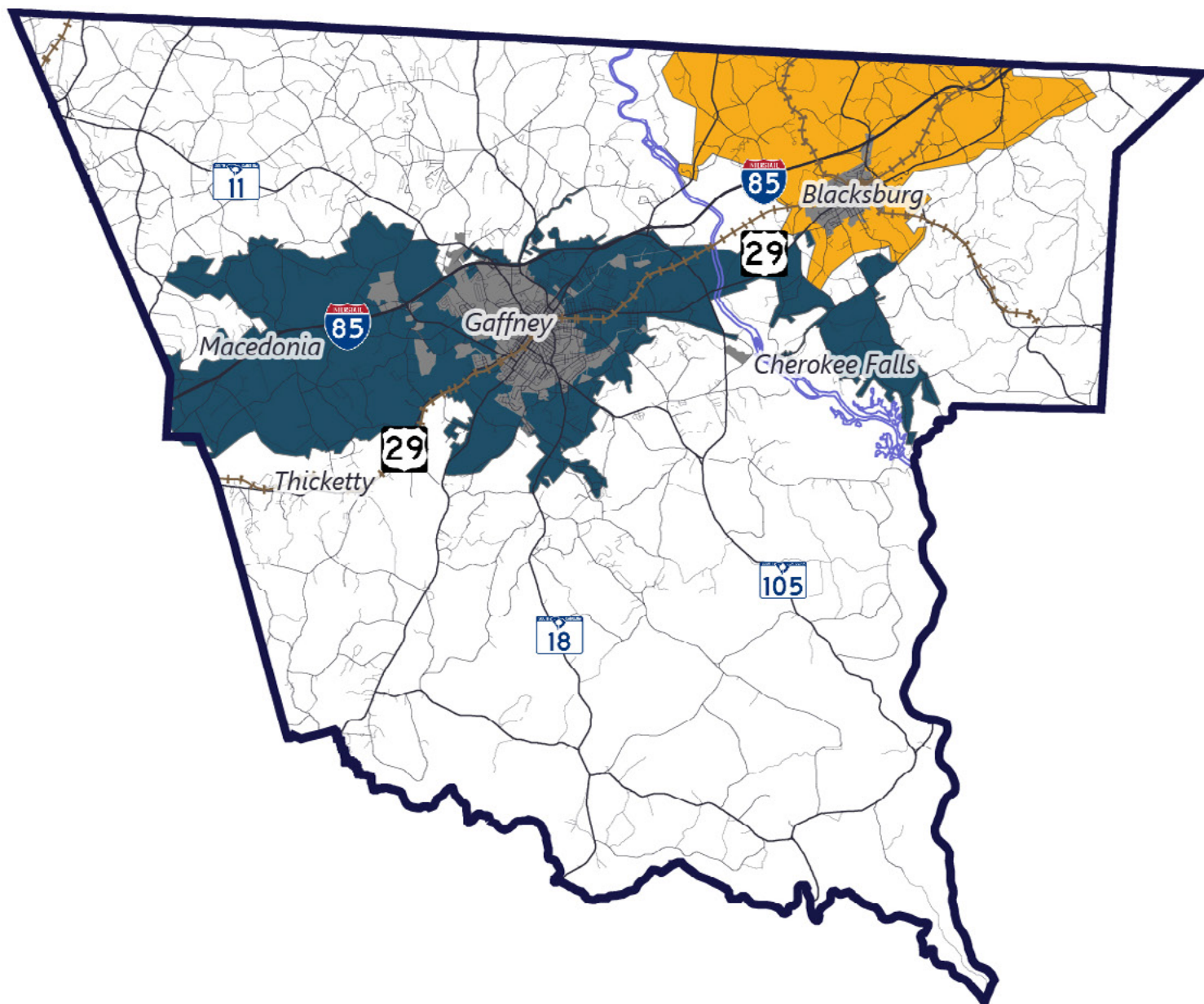
Utilities

The major utility provider in the County is the Board of Public Works (BPW); a power, water, and wastewater utility company that was initially commissioned to provide service to the City of Gaffney. The BPW has a total treatment capacity of 18 million gallons of water per day, over 200 miles of water lines, four above ground storage tanks (including the Peachoid), and two million gallons of ground level storage. Of the 9 MGD of sewer capacity that BPW has, approximately 4 MGD are currently used. Though there are no plans for expansion, one of the plants can be mirrored. The Board is currently in the process of extending sewer up Interstate-85, from the Broad River to Exit 106 (Blacksburg). This \$50 million project was assisted by the County and will provide a lot of opportunity for growth, particularly along an already growing area of the County. The BPW is also planning to take sewer down Highway-5 to Jumping Branch Road. As of April 2024, the BPW now owns the Town of Blacksburg's sewer system. However, the Town continues to provide water within their water service area.

In addition to BPW and the Town of Blacksburg, there are four additional water service providers in the County. The other utility companies providing water service include Daniel Morgan Water District, Drayton Water Works, Inc., Goucher Water Works, and Grassy Pond Water Company, although these companies purchase their water supply from BPW.

Finally, Broad River Electric Cooperative provides power to a great deal of the rural areas of Cherokee County. In addition to Cherokee County, the Broad River's service area extends to Spartanburg and Union counties with some members in Polk, Rutherford, and Cleveland Counties in North Carolina and Newberry County in South Carolina.

Water Service Areas

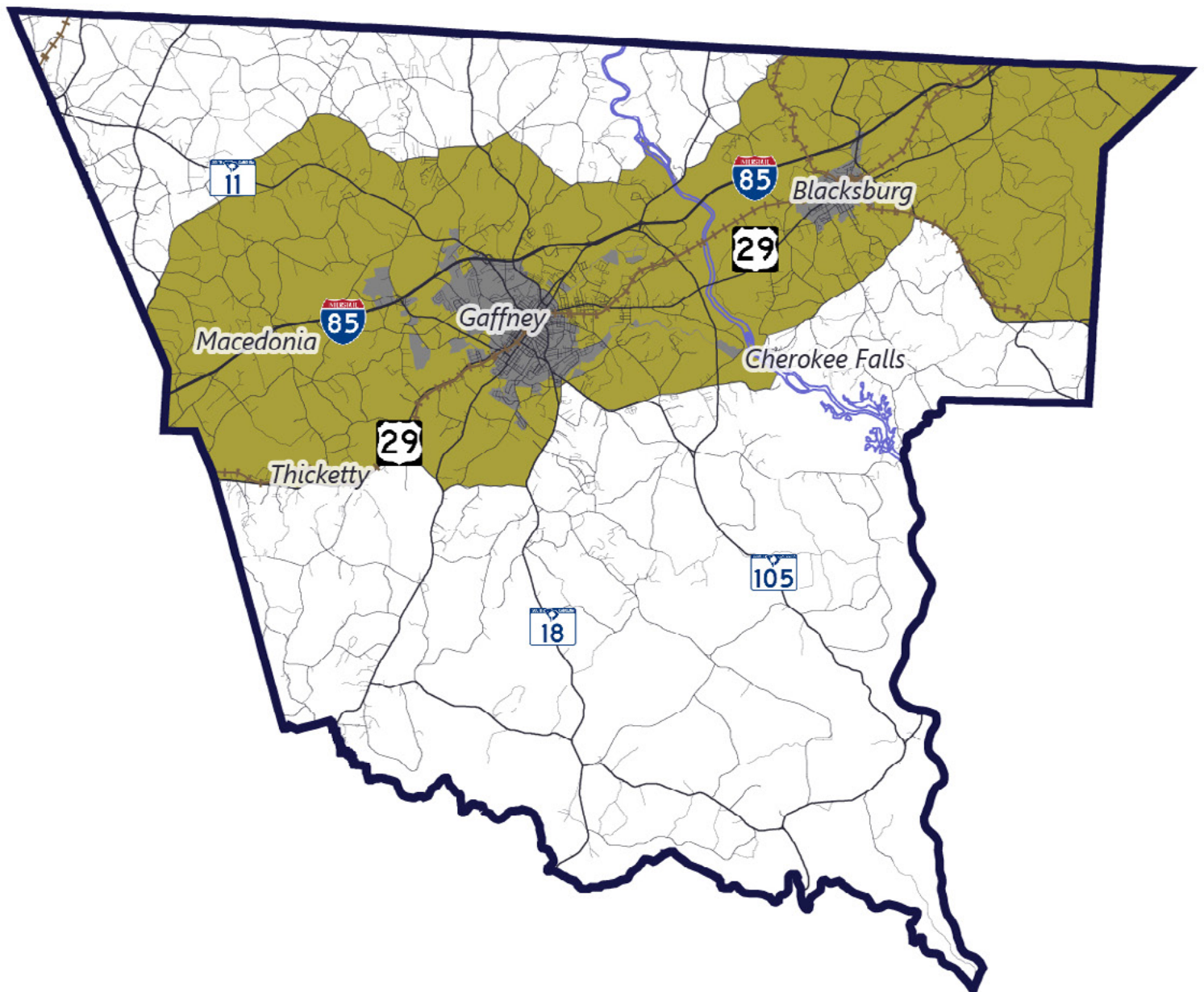


LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| — Major Roads | ■ Municipalities |
| — Major Rivers | ■ Blacksburg Water Service Area |
| — Railroad | ■ Board of Public Works Water Service Area |

Source: Board of Public Works (2023)

● Sewer Service Area



LEGEND

— Major Roads

— Major Rivers

⊢⊢⊢⊢ Railroad

■ Municipalities

■ Board of Public Works Sewer Service Area



Source: Board of Public Works (2023)

Critical Facilities

The Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan detailed the critical community facilities in the County. These are shown in the table below.

Critical Community Facilities

NAME	JURISDICTION
Gaffney City Hall	Gaffney
Gaffney Police Department	Gaffney
Gaffney Fire Department	Gaffney
Overbrook Fire Substation	Gaffney
East Gaffney Fire Substation	Gaffney
Cherokee County Public Library	Gaffney
Cherokee Medical Center	Gaffney
Lifeguard Ambulance Service	Gaffney
First Baptist Church (Shelter)	Gaffney
Cherokee Avenue Baptist Church (Shelter)	Gaffney
Gaffney High School (Shelter)	Gaffney
Blacksburg Town Hall	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Police Department	Blacksburg
Broad River Baptist Church (Shelter)	Blacksburg
Voice of Triumph Worship (Shelter)	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Elementary School (Shelter)	Blacksburg
Blacksburg High School (Shelter)	Blacksburg
Blacksburg Library	Blacksburg
County Administration Building	Gaffney
Cherokee County Courthouse	Gaffney
Cherokee County Sheriff's Office	Gaffney
Macedonia Volunteer Fire Department	County
Twin Rivers Volunteer Fire Department	County
Grassy Pond Volunteer Fire Department	County
Cherokee Creek Volunteer Fire Department	County
Corinth Volunteer Fire Department	County

Source: Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

Critical Community Facilities (cntd.)

NAME	JURISDICTION
Antioch Volunteer Fire Department	County
C.K.C. Volunteer Fire Department	County
Goucher-White Plains Volunteer Fire Department	County
Asbury-Rehoboth Volunteer Fire Department	County
Buffalo Volunteer Fire Department	County
D.M.W. Volunteer Fire Department	County
Corinth Baptist Church (Shelter)	County
Grassy Pond Elementary School (Shelter)	County
Providence Baptist Church (Shelter)	County
Southside Baptist Church Life Center (Shelter)	Gaffney
Midway Baptist Church Life Center (Shelter)	County
B.D. Lee Elementary School	Gaffney
Blacksburg Primary	Blacksburg
Draytonville Elementary School	County
Limestone Central Elementary School	County
Luther-Vaughan Elementary School	County
Northwest Elementary School	County
Ewing Middle School	County
Blacksburg Middle School	Blacksburg
Gaffney Middle School	Gaffney
Alternative Education Program	County
Cherokee County Emergency Operations Center	Gaffney
Cherokee County Detention Center	Gaffney
Cherokee County Communications	Gaffney

Source: Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

School District

The Cherokee County School District is the primary educational provider in the County. The District operates 14 schools, as well as two education support facilities. The schools and facilities are listed below. The School District works closely with Spartanburg Community College, as well as local industries, in an effort to improve student outcomes.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- BD Lee Elementary
- Grassy Pond Elementary
- Blacksburg Elementary
- Limestone Central Elementary
- Blacksburg Primary
- Luther Vaughan Elementary
- Corinth Elementary
- Northwest Elementary
- Draytonville Elementary

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- Blacksburg Middle
- Ewing Middle
- Gaffney Middle

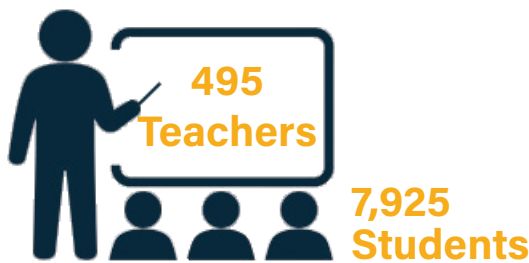
HIGH SCHOOLS

- Blacksburg High
- Gaffney High

OTHER FACILITIES

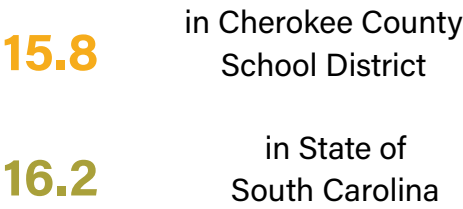
- Institute of Innovation
- Ola Copeland Community Learning Center

The following pages provide information on the County’s School District and its facilities, as reported in the SC School Report Cards for the 2022-2023 school year, the Cherokee County School District Strategic Plan 2020-2025, and the Cherokee County School District Facilities Study (August 2022).



**in Cherokee County School District
(2022- 2023 school year)**

Students per Teacher (2021 - 2022)



Source: SC Report Cards (2022 - 2023) and SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (2021 - 2022)

Cherokee County School District Overall Performance (2022 - 2023)

SC Ready English Language Arts (percent met or exceeding)



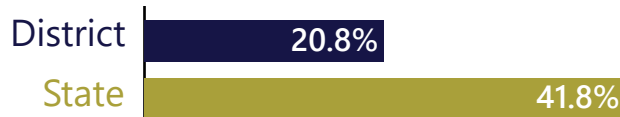
SC Ready Mathematics (percent met or exceeding)



End-of-Course Assessment Results in English 2 (scoring C or higher)



End-of-Course Assessment Results in Algebra 1 (scoring C or higher)



Students in the Graduation Cohort who are College AND Career Ready



Students in the Graduation Cohort who are College Ready



Students in the Graduation Cohort who are Career Ready



Revenues per Student (2021 - 2022)

\$17,649	in Cherokee County School District
\$16,708	in State of South Carolina

Expenditures per Student (2021 - 2022)

\$17,311	in Cherokee County School District
\$16,171	in State of South Carolina

Source: SC Report Cards (2022 - 2023) and SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (2021 - 2022)

■ Capacity and Projected Enrollment (2031 - 2032 School Year)

SCHOOL NAME	2031 - 2032 PROJECTED CAPACITY
Elementary Schools	
BD Lee Elementary	Over Capacity
Blacksburg Primary	Under 90% Capacity
Blacksburg Elementary	Under 90% Capacity
Corinth Elementary	Under 90% Capacity
Draytonville Elementary	Under 90% Capacity
Grassy Pond Elementary	Over Capacity
Limestone-Central Elementary	Over Capacity
Luther Vaughan Elementary	Near / At Capacity
Northwest Elementary	Near / At Capacity
Middle Schools	
Blacksburg Middle	Under 90% Capacity
Ewing Middle	Near / At Capacity
Gaffney Middle	Near / At Capacity
High Schools	
Blacksburg High	Under 90% Capacity
Gaffney High	Under 90% Capacity

The most recent School District Facilities study projects that school enrollment will slowly drop through the 2026 - 2027 school year, before slowly increasing through 2031 - 2032 (reaching enrollment numbers just above the current totals). However, there is significant deferred maintenance at a number of schools in the District, and the Facility Study notes that there is a total of \$250,000,000 worth of deferred maintenance expenses which will need to be expended across the District in the next decade. This cost includes the development of two new middle schools, and the total costs are detailed below.

Total Deferred Maintenance Cost: **\$249,450,216**

Less Needs at GMS and EMS: **\$-66,829,615**

Revised Deferred Maintenance Cost: **\$182,620,646**

Two New Replacement Middle Schools: **\$106,707,762**

Source: Cherokee County School District Facilities Study (August 2022)

Higher Education

Spartanburg Community College (SCC) has a campus in Cherokee County, just off Interstate-85 in Gaffney. In the most recent school year (2022), SCC had a student enrollment around 7,300 students. 837 of these students were from Cherokee County. The County and the School Board provide funding and assistance to help local students attend SCC at little to no cost, through a program that costs around \$1 million a year to run. The Community College is continuously looking to expand its reach and is currently investigating the opportunity of developing a soft landing space for businesses and industries to test their market in Cherokee County. This program would assist students in training, while also promoting business development in the County. '

Limestone University is located in the City of Gaffney with an enrollment of approximately 1,600 students. Limestone is an accredited, independent, coeducational, liberal arts institution, and a non-denominational Christian university. The institution was historically known as Limestone College, changing the name to Limestone University in 2020.

SCC - Cherokee County Campus



Limestone University



Community Facilities Summary

The County and its service providers offer a large range of services to residents and business owners in the County. As growth pressures continue, the proper growth and management of these services will be essential.

Key Observations

- The County owns and maintains a number of facilities that house programs and services available for the community, including the administration building, courthouse, coroner's office, emergency management/services, sheriff's office/animal control/animal shelter, public works, solid waste, and others.
- Public water and sewer utilities are primarily provided by the Board of Public Works, including a planned sewer line that will extend services north on Interstate 85 to the state line. The Town of Blacksburg provides water service in the northeastern area of the County, which includes a limited sewer system within the Town.
- Fire service in the unincorporated areas of the County is supported by 16 rural voluntary fire departments each serving its own fire district.
- The Cherokee County School District owns and operates nine elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, and two support facilities - the Institute of Innovation, and the Ola Copeland Community Learning Center.
- Spartanburg Community College enrolls over 800 students from Cherokee County and operates a campus in Gaffney that includes an advanced manufacturing and industrial technologies center and a small business technology center.
- Limestone University is located in the City of Gaffney with an enrollment over 1,600 students focused on a traditional four-year liberal arts education.

ELEMENT 6

HOUSING

Housing

The Housing element considers location, types, age, and condition of housing; owner and renter occupancy; and affordability of housing. This element includes an analysis of housing affordability as it relates to national metrics.

Housing Types

More than 60% of the housing units in the County are one unit, detached homes. There are very few one unit, attached homes (duplexes or townhouses). Almost 11% of the housing units are multi-family apartment structures and almost 26% are mobile homes. The number of mobile homes in the County is a bit high (compared to 15% in the State and 6% in the nation). However, the County’s rural nature has a large influence on this.

Housing Types



Housing Age

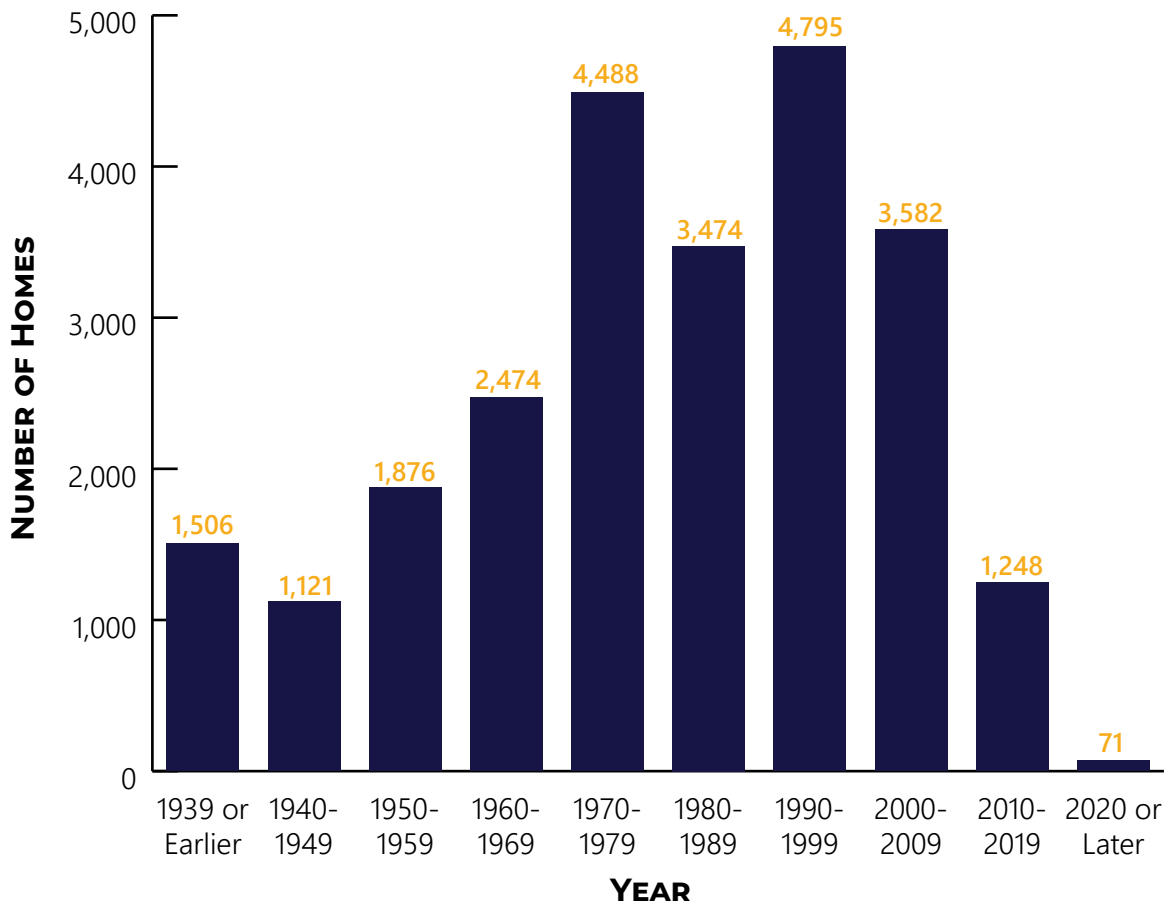
Another factor contributing to the State’s low population projections for Cherokee County is the housing data provided in the American Community Survey. According to this data, more than 53% of all housing units were built prior to 1989. Approximately 34% of homes were built between 1990 and 2009, and very few homes were built since 2010. In fact, as shown on the following page, the Census shows the number of new homes being built in the County being cut in half over the last decade, with similar trends showing up after 2020.

Housing Age



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

■ Year Housing Built



Housing Occupancy and Tenure

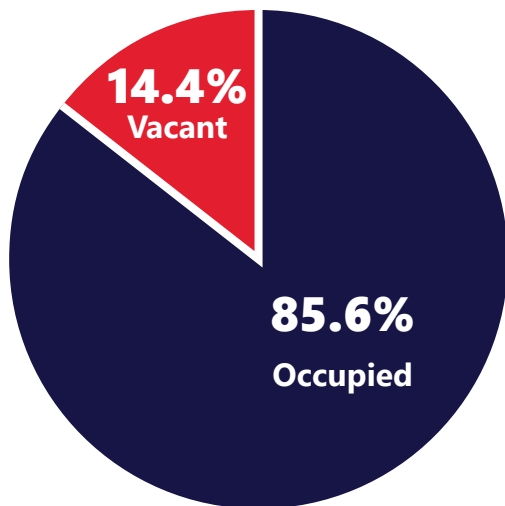
The majority of housing units in the County (85.6%) are occupied. This is comparable with the State's housing occupancy, though slightly lower than national occupancy trends. Generally speaking, when housing vacancy rates are above 5%, this does not indicate a demand for new housing. It should be noted that housing quality may have a strong relationship with housing occupancy in Cherokee County. There appear to be a number of "unlivable" housing structures which may be contributing to the vacancy rates in the County.

Of those housing units which are occupied, most (70%) are owner-occupied. This is similar to South Carolina housing tenure. Nationally, almost 36% of units being occupied by renters (as compared to just 30% in Cherokee County). The limited number of multi-family or apartment structures likely reduces rental-occupancy in this instance.

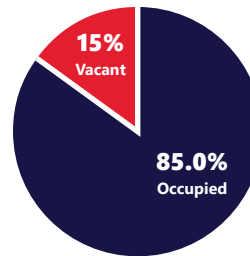
Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

■ Housing Occupancy

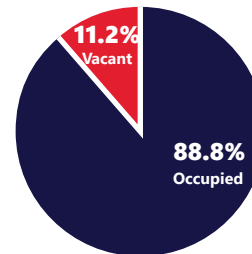
Cherokee County



South Carolina

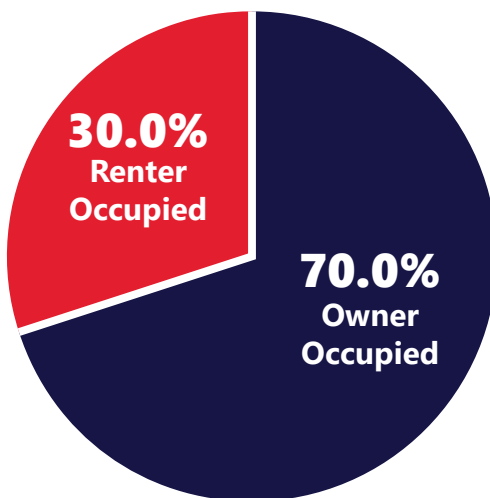


United States

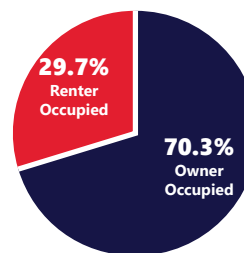


■ Housing Tenure

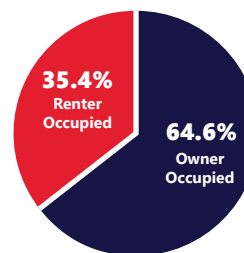
Cherokee County



South Carolina



United States



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Housing Costs

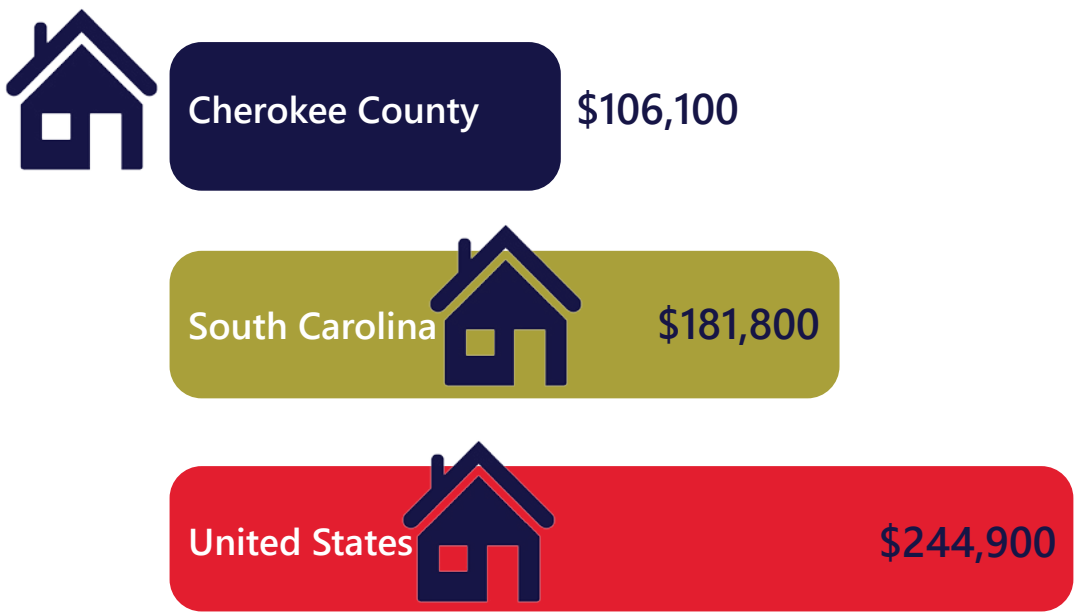
The median home value in Cherokee County is just over \$100,000. This is based on the American Community Survey, which has inherent error but is the best resource in terms of comparing housing data across the country. This value is not the same as market value (which is extremely dynamic). According to Zillow and Realtor.com, the average home value in the County is currently between \$127,557 and \$285,000. For the purposes of analyzing and comparing housing affordability, the American Community Survey data will be used.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to ending America’s affordable housing crisis. Each year, the NLIHC develops a report on the housing costs and affordability gaps in counties and states throughout the country. The following pages detail the findings of the most recent (2022) report.

Generally speaking, housing affordability is measured as the portion of one’s income dedicated toward housing. The first table on the following page illustrates that an estimated 27% of all residents spend 30% or more of their income on housing (which is considered to be unaffordable). The portion of residents who cannot afford their home is higher for renters (45.6%) than homeowners (19.2%).

As compared to the State and nation, Cherokee County is affordable. Based on NLIHC estimates, a resident must have two full time jobs to afford owning a two-bedroom market rate unit in the County (as compared to 2.4 jobs in the United States and 2.7 jobs in South Carolina). Similarly, a renter must have 1.1 full time jobs to afford to rent a two-bedroom unit in the County (compared to 1.2 jobs in South Carolina and the United States).

Median Home Value



Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

Monthly Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ALLOCATED TO HOUSING	ALL OCCUPIED UNITS	OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS
Less than 20%	53.6%	66.4%	23.6%
20 - 29%	16.1%	14.5%	19.8%
30% or More	22.5%	16.6%	36.3%
Zero or Negative Income	4.6%	2.6%	9.3%
No Cash Rent	3.3%	-	11.0%

Housing Costs (NLIHC)

GEOGRAPHY	HOURLY WAGE NECESSARY TO AFFORD 2 BEDROOM (FAIR MARKET VALUE)	2 BEDROOM (FAIR MARKET VALUE)	ANNUAL INCOME NEEDED TO AFFORD 2 BEDROOM (FAIR MARKET VALUE)	FULL TIME JOBS (AT MINIMUM WAGE) NEEDED TO AFFORD 2 BEDROOM
Cherokee County	\$14.21	\$739	\$29,560	2.0
South Carolina	\$19.30	\$1,004	\$40,147	2.7
United States	\$25.82	\$1,342	\$53,699	2.4

Renter Households (NLIHC)

GEOGRAPHY	RENTER HOUSEHOLDS (2016-2020)	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS (2016-2020)	ESTIMATED HOURLY MEAN RENTER WAGE (2020)	MONTHLY RENT AFFORDABLE (AT MEAN RENTER WAGE)	FULL TIME JOBS NEEDED TO AFFORD 2 BEDROOM
Cherokee County	6,057	29%	\$12.88	\$670	1.1
South Carolina	586,090	30%	\$15.98	\$831	1.2
United States	43,928,837	36%	\$21.99	\$1,144	1.2

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

Housing Affordability

The information provided by the NLIHC can be combined with median home value data from the American Community Survey to determine housing affordability in the County. The two tables below consider the median home values, as well as the median household and family incomes, in the County. Assuming that residents can spend 30% of their total incomes each month, their affordable mortgage payments can be calculated. This measure can be backed into an affordable home price (assuming a 4.5% interest rate and \$0 down). The affordable home prices for each percentage of the median household income levels (MHIs) and median family income levels (MFIs) are shown in the second column from the left on each table. These affordable home prices can then be compared to the median home value to determine an affordability gap for each respective median income level.

The results, shown in the far right columns, indicate that residents who earn at or above the median household and family incomes should generally be able to afford a home in Cherokee County. Further, those who earn 80% or more of the median family income should also be able to afford a home. However, those who earn 80% or less of the median household income, or 50% or less of the median family income, can generally not afford a home in the County.

■ Housing Affordability Based on Median Household Income (MHI)

INCOME LEVEL	AFFORDABLE HOME PRICE	AFFORDABLE MONTHLY MORTGAGE	MEDIAN HOME VALUE	AFFORDABILITY GAP
50% MHI	\$47,600	\$516	\$106,100	- \$58,500
80% MHI	\$99,800	\$826	\$106,100	- \$6,300
100% MHI	\$134,600	\$1,033	\$106,100	+ \$28,500
120% MHI	\$169,500	\$1,240	\$106,100	+ \$63,400

■ Housing Affordability Based on Median Family Income (MFI)

INCOME LEVEL	AFFORDABLE HOME PRICE	AFFORDABLE MONTHLY MORTGAGE	MEDIAN HOME VALUE	AFFORDABILITY GAP
50% MFI	\$82,800	\$725	\$106,100	- \$23,300
80% MFI	\$156,000	\$1,160	\$106,100	+ \$49,900
100% MFI	\$204,900	\$1,450	\$106,100	+ \$98,800
120% MFI	\$253,800	\$1,740	\$106,100	+ \$147,700

Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021)

According to the NLIHC, South Carolina ranks number 28 (out of 50) states in terms of housing affordability. On average, a resident earning minimum wage would have to work 91 hours a week to afford a one-bedroom rental home.

The table on the following page provides some context on the median hourly wages of a range of common occupations. This provides some context to the charts comparing wages with housing affordability metrics. The chart also identifies approximate one-bedroom and two-bedroom housing wages, illustrating that all of the occupations earning less than that are generally unable to afford a home on their own. Of course, these housing affordability metrics can, and often are, offset through roommates or other group quarters arrangements, including dual-income families.



Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

Median Wages for Largest Occupations in South Carolina

OCCUPATION	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE
Waiters and Waitresses	31,380	\$9.28
Fast Food and Counter Workers	47,400	\$10.57
Cooks, Fast Food	25,530	\$11.12
Cashiers	54,390	\$11.46
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	30,440	\$11.65
Janitors, Cleaners (Except Maids / Housekeeping)	29,320	\$11.90
Retail Salespersons	66,110	\$12.04
Food Preparation Workers	14,240	\$12.19
Stockers and Order Fillers	31,190	\$14.53
Cooks, Restaurants	21,980	\$14.67
Nursing Assistants	15,900	\$14.70
Office Clerks, General	46,710	\$15.15
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	14,770	\$15.18
Laborers, Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	68,970	\$15.22
Customer Service Representatives	56,090	\$15.66
Shipping, Receiving, and Inventory Clerks	14,550	\$15.88
One-Bedroom Housing Wage		\$16.58
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation / Serving	18,590	\$17.53
Construction Laborers	18,860	\$17.75
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	37,330	\$18.08
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	30,120	\$18.75
All Occupations	2,067,330	\$18.95
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	20,550	\$19.10
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	26,030	\$19.12
Two-Bedroom Housing Wage		\$19.30
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	18,030	\$19.33
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	31,560	\$23.72
Sales Representatives, Wholesale / Manufacturing	20,900	\$25.66
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Admin. Support	27,480	\$25.89
Elementary School Teachers	21,350	\$29.48
Accountants and Auditors	14,120	\$31.49
Registered Nurses	46,160	\$36.96
General and Operations Managers	50,410	\$39.27

Housing Summary

The majority of homes in Cherokee County are single-family units or mobile homes, built between 1970 and 2009. This causes the median home value in the County to remain low, allowing the provision of generally affordable housing for residents. Approximately 15% of the County's housing stock is currently vacant, though this may be related to poor housing conditions in some cases.

Key Observations

- Single family, one unit detached homes make up the majority of housing types in the County at 63% with just over a quarter of the housing units being classified as mobile homes.
- Housing construction in the County was at its highest from 1970 – 1979 (4,488 units) and 1990 – 1999 (4,795 units).
- Over 70% of the housing units in the County are owner occupied, which is on track with the state trend and slightly high than the national trend.
- Median housing values in the County are much lower than the state and national median values.
- Although the median housing values are lower, those earning less than 80% of the median household income are typically unable to afford a home.

ELEMENT 7

LAND USE

Land Use

The Land Use element considers existing and future land use categories, as well as factors which influence land use. This element includes the Future Land Use Map, which is one of the primary implementation elements of this Plan.

Subdivision Patterns

The map on the following page displays parcel sizes throughout the County. The smallest parcels, shown in shades of red and orange, are generally concentrated in the northern portion of the County, particularly around the Interstate 85 corridor and near the municipalities of Gaffney and Blacksburg. There is a significant number of large parcels (greater than 100 acres) clustered in southern Cherokee County, with many mid-sized parcels (10 to 50 acres) spread throughout the County. Generally speaking, smaller parcels tend to have already been subdivided and correspond with parcels which have existing development on them.

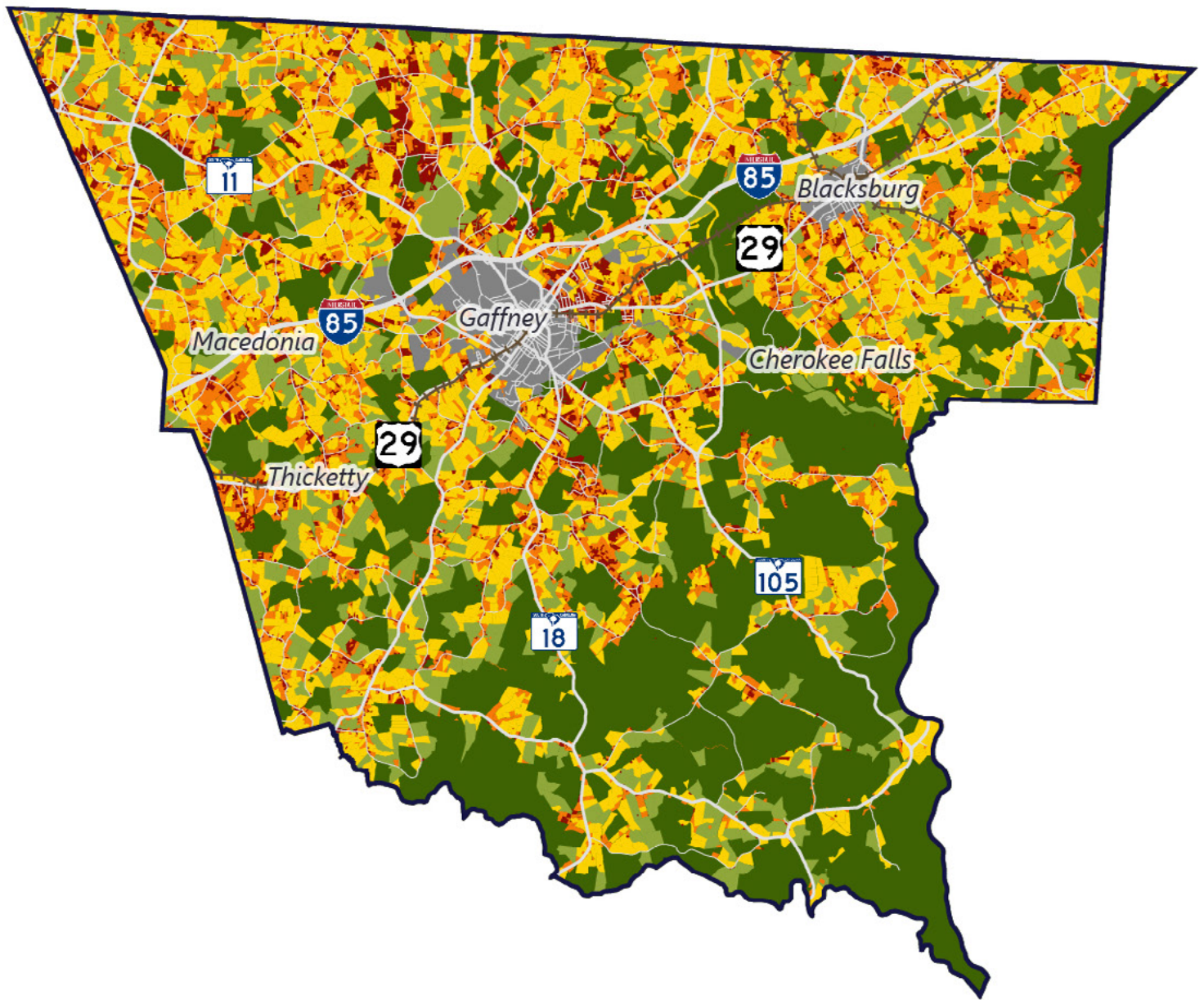
Existing Land Use

Today, a large portion of Cherokee County could be described as rural or undeveloped land. Residential uses tend to be located along major roadways and commercial and industrial uses are largely located within close proximity to the Interstate. Agricultural and recreational areas are spread throughout the County, and are shown in shades of green on the existing land use map.

Agriculture and Industrial Land Uses



Parcel Size / Subdivision Patterns



LEGEND

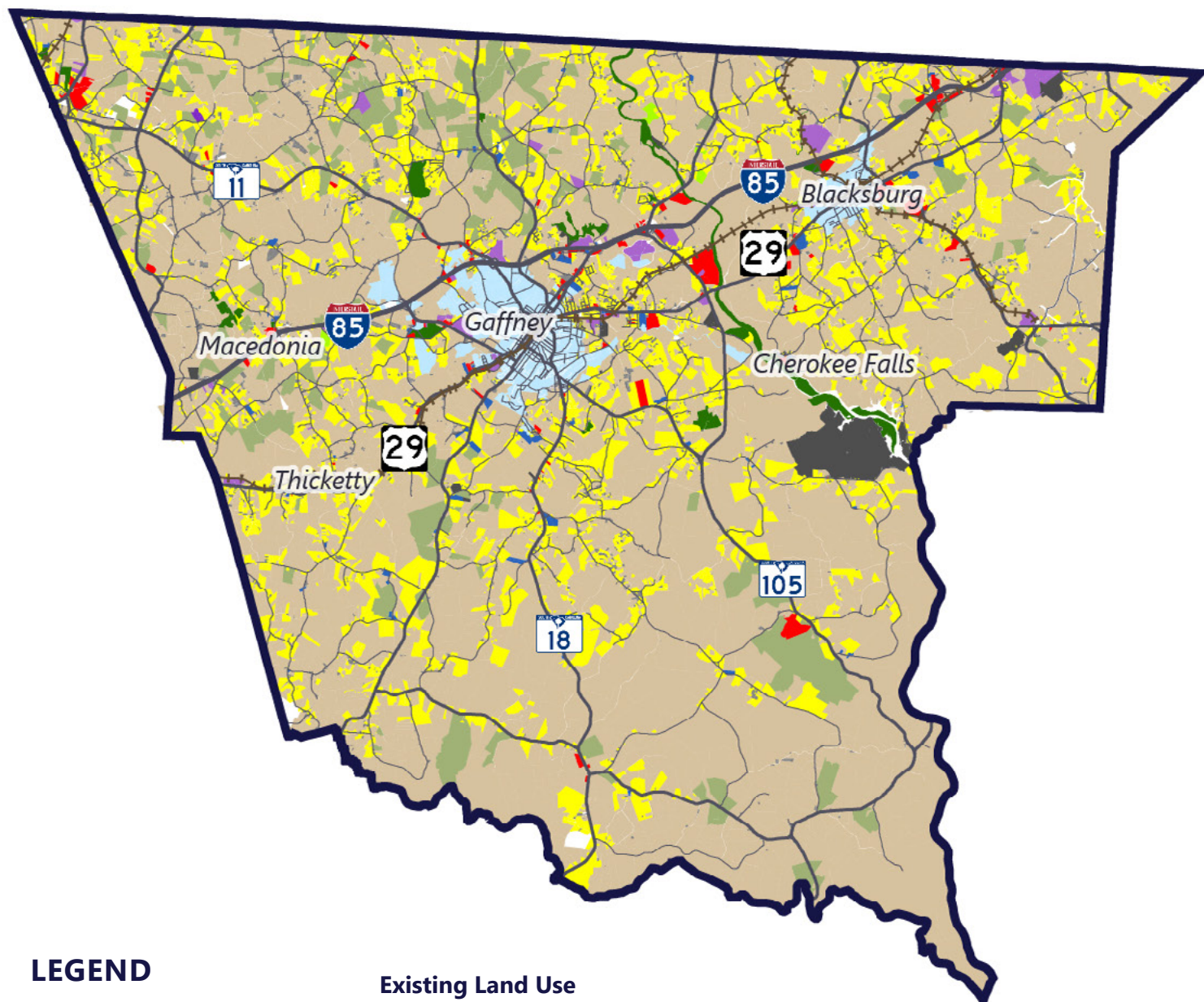
-  Cherokee County
-  Municipalities
-  Railroad

Parcel Acreage

- | | |
|---|--|
|  < 2 |  50 - 100 |
|  2 - 10 |  > 100 |
|  10 - 50 | |

Source: Cherokee County GIS (2023)

Existing Land Use



LEGEND

Cherokee County

Major Roads

Railroad

Existing Land Use

Municipality

Civic/ Institutional

Residential

Commercial

Industrial

Airport

Vacant

ROW

Agriculture

Recreation / Conservation

RV / Campground

Utility

Rural/ Undeveloped



Source: Cherokee County GIS and Benchmark (2023)

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map provides a general direction for how the County would like to grow in the future. This map identifies generalized areas for future development, as well as areas which should maintain a rural character. Unlike a zoning map, the Future Land Use Map is not a regulatory tool, meaning that it is not directly enforceable. However, the Planning Commission and County Board of Commissioners are required by State Statutes to consider the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map when reviewing all proposed developments and rezonings. Should a proposed development or rezoning be incompatible with the Future Land Use Map, the County's elected and appointed officials should closely examine whether or not such a development should be permitted. As change occurs in the future, the County will need to continually reconsider and update this Future Land Use Map to ensure that it aligns with their intended direction for the future.

The Future Land Use Map consists of eight generalized future land use categories described in detail below and on the following pages.

I-85 CORRIDOR

The I-85 Corridor land use classification is applied to areas of Cherokee County that are situated within one mile of the interstate. The intent of this land use classification is to define the area of primary economic development focus. Higher intensity land uses, including significant employment generating uses are a key component of the corridor adjacent to the interstate, especially in areas that are most proximate to the County's nine interchanges with I-85. Land suitable for new economic development opportunities, as well as existing industrial, manufacturing, logistics, and similarly used properties in the corridor should be zoned in a manner that protects them from incompatible adjacent development, while also ensuring that an adequate number of appropriately zoned sites are available for major economic development initiatives.

Those portions of the I-85 corridor that are within one mile of a municipality should be considered as part of the Primary Growth Area of the nearby municipality. These areas are anticipated to be developed in an urban manner with higher intensity commercial and residential land uses as outlined in the Primary Growth Area classification. Land suitable for large economic development projects, however, should be reserved for that purpose through appropriate zoning designation so that limited land resources are used most efficiently.

Land in the vicinity of interchanges that is not suitable for economic development purposes should be designated for commercial development, while land outside of the immediate vicinity of the interchanges that is not suitable for economic development purposes should be designated for low density residential development (1-2 dwelling units per acre), based on the availability of utilities.

PRIMARY GROWTH AREA

The Primary Growth Area land use classification is applied to areas within one mile of the municipal limits of the City of Gaffney and the Town of Blacksburg. The purpose of this land use classification is to define areas where urban development at the scale and intensity of the associated municipality is appropriate and generally expected due to the proximity of existing urban development and the availability of utilities and related services.

Development in these areas should be coordinated between the County and nearby municipality to ensure that compatible growth patterns are fostered. Commercial development and higher density residential development should be directed to land in the Primary Growth Area where annexation by one of the respective municipalities is possible. Residential development in the Primary Growth Area that will foreseeably remain in unincorporated Cherokee County should not exceed four dwelling units per acre.

SUBURBAN GROWTH AREA

The Suburban Growth Area land use classification encompasses the majority of the Gaffney Board of Public Works wastewater service area that is not designated with the I-85 Corridor or Primary Growth Area land use classifications. The purpose of this land use classification is to provide for a transition between the higher intensity development patterns of the Primary Growth Area / I-85 Corridor and rural areas of the County, where such transition is possible. Development patterns in this area should remain primarily residential, with development density not exceeding four dwelling units per acre, based on the availability of utilities.

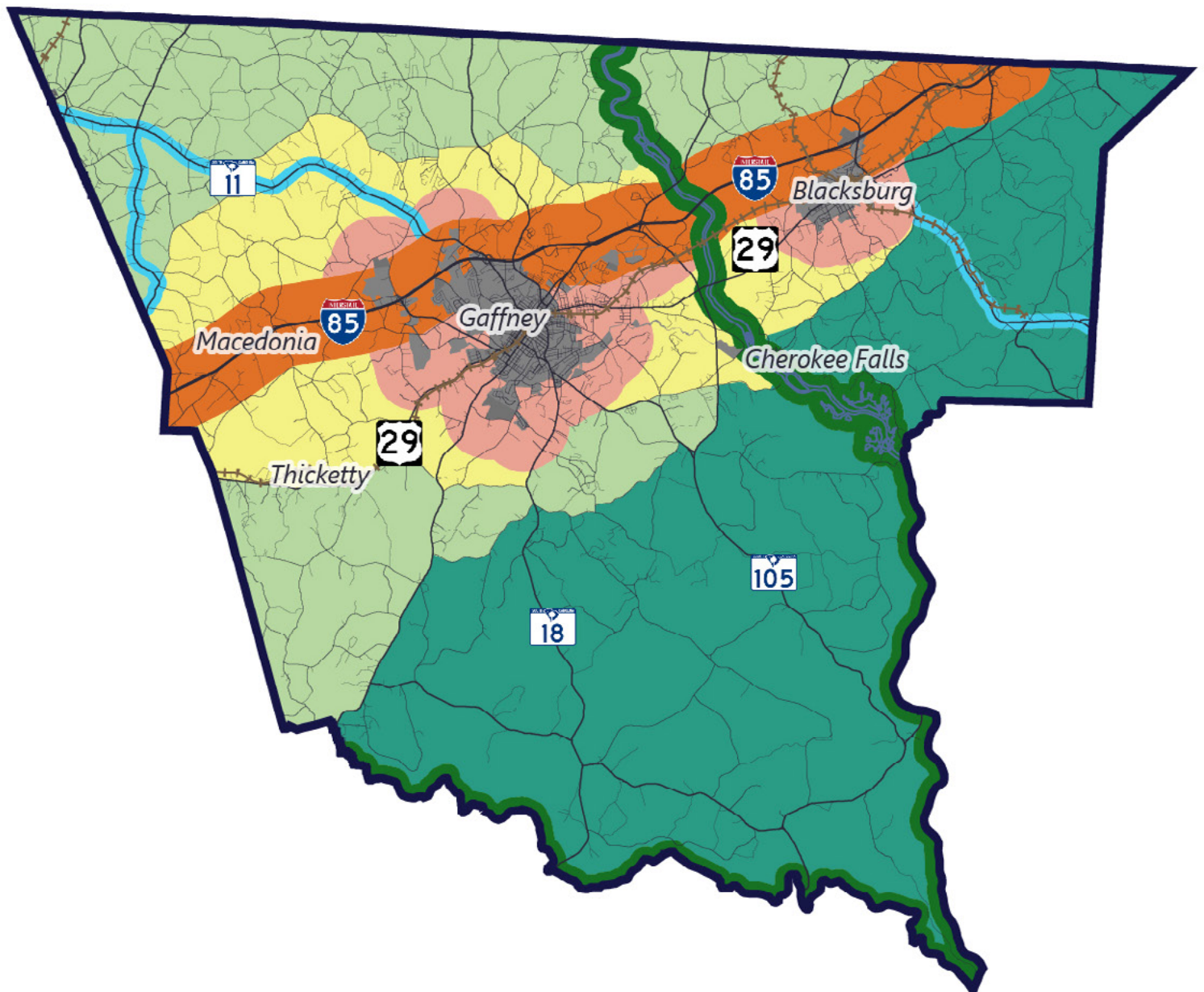
AGRICULTURE / COUNTRYSIDE RESIDENTIAL

The Agriculture / Countryside Residential land use classification is intended to help sustain the viability of the County's agricultural economy while also providing opportunities for low density residential development. Agricultural enterprises and associated support businesses are permitted and encouraged throughout this area, along with small-scale convenience retail and service uses at crossroads to serve rural residents. Residential development should not exceed one dwelling unit per acre in major subdivisions, with larger lot sizes required outside of major subdivisions.

RURAL RESERVE

The Rural Reserve land use classification is applied to areas of the County that generally lack utility service, and, due to poor soil suitability for onsite wastewater disposal, have limited development potential. The Rural Reserve is generally characterized by concentrations of land in parcels greater than 50 acres in size, many of which are planted in commercial timber and held by entities engaged in forestry operations. Small-scale retail and service uses are permitted at crossroads to serve rural residents. Residential development should not exceed one dwelling unit per three acres within major subdivisions, while other forms of land subdivision should be required to meet the statutory exemption minimum five-acre parcel size.

Future Land Use Map



LEGEND

	I-85 Corridor		Agriculture / Countryside Residential
	Primary Growth Area		Rural Reserve
	Suburban Growth Area		Scenic Byways
			River Corridors
			Municipal Jurisdiction



SCENIC BYWAYS

This land use classification is applied to the Cherokee Foothills byway (SC 11), the Cowpens National Battlefield byway (SC 110), and SC Highway 5 east of Blacksburg. The intent of this land use classification is to maintain a rural / scenic character along these routes. This is primarily intended to be accomplished through the application of a zoning overlays. It is anticipated that such overlay districts would restrict uses that are incompatible with the intent of the classification and, potentially, modify development standards to improve the aesthetic appeal of permitted development within the corridors.

RIVER CORRIDORS

The River Corridors land use classification is applied to areas within roughly one-half mile of the banks of the Broad River and Pacolet River. The intent of the land use classification is to identify lands that influence the visual appeal of the rivers, provide opportunities for access and recreation along the rivers, and that will influence the overall health of the rivers if developed in a manner that is not respectful of proximity to the river. Land development and zoning standards (where applicable) should be oriented to support and maintain the natural beauty of these important resources.

MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION

The Municipal Jurisdiction land use classification is intended to identify lands that are outside of the scope of applicability of Cherokee County's Future Land Use Map. Incorporated municipalities include Gaffney, Blacksburg, Chesnee, and Smyrna.

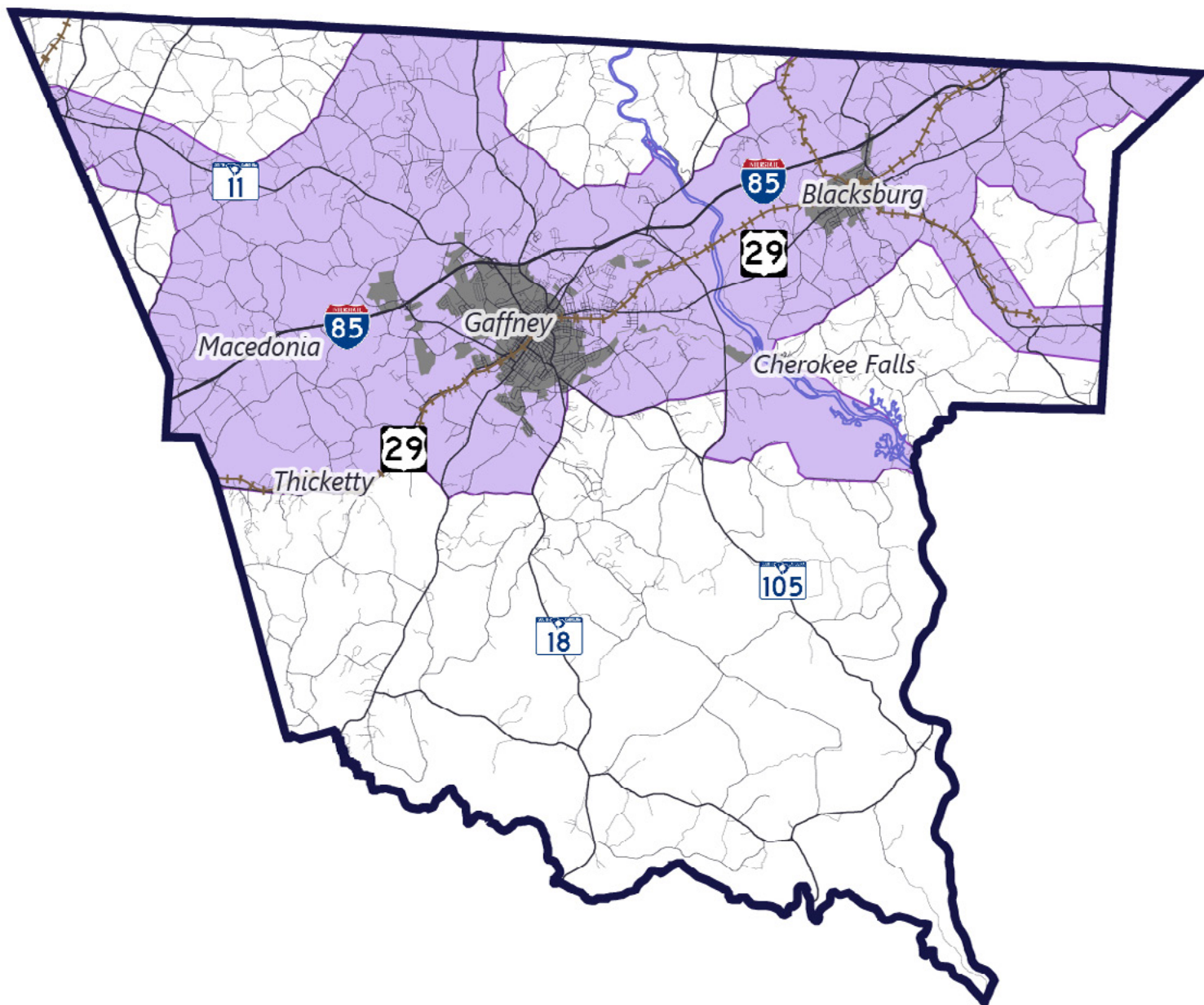
Growth Areas Identified for Zoning

Though the Future Land Use Map is not regulatory in nature, one of the recommendations of this Plan is to adopt a Zoning Ordinance and related Zoning Map. During this planning process, a number of potential zoning strategies were examined and it was determined that the County should establish zoning regulations only in portions of the County which are likely to have significant development pressure. The remainder of the County, the un-zoned portion, would continue to be regulated by the Land Development Regulations, which should also be improved following the adoption of this Plan, but will not have any specificity in terms of which land uses will be permitted where.

The map on the following page shows the portion of the County which should be zoned in the near future. Following the adoption of this Plan, a Zoning Ordinance will be developed to establish specific zoning districts and a Zoning Map will lay out the land uses permitted throughout the area.

Beyond this area, property owners can request zoning but the intent would be for them to remain un-zoned in the near future. As additional development occurs and other factors change, the County may consider expanding the zoned area in the future.

■ Growth Areas Identified for Zoning



LEGEND

-  Cherokee County
-  Growth Areas Identified for Zoning
-  Roads

Land Use Summary

There are a variety of land uses and parcel sizes in Cherokee County. However, much of the developed land and smaller parcels are concentrated around the municipalities, along the Interstate 85 corridor, and in the northeastern portion of the County. The southern portion of Cherokee County contains a number of very large parcels, as well as some significant agricultural land. Generally speaking, commercial and industrial development tends to be concentrated around the Interstate, while residential neighborhoods tend to occur in the municipalities and along major corridors.

Key Observations

- A significant amount of land within the County is classified as rural or undeveloped with a number of parcels in the County that are over 100 acres.
- The largest concentration of parcels of land greater than 100 acres is the southern portion of the County.
- In the central to northern segments of the County, the majority of parcels are 10 to 50 acres in size.
- Most industrial, commercial, and neighborhood residential uses are located along Interstate 85, major highways, or within the municipalities.
- The Future Land Use Map consists of eight land use categories focused on Interstate 85, primary growth areas, suburban growth areas, agriculture/countryside residential, rural reserve, scenic byways, river corridors, and municipal areas.
- Growth areas identified for the application of potential zoning primarily include the Interstate 85 corridor, the Board of Public Works sewer service area, the Grassy Pond/150 corridor, SC Highway 11, and SC Highway 5 to the York County line.

ELEMENT 8

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation

The Transportation element considers transportation facilities, including major road improvements, new road construction, pedestrian and bicycle projects, and other elements of a transportation network. This element was developed in coordination with the Land Use element, to ensure transportation efficiency for existing and planned development.

Roadway Classification

The major roadways in Cherokee County are Interstate 85, US-29, and SC-5. The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) classifies each of these as principal arterials, connected through a series of minor arterials and major collector roads. The lowest functional classifications of roadways are minor collector roads and local roads, which are shown in shades of gold and blue on the functional classification map.

Average Daily Vehicle Traffic

Interstate 85 carries the highest level of traffic in Cherokee County, with between 47,000 and 63,000 vehicle trips occurring per day along this route. Segments of US-29 are the second most traveled, with almost 11,000 trips occurring near Gaffney each day. In general, the routes shown in shades of red and orange on the average daily traffic map are the most trafficked, while those shown in shades of gold and blue are the least traveled.

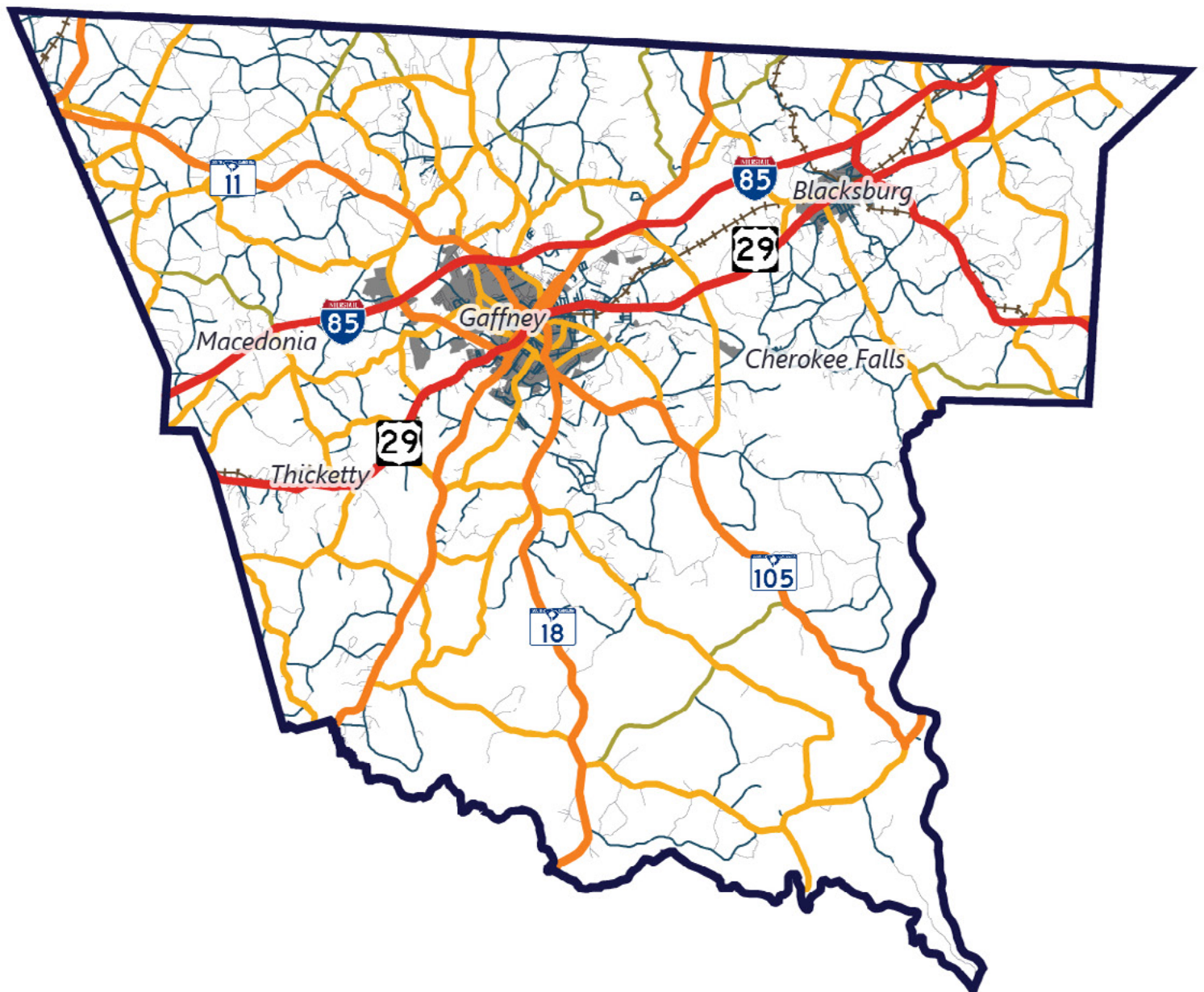
Vehicle Crashes

The map on page 106 displays all recorded vehicle crashes in the County between 2018 and 2021. Of course, the majority of these occurred in the northern portion of the County, particularly concentrated along Interstate-85, where much of the traffic is. There was also a significant number of crashes in the City of Gaffney.

Planned Improvements

The map on page 107 displays the transportation improvements included in the most recent State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). One of the most notable of these is of course the widening of Interstate-85. There are also a number of road improvements planned for roads connecting to the Interstate, as shown by orange and green lines on the map. The pages which follow detail the specific projects included in the STIP and their current status (many already under construction but some still in the design / development phase).

Functional Classification



LEGEND

- Cherokee County
- Municipalities
- Railroad

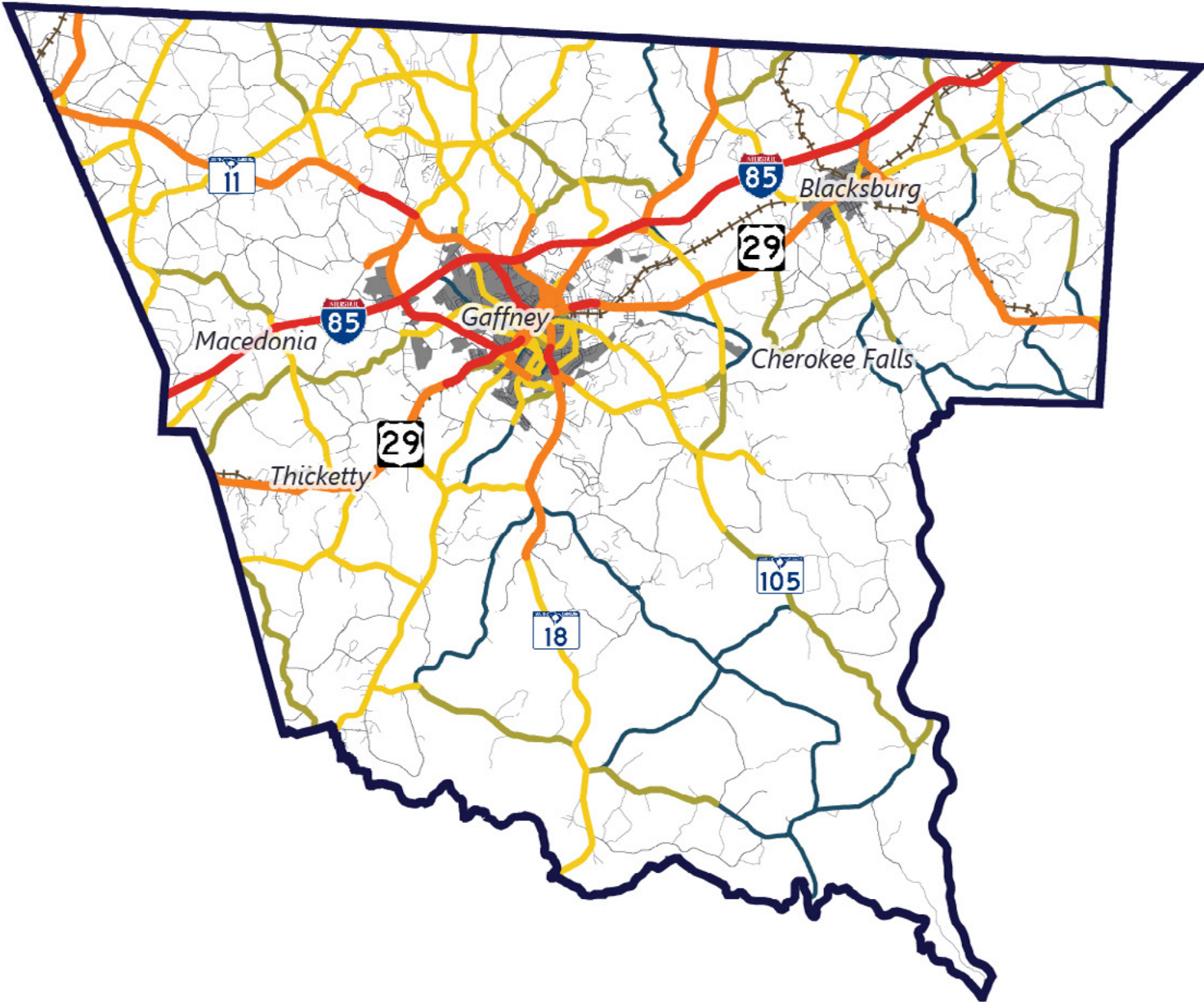
Functional Classification

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Collector
- Minor Arterial
- Local Road
- Major Collector



Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation (2023)

Average Daily Traffic



LEGEND

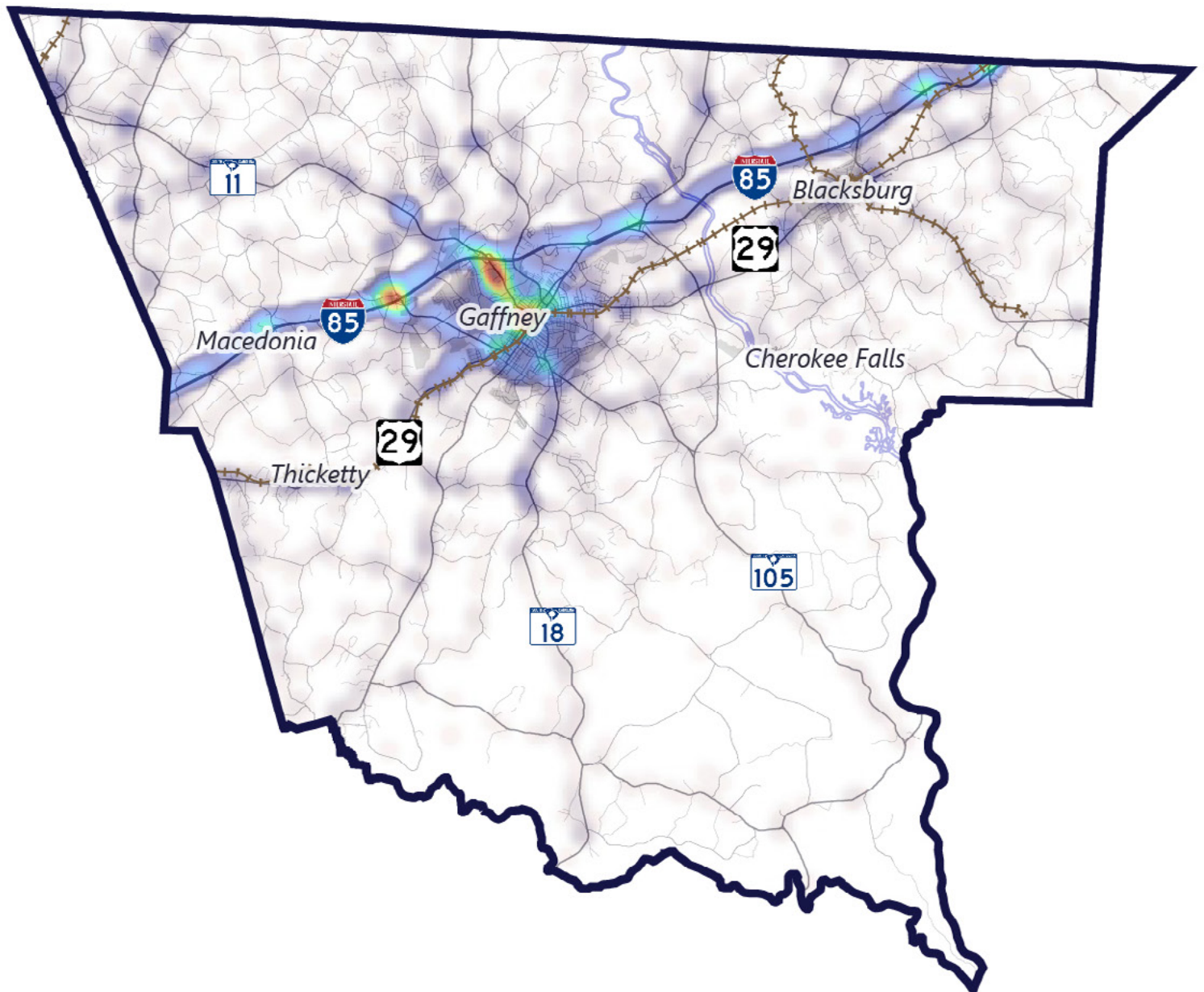
- Cherokee County
- Municipalities
- Railroad

Average Daily Traffic Count (2021)	
	> 10,000
	5,000- 10,000
	1,000- 5,000
	500- 1,000
	< 500



Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation (2021)

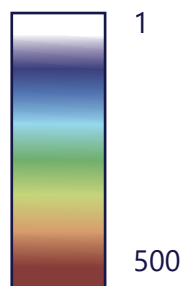
Vehicle Crashes



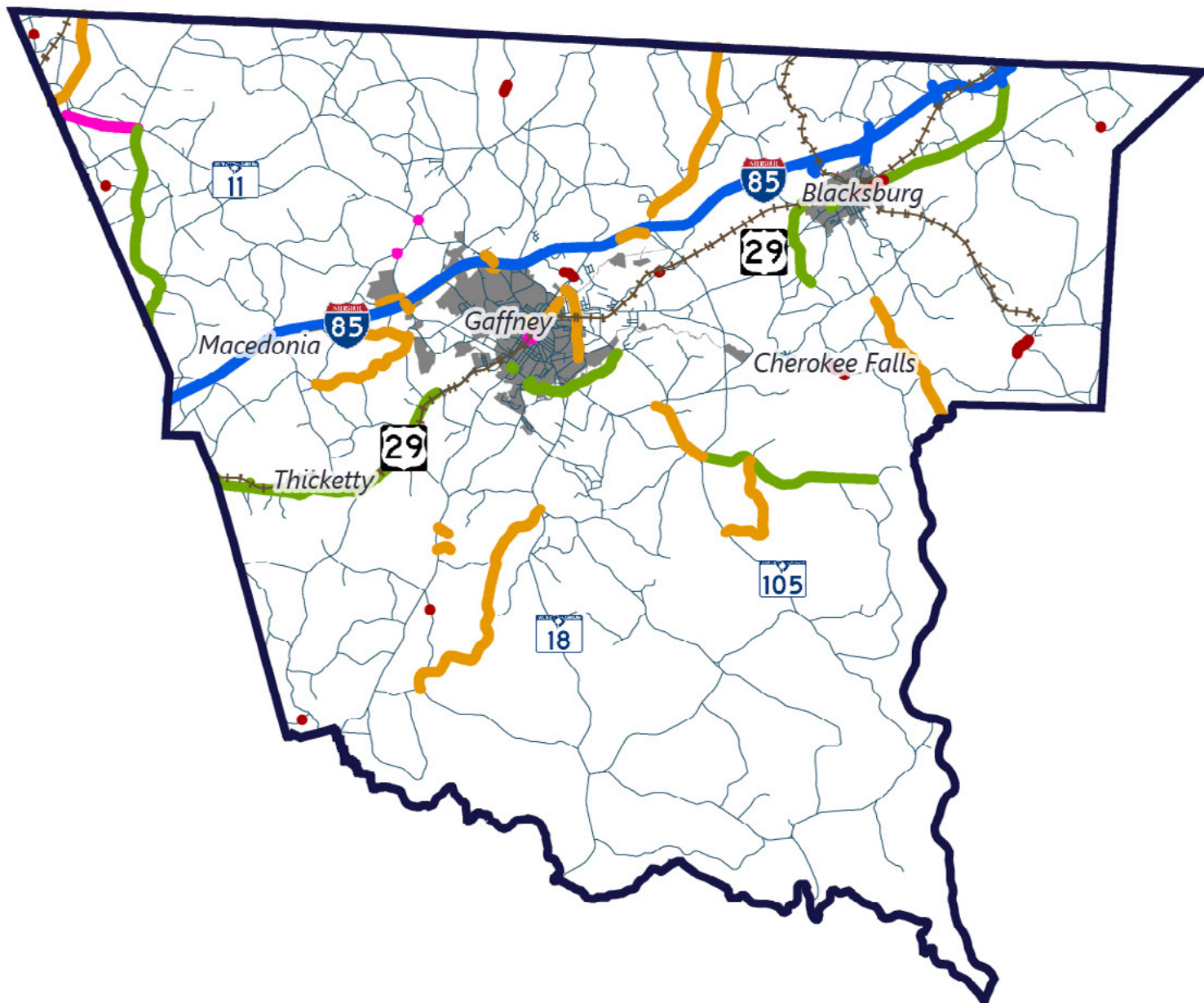
LEGEND

- Cherokee County
- Municipalities
- Railroad

Number of Vehicular Crashes 2017-2021



State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)



LEGEND

Cherokee County

Municipalities

Railroad

Project Budget Category

Bridge

Operation & Safety

Rehab & Reconstruction

Transportation Alternative

Widening

STIP Programmed Projects in Cherokee County 2021-2027

PROJECT ID	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	CURRENT STAGE
P027114	I-85 (Gossett Rd (S-57) to NC State Line) - Gossett Rd (S-57) to SC 18	Widening & New Location	Construction
P027116	I-85 - Widening from near SC 18 (Exit 96) to near NC State Line (Phase 3)	Widening & New Location	Construction
P027884	Gaffney T-Bridge Improvements	Transportation Alternative	Construction
P029835	S-61 (Old Post Road) Intersection Improvements	Operational & Safety	Construction
P030403	US 29 over Southern Railroad	Bridge	Design/Development
P037082	US 29 Safety Improvements in Cherokee County	Operational & Safety	Design/Development
P038057	S-97 over GoForth Creek Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Construction
P038058	S-265 over Manning Creek Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Construction
P038059	S-793 over Providence Creek Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Design/Development
P038724	S-119 over Bear Creek District	Bridge	Construction
P038851	Intersection Improvements - SC 150 (S Limestone St) @ S-111 & SC 150 (Pacolet Hwy) @ S-111	Operational & Safety	Design/Development
P039624	Cherokee 2022 NFA Secondary Extension	Rehab & Resurfacing	Design/Development
P040201	2022 Primary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040202	2022 FA Secondary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040203	2022 Non-FA Secondary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040475	S-111 (E Jr High Road) MP 0 to MP 2.83 - Cherokee County	Operational & Safety	Construction
P040588	RRWD upgrade for NS crossing 716340S in Cherokee County	Operational & Safety	Design/Development
P040665	S-11-56 (Montgomery Drive) over Horse Creek Bridge (Cherokee Cty)	Bridge	Design/Development
P040813	2023 Non-NHS Primary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040814	2023 FA Secondary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040815	2023 NFA Secondary Pavement Improvement Program	Rehab & Resurfacing	Construction
P040847	Type II Traffic Signal Upgrades in District 4 FY22	Operational & Safety	Design/Development
P040915	District 4 Primary Route Bridge Strengthening - Structural Design Small Purchase (PE Only)	Bridge	Design/Development

P041148	S-56 Bridge Replacement over Horse Creek	Bridge	Design/Development
P041149	S-106 Bridge Replacement over Bridge of Suck Creek	Bridge	Design/Development
P041150	S-226 Bridge Replacement over Unnamed Stream	Bridge	Design/Development
P041151	S-138 Bridge Replacement over Goucher Creek	Bridge	Design/Development
P041152	S-86 Bridge Replacement over Kings Creek	Bridge	Design/Development
P041241	Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail	Transportation Alternative	Design/Development
P041399	2022 Center Line Milled in Rumble Stripes District 4	Operational & Safety	Construction
P041556	Cherokee CTC - extension S-11-72 Burnt Gin Road	Rehab & Resurfacing	Design/Development
P041925	S - 49 River Drive over Cherokee Creek Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Design/Development
P041939	Cherokee CTC - state	Rehab & Resurfacing	Pre-Award
P041940	Cherokee CTC - state	Rehab & Resurfacing	Design/Development
P042025	SC 110 (Battleground Road) MP 0.00 to MP 5.22	Operational & Safety	Pre-Award
P042026	S-245 (Leagan Drive/Moss Crossing) MP 0.00 to MP 2.18	Operational & Safety	Pre-Award
P042027	S-13 (McKown's Mountain Road) MP 0.00 to MP 4.47	Operational & Safety	Pre-Award

Transportation Summary

Interstate 85, US-29, and SC-5 are the major transportation routes within Cherokee County. These roadways carry the highest levels of traffic and are also the areas where the largest amount of developed land exists. As development continues, ensuring adequate transportation infrastructure is in place is a very important element of planning.

Key Observations

- The primary arterials defined by SCDOT that connect through the County are Interstate 85, US-29, and SC-5.
- Interstate 85 accounts for 47,000 to 63,000 vehicle trips per day, while US-29 has almost 11,000 vehicle trips per day.
- The minor arterials in the County, including highways 11, 18, 105, and 150 experience much lower traffic volumes (under 10,000) with most of the major collector roads seeing less than 5,000 vehicle trips per day with less than 1,000 vehicle trips per day on the minor collector roads.
- The majority of vehicular crashes occur along Interstate 85 and at major intersections within and around Gaffney.
- The major widening of Interstate 85 is continuing with a number of bridge projects, operation and safety improvements, and rehab/reconstruction projects planned throughout the County.

ELEMENT 9

RESILIENCY

Resiliency

The Resiliency element was added to the South Carolina Planning Enabling Statutes requirements in 2019. This element considers the impacts of flooding, high water, and natural hazards on individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, economic development, public infrastructure and facilities, and public health. This element includes an inventory of existing resiliency conditions, promotes resilient planning and development, and is coordinated with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.

Resiliency Framework

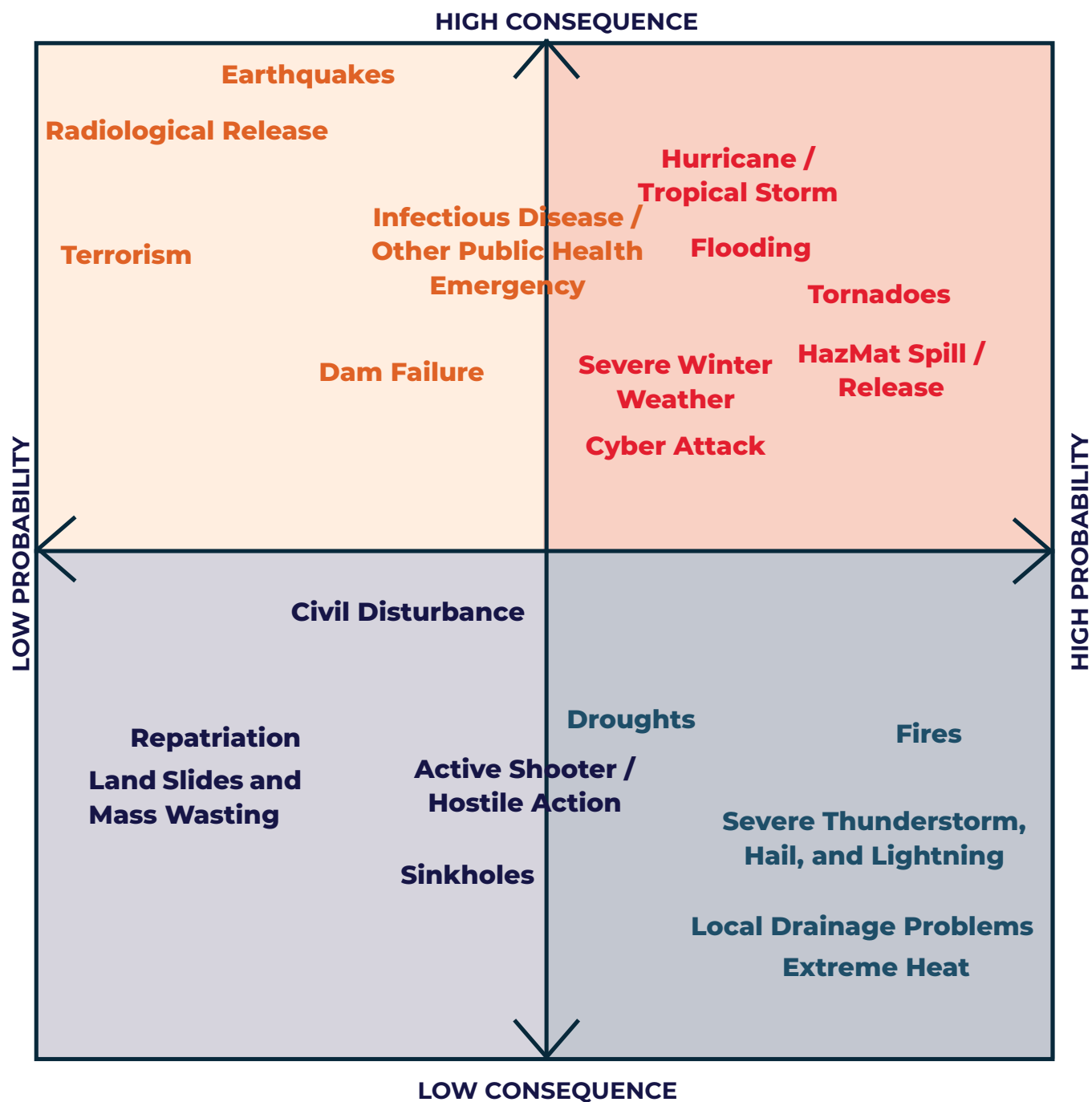
According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities, businesses, institutions, and governments to adapt to changing conditions and to prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions to everyday life, such as hazard events. As an uptick in natural and man-made disasters has occurred in the United States, an increased focus on hazard mitigation and resiliency planning has taken place across the country. The primary hazard mitigation and resiliency plans which affect Cherokee County are detailed below and on the following pages.

STATE PLANS

The Statewide Strategic Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan (2023) is developed and implemented by the South Carolina Office of Resilience. The plan identifies major risks and potential losses that could occur as a result of extreme weather events, providing strategies for local governments to implement in their communities in order to mitigate potential risks. This State plan, which is currently being updated, details the natural hazards which most impact South Carolina: flooding, wildfire, seismic events, drought, wind, and extreme weather. The plan also projects climate changes in the future, with varying gauges of impacts to Cherokee County.

The South Carolina Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018) outlines the State's strategy for all natural hazard mitigation goals, actions, and initiatives. It is the result of an evaluation of the vulnerability to natural hazard impacts present in South Carolina. This plan lists the following hazards as having potential to impact the citizens and property of the State: earthquakes, hurricanes, coastal issues, floods, thunderstorms, tornadoes, lightning, hail, sea level rise, tsunamis, sink holes, droughts, winter weather, wildfire, landslides, extreme heat, nuclear facilities, terrorism, pandemics, and other disease outbreaks. These hazards are illustrated in a table showing level of risk (low to high) and level of probability (low to high), as illustrated on the following page. The plan provided additional information specific to Cherokee County. At the time of the plan, the State estimated buildings in the County to be worth \$2,757,125,000 in total; the majority of this coming from residential property. It also detailed the historic and projected future hazard impacts to the County, as shown on the table on the following page. The cells highlighted correspond with hazards that have the greatest potential of occurring in the County in the future.

Figure on Probability versus Consequence



Annualized Count of Total Hazards in Cherokee County

Total Hazards	Drought	Earth-quake	Extreme Cold	Extreme Heat	Fog	Hail	HazMat	Lightning	Severe Storm	Tornado	Tropical Cyclone	Wildfire	Wind	Winter Weather
4,292	175	0	86	13	126	3	40	3766	35	<1	<1	42	2	3
FUTURE ANNUAL PROBABILITY OF HAZARD (% CHANCE PER YEAR)														
	2494	0	8647	1280	12637	323	3971	376581	3519	23	4	4227	170	317

Source: SC Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018): SCEMD Emergency Operations Plan

COUNTY PLANS

The **Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)** was recently updated to comply with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The Plan details information specific to the County and its municipalities, particularly concerning hazard mitigation and resiliency strategies. In addition to logging all resources in the County, it catalogs past hazards which have occurred. Information presented in this plan is shared on the following pages.

Hazard Risks

To assess and evaluate hazards, the Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan established four criteria, and each hazard was given a rating of “high,” “medium,” or “low” risk. The four criteria include:

- **Probability:** Risk determined by hazard frequency percentage calculated in plan.
- **Vulnerability:** Risk based on the total population and an estimated projection on property values and facilities within the jurisdiction.
- **Impact:** Risk determined by considering vulnerability of the jurisdiction, as well as past history occurrence. Also based on the extent of the occurrence.
- **History:** Risk determined by past occurrences in each participating jurisdiction.

Since some criteria are judged to be more important than others, a weighting factor was established to balance out the total scoring. A composite score for each hazard was determined by multiplying the score value assigned to each criterion by its weight and then summing the four totals. This was calculated for each of the jurisdictions (Blacksburg, Gaffney, and the County overall) and the summations are shown on the following spread. Those highlighted with the highest scores represent the greatest risk to each jurisdiction.

The plan concluded that a disaster in the City of Gaffney would have the possibility to be costlier due to the larger number of historic buildings, which could also prolong the recovery time from a disaster. A larger number of injuries and deaths could be expected in both the City of Gaffney and the Town of Blacksburg, due to their higher concentrations of people. During a disaster in the County, a lower number of injuries and deaths could be expected because people live in a less dense manner. However, the possibility of a greater loss of agricultural products would exist. Devastation of the higher number of critical community facilities located in this area could also prolong the recovery time from a disaster.

Overall Hazard Vulnerability in the County

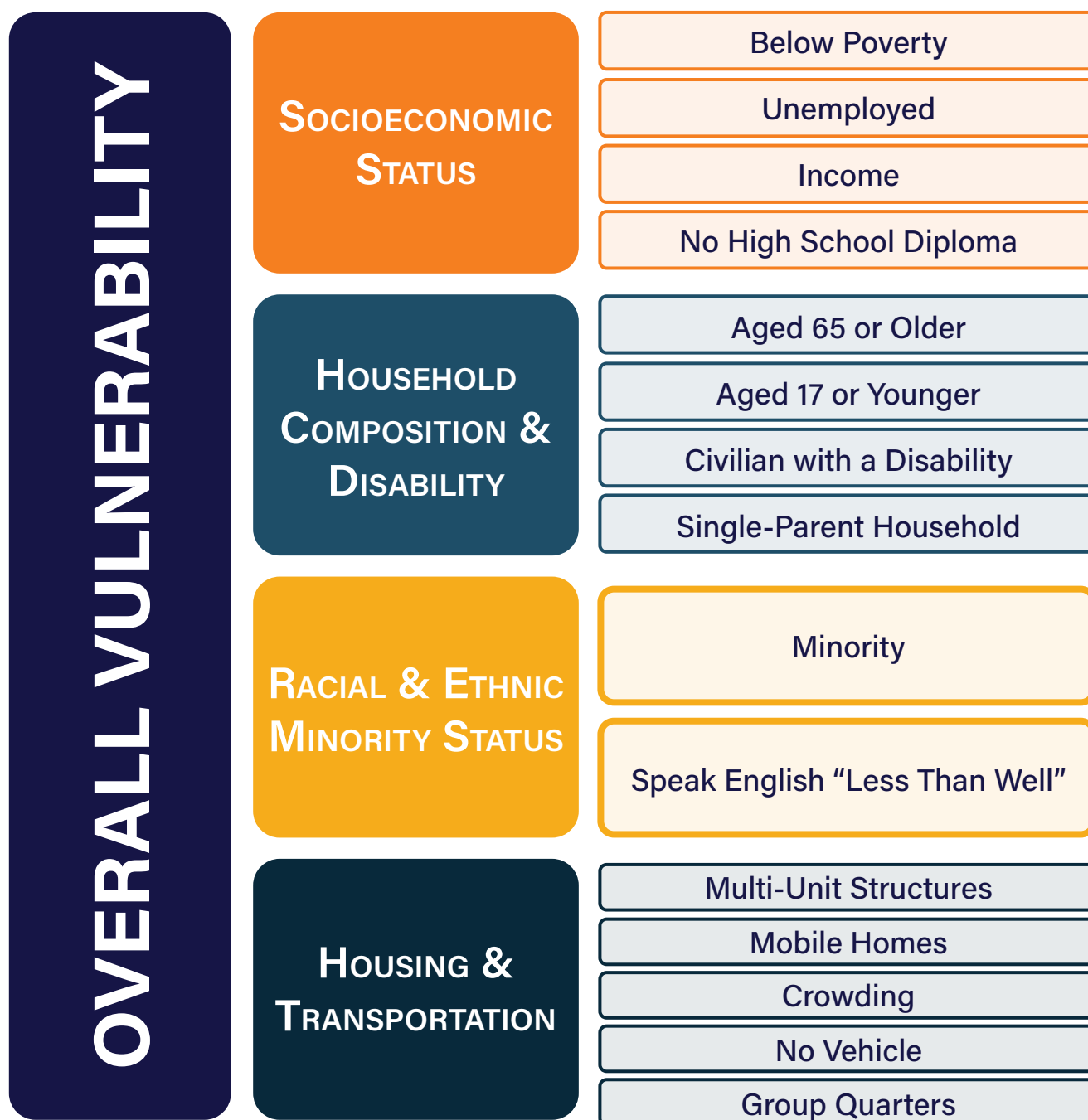
HAZARD	PROBABILITY	VULNERABILITY	IMPACT	HISTORY	TOTAL SCORE
Tornadoes	low	medium	high	low	134
Priority Score	7	25	100	2	
Winter Storms	high	high	medium	high	190
Priority Score	70	50	50	20	
Floods	medium	medium	high	medium	170
Priority Score	35	25	100	10	
Hurricanes	low	medium	medium	low	78
Priority Score	1	25	50	2	
Hail	high	medium	high	high	215
Priority Score	70	25	100	20	
Drought	high	high	high	high	215
Priority Score	70	25	100	20	
Earth-quakes	low	high	low	low	44
Priority Score	7	25	10	2	
Wildfire	high	high	high	high	240
Priority Score	70	50	100	20	

As shown above, the greatest risk to the County overall is wildfires. This is followed by hail, drought, and winter storms. The City of Gaffney and the Town of Blacksburg are more susceptible to winter storms and hail, and slightly less susceptible to wildfires.

Source: Cherokee County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

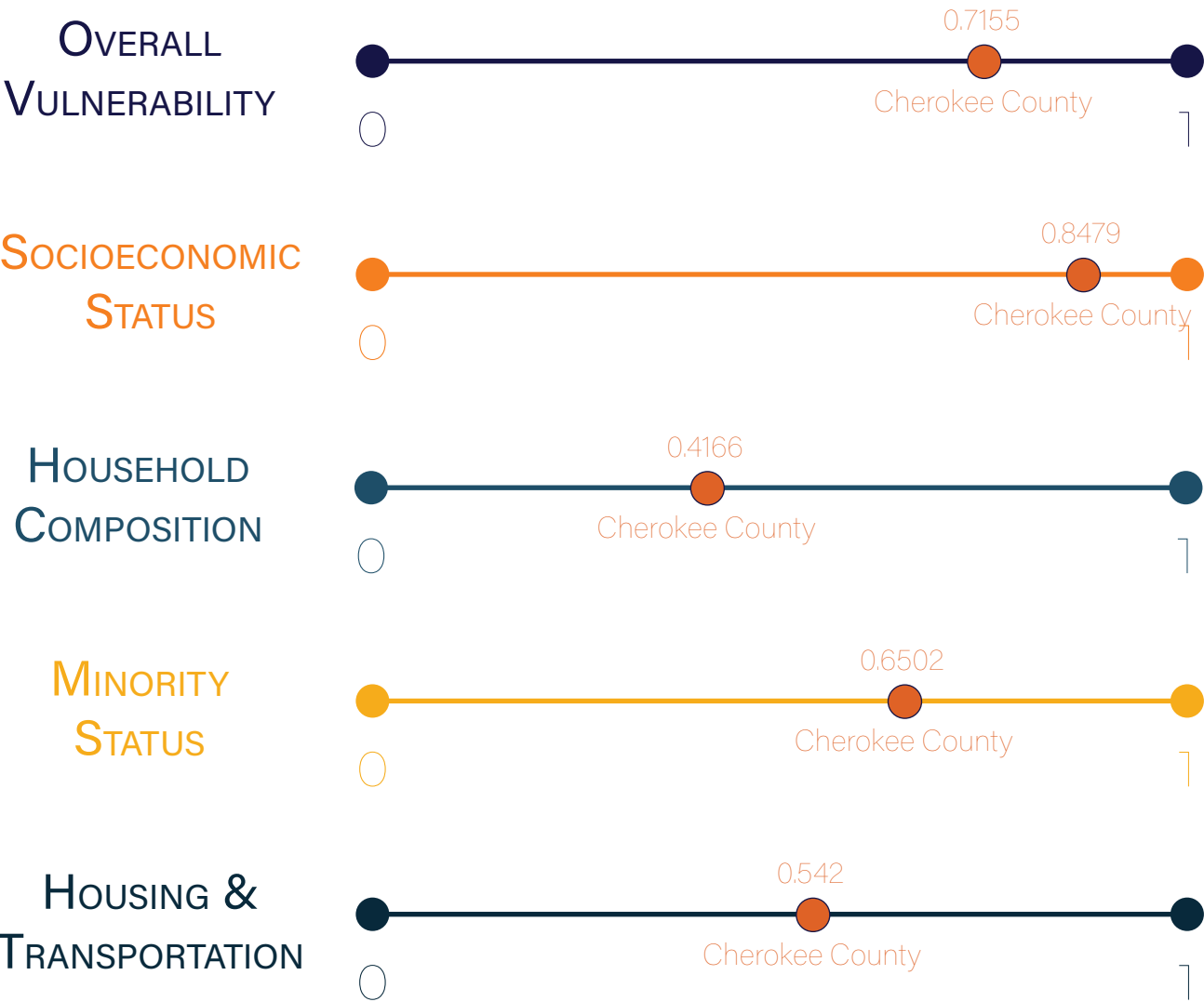
Social Vulnerability

The County's Hazard Mitigation Plan discussed social vulnerability and its impacts on community resiliency. Social vulnerability refers to certain social descriptors which can help to portray populations that are vulnerable to natural hazards. Factors such as age, gender, race, housing, and income can be indicators of vulnerability. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has developed a social vulnerability index which can be used to determine overall vulnerability at the census tract level. The CDC measures social vulnerability based on four overarching categories: socioeconomic status, household composition and disability, minority status and language, and housing and transportation. The specific attributes which influence each factor are illustrated here:

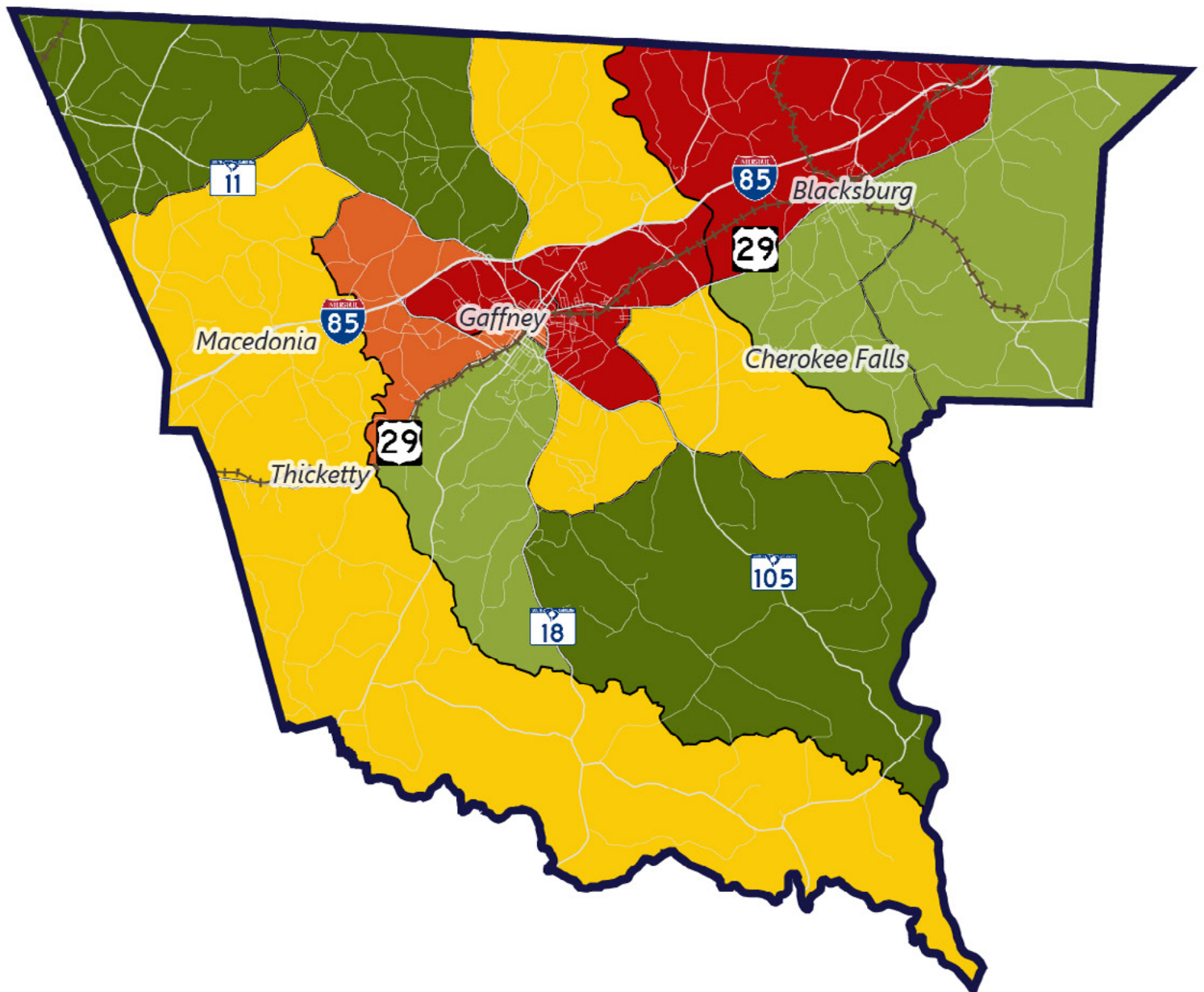


The CDC assigns weights and scores to each of the attributes shown on the table to the left and then factors them to determine an overall vulnerability score. Vulnerability scores can also be calculated for individual factors. The vulnerability scores range from 0 (lowest vulnerability) to 1 (highest vulnerability). According to the CDC, Cherokee County has a medium to high level of overall vulnerability (0.7155).

The County has a high level of socioeconomic vulnerability, and a low to medium level of vulnerability related to household composition and disability status. The County has a medium to high level of vulnerability related to racial and ethnic minority status and to housing and transportation characteristics. The detailed scores for each factor are shown on the charts below and overall vulnerability by census tract is shown on the map on the following page.



Social Vulnerability Index



LEGEND

-  Cherokee County
-  Municipalities
-  Railroad

Social Vulnerability Index- Overall Score

-  High Risk
-  Medium High
-  Low Medium
-  Low Risk
-  Very Low



Source: Center for Disease Control (2020)

Resiliency Summary

Cherokee County is very likely to be impacted by a number of hazards in the coming years. The most imminent concerns include wildfires, drought, and winter storms. Floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, and hurricanes are all likely to occur as well, but likely at a less frequent and less damaging degree. The County and other organizations have been actively monitoring and planning for all of these hazards, and emergency operations plans are in place.

Key Observations

- The State has plans and resources in place to aid the County in response and recovery to natural disasters.
- The County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan sets forth a comprehensive list of strategies to guide the County in establishing plans to limit the impacts of potential natural disasters and the critical steps to facilitate recovery after a natural disaster.
- The most significant hazards/risks in the County are Hurricanes/Tropical Storms, Flooding, Tornadoes, HazMat Spills/Release, Severe Winter Weather, and a Cyber Attack.
- The County has a relatively high level of overall vulnerability and socioeconomic vulnerability as outlined in the Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index.
- Greater concentrations of the County's population with a higher risk of social vulnerability live within census tracts in and around Gaffney and Blacksburg.

ELEMENT 10

PRIORITY INVESTMENT

Priority Investment

The Priority Investment element analyzes likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities. It also recommends projects for expenditure of those funds, as well as adjacent and relevant jurisdictions with whom the County should coordinate.

Intergovernmental Coordination

To effectively manage growth and development, the Priority Investment Act requires local governments to coordinate with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies before recommending projects for public expenditure. To facilitate this process, the Act encourages local governments to maintain a list of these partners so that they can be effectively included in major development decisions. Cherokee County's coordinating partners include:

STATE AGENCIES

- South Carolina Department of Commerce (SCDOC)
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC)
- South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (SCPRT)
- South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)

REGIONAL AGENCIES

- Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG)
- Carolina Thread Trail

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

- City of Gaffney
- Town of Blacksburg
- City of Kings Mountain (related to opportunities with the Casino)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Cherokee County School District

UTILITY PROVIDERS

- Broad River Electric Coop
- Cherokee County Cogeneration Partners
- Drayton Ville Water Works Inc.
- Duke Power
- Gaffney Board of Public Works (BPW)
- Goucher Water Company Inc.
- Grassy Pond Water Co.
- Piedmont Municipal Power Agency
- York County Natural Gas

Potential Funding Sources

During this planning process, the consultants examined a range of potential funding sources that Cherokee County may have access to. These potential funding sources are summarized on the following pages.

REGIONAL FUNDING

Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG): ACOG provides public administration, planning, information systems and technology, grants, workforce development, and elderly services to local governments (including Cherokee County). Grant programs administered by ACOG include infrastructure improvement grants for economic development, education grants for technical education, and investments from the Appalachian Regional Commission; infrastructure improvement grants, residential water and sewer funding, housing rehabilitation funds, and grants for community facility improvements or construction from Community Development Block Grants; infrastructure improvement grants from the Economic Development Administration; infrastructure development grants, community facilities improvement funding, and residential water and sewer funds from the United States Department of Agriculture; phase I and phase II environmental site assessments and analysis of brownfields cleanup alternatives from the SC Brownfields Environmental Site Testing Program; South Carolina Parks, Recreation, and Tourism grants; recycling grants from the State Department of Health and Environmental Control; planning and preservation grants from the State Department of Archives and History; and South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority grants.

STATE FUNDING

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG): CDBG funds can be used to assist local governments in a variety of projects, such as community infrastructure, job creation, neighborhood revitalization, and public facilities. Funds are available from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State Department of Commerce, and ACOG.

South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH): SCDAH helps to administer federal historic preservation and planning funds to local governments within the State through planning and preservation grants. These grants can be used to help fund historic district plans, facade improvement programs, and rehabilitation projects.

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC): SCDHEC has several grants available to municipalities, counties, and regions within the State that provide solid waste services. These annual grants can help improve solid waste and recycling efforts.

South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (SCPRT): SCPRT has a State Parks and Recreation Development Fund (PARD) that is available to local governments for new parks and trails, or for improvements to existing facilities.

South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT): The SCDOT administers federally-funded community based projects through a number of different programs. Local governments are amongst the list of eligible applicants for a few of these. Notably are the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which is a reimbursement-based grant program that funds pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities,

and streetscape projects. If approved, the federal government will reimburse up to 80% of project costs. SCDOT also administers Safe Routes to School funding, which may be used for infrastructure improvements, education, encouragement, and enforcement programs that enable and encourage children to safely walk and bike to school. Selected schools can receive up to \$200,000 through this program.

South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC): The Forestry Commission has several grant opportunities to assist local governments with Geographic Information System (GIS) studies, tree surveys, and environmental protection projects.

South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (SCRIA): The Rural Infrastructure Authority has a Basic Infrastructure Grant Program which can be used to offset local infrastructure projects.

FEDERAL FUNDING

Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA): The EDA offers infrastructure grants for economic development to local governments. Projects eligible through this type of grant include the drafting of economic development plans in under-served areas, technology-based economic development initiatives, and opportunity zone work.

Federal Transportation Administration (FTA): The FTA provides funding to local governments for public transit system development, including buses, subways, and commuter rail.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): The USDA provides several grant opportunities to rural communities throughout the State. Some of the key programs include community facilities grants / loans, water and wastewater disposal grants / loans, and rural business development grants.

Priority Investment Areas

The Priority Investment Act allows local governments to use market-based incentives to encourage the development of traditional neighborhood designs and affordable housing in designated priority investment areas. At this time, the County does not wish to designate any priority investment areas.

Capital Improvement Projects

Cherokee County does not currently maintain a Capital Improvement Plan, or CIP. The Priority Investment / Implementation Table contained on the following page should be considered for the initial development of a future Capital Improvement Plan. The Priority Investment Table identifies all of the implementation strategies contained in this Plan and establishes an estimated timeframe (immediate, medium, and long-term) as well as responsible entities to implement the strategy. The CIP could include all of these projects, as well as other major projects the County would like to invest in in the coming years. The CIP would include dedicated funding sources, more specific estimated costs, and more definitive project timelines.

Priority Investment Summary

There are a number of potential funding opportunities which the County could consider pursuing. In order to aid in the implementation of this Plan, the County should proactively consider the wide range of partner jurisdictions and agencies, as well as available assistance, which could support the recommendations of this Plan.

Key Observations

- Intergovernmental coordination with federal, state, and regional agencies is necessary to plan for the future funding of projects and initiatives in the County.
- Coordination with local government partners within the County will help ensure an efficient and comprehensive delivery of services to all residents of the County.
- It is important for the County to coordinate closely with the Cherokee County School Districts to provide quality education to the County's current and future school-aged population.
- The County has many partnerships with a variety of utility providers and economic development agencies to facilitate economic development and growth.
- A formal Capital Improvement Plan will help the County prepare for the funding of programs, projects, and other important community initiatives to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Priority Investment Table

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES
1. Direct higher intensity development to the areas of the County identified on the Future Land Use Map as I-85 Corridor and Primary Growth Area.	Immediate	County Staff, Planning Commission, Board of Commissioners
2. Prepare and adopt a zoning ordinance and map for the area identified in the plan.	Immediate	County Staff, Planning Commission, Board of Commissioners
3. Continue to coordinate with the Board of Public Works, SCDOT, and other infrastructure providers to ensure there is sufficient capacity in identified growth areas.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners
4. Conduct an assessment of the existing and future county-wide emergency services needs.	Medium	Board of Commissioners
5. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to forecast funding needs and priorities over the long-term.	Immediate	Board of Commissioners
6. Coordinate with the Cherokee County Economic Development Board and other partners to strengthen existing businesses and industries in the County, while encouraging the development of new employment and commerce opportunities in a variety of industry sectors.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners
7. Evaluate opportunities to develop small business support infrastructure, programs, and seed funding for the establishment and growth of local entrepreneurs and business founders.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners
8. Encourage the sustainment and viability of the agricultural economy.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, Clemson Extension Program
9. Develop a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Plan to meet the needs of the existing population and help to make Cherokee County a more desirable community for young families.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners
10. Expand and improve recreational access along the Broad River.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES
11. Monitor the health and long-term sustainability of the County's natural resources and endangered species.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, State Agencies
12. Continue to work with local, regional, and state partners to implement the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Medium	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, COG, State Agencies
13. Identify strategies to develop and expand the tourism economy of the County.	Long-Term	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, City of Gaffney, Town of Blacksburg
14. Continue to promote and protect the historic and cultural resources that exist in the County.	Long-Term	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, City of Gaffney, Town of Blacksburg
15. Identify opportunities to expand civic and cultural events in the County.	Long-Term	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, City of Gaffney, Town of Blacksburg
16. Identify ways to collaborate with the School Board to improve educational opportunities.	Immediate	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, Spartanburg Community College, Cherokee County School Board, Limestone University
17. Develop targeted facilities, events, and programs for children and young adults in the County.	Long-Term	County Staff, Board of Commissioners, City of Gaffney, Town of Blacksburg



Cherokee
County
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN