



# STATE OF THE COUNTY

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# INTRODUCTION

York County is one of the fastest growing counties in the Carolinas and the country, growing by 37% since 2000. This growth has been fueled by a strong regional economy, excellent schools, lower taxes and a high quality of life. Growth continues to increase demand for services and infrastructure. Keeping pace with that demand is paramount to maintaining the quality of life for which the area is known. In addition, local leaders recognized that for York to capitalize on market opportunities an update to the Comprehensive Plan was needed.

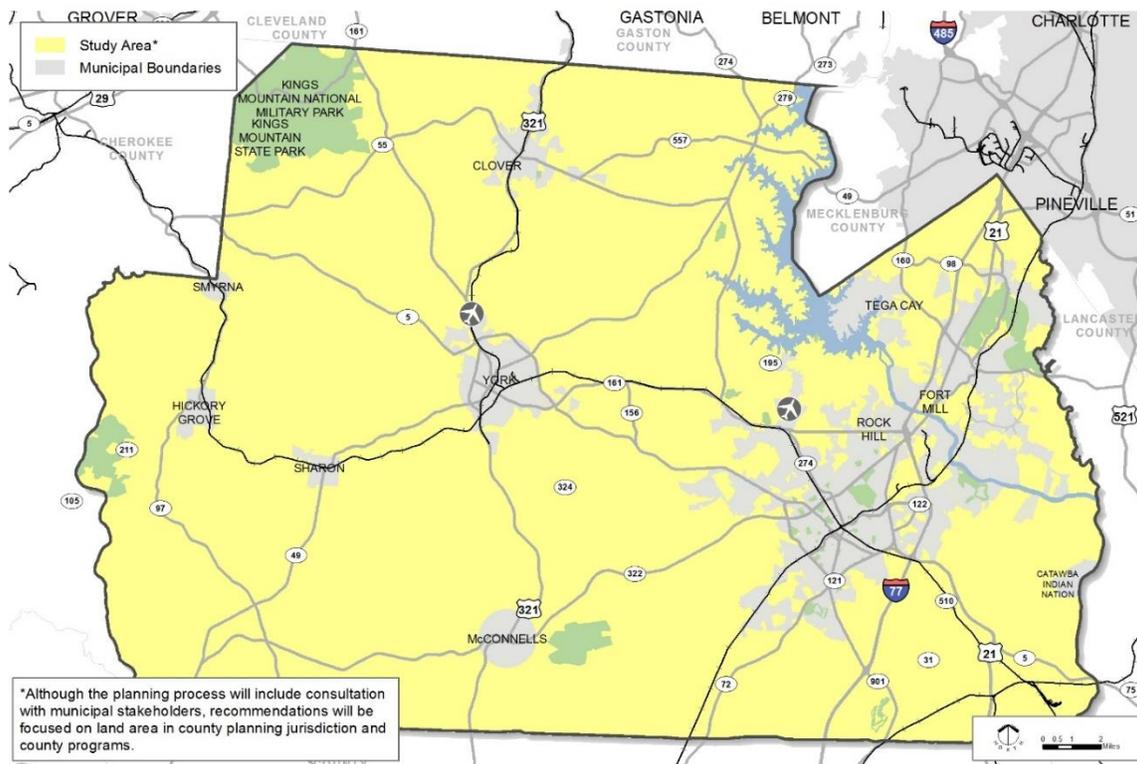
While an update to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan at this time is in response to a requirement set forth in the State of South Carolina's Code of Laws, the update is timely for York County at this stage of its evolution. It presents an opportunity to address the specific needs of the community and continue on the path of positive growth.

This effort will result in a plan that is strategic in nature, identifying key programs that the County and its partners in both the public and private sectors can implement to facilitate growth management initiatives that are critical to future economic stability.

## STUDY AREA

York County encompasses 696 square miles in the South-central section of South Carolina. While the York County government is responsible only for the unincorporated areas of the County, the environmental and infrastructure systems cross jurisdictional lines; therefore, the study area, as shown in Map 1, includes the nine municipalities within the County. York is one of three South Carolina counties that comprise a 14-county bi-state region anchored by the Charlotte economy. It lies within Charlotte's metropolitan area and the northern part of the County is within commuting distance of the central business district of downtown Charlotte. So, while the study area does not extend beyond the County boundaries, the context is taken into consideration to better understand the opportunities associated with—and the impacts of infrastructure investments made in support of—regional economic growth.

Map 1: Study Area



# PLANNING PROCESS

## Phases of Work

The process to update the Comprehensive Plan is divided into five phases. The first phase focused on project initiation tasks, such as data collection, a review of existing plans and studies, and study area tour. During Phase Two, an inventory of existing conditions in the County was created as a step toward an assessment of the County and the identification of issues and opportunities to be considered in subsequent phases. Future land use scenarios designed to test the likelihood of achieving stated goals given a range of potential policy directions will be developed in Phase Three. Based on the results of the previous phases, a set of recommendations and implementation strategies that support the concepts will be developed during Phase Four. The final phase of the process will consist of merging all plan components into a single, comprehensive plan document. This report is a summary of the findings of Phase Two.

Figure 1: Planning Process



## Public Involvement

Guiding development of the plan is an inclusionary public engagement process. Understanding community values today ensures that this Plan, implemented in accordance with the recommendations, supports and advances those priorities over the long term.

### *Advisory Committee Meetings*

This effort is guided by an Advisory Committee appointed by County Council. It includes two representatives from each Council District. Regular meetings of this group will be held throughout the process to set goals, provide feedback, and advise the project team on plan concepts and recommendations. A list of the Advisory Committee members can be found in the Appendix of this document.

### *Stakeholder Interviews*

Stakeholder interviews were conducted to verify and supplement the data gathered, to explain the conditions observed and to further understand the issues and opportunities that affect the study area. Their input supplemented the feedback

received directly from citizens and property owners participating in the process. The stakeholders included key personnel from county departments as well as representatives of interest groups who addressed questions about the following topics: economic development, transportation, neighborhoods, utilities, and farming. A complete list of interviewees is provided in the Appendix.

#### *Community Meetings*

Community meetings will be held throughout the process to provide an opportunity for property owners, residents and other interested stakeholders to learn about the project, refine the goals established by the Advisory Committee, provide comments on plan components, react to concepts developed in response to that input, help define the future land use vision, and suggest ways in which the plan can be effectively implemented over time.

#### *Web Site*

To supplement the information gathered during community meetings, a project Web site ([www.yorkforward.com](http://www.yorkforward.com)) has been created so residents, property owners, business owners and other stakeholders can access information and provide input throughout the process. Such input will be recorded, and like the input shared at the community meetings, used to clarify the concerns and desires of the community.

## **ABOUT THIS STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT**

An understanding of the conditions of the County today is critical to the creation of a sound plan that will guide future land use and infrastructure decisions. Synthesizing the data collected in the first phase of the planning process, several issues and opportunities to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan were identified. This report defines the existing conditions examined, an assessment of those conditions as well as planned improvements, and finally the results of the assessment. While the assessment was conducted on a topic-by-topic basis, the report presents a summary of the issues and opportunities as well as the goals that were shaped by them.

# POPULATION

An important step in preparing a Comprehensive Plan is gathering data that will help develop a snapshot of one of the County’s greatest assets – its people. Unlike a municipality which can grow its population by increasing its geography through annexation, the population of a county changes through migration, birth and death. According to the Census Department, in the United States one person is born every eight seconds and one person dies every twelve. By 2050, the US population is projected to grow from 310 million (2010 Census) to 439 million, an increase of 42%. Meanwhile the nation will become more diverse with the aggregate minority population projected to become the majority by 2042. The average age of the population is also expected to become much older with nearly one in five US residents aged 65 or older by 2030. In York County, the population growth and ethnic diversity is projected to follow a similar pattern. In fact, population growth in our county is projected to be even faster than the US, with York County adding another 183,687 people by 2050 or an increase of 81%.

## HISTORICAL YORK COUNTY POPULATION

Table 1: Historic Population

HISTORIC YORK COUNTY POPULATION			
YEAR	POPULATION	TOTAL INCREASE	PERCENT CHANGE
1950	71,596		
1960	78,760	7,164	10.0%
1970	85,216	6,456	8.2%
1980	106,720	21,504	25.2%
1990	131,497	24,777	23.2%
2000	164,614	33,117	25.5%
2010	226,073	61,459	37.3%

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

York County has seen its population grow decade after decade for at least the past 60 years. In the 1980’s the rate of growth accelerated and continued at that pace for three consecutive decades, almost doubling its population in 30 years. During the ten years from 2000 to 2010 the population grew at an even faster rate and the number of people in York County increased to more than 200,000 for the first time. No doubt the recession that began in 2008 slowed that tempo significantly as fewer new jobs were created to bring in new residents. The booming housing market virtually came to a halt as the financial industry tightened their lending practices and consumer confidence slumped. Building permits for new

single family residents dropped from 1,218 in fiscal year July 2007 to June 2008 to 565 the following 12 month period. The most recent data suggests the economy is recovering. 693 new detached single family residential building permits were issued in 2013; the highest 12 month total since 2008. Most of this new construction is located in subdivisions that were partially completed prior to the recession and subsequently abandoned. Another signal that growth is returning to the area is the recent increase in rezoning requests, site plan submittals and general development inquiries.

## REGIONAL POPULATION HISTORY AND PROJECTIONS

York County is part of a larger regional landscape that includes the Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord, NC-SC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). According to the 2010 Census, the population of our MSA was 2,217,012 and is the 37<sup>th</sup> largest of the 381 MSAs in the United States. The counties include York, Lancaster and Chester in South Carolina and Mecklenburg, Gaston, Lincoln, Iredell, Cabarrus, Union and Rowan counties in North Carolina.

Although, York County is part of this much larger area for statistical reporting purposes and is involved in a variety of projects with its neighbors throughout the region, the counties listed in the two tables below play a more significant role with York County as they directly border the County or in the case of Union County, NC have had significant and comparable population growth. In 2010, York County’s growth rate moved up to second place behind Union County. At the same time it also surpassed Gaston County and became the second most populated county within the region. While the rate of growth is not projected to be as steep as it has been during previous decades, the region is still expected to double the number of its residents by 2050.

Table 2: Regional Historical Population Growth

REGIONAL HISTORICAL POPULATION GROWTH					
	1990	2000	% CHANGE	2010	% CHANGE
York County	131,497	164,614	25%	226,073	37%
Chester County	32,170	34,068	6%	33,140	-3%
Lancaster County	54,516	61,351	13%	76,652	25%
Union County, SC	30,337	29,881	-2%	28,961	-3%
Cleveland County, NC	84,714	96,287	14%	98,078	2%
Gaston County, NC	175,073	190,365	9%	206,086	8%
Union County, NC	84,210	123,772	47%	201,292	63%
Mecklenburg County	511,433	695,454	36%	919,628	32%

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

REGIONAL POPULATION PROJECTION AND GROWTH							
	2010	2020	% CHANGE	2030	% CHANGE	2040	% CHANGE
York County	226,073	273,000	21%	316,800	16%	364,600	15%
Chester County	33,140	33,300	0.5%	34,000	2%	37,600	11%
Lancaster County	76,652	84,000	10%	94,300	12%	106,500	13%
Union County, SC	28,961	29,000	0.1%	28,800	-1%	28,700	-0.4%
Cleveland County	98,078	99,703	2%	109,071	9%	122,022	12%
Gaston County	206,086	223,213	8%	239,359	7%	257,220	7%
Union County, NC	201,292	251,600	25%	295,900	18%	339,800	15%
Mecklenburg	919,628	1,112,300	21%	1,300,900	17%	1,492,100	15%

SOURCE: RFATS MPO

Table 3: Regional Population Projections and Growth

## POPULATION TRENDS BY LOCALITY

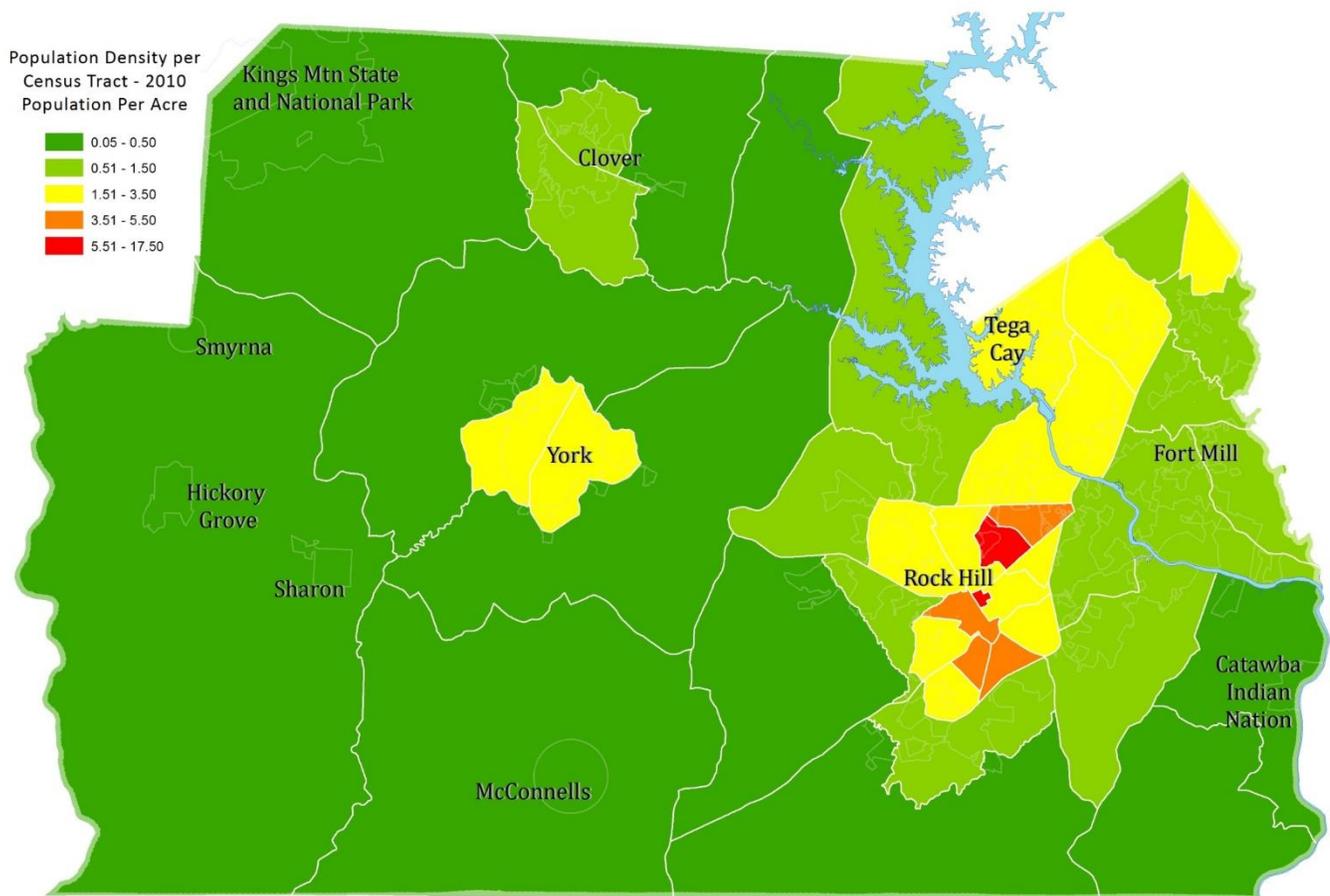
The greatest population growth within York County has occurred along the 1-77 corridor, specifically within the towns of Fort Mill and Tega Cay. This is most likely due to their close proximity and relatively easy commute to the many employment centers in Charlotte. The City of Rock Hill has continued its steady growth over the past decades as well. The large scale residential, retail and recreation project known as Riverwalk at the former Celanese plant will add as many as 950 houses and 2,500 people into Rock Hill’s jurisdiction.

Table 4: Population Trends by Vicinity

POPULATION TRENDS BY VICINITY					
MUNICIPALITY	1990	2000	% CHANGE	2010	% CHANGE
Clover	3,422	4,014	17.3%	5,094	26.9%
Fort Mill	4,930	7,587	53.9%	10,811	42.5%
Rock Hill	41,643	49,765	19.5%	66,154	32.9%
Tega Cay	3,205	4,044	26.2%	7,620	88.4%
York	6,709	6,985	4.1%	7,736	10.8%
York County	131,497	164,614	25.2%	226,073	37.3%

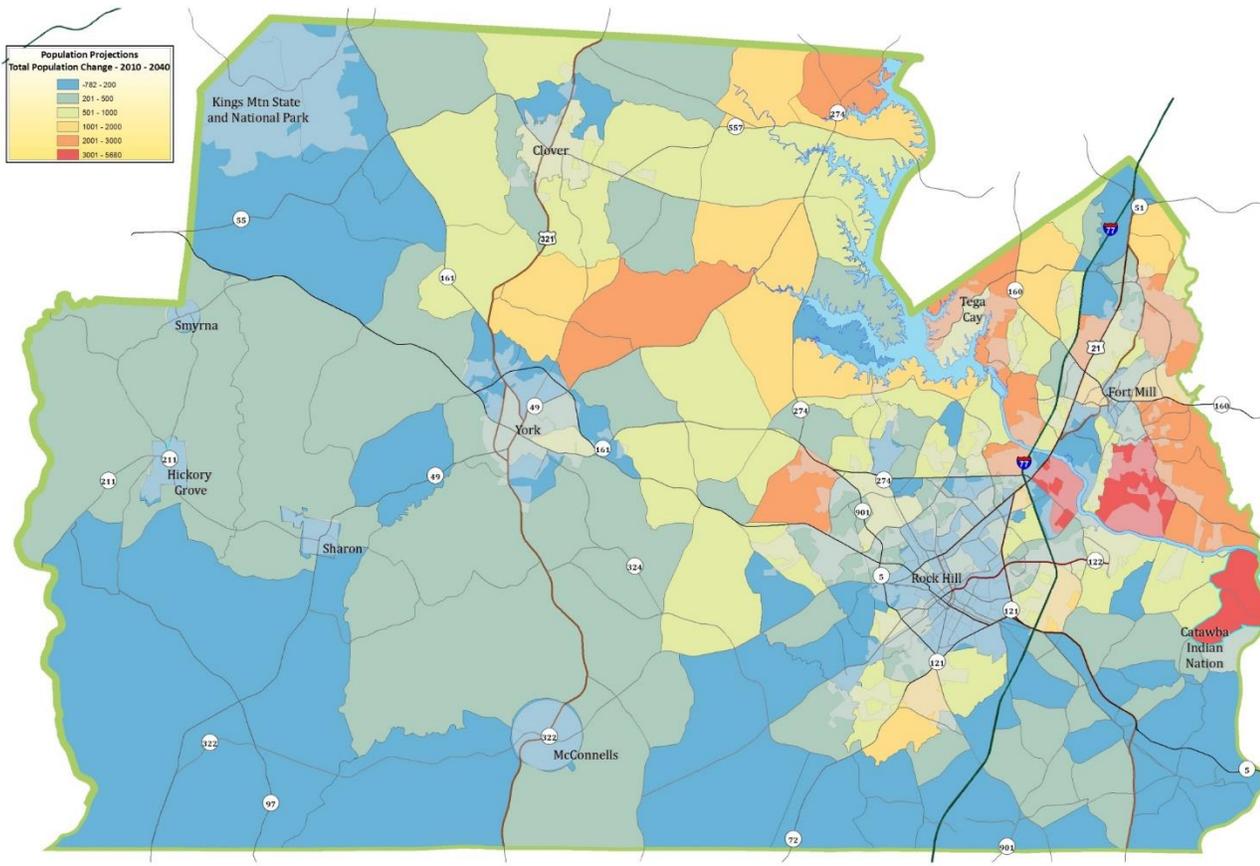
SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

Map 2: Population Density



SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

Map 3: Population Projections



SOURCE: RFATS

## POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

The majority of York County’s population is white. However, the 2010 census continued the trend of increasing diversity with now more than 25% of the population non-white. The percent of Hispanic population has more than doubled each decade. From 2000 to 2010, the state of South Carolina had the highest percent increase in its Hispanic population throughout the entire country. In 2000 the total Hispanic population was 95,076 and in 2010 the total was 235,682, an increase of 147%. The Hispanic population accounted for over half the growth of the total population in the United States between 2000 and 2010.

Table 5: York County Race and Ethnicity

YORK COUNTY RACE AND ETHNICITY						
	1990	% OF TOTAL	2000	% OF TOTAL	2010	% OF TOTAL
White	103,000	78.3%	127,162	77.2%	169,158	74.8%
Non-White	28,497	21.7%	37,452	22.8%	56,915	25.2%
Hispanic/Latino Origin	735	0.6%	3220	2.0%	10,075	4.5%
Non-Hispanic Origin	130,792	99.4%	161,394	98.0%	215,998	95.5%
Total Population	131,497		164,614		226,073	

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

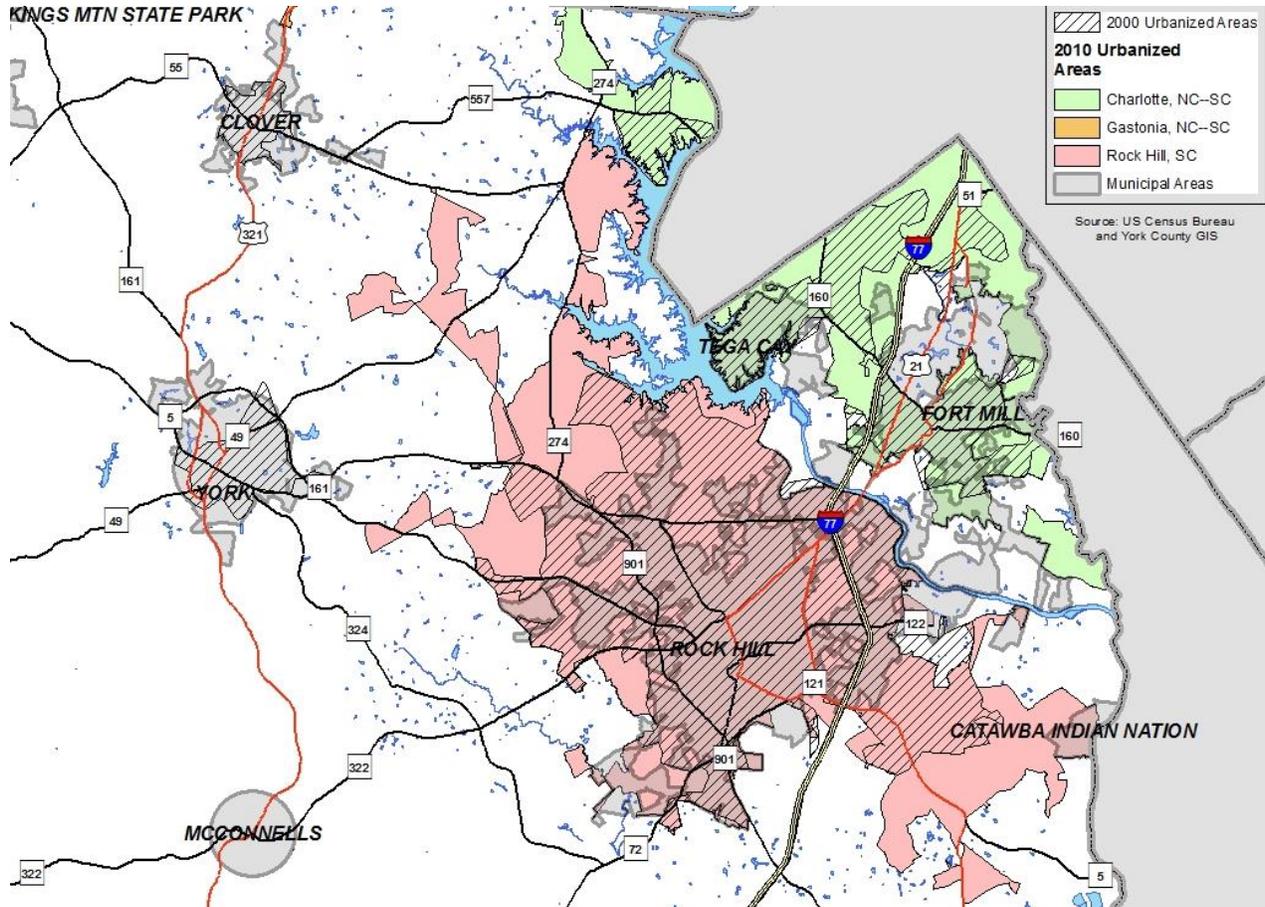
## COMMUTING PATTERNS

As mentioned previously, one component of the rapid population growth within York County is its proximity to Mecklenburg County and its many employment centers. The table below distributes each county's working population to which county they travel for employment. According to data from the US Census Bureau, more than 50% of York County's population remains within the County for employment. The second most common destination for employment for York County reside is Mecklenburg, which receives over 30% of York's working population. Being directly adjacent to Mecklenburg County and its many employment centers will continue to make York County a prime alternative for new residential housing.

Table 6: Commuting Patterns

		WHERE RESIDENTS WORK											
		Cabarrus	Cleveland	Gaston	Iredell	Lincoln	Meck.	Union	Chester	Lancaster	Union, SC	York	Total
WHERE RESIDENTS LIVE	Cabarrus	21,493	261	762	1,378	181	26,453	1,358	13	43	3	195	52,140
	Cleveland	222	15,989	4,507	228	632	2,482	273	7	7	18	263	24,628
	Gaston	1,215	2,878	32,761	991	2,045	25,757	748	14	86	3	2,077	68,575
	Iredell	1,808	206	588	27,114	494	11,111	374	2	15	3	100	41,815
	Lincoln	419	638	2,736	754	7,469	8,455	218	2	12	1	227	20,931
	Meck.	9,762	1,264	6,542	4,887	1,394	234,724	8,011	105	1,385	18	7,781	275,878
	Union	1,418	252	621	502	130	31,013	23,034	39	516	1	1,011	58,537
	Chester	22	49	133	13	19	1,230	53	3,522	609	127	2,935	8,712
	Lancaster	65	14	48	36	7	5,000	1,146	743	7,651	19	3,281	18,010
	Union, SC	17	49	85	16	17	337	30	12	79	3,763	291	4,809
	York	406	450	2,497	250	113	24,490	900	1,222	1,911	138	39,434	71,811
	Total	36,852	22,050	51,280	36,169	12,501	371,052	36,145	5,794	12,314	4,094	57,535	645,846
	% Travel to Meck.	37%	1.1%	3%	24%	1.1%	2.8%	1.7%	33.7%	18.2%	6.1%	54.9%	
	% Travel to York	50.7%	10.1%	37.6%	26.6%	40.4%	85.1%	53%	14.1%	27.8%	7%	34.1%	
% Retain Population	41.2%	64.9%	47.8%	64.8%	35.7%	85.1%	36.4%	40.4%	42.5%	78.3%	54.9%		
Retention Rank	8	3	6	4	11	1	10	9	7	2	5		

Map 4: Urbanized Areas within York County



## URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION COMPARISON

According to the 2010 Census, York County continued its pattern of becoming more urbanized with 77.0% of the County's total population living in an urban area. The Census Bureau's urban areas represent densely developed residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses. There are two types of urban areas: "urbanized areas" of 50,000 or more people and "urban clusters" of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people. For instance the towns of York and Clover are considered urban clusters. The nation's urban population increased by 12.1 percent from 2000 to 2010 which outpaced the nation's overall growth rate of 9.7%. Among the US urbanized areas with populations of one million or more, the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill area grew at the fastest rate from 2000 to 2010, increasing by 64.6%. This pattern of increased urbanization is most likely to continue. The map Urbanized Area map depicts the geographic growth of the areas from 2000 to 2010. The map highlights the sprawl that occurred around previously established urban areas. To maintain fiscal efficiency, provide expected levels of service and protect the natural beauty of York County, the spread of the County's urbanized areas makes these tasks more difficult.

Table 7: Urban and Rural Population Growth

YORK COUNTY URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION GROWTH						
	1990	% OF TOTAL	2000	% OF TOTAL	2010	% OF TOTAL
Total Population	131,497		164,614		226,073	
Urban Population	74,824	56.9%	105,846	64.3%	174,178	77.0%
Rural Population	56,673	43.1%	58,766	35.7%	51,895	23.0%

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

## POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

A variety of relationship types contribute to the formation of a household. Who lives in a household has important consequences for economic resources available to housing units and for access to social support systems such as care for young children or older parents. A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit. One person in each house is considered the “householder.” A family consists of a householder and one or more other people living in the same household related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption. A non-family household consists of a householder living alone or with roommates or unmarried spouse. In York County, the number of households increased almost 30% from 1990 to 2000 and another 38% from 2000 to 2010 which is very similar to the rate of population growth over the same period. As the table below indicates the composition of the York County household has changed over the past 20 years. There has been an increase in non-family types of households as well as those without children and those that are headed by females.

Table 8: Household Composition

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION						
	1990		2000		2010	
	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
Total Households	47,006		61,051		84,382	
Non-Family	11,098	23.6%	16,136	26.4%	24,101	28.6%
Designated as Family	35,908	76.4%	44,195	72.4%	60,281	71.4%
w /Children	18,860	52.5%	21,630	48.9%	26,454	43.9%
w /o Children	17,480	47.5%	22,565	51.1%	33,827	56.1%
Married	28,381	60.4%	34,348	56.3%	46,898	55.6%
w /Children	14,080	49.6%	15,637	45.5%	19,521	41.6%
w /o Children	14,301	50.4%	18,721	54.5%	27,377	58.4%
Female Headed	5,962	12.7%	8,116	13.3%	10,088	12.0%
Male Headed	1,565	3.3%	1,721	2.8%	3,295	3.9%
Persons Per Household	2.72		2.63		2.65	

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

## POPULATION BY AGE

Reviewing data on a population’s age composition is one of the ways to better understand how population is changing over time. The 2010 Census revealed that the population has continued to grow older with 40 now the median age of many states (South Carolina’s median age is 37.9). The table below contains population data that is grouped into specific age related categories and these groupings are tracked over four decades. The table highlights that while the total of almost all the age groupings has increased over time, the proportion of some groups has declined. For instance the school age group is declining as a proportion of the total population while the 65 and older group is increasing. This trend is similar across the country as the 2010 census contains 13.0% of the population in the 65 and older group. Health and Human Services “anticipated the tide of baby boomer retirees will double America’s senior population by 2030.” York County will need to address land use strategies and public facilities to support the demographic shifts as the population ages and becomes more diverse.

Table 9: Population by Age

POPULATION BY AGE				
AGE	1980	1990	2000	2010
Pre-School 0-4	7,828	9,642	11,144	15,534
School Age 5-17	24,551	24,430	32,140	42,210
Workforce Age 18-64	65,096	83,424	104,528	142,703
65 and Older	9,245	14,001	17,072	25,626
Total	106,720	131,497	164,884	226,073

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The people of York County have continued to make strides in increasing the level of education. The percent of those 25 years and over that have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education has declined more than three percent over the 10 year period from 2000 to 2010. Additionally the number of people who have attended or graduated college has increased during that same decade. The state of South Carolina has had similar changes with their level of education, but York County continues to have a greater percent of its population either attended or graduated college. Improving the level of education is important as access to a well-educated workforce is one of the leading criteria employers consider when looking to expand or relocate their operations.

Table 10: Educational Attainment

	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
	2000		2010	
	YORK COUNTY	SC	YORK COUNTY	SC
Population 25 years and over	105,757		150,154	
<9 <sup>th</sup> grade education	8,177	7.7%	6,156	4.1%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	15,888	15.0%	12,162	8.1%
High School graduate	30,127	28.5%	40,542	27.0%
Some college	21,842	20.7%	30,932	20.6%
Associate's degree	7,610	7.2%	14,715	9.8%
Bachelor's degree	14,945	14.1%	31,382	20.9%
Post Bachelors	7,168	6.8%	14,415	9.6%

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median income in York County continued to rise in the decade between 1999 and 2009, but at a much lower rate of growth than the previous decade. York County continues to have a higher median income than the state and ranks third within the region. There is no doubt that the recent recession and the sustained high unemployment rate of the past few years has slowed the previous growth rate. According to the 2009-2011 ACS 3-year estimate, median household income declined slightly in York County and a few other communities across the region.

REGIONAL MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME						
	1989	1999	DECADE CHANGE	2009	DECADE CHANGE	2009-2011
York County	\$31,288	\$44,539	42%	\$51,925	17%	\$51,740
Chester County	\$23,054	\$32,425	41%	\$32,743	1%	\$31,387
Lancaster County	\$25,320	\$34,688	37%	\$38,959	12%	\$39,606
Union County	\$21,526	\$31,441	46%	\$33,470	6%	-
Mecklenburg County	\$33,830	\$50,579	50%	\$55,294	9%	\$53,545
Gaston County	\$28,126	\$39,482	40%	\$43,253	10%	\$41,043
Union County, NC	\$30,957	\$50,638	64%	\$63,386	25%	\$64,311
South Carolina	\$26,256	\$37,082	41%	\$41,101	11%	\$43,304

Table 11:  
Median Household Income

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

## POVERTY THROUGHOUT THE REGION

The poverty rate is one of several indicators used to evaluate economic conditions. It measures the percentage of people whose income fell below the federally established poverty threshold. The Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index. The poverty line for a family of four has hovered around \$23,000 for the past few years. Additionally the official poverty calculations do not take into account the value of in-kind benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and housing and energy assistance.

Table 12: Regional Poverty Rates

REGIONAL POVERTY RATES									
	1989			1999			2010		
	TOTAL POPULATION	BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL POPULATION	BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL POPULATION	BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	% OF TOTAL
York	127,623	13,207	10.3	160,201	16,082	10.0	223,535	29,380	13.1
Chester	32,010	5,381	16.8	33,620	5,157	15.3	32,700	6,561	20.1
Lancaster	54,054	7,978	14.8	59,265	7,599	12.8	76,131	16,051	21.1
Union	30,050	5,102	17.0	29,557	4,230	14.3	28,337	6,126	21.6
Cherokee	43,779	6,523	14.9	51,626	7,176	13.9	54,780	10,480	19.1
Gaston	165,835	18,076	10.9	186,991	20,309	10.9	202,974	41,514	20.5
Cleveland	89,398	9,208	10.3	93,771	12,446	13.3	96,217	19,948	20.7
Union, NC	84,021	7,982	9.5	122,007	9,926	8.1	201,057	15,719	7.8
Mecklenburg	500,347	47,910	9.6	681,210	62,652	9.2	908,026	138,893	15.3
South Carolina	3,368,125	517,793	15.4	3,883,329	547,869	14.1	4,493,865	815,755	18.2

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

In 2010, about 15.3 percent of Americans were considered below this threshold. Nationwide the percentage rate has increased for four consecutive years however the percentage point increase has been smaller from year to year. The ACS 2010 1-year estimate reported that York County poverty rate was 13.1%. While this was three percentage points higher than 1999, it was the second lowest poverty rate in the region and continued to be lower than the state of South Carolina (18.2%) and the nation.

Another interesting way to look at the poverty statistics is by school district. According to the Census, in 2011, there were 53.8 million school-age children in 13,529 school districts. Of these 49.2 percent of all school aged children resided in districts with school district poverty rates greater than 20 percent. Poverty rates have a significant influence on the funding levels of schools. States contribute approximately 45 percent of funding for primary and secondary education and the federal government pitches in another 10 percent. The rest of the funding comes from the County, primarily through property taxes. Therefore in districts where poverty runs high, school funds are often low. Higher poverty also means public schools need to provide more services such as subsidized meals. According to NEA Research report, public school revenue per student in SC went from \$11,081 in 2010-11 to \$10,945 in 2011-2012 falling from ranking 28 to ranking 31 across the nation. Increased poverty and lower median income affect the amount of funding a school district receives. The table below is gathered from the Census “Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)” from 2011.

According to the following table gathered from the SC Department of Education’s report on Free and Reduced Meals the York School District has the highest percentage of students who receive free or reduced lunches. The lowest is the Fort Mill School District. Over the past four years the percentage for each school district has remained fairly consistent. The York School District had the largest increase – from 55.6% of students receiving a free or reduced rate in 2009 to 61.4% in 2012. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. Eligibility to participate in the program is based on family income. Children from families with income at or below 130 percent of the poverty level may receive a free meal. Those between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level may receive a reduced-price meal. Therefore the table below is directly correlated with the poverty table above.

Table 13: Poverty by School District

POVERTY BY SCHOOL DISTRICT								
	2010				2011			
	TOTAL POPULATION IN DISTRICT	POPULATION RELEVANT AGES 5-17	RELEVANT AGES 5-17 IN FAMILY IN POVERTY	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL POPULATION IN DISTRICT	POPULATION RELEVANT AGES 5-17	RELEVANT AGES 5-17 IN FAMILY IN POVERTY	% OF TOTAL
York	31,236	5,630	1,172	21%	31,725	5,685	1,661	29%
Clover	34,505	6,627	1,221	18%	35,045	6,691	1,287	19%
Rock Hill	111,167	19,057	3,339	18%	112,910	19,243	4,205	22%
Fort Mill	50,063	10,951	907	8%	50,848	11,058	1,045	9%
Total	226,971	42,265	6,639	16%	230,528	42,677	8,198	19%

SOURCE: SC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Table 14: Free and Reduced Lunches by School District

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCHES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT					
SCHOOL DISTRICT	DISTRICT	TOTAL # STUDENTS ENROLLED	TOTAL # FREE LUNCHES	TOTAL # REDUCED LUNCHES	% STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE
2012-2013	York	4,905	2,663	347	61.4%
	Clover	6,522	1,772	408	33.4%
	Rock Hill	16,994	8,232	1,242	55.7%
	Fort Mill	11,049	1,783	451	20.2%
2011-2012	York	5,119	2,698	395	60.4%
	Clover	6,567	1,776	386	32.9%
	Rock Hill	17,579	8,623	1,111	55.4%
	Fort Mill	10,885	1,691	416	19.4%
2010-2011	York	5,001	2,651	260	58.2%
	Clover	6,307	1,665	371	32.3%
	Rock Hill	16,922	7,929	979	52.6%
	Fort Mill	10,240	1,651	413	20.2%
2009-2010	York	5,110	2,510	331	55.6%
	Clover	6,373	1,651	403	32.2%
	Rock Hill	17,351	7,723	1,408	52.6%
	Fort Mill	9,918	1,562	410	19.9%

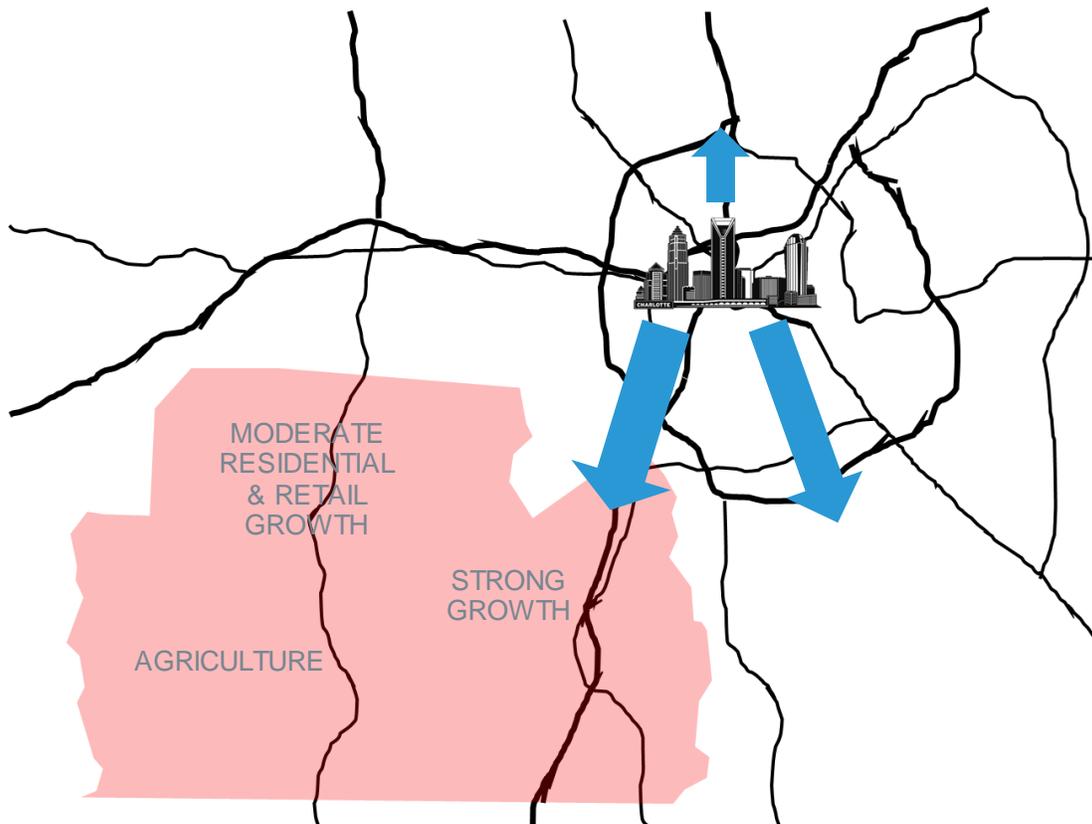
SOURCE: SC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

York County is one of the fastest growing counties in the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area<sup>1</sup> (Metro Area or MSA), the state of South Carolina, and the Southeast due to its strong economic fundamentals, high quality of life, and the growing positive perception of the area. The County is geographically divided into three general regions: a primarily rural landscape in the west, a recreational getaway and bedroom community surrounding Lake Wylie in the north, and a rapidly expanding housing and business environment along I-77 in the northeast. In York County, most new growth is concentrated in Fort Mill and unincorporated areas approaching Charlotte. Accordingly, east York County is a diverse and populated area with manufacturing, distribution employment, corporate office development, and a rapidly expanding residential base while west York County continues to be dominated by agriculture.

Map 5: Economic Growth



SOURCE: NOELL CONSULTING GROUP

Growing annually by 4,491 residents since 1990 and 5,323 residents since 2000, York County has emerged as a preferred county in which to live and do business within the Charlotte metropolitan area. This growth has been sustained over the past 25 years primarily due to the county's proximity to Charlotte, which has been among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the Southeast and claims the largest metro population in the Carolinas. A combination of healthy regional economy, low taxes, low cost of doing business, superior schools, recreational attractions, and housing affordability has fueled this growth. The demand for housing in the county, particularly in the northeast section, has produced robust expansion. Rapid population growth has continued to attract a skilled labor force who are seeking high-performing schools and strong lifestyle advantages.

<sup>1</sup> The Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes Mecklenburg, Iredell, Lincoln, Gaston, York, Chester, Lancaster, Union, Cabarrus, and Rowan Counties.

This chapter's goal is to provide an assessment of York County today and to identify potential issues that merit emphasis in the long-term analysis of the County, along with recommendations that should be pursued to maintain strong growth and create a county that is sustainable in the long-term.

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

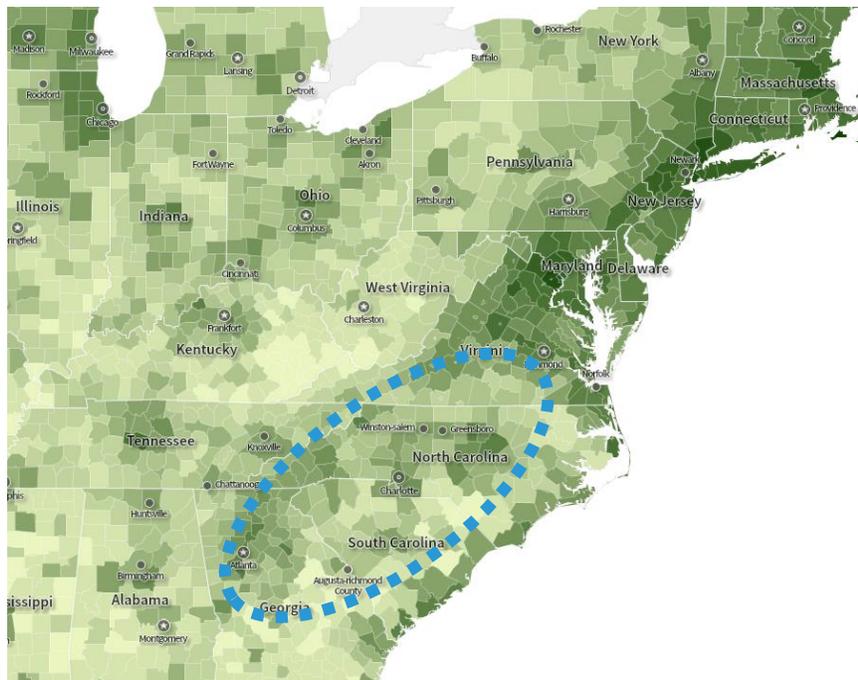
Prior to analyzing York County, it is important to understand important national and macro trends occurring economically and demographically in the United States and the Charlotte Metro. The following summarizes these significant trends:

- The drive for efficiency and effectiveness, expansion of technology, and America's diverse economic base has continued to shape America's economic prospect, real estate, and trends.
- No form of real estate is immune to the expansion and rise of technology. New tools, denser environments, and technology have pushed broad changes in space, usage, and location.
- Trends have been impacted significantly by the aging Generation X (1964 - 1978) and Baby Boomer (1945 - 1964) populations, representing approximately 117 million people. Millennials' impact is growing and is still early on in its influence.
  - Baby Boomers are aging and beginning to live for themselves (as opposed to their children, who have "left the nest"), focusing on areas that offer their lifestyle preferences rather than those of their children, who have been the driving factors in their residential decision-making for the last 20 years.
  - Changes in age will accelerate millennial trends over the next 10 years and have already started in urban markets across the United States.
    - The rise of multifamily housing has become extremely popular and unlikely to taper anytime soon.
    - Millennials and younger adults, who are a larger demographic group than the Baby Boomers, have postponed home ownership and are continuing to rent much longer than previous generations.
- Convenience is becoming a major factor for all generations, and 18- to 24-hour cities are coming of age and becoming increasingly popular.
  - The urbanization of America has become increasingly attractive to many as downtown and in-town transformations, combined with denser housing, retail offerings, dining, and walkable work locations, have spurred investment in urban cores and edge suburban locations.
  - Walkability and town centers, walkability to areas to dining, shopping, parks, work, etc. in suburban locations and edge cities in metropolitan locations are being demanded by all age groups.
  - The desire to live in locations with shortened work commutes, avoiding heavy traffic and long drives, feeds trends across all metropolitan areas in the United States.
- Lifestyle, including walkability and authenticity, extends to the commercial side as well, with more livable, walkable business environments becoming increasingly attractive.
  - There is very strong growth in startups and small business throughout the US, including professional services firms and creative-type industries. These firms strongly prefer more walkable, accessible, and convenient locations, such as in-town areas and small-town downtowns.
- Retail has become more experiential during the last few years. The experience is now considered important not only in the store, but also in the overall retail environment. The rise of online shopping is significant and has cut into retail (particularly for comparison goods shopping), but the majority of consumers still want to shop at brick and mortar stores.
  - Retail town centers and infilling of retail into older, established cores has become increasingly common as conventional strip and power centers, as well as regional malls, have lost share in the market and will likely continue to lose share in the coming years (with luxury malls being the most significant exception).

## Carolinas & Charlotte Metro Trends

- The demand for improving the quality of life has led to a large population migration into the Carolinas and Charlotte Metro. These people are seeking value, better schools, a lower cost of living, and increased opportunity.
  - Baby Boomers and aging Gen Xers have influenced nearly all of the population growth, along with the real estate market trends. These groups historically sought non-urban locations and land – driven by price and value.
  - The Charlotte metro area was ranked the 4<sup>th</sup> fastest growing metro area in the United States from 2000 – 2010. It is now home to eight Fortune 500 companies and is the second largest financial center in the nation.
- Activity in national secondary markets, including cities like Raleigh and Charlotte, have accelerated as investors, jobs, and economic prosperity have followed the migration and influx of population.
- Younger members of Gen X and Gen Y particularly value walkable places and convenience. They are the primary generations fueling the renaissance of inner cities throughout the Carolinas, including Charlotte, Raleigh, Durham, Greenville, and Wilmington. This trend includes town centers in more suburban locations such as Birkdale, Baxter, and Phillips Place, as well as older, authentic town centers such as Davidson.
- Demand for industrial space has been growing in gateway markets and strong geographic locations like the Carolinas.
  - Retail logistics are moving closer to their consumers to supplement logistics and are seeking strategic locations along the East Coast.

Map 6: Median House Value of Owner-Occupied Home – 2013 (Darker green shows concentrations of higher values)

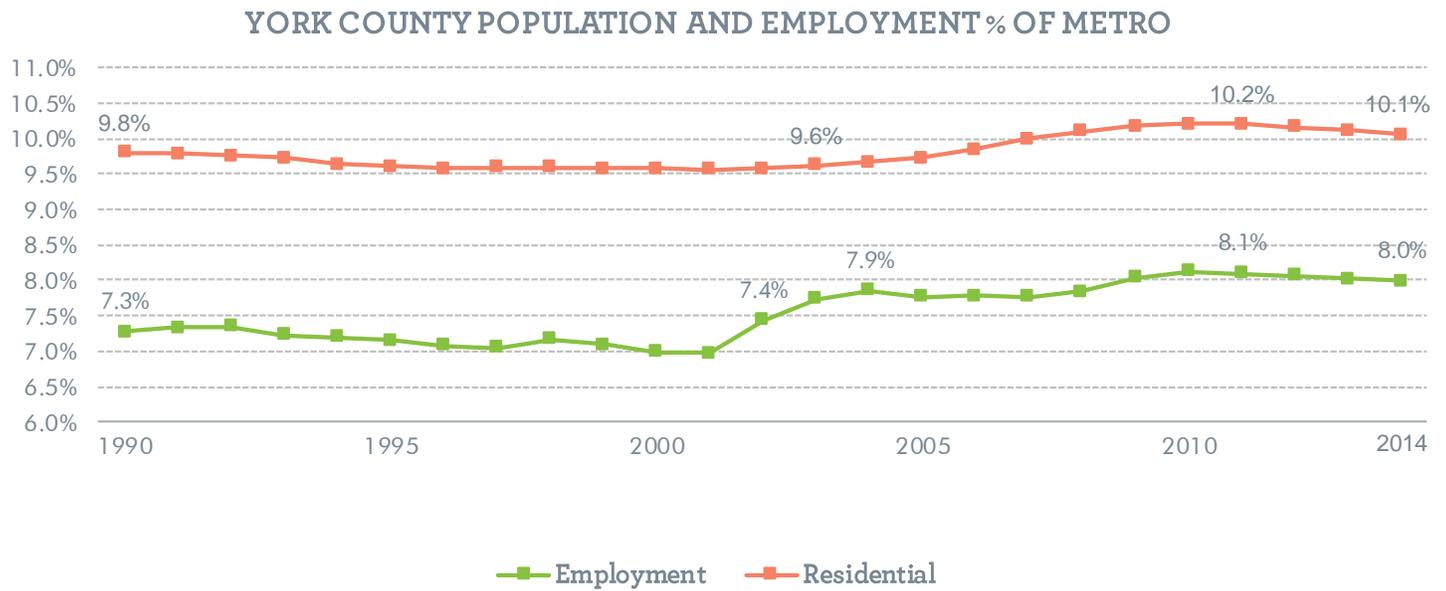


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. PREPARED BY SOCIAL EXPLORER

## York County Trends

- Economic prosperity and large population growth is driven by the continued growth from Charlotte metro, the region's population growth, York's investment in transportation (road investments), a strong proposition of success for industrial companies, and the overall success of the Charlotte metro.
- The Charlotte metro and York County economies have rebounded from the last recession, which included significant fallout in the banking sector, and are now benefiting from a surge in new companies, expansion of existing companies, and strong growth in the residential housing base.
- York County has shown strong fundamentals of growth as families seek lifestyle benefits such as recreation, high quality of living, convenience to Charlotte, and strong schools.

Figure 2: York County Population and Employment % of Metro



SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

- Primary growth has focused on an expanding industrial and distribution base, large single family home neighborhoods, and office migrations driven by tax advantages.
- Baby Boomers, as workers and retirees, and older Generation Xers has been much of the historic growth and will continue to have a significant impact on real estate development and investment in the short term.

Many of these economic and real trends in the nation, region, and more importantly York County are about more than the convenience. They're about lifestyle and more significantly, they're about de-commoditization and appeal of the region as a whole. Particularly after this last housing recession, Baby Boomers and younger households alike are increasingly aware that location counts, and finding unique locations in the market--those where value exists beyond the home in which they're living--becomes key. In the short term, much of the growth will continue to include primarily Baby Boomers and older Generation Xers. Nonetheless, York County will need to keep pushing for smarter growth, focusing on town center like neighborhoods, different product types to attract the surge of millennials who will be the biggest driver of growth over the next 10, 20, and 30 years. While the demand for conventional suburban products (single-family homes on medium to large lots, neighborhood retail centers, and suburban office parks) continues to be a market force, market preferences and forces are evolving and York County must be aware of those changes in the coming decades. During the next 10 to 30 years York County will need to identify ways to maintain its current lifestyle offerings and economic edge, as well as to expand those offerings to attract a broader variety of residents, employers, and retailers.

## YORK COUNTY'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

York County has increasingly offered an attractive position for businesses and residents. The lower property and income tax rates, quality schools, newer developments, and easy commute into Charlotte collectively have made the County a top choice for relocations. Below are highlights among the competitive advantages that York County has over other regions of the country as well as to other counties in the MSA:

### Strategic Geographic Location

- Central location in Southeast United States and Carolinas, strategically positioned halfway between New York and Miami.
- Access to rail, system of highways, and multiple seaports – a strong point for businesses.
- Ability to reach 60% of the United States market in 24 hours.
- Strong regional location, close and easy access via Interstate 77 into to the largest metropolitan area in the Carolinas – Charlotte.
- A South Carolina county address in Charlotte Metro offers South Carolina tax benefits. South Carolina taxes are considered more advantageous than North Carolina taxes.
- Large county in terms of available land area, offering large tracts of land ripe for development, building sites and opportunity.

### Pennies for Progress

- A York County capital project sales and use tax program dedicated to road investment and improvements.
- A one cent sales tax program imposed on anyone purchasing goods (non-grocery and a cap on car sales) in York County.
- Revenues over the last four quarters totaling \$26.9 million.
- Transportation projects chosen by a sales tax commission represented by citizens of York County and then approved by voters.
- Has funded nearly \$1 billion of roadway improvements across the County.
- Considered a very successful program, creating a robust road infrastructure system in the County.

### Low Cost of Living

- York County is perceived and is ranked as a “low cost of living” county due to affordable housing and lower costs of goods.
  - Overall, the cost of living index is 93.20, below the United States average cost of living index of 100. The lowest cost of living index is housing, which is rated an 80, compared to the United States average of 100.
- One of the lowest county property taxes in the nation, ranking 650th out of 788 counties in the United States. On average, homeowners pay 1.6% of their income and 0.7% of their home value on property taxes. Primary residences are assessed at 4% of their appraised value and multiplied by millage rates which range from 92.7 to 263.9 (factoring in applicable municipal and school taxes).

### High Quality of Life and Strong Schools

- The area offers residents abundant home choices relative to price, subdivisions, and housing product types with access to recreation and greenspace.
- Natural recreation areas for residents including the Riverwalk Trail, Designated Scenic Rivers (Catawba River and Broad River), 325 miles of shoreline of Lake Wylie, Anne Springs Close Greenway (2,300 acres), and the Catawba Indian preserve.
- Recreational investments made including museums, Rock Hill Tennis Center, Hargett, Park, Rock Hill Aquatic Center, multiple golf courses, multiple recreation centers, Giordana Velodrome, multiple parks, sports complexes, and the Novant Health BMW Supercross Track. These investments have been a huge draw for residents across the metro area, increasing the perception and selling proposition of the County.
- Strong perception of schools in the area, considered the best overall school district in the metro area.

- Fort Mill Schools lead the County and considered the best in the metro area. Great Schools, a rating tool based on test scores and other available data, including student academic growth and college readiness, scores schools using a 1 to 10 metric. All schools in Fort Mill are rated from 8 to 10 (out of 10).
- Schools in and around Rock Hill are considered above average, with a majority averaging 5 to 7 and few inferior schools. Schools in and around York City are considered excellent, with most schools averaging 8. Schools in and around Clover are considered excellent, with all rated 8 to 10.
- Schools have been the biggest driver of residential demand in the County and are one of the biggest competitive advantages York has over the region as a location in which to live.

### Tax Policies and Cost of Doing Business

- South Carolina is frequently recognized by publications and organizations as one of the country's most business-friendly states due to state tax policies.
  - *Business Facilities* magazine named South Carolina #1 for Economic Growth Potential and #4 for Best Business Climate. *Site Selection* magazine consistently names South Carolina in the top 10 on its Top State Business Climates report. Lastly, *Forbes* magazine named South Carolina #8 in the nation for its pro-business regulatory environment.
- South Carolina, with an index of 82.9, ranks as a top 10 state to do business ranking and currently the 8th lowest cost state for doing business in the United States. North Carolina ranks 32nd lowest out of all the states.
  - Among the lowest corporate income tax rates in the Southeast at 5%.
  - No state property tax, no local income tax, no inventory tax, no sales tax on manufacturing machinery / industrial power / materials / finished products, no wholesale tax, no unitary tax on worldwide profits.
  - The state tax benefits are extremely advantageous for industrial and manufacturing companies, compared to benefits afforded by counties in North Carolina, and will continue to be beneficial for this industry due to the inventory and sales policies. Progressively, North Carolina has begun to lower their corporate tax rates and will continue to push them even lower if revenues allow.
  - Although York County has had beneficial tax policies in the past, many counties in the metro area have started working to even the playing field.
- Abundant amount of State and York County business Incentives
  - Corporate income tax credits, job tax credit, corporate headquarters credit, research and development credit, investment tax credit, biomass resources credit, ethanol or biodiesel credit, job development credit, job retraining credit, corporate income tax moratorium, international trade incentive program-port volume increase credit, negotiated fee in lieu of property tax (York has the ability to negotiate with companies to pay a fee-in-lieu of its property taxes which can result in savings of up to 43% for a 20-year period).
- Right to work state; the 6th lowest unionization rate in the country

Table 15: South and North Carolina Tax Rates (source: Charlotte Regional Partnership)

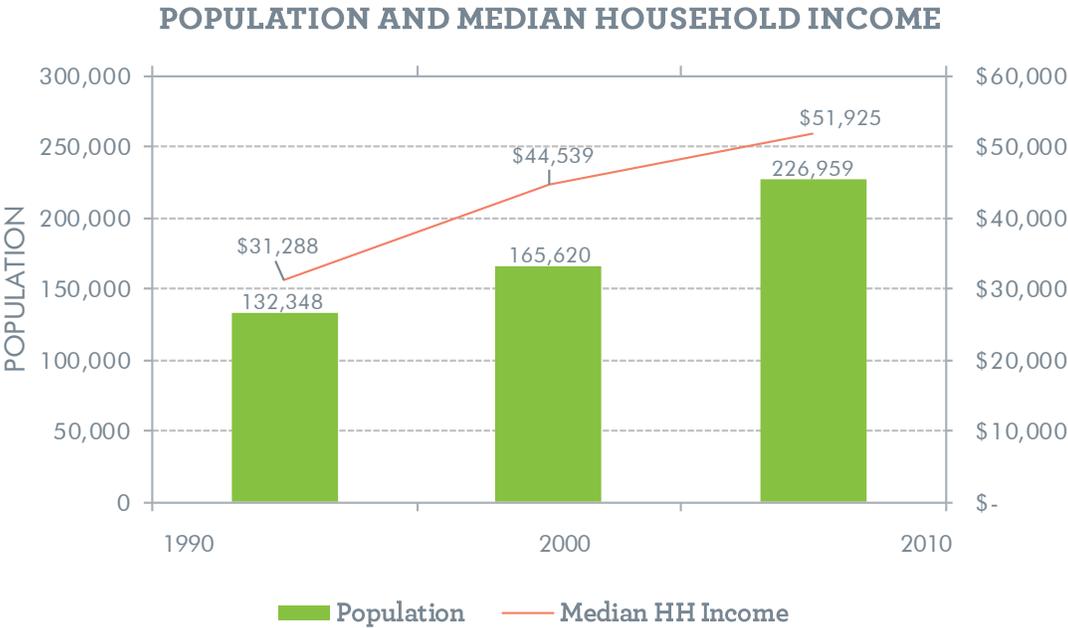
FUNDING SOURCE	SOUTH CAROLINA	NORTH CAROLINA
Corporate Tax	5.0% flat rate	6.0% flat rate (Rate will decrease to 5.0% in 2015)
Sales & Use Tax	6 percent statewide with a local rate of 1 percent or 2 percent on transactions	4.75% statewide with a local rate of 2.0% - 2.5% on transactions
Franchise Tax	None	\$1.50 per \$1,000
Inventory Tax	None	None
Property Tax	South Carolina does not impose a state property tax. Subject to local rates (county rates range .41-1.93 percent, county and school rates range 4.07 percent)	North Carolina does not impose a state property tax. Subject to local rates (county rates range 4.2-11 percent, city rates range 2.4-8 percent). Rates assessed per \$100 of 100 percent assessed value.
Electricity	None	3.00%

# ECONOMIC PROFILE AND COUNTY ASSESSMENT

## Demographic

The population of York County has grown substantially since 1990 and at a faster rate than the greater metropolitan area. York County has grown at an average of 4,491 people annually since 1990 and is growing at a 3.4% annual pace. While it is still behind Union County (6.4%), Cabarrus (3.8%), and Mecklenburg (3.8%), York County has eclipsed the growth rates of Charlotte Metro (3.2%) and South Carolina (1.6%) since 1990. In terms of absolute numbers, the County is one of the fastest growing in the Carolinas. By 2010, York County's population had increased to 226,959 people from 132,348 in 1990 and 165,620 in 2000. In terms of total numbers, York County has grown to a population of over 240,000 people (estimated end of 2014), only trailing Mecklenburg County in total population within the Charlotte metro area.

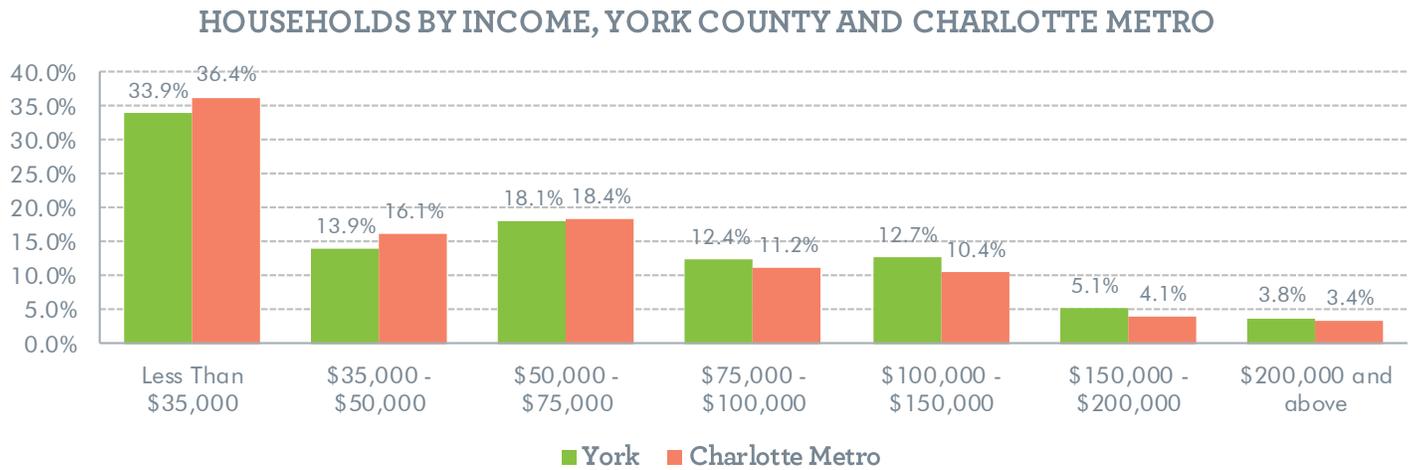
Figure 3: Population and Median Household Income



SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

Median household income growth has also been steadily increasing during this period, rising from \$31,288 (adjusted for inflation) in 1990 to \$51,925 in 2010. The median income now approaches \$54,000. This represents an annual growth rate of 2.9% over the 20 year period, a steady rate of growth and evidence of an increasingly affluent middle class in the County. Many York County households align with those in the Charlotte metro area, including a significant middle class population. More than 34.01% of York County's households have incomes above \$75,000, which is greater than the Charlotte metro's average of 29.1%.

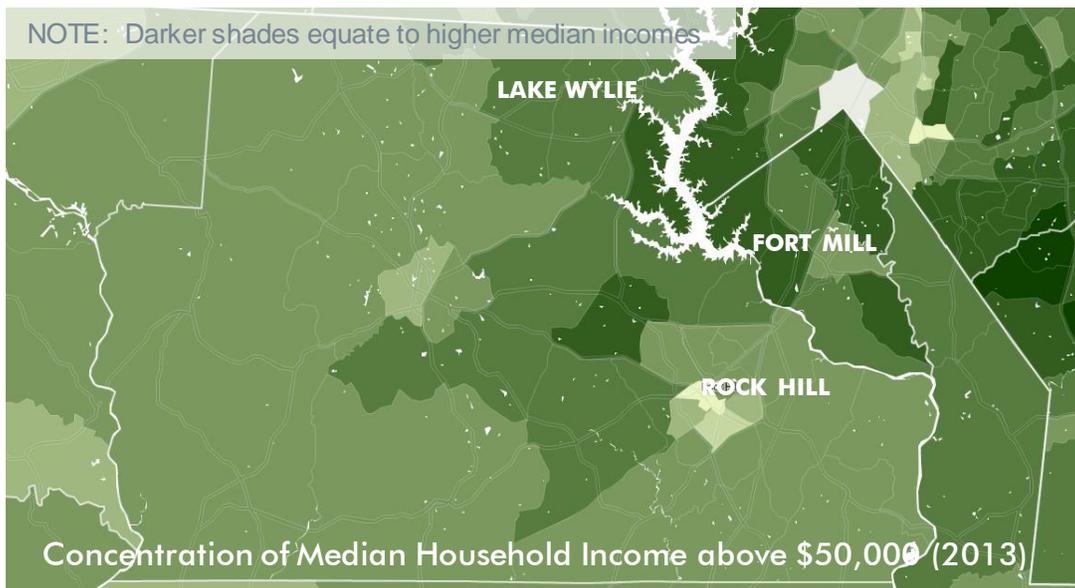
Figure 4: Households by Income



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

York County today has slightly fewer lower-income households than Charlotte Metro, with roughly one-third of all households earning less than \$35,000. Most of this figure is explained by the more moderate income, agriculturally-based economy in the western and southern portion of the County as well as retirees closer to the lake. While most of the wealth is concentrated in the northeast portion of the County, overall York has relative wealth and a strong middle class that can be seen through the depth of middle income households, and in the County's lower poverty rates, with only 10.1% of the population below the poverty line. This is lower than the 13.3% average in the metro area and the 16.6% rate in Mecklenburg County.

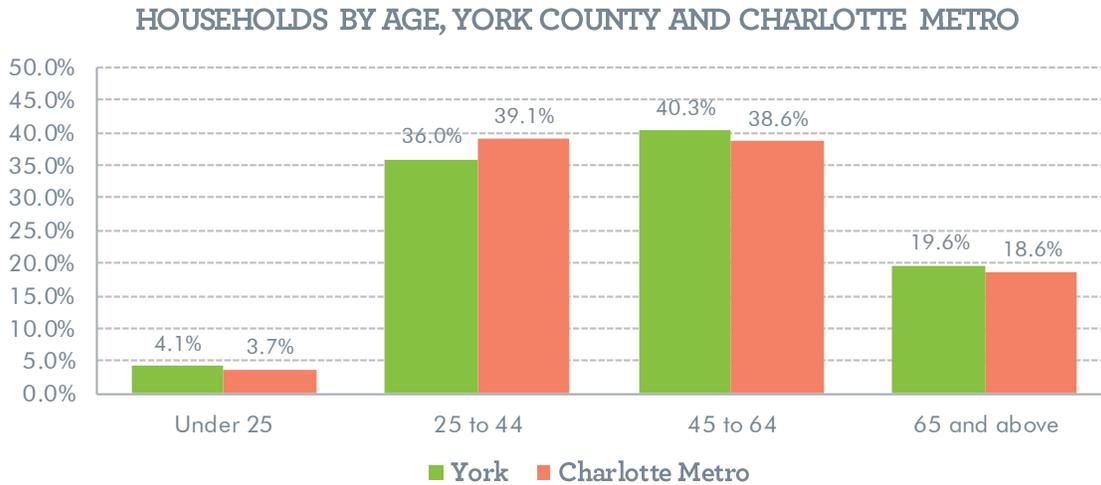
Map 7: Concentration of Median Household Income above \$50,000 (2013)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. PREPARED BY SOCIAL EXPLORER

When examining York County's current household composition, one can see that it again parallels the Charlotte metro, while being a slightly more mature county than the Charlotte metro area overall – not surprising given the attraction of schools, lack of Class A rental product, tax incentives, and the rising house values--and somewhat lacking in its attraction for younger households. This is in part due to the lower density suburban lifestyle offered in the County today and changing preferences among younger members of Generation Y (those born after 1978), who increasingly prefer more walkable, mixed-use environments, more of which are found in the urban core of Charlotte.

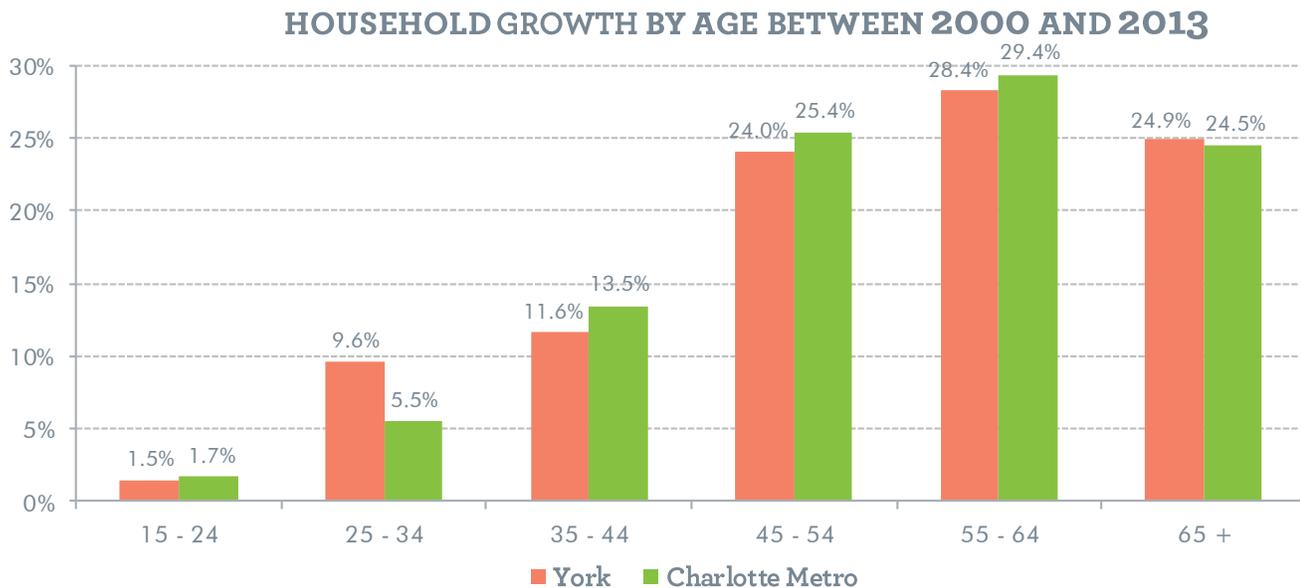
Figure 5: Households by Age



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

In looking further at household growth by age, York has added nearly 20,000 households ages 45+, representing 77.3% of the household’s growth in the County. Much like the Charlotte metro, this area is appealing to Baby Boomers and older households. In addition, 11.1% of the household’s growth has been in households 15 – 34 years old. The lack of appeal to Generation Y--a generation that is equal in size to the Baby Boomers--could have an increasingly significant impact on real estate decisions and growth in county in the coming decades. As shown in the graph below, growth in 25 – 34 age cohort in York County from 2000 and 2013 is higher than the metro as a whole, showing that there is appeal from Generation Y compared to the metro and should be noted as an opportunity to capture more.

Figure 6: Household Growth by Age 2000-2013



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

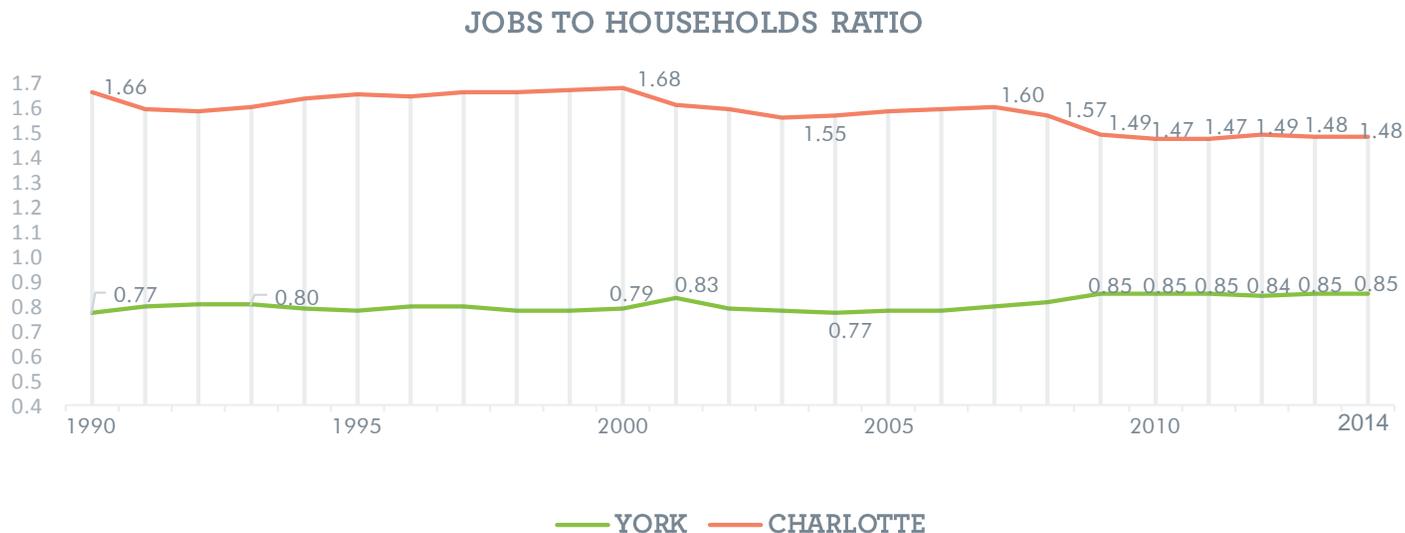
It also bears noting that 71.4% of the households are families in York County, growing by 16,840 households from 2000 – 2013. This figure further shows the need to diversify household composition, as singles and childless couples are among the fastest growing demographics nationally. Non-family (singles and unmarried couples) only represent 28.5% of the current households in the County, growing by only 8,306 households from 2000 – 2013 (a 32.7% increase in 13 years).

These missing groups--Generation Y households and singles--become significant given their share of the market and growth in the coming years. Both tend to be attracted to more dynamic, mixed-use environments and both have higher propensities to either buy or rent attached or small-lot for-sale product. As will be discussed later in this report, York County largely lacks these products historically (although Rock Hill's downtown and Baxter do represent to current town center environments) and should consider opportunities to add these products in a setting that maximizes their attraction to these growing audiences to continue to be competitive for all age groups.

## ECONOMIC OVERVIEW AND CAPTURE OF THE GROWTH

York's economy has continued to expand into a robust economy, supporting a significant number of the residents living in the County. In conjunction with the strong population and household growth, which has averaged an annual capture of 10.1% of the growth in the metro, the County has averaged a jobs growth capture of 16.9% of the metro growth since 1990. York County's economic and tax policies and the business climate in the County are primary reasons for the greater share of jobs capture to the metro. As York continues to capture high quality jobs this jobs to household ratio has been maintained and has slightly increased (strong, given the high level of residential growth occurring in the County). Today the ratio is .85 jobs/households, representing a 9.2% increase since 1990. This is reverse from the trend of the Charlotte metro, where the metro has seen a reduction of jobs/housing since 1990 as the residential population outgrows the amount of jobs. Nevertheless, York's ratio is considerably lower than the metro level and has a considerable undertaking to achieve a higher ratio, comparative to the metro area.

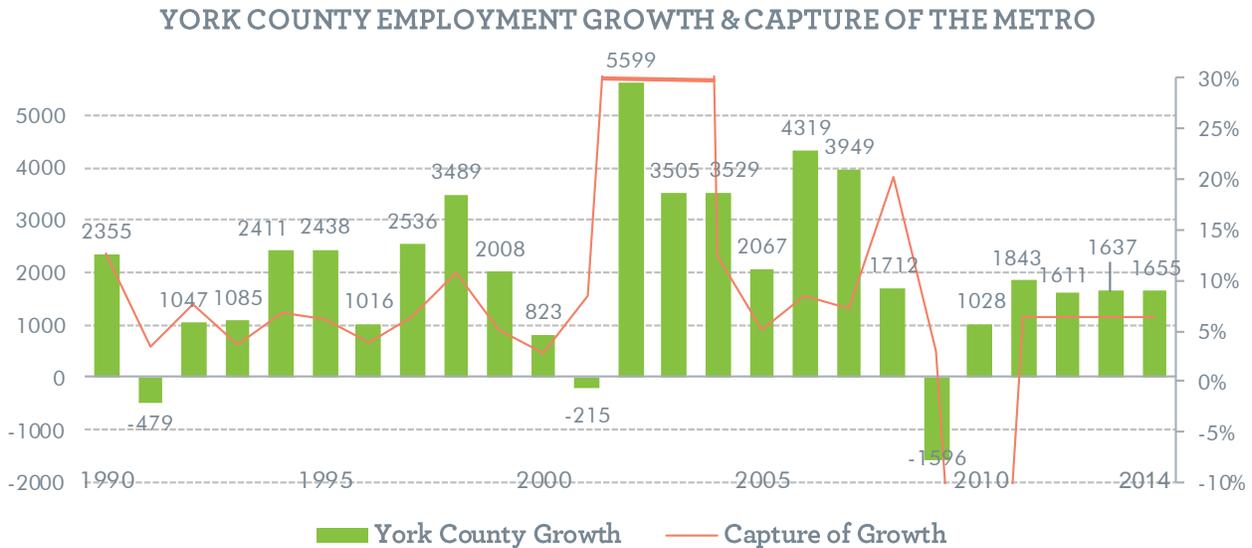
Figure 7: Jobs to Households Ratio



SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

Currently, York County jobs accounts for 8.0% of the job growth in the Charlotte MSA. Yet, looking further into capture of job growth in the metro, York has shown strong capture numbers. The county has averaged 21.4% capture of job growth since 2000, ahead of Iredell (15.7%), Union (12.1%) and Cabarrus (7.7%), but well behind Mecklenburg's 68.6% capture.

Figure 8: York County Employment Growth and Capture



Note: York's 2002 & 2003 captures were greater than 30% and not shown on this chart for ease of viewing the rest of the data.

SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

A continued push for more jobs is needed to increase the jobs to housing ratio and create more balance and a broader employment base in the County. This has increasingly become harder as the growth of the Charlotte in-town core has become more competitive, both in terms of lifestyle proposition and the improved tax policies discussed previously. Indeed, this is a note of concern, further displayed by the employment capture of growth from 2011 to 2014, which has averaged 6.4%, below the historic average of 17% capture of growth in the County (factoring in recessions, and the 7.5% capture during stronger economic periods in the 2000s).

As shown on the previous chart, York County has experienced three different phases of capture of Charlotte metro's employment growth:

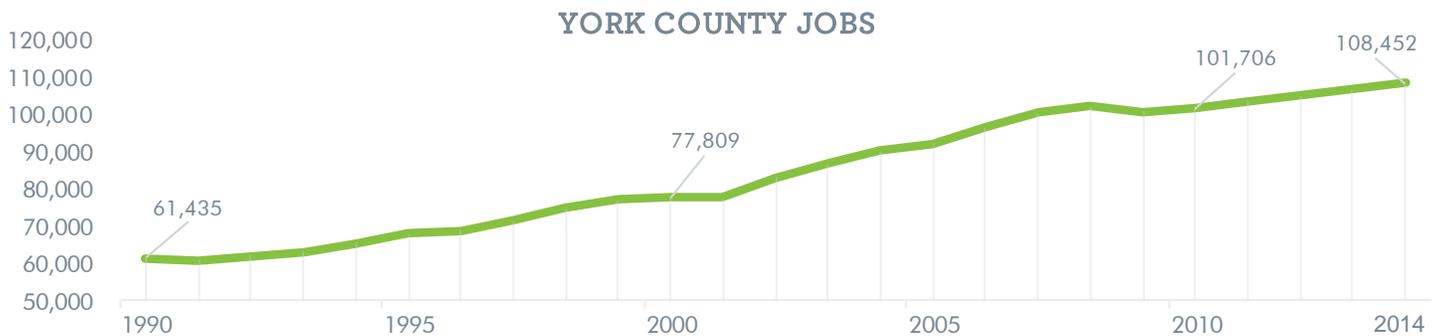
- York's historic captures of employment growth:
  - 1990 to 1999 average 6.3% of the capture – steady and strong growth;
  - 2000 to 2009 averaged 39.0%
    - Weathered two recessions better than the metro area overall (particularly the most recent recession, which hit professional services and finance industries particularly hard);
    - Growth led by tax policies and growing resident population;
    - Non-recession years averaged 7.5% years (5 years out of 10) and recession years averaged 49%. This indicates a stronger growth capture during the recession years (particularly years 2002-2003).
  - 2010 to 2014 averaged 6.4% (-7.0% capture if 2010 is included with a -60.7 capture) – Steady and strong growth after the recession led by quality of life and business incentives.
    - The recovery of the finance and professional services industries—those largely clustered in Mecklenburg—resulted in this capture loss;
    - The renaissance of the center city has also impacted job growth in the suburbs;
- 2015 and beyond: to be further analyzed by Noell Consulting Group, although the opening of the Lash and LPL offices, along with other announced relocations, should help the County maintain or increase its capture.
  - Included in this will be a focus on a number of key industry types York has identified as targets for economic development, including (Metro employment #'s in 2012):
    - Automotive manufacturing (10,860);
    - Plastics manufacturing (1,351);

- Aviation and aerospace manufacturing (150);
- Distribution (warehousing—8,900, trucking/transport—17,330);
- Machinery manufacturing (8,600); and
- Financial services processing (banks & support—56,000).

### Major Industries / Jobs

Job growth in York County has been robust, averaging 1,959 net new jobs since 1990 and 2,189 since 2000. However, since 2010, the growth has somewhat tapered to an average of 1,687 jobs since 2010, as York improves from the Great Recession.

Figure 9: York County Jobs



SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

While the recession took a significant toll on the metro and county, York County total employment figures fared well relative to other areas in the metro region. Comparing employment numbers since 2008, only two industries have a negative net difference of over 1,000 jobs: construction and manufacturing. These two sectors have not recovered to the peak levels of 2008 and represent a sum of 2,819 jobs lost to date. Since 2008, York County has become more diverse and has expanded in nearly 15 industries, with the largest growth occurring in retail trade, finance/ insurance, administrative, and healthcare/ social assistance. Accordingly, the County has increasingly become a service-based economy to support the local housing (which lagged before the recession).

Table 16: Top Industry Sectors

INDUSTRY SECTOR	YORK COUNTY (2014)	CHARLOTTE METRO	YORK COUNTY TO CHARLOTTE METRO
RETAIL TRADE	12,764	137,201	1.16
STATE and LOCAL GOVERNMENT	11,479	138,498	1.04
OTHER SERVICES, EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMIN	9,619	78,077	1.54
HEALTH CARE and SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	9,589	115,419	1.04
MANUFACTURING	9,324	93,009	1.25
ADMINISTRATIVE and WASTE SERVICES	8,996	113,207	0.99
FINANCE and INSURANCE	8,069	95,542	1.06
ACCOMMODATION and FOOD SERVICES	7,964	95,693	1.04
PROFESSIONAL and TECHNICAL SERVICES	5,062	87,440	0.72
CONSTRUCTION	4,595	72,087	0.80
WHOLESALE TRADE	4,364	63,687	0.86
REAL ESTATE & RENTAL & LEASE	4,209	61,771	0.85
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, & RECREATION	2,735	35,194	0.97
UTILITIES	1,861	5,587	4.17
INFORMATION	1,778	27,883	0.80
TRANSPORTATION & WAREHOUSING	1,561	45,302	0.43
FARM	1,331	8,158	2.04
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	1,051	26,594	0.49
FEDERAL MILITARY	988	6,575	1.88
FEDERAL CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT	442	9,945	0.56
MANAGEMENT	340	36,288	0.12
FORESTRY, FISHING, & OTHER	245	1,758	1.74
MINING	86	1,477	0.73
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108,452</b>	<b>1,356,392</b>	<b>1.00</b>

SOURCE: USCENSUSBUREAU

Table 17: Top 10 Non-Government Employers

Top 10 Employers (Non Gov)	Employees
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage	2,335
Duke Power-Catawba Nuclear Station	1,228
Ross Distribution	919
CitiFinancial	850
U. S. Foodservice, Inc.	735
Resolute Forrest Products	613
Shutterfly	600
Schaeffler Group USA, Inc.	558
Metrolina Greenhouses	523

SOURCE: YORK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

When examining the County's economic base by industry, 11 of the 23 industry sectors have a greater location quotient ratio than the Charlotte metro area. As shown in Table 16, York County's economic base can be found in those industries shaded--industries in which a greater share of York's total employment can be found relative to that of the Charlotte metro area. Any ratio above a 1.0 indicates a greater concentration of jobs in York relative to the Charlotte area. Most of the green shaded industries are large corporations that offer low to moderately paying jobs and metro serving industries, such as Ross Distribution, that have relocated to York County. These employers, including other large corporations like Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Duke Power, and CitiFinancial, have driven growth by bringing many jobs and a stronger tax base to the County. The economy is strong and diverse, including nine industries with a base of 5,000 jobs or more.

Indeed, recent recruitment and expansion announcements, as laid out in the State of the County report for the York County Regional Chamber of Commerce, have been significant and have included a good mix of office and industrial-using companies; export jobs that will bring money into the local economy, as opposed to local-serving jobs that serve the local economy, but bring no new dollars into the area. Some of these key growth announcements are summarized in the table 18.

Yet in contrast to the metro area, the County lacks smaller industries along with local service companies, such as educational services, management, and other professional services. In addition, the County lacks high-paying employment which arises from management position and services; positions largely found in Mecklenburg County (although the LPL and Lash moves will help this issue). These fields can continue to drive growth and help with the imbalance of jobs to housing. York County is lacking jobs in some primary industries that provide quality, high-paying jobs, including Professional/ Technical Services, Transportation and Warehousing, Educational Services, and Management of Companies. Professional Services and Management, in particular, are higher-paying job sectors under-represented in the County. Growth in these areas should be a focus in the years to come. As previously mentioned, York County, through its Target Industry Analysis study, has identified six industries that match York's key characteristics and should be focal

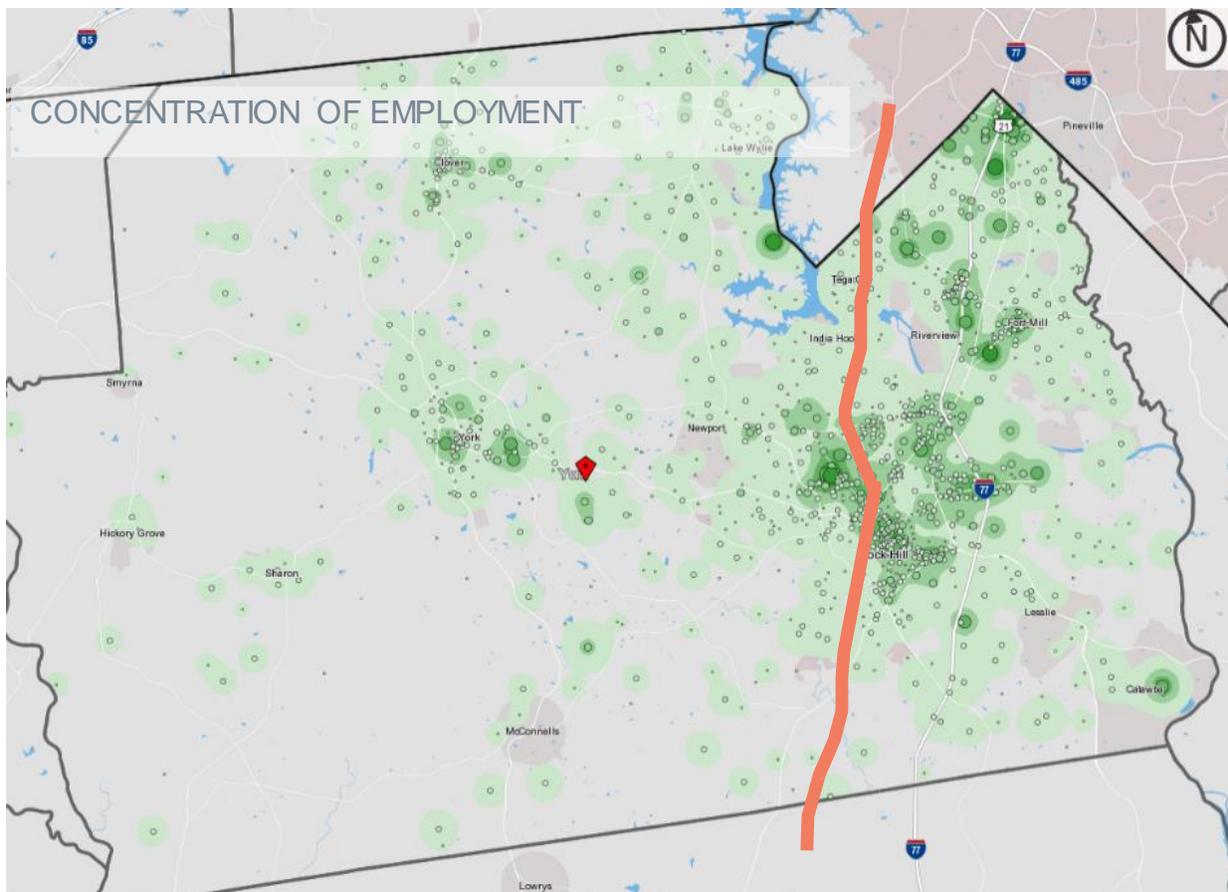
Table 18: Companies Locating to York County

Company	New or Expanding	Number of Jobs
LPL Financial	New	3,000
The Lash Group	New	2,400
Ross Distribution	New	600
Shutterfly	New	416
Physicians' Choice	New	364
Britax	New	240
Coroplast	New	153

points for economic development efforts, including (auto, plastics, aviation/aerospace and machinery manufacturing, distribution and financial services processing). All represent moderately to middle-income paying jobs and many aim to replace manufacturing jobs lost in past decades.

While not a major employment source in the County, York County's large agricultural base consumes the land of most of the western portion of the County. The County has over 1,000 farms (4.0% of all South Carolina farms, averaging 139 acres per farm), and of these, 96% are small family farms producing less than \$250,000 gross sales per year. The western portion of the County and much of the area west of Lake Wylie lacks major transportation nodes and water and sewer infrastructure. The absence of strong transportation nodes has hampered access to the Charlotte metro, attraction for employment, and growth.

Map 8: Concentration of Employment



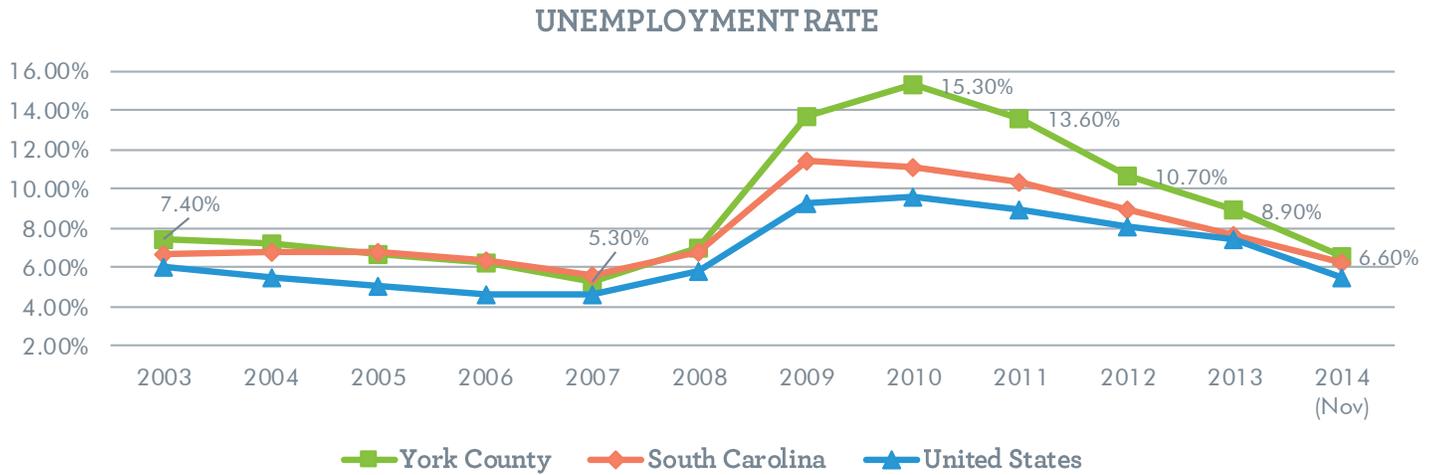
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. PREPARED BY LEDONTHEMAP

Many of York County's major employment cores can be found in the northeast section of the County and in Rock Hill. As shown in the map to the right, densities of green signify concentrations of jobs in the County. Major concentrations of employers can be categorized into three primary groups: local government, distribution, and corporate services. Interstate 77, the major spine and concentration of these jobs, is the primary area of employment growth and principal foundation for jobs. Interstate 77 allows easy access to Charlotte and other metro regions and serves as the major thoroughfare in the County. Nearly 79.5% of the total jobs in the County are within 5 miles of I-77, where healthcare, retail, and manufacturing are the three biggest industries. This does not include the planned 5,000 jobs moving to the I-77 core with Lash Group and LPL Financial moving into the County. Other areas of the County serve as distribution hubs, local government, and agriculture. While the road investment of I-77 has influenced rapid job expansion, it has increasingly caused congestion and the rise of low density housing around the interstate, fueled by those relocating from other areas of Charlotte and seeking housing. Balancing the residential growth in portions near the interstate, as well as broadening the investment of roads to improve access to other areas of the County, can spur additional economic growth, including areas west of Lake Wylie and areas west of Rock Hill. Indeed, the trend of corporations locating on I-77 will continue into the foreseeable future and should be of great value to the County, but future planning and economic growth should focus on adding industry in strategic locations, attracting smaller businesses, and building for Generation Y, a group that is spurring large growth in Mecklenburg County. As referenced previously, York County's job to housing ratio has not kept up with that of the region (1.48 in the Charlotte Metro, 1.00 in Iredell County, 0.90 in Cabarrus County, .78 in Gaston County and 0.73 in Union County), averaging around .85 jobs to housing. In the coming years this ratio could improve somewhat, considering two major corporate relocations in the County. However, the amount of residential in the pipeline is significant, and maintaining solid job growth as robust household growth returns to the area should be at the forefront of planning exercises.

## Unemployment

As of November 2014, the County had 7,449 unemployed people, which equates to an unemployment rate of 6.6%. This is slightly above the South Carolina average of 6.3% and above both the United States average of 5.50% and the Mecklenburg County rate of 6.3%. York felt the impacts of the Great Recession, with some of the highest unemployment figures in the region. Unemployment increased from 5.3% to a high of 15.3% in 2010, but the County has since recovered and has the fundamentals to achieve a much lower rate in the coming years.

Figure 10: Unemployment Rate



SOURCE: S.C. DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE

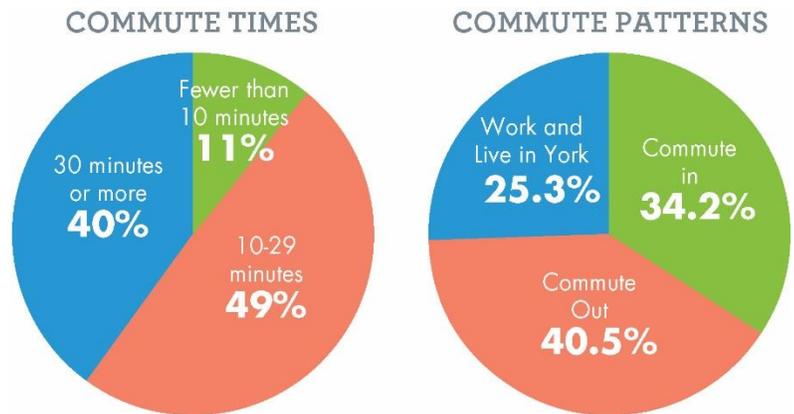
## Current Labor Force and Inflow/Outflow

As of November 2014, there were 105,411 people employed in the County. Currently, only 23.3% of the labor force is 29 years old or younger, 57.5% of workers are 30-54 years old, and 19.2% are 55+. To this, only 20.7% have completed a bachelor's degree or higher education levels, reflective of the industries that have historically dominated the County's economy. Of this labor force, roughly 54% are from York County, while the rest commute to York from other counties. This is higher than the other counties in the metro region with 51% living and employed in Mecklenburg County, 49% in Iredell County, and 47.6% in Union County

Top 5 places from which workers commute are:

1. Mecklenburg County: 8,514 workers
2. Lancaster County: 3,470 workers
3. Chester County: 2,927 workers
4. Gaston County: 2,195 workers
5. Richland County: 1,359 workers

Figure 11: Commuting Patterns and Times



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

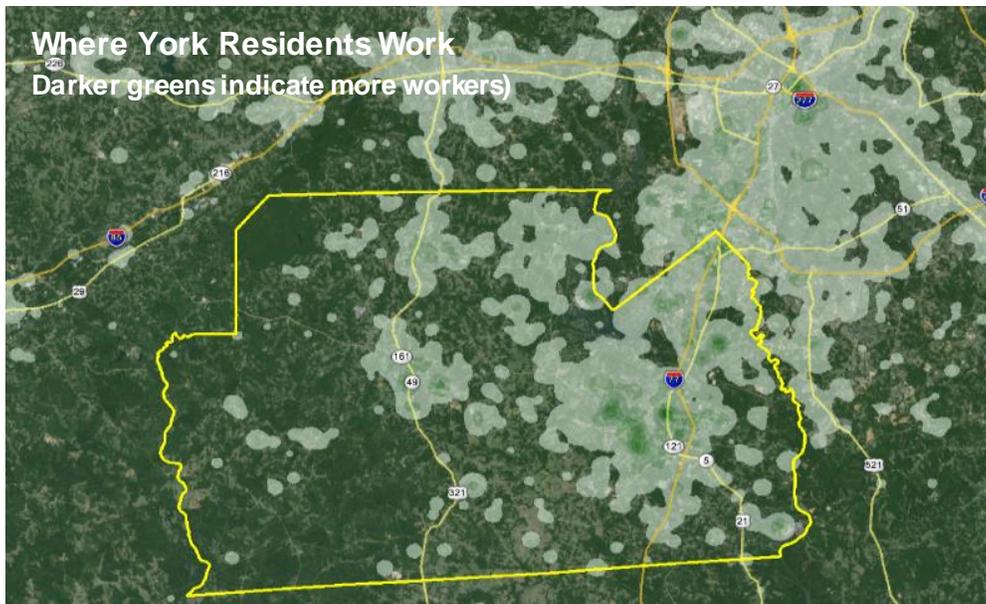
On the other hand, many residents in York County are commuting to Charlotte for work. This number is expected to continue to rise as the residential pace broadens in the coming years. In 1990, 31% of workers commuted to North Carolina counties, and by 2000 the amount of commuters had risen to 36%. As shown in Figure 11, York generally exports more workers than it imports, with 40% of those living in the County commuting out, 34% commuting in, and roughly 25% working and living in the County.

Top 5 counties to which York residents commute to are:

1. Mecklenburg County: 29,013
2. Gaston County: 2,752
3. Chester County: 1,366
4. Lancaster County: 1,174
5. Union County: 682

Approximately 92% of all employed York residents drive to work, of which roughly 10% carpool and an additional 5% work at home. The average inclusive commute time is 26 minutes for all workers.

Map 9: Resident Employer Destinations



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. PREPARED BY LEDONTHEMAP/GOOGLE EARTH

## OFFICE MARKET

South Carolina's aggressive recruiting policies, York County's lower tax rates, and a direct connection to I-77 have helped to propel York County's office market, with a number of major firms moving across state lines into the County. Much of the office inventory is located along the I-77 corridor, attracting national corporate businesses and select smaller service offices. As shown in the table below, York County offers more than 5,300,000 square feet of multi-tenant and owner-occupied office space, or about 5.3% of the total office market in the Charlotte metro area and 6.9% of the total market, excluding Downtown/Uptown Charlotte<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the overall vacancy is only 6.8%, well below the 10.6% vacancy in the Charlotte metro (excluding the Uptown submarket).

Table 19: Office Space by County

OFFICE SPACE BY COUNTY						
COUNTY	BUILDINGS	TOTAL SQUARE FEET	SHARE OF CHARLOTTE METRO	SQUARE FEET PER BUILDING	VACANCY RATE	AVERAGE ASKING RENT
York	506	5,336,798	5.3%	10,547	6.8%	\$18.29
Gaston	669	4,031,287	4.0%	6,026	7.6%	\$14.14
Iredell	379	3,809,451	3.8%	10,051	12.0%	\$16.78
Union	357	2,227,498	2.2%	6,239	10.6%	\$17.82
Airport/SW Mecklenburg	340	13,036,975	13.0%	38,344	14.2%	\$17.59
NC 51/S Mecklenburg	303	8,591,741	8.6%	28,355	13.9%	\$23.36
Charlotte Metro (Total)	5,343	100,103,689	100.0%	18,735	10.2%	\$20.10
Metro Suburban	5,200	77,250,353	77.3%	14,855	10.6%	\$19.39

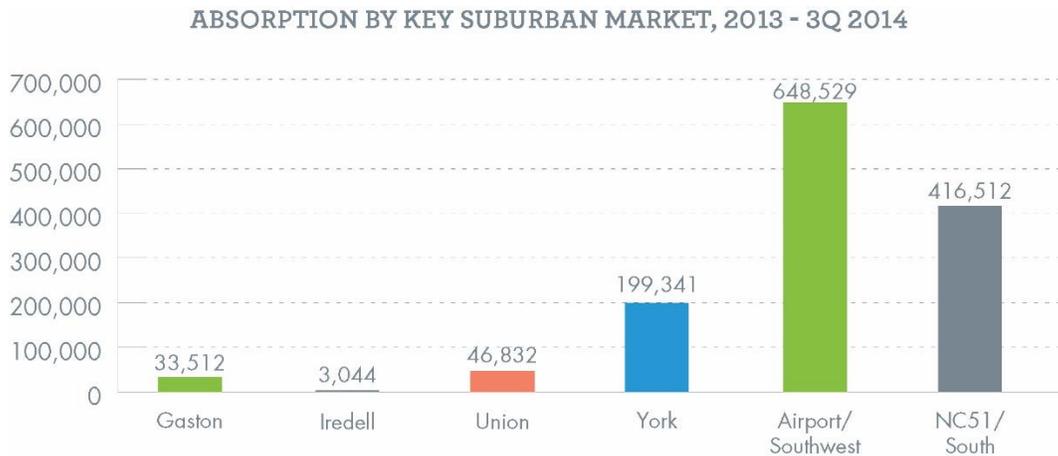
SOURCE: CASSIDY TURLEY MARKET REPORT

The market also boasts the highest lease rates outside of Mecklenburg County (\$18.29/SF), above Gaston, Iredell, and Union Counties. Iredell County, often the County noted as being a solid comparable to York given Charlotte's "hourglass" growth pattern, is similar to York in size of buildings offered, but has a higher vacancy rate and lower asking rent rates, indicating the strength of York's market. Typical asking rents average \$18.29/square foot, below asking rents of \$19.39 in the Charlotte metro and \$23.68/sq. ft. in the Downtown/Uptown. Lower operating costs, lower property taxes, and lower asking rents are alluring tools for many companies seeking to do business in York County. Office fundamentals having been trending upwards in the past year, with asking rents increasing from \$16.96/square foot and vacancy decreasing from 7.1% since the end of 2013.

York has achieved relatively strong absorption rates over the last two years (2013 – 3Q 2014), totaling around 200,000 SF absorbed (100,000 SF annually), far more than other suburban counties shown.

<sup>2</sup> Via Cassidy Turley's Charlotte Office Market Snapshot, 3Q, 2014

Figure 12: Absorption by Key Suburban Market, 2013 - 3Q 2014



SOURCE: CASSIDY TURLEY MARKET REPORT

Absorption in York is largely being fueled by bigger relocations to the market, such as Wells Fargo, Lash, and LPL, among others. It is secondarily being fueled by smaller tenant growth; tenants that value a convenient, yet lifestyle-driven location such as Baxter or Riverwalk or the potential new town center in Kingsley. Indeed, the large majority of office-using firms in the County are quite small, having fewer than 20 employees (roughly a 10,000 SF or smaller user). Smaller firms are growing rapidly with the improvements in technology as well as many larger companies shedding employees and rehiring them as consultants. The distribution of these firms can be seen in Table 20.

Table 20: Number of Firms by Number of Employees

NUMBER OF FIRMS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES								
INDUSTRY/EMPLOYER	1-4	5-9	10-19	20 – 49	50 – 99	100 – 249	250 – 499	500+
Finance & Insurance	215	65	34	11	3	1	3	2
Prof & Technical Services	336	76	31	10	5	1	0	0
Health Care	191	92	71	53	24	10	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

SOURCE: WOODS & POOLE ECONOMICS

As noted earlier, York County has in part functioned as a price alternative to Charlotte and Mecklenburg County as it's big selling points (particularly with the State's tax incentives for major moves). A key for the County going forward is to focus on that quality of life in the workplace aspect (as opposed to residential quality of life). LPL, in its announced move to York County, provided some insights into this need, with its requirement for the creation of some type of mixed-use town center proximate to its offices, where employees could walk for lunch or dinner, and where employees could live and be within walking distance of the office. Creating these locations, and emphasizing parks and greenways for exercise and relaxing should be a focal point for York and its cities in the coming years.

## INDUSTRIAL MARKET

The state of South Carolina has emerged as a major player in industrial land use in recent decades due to strong competitive advantages, including a diverse base of industrial companies, a skilled industrial workforce, international ties, excellent transportation links, a favorable geographic location, tax policies, and access to seaports. York County's highway proximity to Charlotte, access for distribution operations, and large blocks of inexpensive land have attracted many single-tenant users and build-to-suit industrial users seeking to make sizeable investments in the region. Examples include Ross Distribution, U.S. Foodservice, and Northern Tool and Equipment. Sizable investments have been made, including a 1,200,000 square foot Black & Decker Corporation distribution center, a 1,300,000 Ross Stores distribution center (Ross has over 3 million square feet of industrial space in York), and a 423,000 square foot TransPoint distribution

center. Much of the industrial base exists in Rock Hill, where more than 120 industrial companies are based, and in Fort Mill, which is home to more than 50 industrial companies.

York's industrial market has continued to expand and showcase strong fundamentals. According to Cassidy Turley, more than 19,200,000 square feet of space exists in the market (with nearly 300,000 square feet currently under construction), representing 12.5% of all industrial space in the metropolitan area. Vacancy continues to trend down and is currently 4.5%, below the metro average of 5.1%. In addition, asking rents for the County average \$3.44/square foot, well below the \$4.73/square foot asking rent average in the Charlotte metro.

Industrial has represented a significant economic engine and tax basis for the County although, as noted earlier, York's location quotients for both Distribution and Warehousing relative to the Charlotte metro are low, indicating these uses are not yet export industries for the County. York County, with direct access to I-77 (and a location between Charlotte and Columbia) as well as connectivity to I-85 to the west (I-85 being the largest distribution/warehousing corridor in the Southeast), is well-positioned to see significant growth in industrial-using industries. Indeed the Carolinas and the Charlotte metro area have seen a renaissance in industrial demand, driven not only by warehousing and distribution, but increasingly by manufacturing, which has enjoyed a renaissance in the US due to international transportation costs, the need for quicker inventory controls, and a greater importance on quality control.

While traditional loss industries, such as textile-related manufacturing, have continued to decline, several industry types have shown promising growth, focused around computers and electronics. These growing areas are:

- Printing and Related Activities
- Chemical Manufacturing
- Machinery Manufacturing
- Computer and Electrical Products
- Retail distribution

The large majority of space delivered to the market to date has been within a few miles of I-77, largely in and around Rock Hill, where land prices are lower and development feasibility more realistic. Projects like Riverwalk and Waterford have been highly successful in locating new warehouse and industrial facilities. Central and western York County have seen less industrial development given their more removed location relative to regional interstates. This said, the four-lane Highway 5/161 corridor between I-85 in the west and I-77 in the east create opportunities. Tapping into these opportunities and drawing firms further off of the two freeways (York's closest proximity to I-85 is around 7.5 miles) will be the key challenge for these areas.

New innovations, robotics, online retail, and nanotechnology are transforming the industrial sector and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. These industries are also import industries, bringing outside dollars into the County and providing a strong tax base, which is important to the long-term health of the community. There is significant opportunity for industry and manufacturing in the County, especially in the western portion, where land is abundant and transportation investments can be made. In addition, as noted previously, the location quotients for transportation-related distribution and warehousing are lacking in the County and offer room for improvements relative to the metro.

## RETAIL MARKET

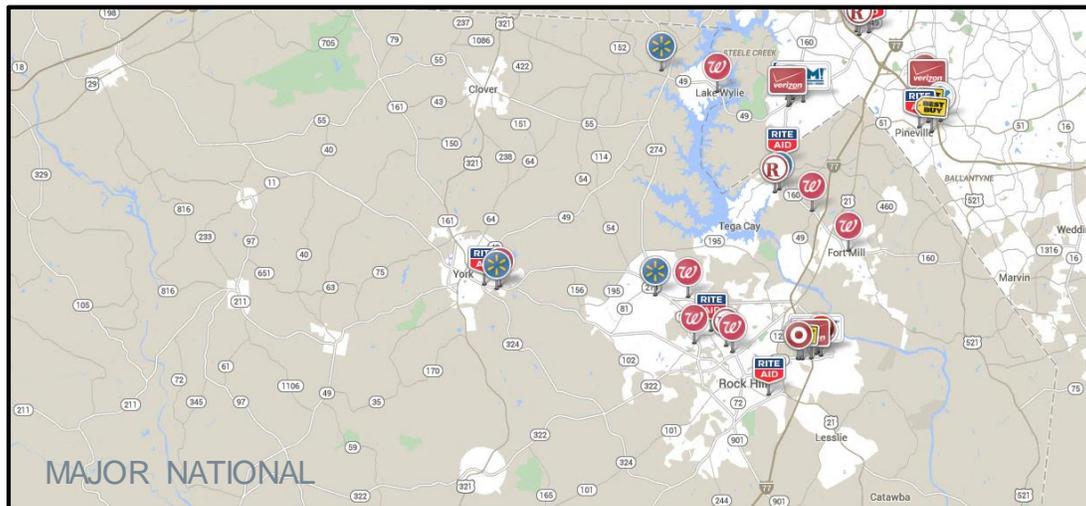
York County's strong residential growth has spurred a greater need and demand for retail uses. Most of the retail development in the County to date has been in the form of smaller neighborhood retail uses as well as stand-alone big box discount retailers such as Walmart. Most retail centers in the County are relatively small, with national grocery-anchored neighborhood centers, small strip centers, or freestanding retailers. Although it is growing, the retail base in the County is lacking in terms of variety compared to Mecklenburg County and there is a general sense that sales are being lost to York's northern neighbor, particularly sales relating to mall-type stores and comparison goods, while convenience retail uses (grocery, drug store, etc.) and discount retailer are being well-captured in the County.

Overall NCG estimates there are around six million square feet of retail space in York County as of 2012, including both multi-tenant space and user-occupied space (build-to-suits). This is based off of the more than 8,200 retail employees and 6,100 restaurant employees in the County (as of 2012). Karnes Research estimates there are around 5.4 million square feet of space in the County in multi-tenant properties, a close match to NCG's estimates. This total places York above Iredell County and Union County, and in line with Gaston, but well below Cabarrus County (Concord Mills) among Charlotte's suburban areas.

Vacancy rates are quite strong in the County, estimated to be around 94%, well below the regional average of 91.4% and indicative of a tight retail market. Rents are also solid, averaging close to \$18/SF in the County, below the regional average of \$19.15, but higher than all of its suburban competitors, again reflective of a strong retail market.

As can be seen from the map below, nationally-represented retail uses are largely focused on discount retailers (Walmart and Target) or convenience based retail, with destination retail uses, including higher-end, Main Street or mall-type tenants being found in Mecklenburg. Indeed, York's market is dominated by convenience-based retail (grocery stores, drug stores) as opposed to more comparison or destination retail. Overall, NCG estimates York is capturing around 65% of its retail expenditure potential, when factoring out car sales and online transactions. Creating these destinations will be a focus going forward, particularly with the County's population showing such strong and affluent growth.

Map 10: Major National Retailers in York County



SOURCE: SQUARE UP

York County has 0.192 grocery stores for every 1,000 people, which is slightly below the 0.199 average in South Carolina and the .214 average in Mecklenburg County. West York County lacks grocery and retail due to the lack of rooftops, while Rock Hill and Fort Mill have a significant number of grocery stores (including Walmart) and continue to increase this number substantially. In 2014, Rock Hill alone announced five more grocery stores, including three Walmart neighborhood markets (in addition to a planned new supercenter) and two Publix stores. In addition, the County offers 117 full service restaurants, a ratio of .561 restaurants for every 1,000 people. This is well below the South Carolina average of .775 and the Mecklenburg average of .931. As the County offers more opportunity to capture comparison goods/regional-type

needs and more rooftops come to the York area, many national companies are realizing the traffic and population can support the dynamics of retail. As York continues to develop and new opportunities emerge, temptations to overdevelop the retail market will appear, creating the potential for retail abandonment along corridors. Safeguarding against this is an important issue for York County going forward and will be addressed in future demand reports. The county will need to capture retail potential while avoiding retail abandonment and focus on national retail trends of experience based and restaurant mix tenant bases. Opportunity appears to exist in the County for smart growth and lifestyle-oriented retail, be it in existing town centers, in newer mixed-use centers, or even in the main street components. These centers can be solely retail endeavors, or they can be mixed with residential and other land uses to create destinations.

## **POSSIBLE ECONOMIC/MARKET ISSUES FOR STUDY**

Against the preceding assessment, we believe there are several key issues that merit further study, beyond understanding demand potential in the County in the coming decades. These issues include:

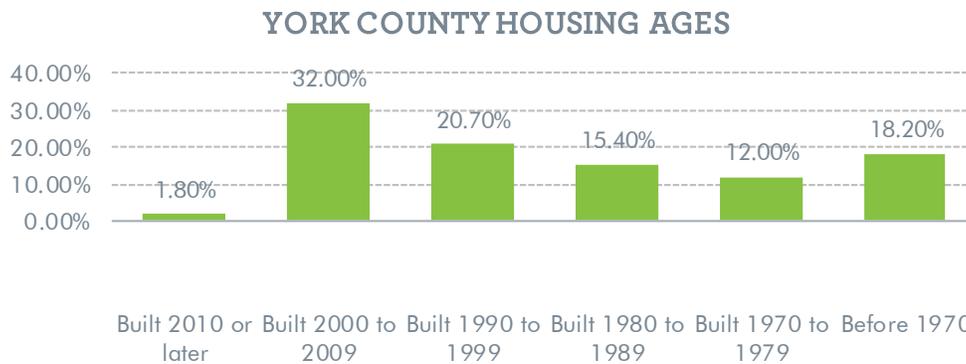
- Ability to attract smaller firms and employment into the County;
- Identifying market potential and strategies to continue to attract a diverse array of companies, one that will allow the County to grow in the foreseeable future;
- Understanding land supply for office and industrial users relative to potential future growth;
- Opportunities and strategies to further growth of key manufacturing and industrial sectors in the County, including locations, infrastructure, and other investments that may increase York's attractiveness for these users;
- Spurring economic development (beyond retail) west of Lake Wylie, western portions of the County, and areas east of Rock Hill;
- Diversifying residential opportunities in the County to accommodate a broader demographic of residents;
  - This includes creating housing opportunities that are attractive to singles and couples without children, who are disinterested in conventional lot single-family product, and younger Gen Y members who are not attracted to the County currently;
- Continuing creation of town centers like developments and fortification of existing town centers to recreational focal points for development;
  - These places could be attractive not only for all types of residential product, but for retail and office users as well; and
- Creating strategies for retail development in the County--based on estimates of demand potential and space needs--and address overall retail needs by time period in the coming years, along with opportunities to capture "leakage" to Mecklenburg County.
- Strategies to attract employers who desire/need higher education requirements which may in turn provide higher wage positions.

# HOUSING

## HOUSING MARKET

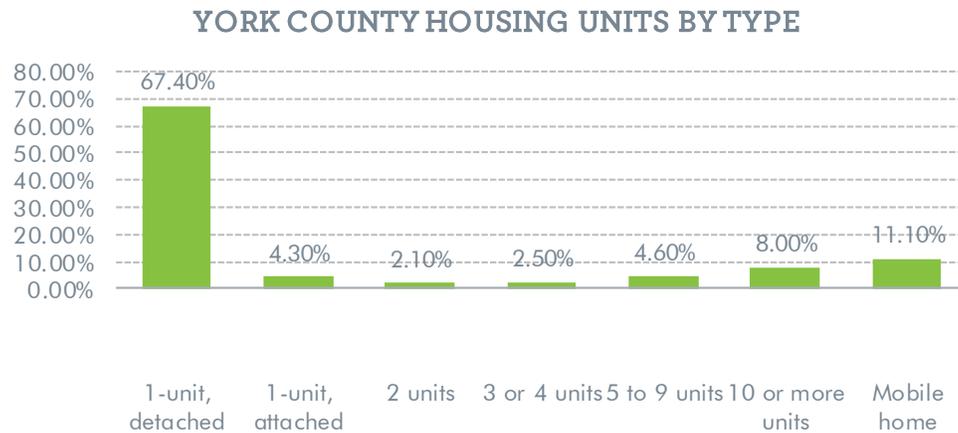
York County's housing market fundamentals are strong, due to the solid lifestyle proposition and growing positive perception of the County. York's housing market is largely comprised of lower-density, for-sale residential homes to a greater extent than that of the Charlotte area overall. Roughly 72% of York County's 87,303 occupied housing units are owned, above the 67% average ownership rates seen at the larger Metro area. This isn't too surprising, as renters tend to accept more convenience-driven and urban locations, while many owners, who are often driven by factors relating to schools and are more apt to "drive for value", accept homes in suburban counties such as York, Cabarrus, and Union. Indeed 67.4% of York County's entire housing stock can be found in single-family units, with an additional 11.1% found in mobile homes. 21.50% of all housing units are found in attached product, including townhouses, duplexes, and rental apartments. All are products that can function as price-alternatives to higher-priced single-family homes, and all are less land-intensive than single-family homes.

Figure 13: York County Housing Ages



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Figure 14: York County Housing Units by Type



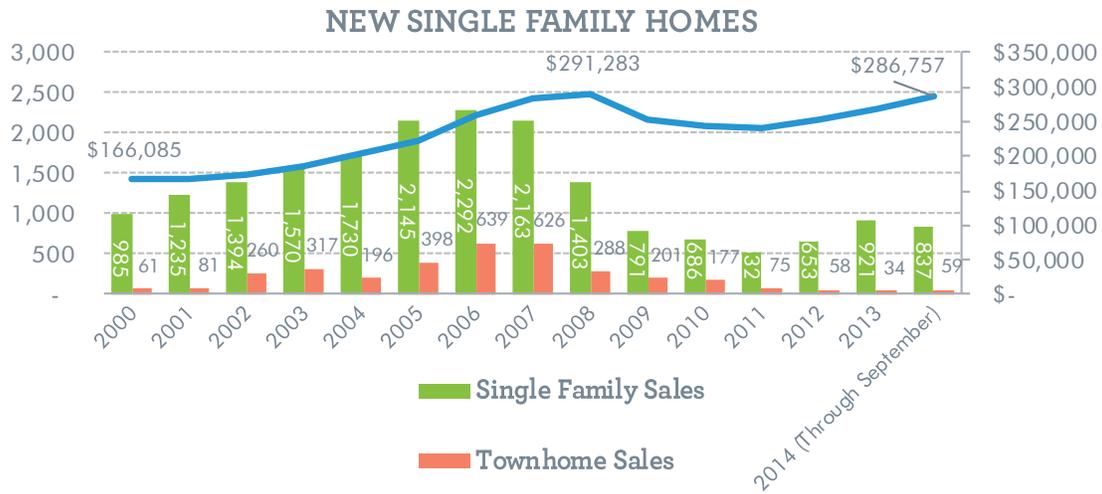
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Given York's function as a family and bedroom community, a role that has largely emerged over the last 20 years, it should be no surprise that the majority of York County's housing stock was built after 1990. Nearly one-third has been built since 2000. Given the predominantly new housing stock in the area, issues relating to housing quality should be minimal in the coming years.

York County has seen a significant moderation in housing activity since the last decade, during which single-family new home sales rose to as high as 2,300 units in 2006 and fell to as low as 532 sales in 2011. Home sales are rebounding

from the recession with home prices reaching pre-recession levels. The momentum is expected to continue into 2015 and beyond. The pipeline is expected to grow due to rapidly rising home prices, especially in the Fort Mill area. Price appreciation has been substantial in York County since 2000, with median new home sales prices increasing by over \$120,000 (up 42% over a 14 year period), in spite of a price drop during the Great Recession.

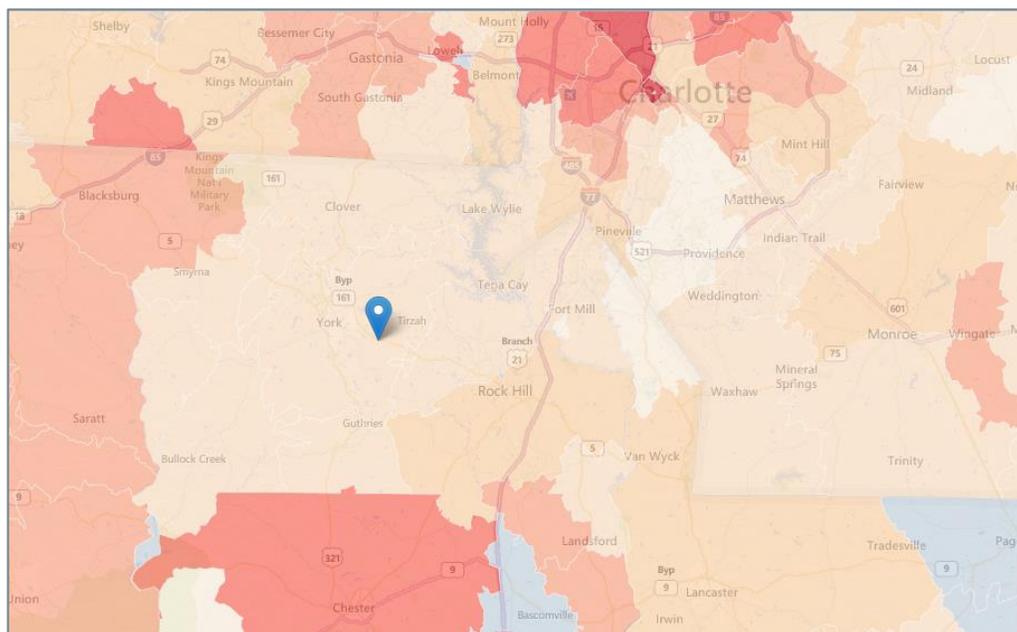
Figure 15: New Single Family Homes



SOURCE: MORE DATA

This strong growth in house prices has helped York to avoid significant issues with foreclosures and homes “under water”, where the amount owed on the house is more than the value of the house itself. As shown in the graphic below, areas within York County range from around 10% of homes under water (around Tega Cay and northeast York County) up to 19% in Rock Hill. As can be seen below (the darker shades being higher percentages of homes under water, the County is in good shape relative to not only parts of Mecklenburg, but also to rural areas in South Carolina to the south and west.

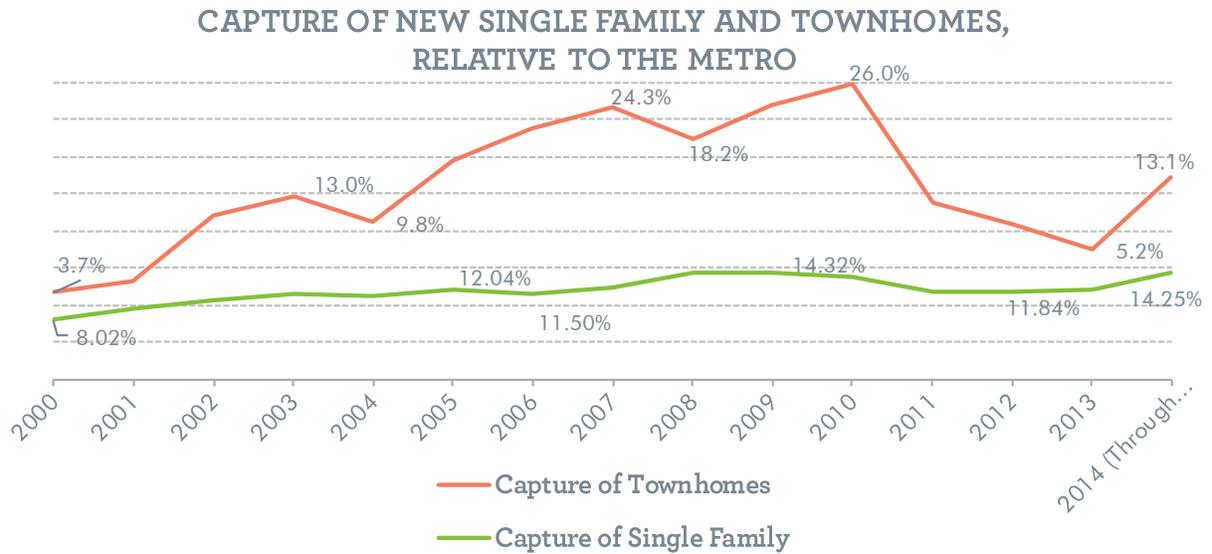
Map 11: Percentage of Homes Under Water



SOURCE: ZILLOW

Rising home prices also create significant opportunities for other housing product types, including townhomes, and condominiums, as residents look for price alternatives to single-family homes. As shown below, York's capture of MSA townhome sales has been significantly higher than its capture of single-family homes, indicative of affordability issues in parts of the county (particularly Fort Mill to Tega Cay) where singles and childless couples, and young families are more likely to be priced out of the single-family housing market.

Figure 16: Capture of New Single Family and Townhomes

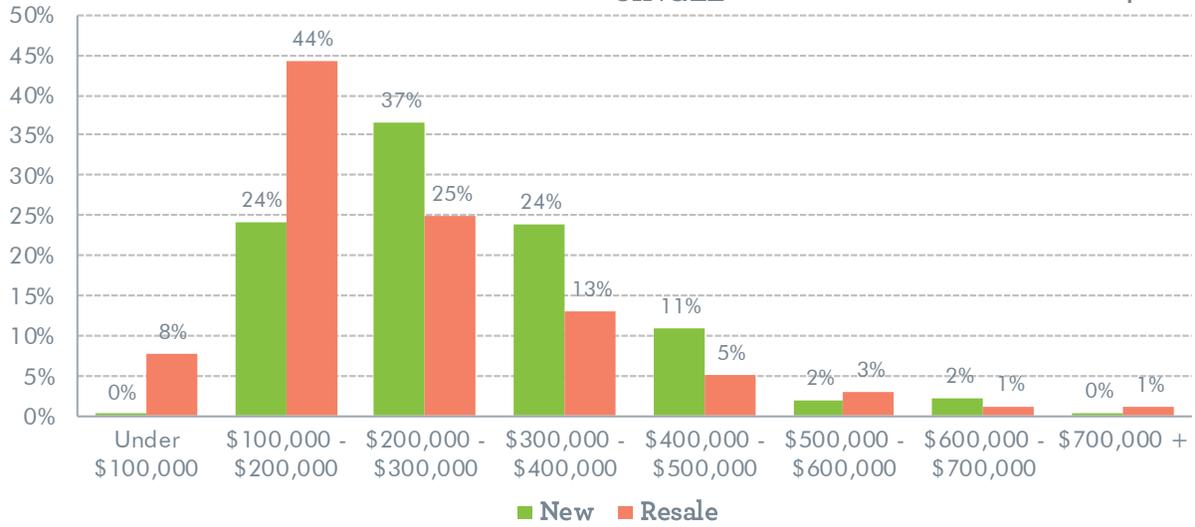


SOURCE: MORE DATA

As shown in the graph below, 75% of York County's new single-family home sale prices were over \$200,000 in 2014, with the majority ranging from \$200,000 - \$300,000. On the resale side, only 48% were over \$200,000, with the majority of resale single family homes being sold in the \$100,000-\$200,000 range. Clearly the County is becoming less affordable over time, creating both a need and opportunity for price alternative products as alluded to earlier.

Figure 17: York County New and Resale Single Family Home Sales 2014

### YORK COUNTY NEW AND RESALE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME SALES IN 2014

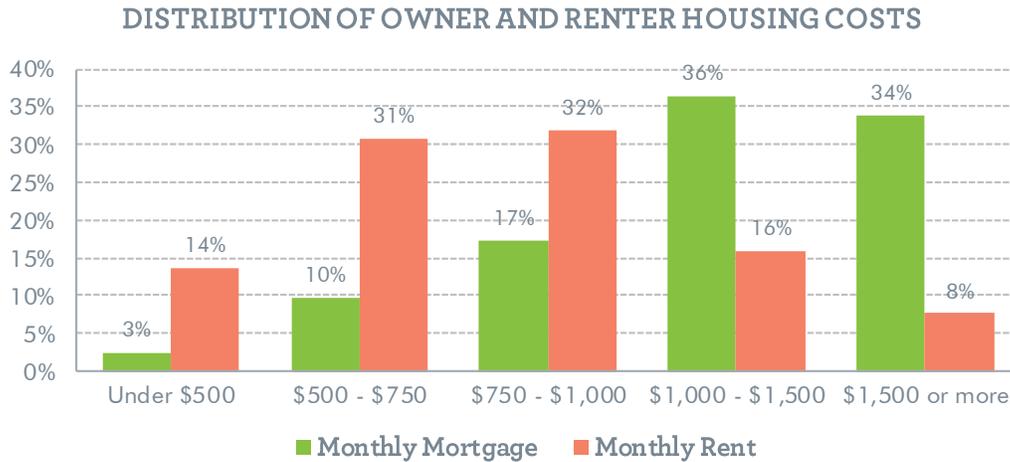


SOURCE: MORE DATA

## INDICATORS OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Affordability is increasingly becoming a topic of discussion in areas, such as York County, that continue to grow and see price appreciation. Indeed, one can see the differences in value propositions for ownership housing in the County relative to rental housing, shown below. Roughly 70% of all owners in the County are paying more than \$1,000 per month in mortgage, while only 24% of renters are paying the same amount which makes renting a largely affordable proposition in York County.

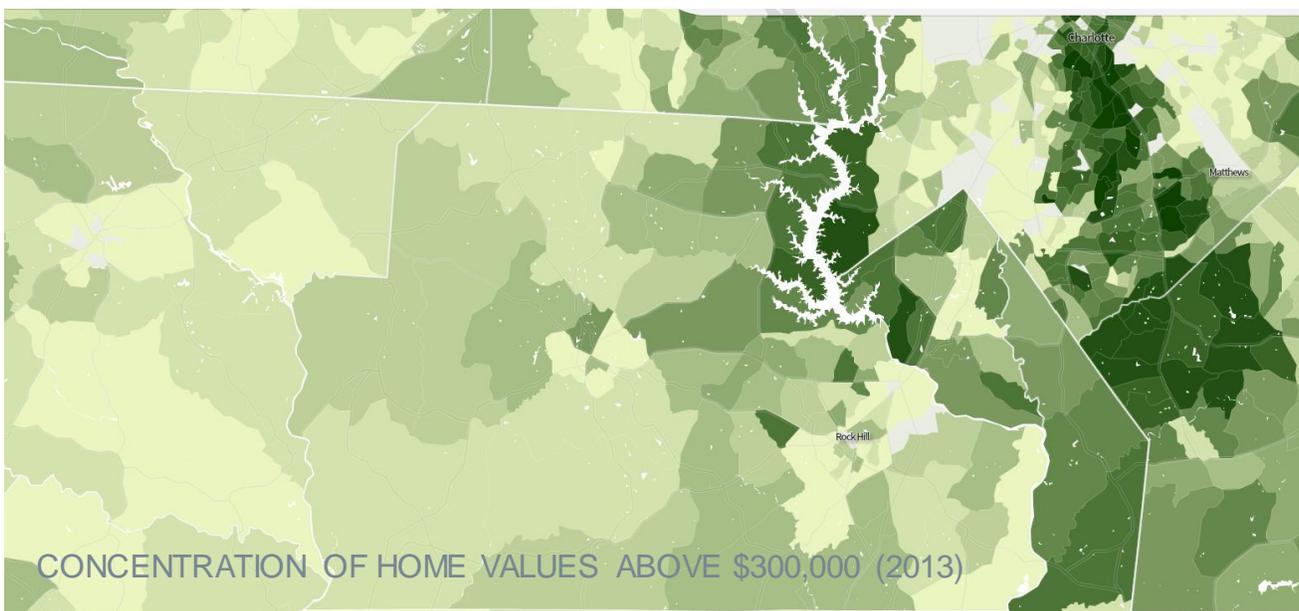
Figure 18: Distribution of Owner and Renter Housing Costs



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

In addition, interviews with developers revealed that home values are rapidly increasing, with new product in the Town of Fort Mill reaching \$600,000 and above. The map below shows the concentration of home values above \$300,000. Contributing factors include quality walkable neighborhoods, the rapidly improving perception of the County, quality schools, lack of product, and recreational attractions. Planning efforts should focus on creating more areas of the County that are attractive for residential expansion including areas west of Lake Wyle, City of York, and south of Rock Hill.

Map 12: Concentration of Home Values above \$300,000 (2013)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. PREPARED BY SOCIAL EXPLORER

The County can make other areas more attractive by increasing the lifestyle proposition, investing in transit nodes, recreational amenities in areas west of Rock Hill, and creating more walkable neighborhoods. The County has experienced tremendous success, as shown in house values and economic development in the northeast portion of the County, where strong investments in recreational amenities, transit nodes, and walkable neighborhoods are proliferate. The Carolinas, like much of the United States, has a growing demand for more walkable interactive "places" in the market, and households are willing to pay to live close to those places. Existing examples include Riverwalk and Baxter Village.

Over the past several years Noell Consulting Group (NCG) has conducted a number of consumer research efforts in the Southeast in order to understand living decisions and preferences among households of varied ages, compositions, and incomes. The following two graphs summarize stated preferences from a recent NCG survey in Raleigh-Durham of nearly 1,000 Research Triangle Park employees: white collar employees who are consistent in many ways with middle-income and affluent households moving into York County.

As can be seen below, nearly 75% of surveyed households indicated that they would be willing to make trade-offs to live in areas that are walkable to stores and restaurants. More than half sought a home within walking distance of work, even if it meant giving up square feet in the home. Similarly, more than half would give up yard space to live within walking distance of a park.

Figure 19: Home/Neighborhood Trade-Offs



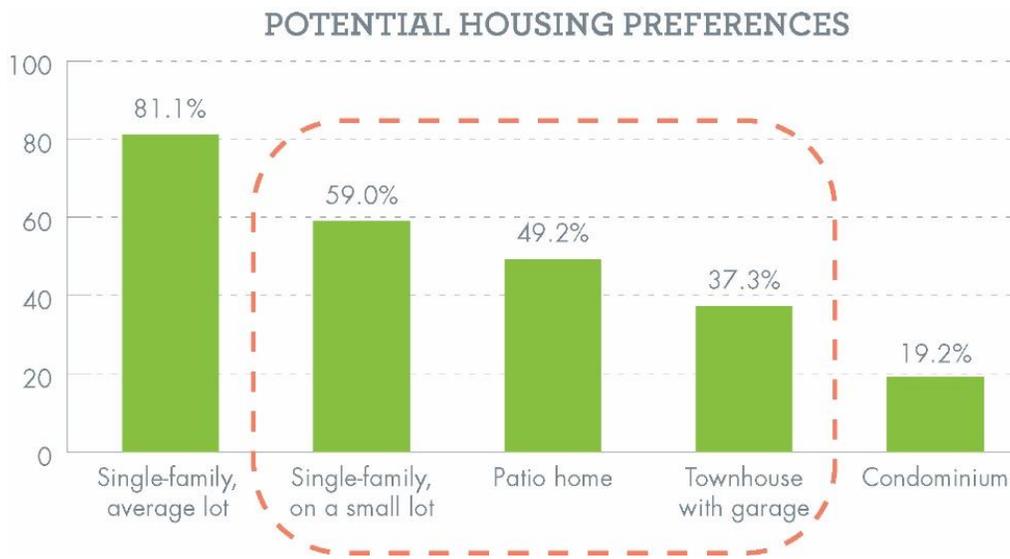
SOURCE: NOELL CONSULTING GROUP

To this conclusion, York County has encouraged successful traditional neighborhood and town center-like neighborhoods like Baxter Village, which should act as a framework for future smart home growth in the area. These environments can be created to maintain and enhance market interest in living in the County and to allow the County to coexist with all land uses, a practice which is becoming much more prevalent in new developments across the nation and region.

The NCG survey also asked about interest in different types of housing, including conventional single-family homes and alternative products. As shown in Figure 20, conventional single-family homes continue to garner the most interest of all products, but detached homes on smaller lots and patio homes--products potentially more attractive to singles, couples without children, empty nesters, and aging households--are also products that half or more of the surveyed households would somewhat or seriously consider. When combined with the previous chart--those willing to make trade-offs for the right location--opportunities for different products and environments in York County become clearer. Finally, it is worth noting that more than 37% of those surveyed expressed interest in living in townhouse units, a growing product in York County.

Creating these environments, including those that appeal to younger singles and couples, as well as maturing households increasingly driven by lifestyle, will be important to York County's continuing residential growth in the long-term and should be understood more thoroughly. York's significant executive housing growth makes possible the creation of these areas and furthers opportunities for alternative products. These include products that not only appeal to people for lifestyle opportunities, but also offer price-alternative options to single-family homes.

Figure 20: Potential Housing Preferences



SOURCE: NOELL CONSULTING GROUP

## RENTAL APARTMENTS

York County has been exceedingly proactive in accepting and building Class A apartments. In addition to being the largest apartment market outside of Mecklenburg County, the County has shown strong fundamentals with the lowest vacancy in the metro and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest average rents.

Nearly all of the product is garden style apartments with surface parking, with the strongest concentration of rental multifamily around Rock Hill (which has recently put a moratorium on apartments). Additionally, much of the product in the County is older, between 6-15 years old and classified as Class B product. Strong demand exists for new rental multifamily as families seek to be in good school districts yet cannot afford the increasing home prices in the area, especially in Fort Mill, which has seen new home prices average in the \$400,000s with some homes exceeding \$600,000.

The apartment market has continued to show strong fundamentals, experiencing strong rent growth and growing from average rents of \$673/month in 2009 to \$875/month today. However, in the past 5 years, the County has only developed 780 units. These units demonstrate the strong demand, currently at a 2.8% vacancy rate and average rents at \$1,034/month.

Table 21: Charlotte Submarket Comparison

CHARLOTTE SUBMARKET COMPARISON						
County	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate	Average Sqft	Average Rent	Average Rent/Sqft
Mecklenburg	90,626	4,759	5.3%	959	\$943	\$0.98
Cabarrus	4,740	188	4.0%	917	\$783	\$0.85
Gaston	3,041	155	5.1%	950	\$685	\$0.72
Iredell	4,725	523	11.1%	963	\$854	\$0.89
Union	1,197	61	5.1%	846	\$750	\$0.89
York	7,354	238	3.2%	990	\$875	\$0.88
<b>Averages/Total</b>	<b>111,683</b>	<b>5,924</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>\$815</b>	<b>\$0.87</b>

Table 22: Statistics by Class

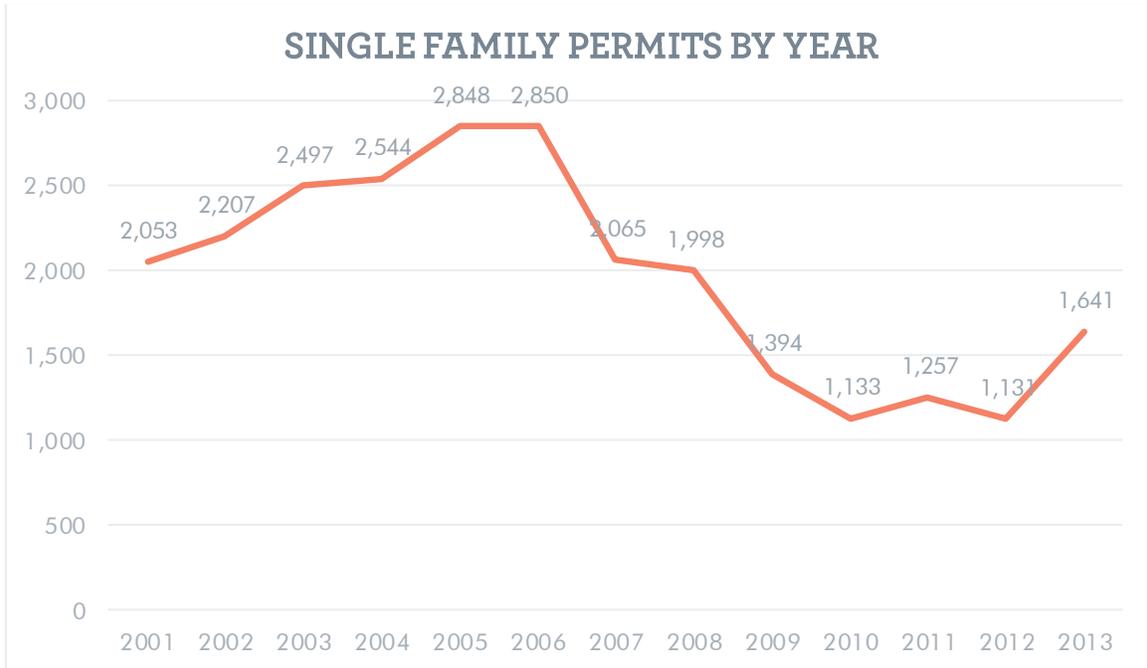
STATISTICS BY CLASS (A, B, C)						
Class	Total Units	% of Market	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Avg Sqft
A	1,520	21%	40	2.6%	\$1,088	1,068
B	4,992	68%	170	3.4%	\$848	977
C	842	11%	28	3.3%	\$647	927
	<b>7,354</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>\$876</b>	<b>991</b>

SOURCE: REAL DATA -- APT INDEX REPORT

## RECENT DEVELOPMENT

Development in York County has historically been large public serving focused developments, single tenant industrial buildings, large office campuses, and single family lot neighborhoods. The County features large destination recreational amenities such as the Giordana Velodrome and Carowinds amusement park. A majority of the industrial buildings has been built on large tracts for single tenant use, focused around I-77 and commuter routes. Office campuses of large corporations have been built in areas such as Kingsley and focused on staying around the I-77 core. Yet, the York County development landscape is dominated by single family homes. Shown below are recent single family permits by year:

Figure 21: Single Family Permits by Year



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

As shown, the amount of single family in the County is significant. The substantial amount of smaller neighborhoods built without connectivity has led to a fragmented built environment. From 2001-2013 alone, over 25,000 single family permits were issued and typically followed historic development patterns of large tract single family neighborhoods.

Indeed, the number of residential units ready to come online is significant in the County, a testament to its growing popularity as a place to live. Currently (late 2014), more than 14,600 units are in the pipeline, the majority of which can be found in northeastern portions of the County (Fort Mill, Tega Cay).

Table 23: Pending Housing Units

PENDING HOUSING UNITS	
AREA	PENDING HOUSING UNITS
Fort Mill	8,300
Unincorporated York County	2,953
Rock Hill	2,100
Tega Cay	1,274
<b>Total, York County</b>	<b>14,627</b>

In the past decade a shift has turned and developments have focused on denser and smart mixed used communities. Following national and regional trends, these developments focus on the community and adding value to the County. These highly perceived mixed-use developments should serve as blueprints for future growth in the County. Some of these communities include Baxter Village, Riverwalk, and Kingsley:

### **Baxter Village**

- A built out master planned community featuring large traditional neighborhood design with a retail town center core.
- Regarded as highly successful with walkable components, smaller lot homes, mixture of housing products, community-focused facilities, commercial out parcels, and retail with national and local tenants that serve as the neighborhood core.

### **Kingsley**

- A large corporate office campus development with rental multifamily, Fort Mill High School, and greenspace.
- Successful in attracting corporate jobs including two planned relocations (Lash and LPL) while mixing different land uses including retail and residential.
- A large town center with retail and dining options is in the works to better accommodate newly-relocated office tenants.

### **Riverwalk**

- A highly appealing and innovative master planned community currently under construction.
- Riverwalk features single family homes, apartments, 250 acres of public recreational space, a planned town center with retail and office spaces, restaurants, and a planned river district with boutique dining.
- Through a public-private partnership, Riverwalk and City of Rock Hill have completed construction on the world-class Giordana Velodrome, miles of bike trails, and public green spaces. In addition, a planned YMCA is opening in 2015.
- Riverwalk sets the precedent for mixed use in York County and the region, combining all land uses (including industrial), developing high quality buildings, and creating a destination for the area.

# LAND USE

## OVERVIEW

York County is 695.6 square miles (445,203 acres) in area. Of this land area, 615 square miles (88%) is county jurisdiction and 80.7 square miles (12%) is located in municipalities and the Catawba Indian Nation. The County is bounded by the North Carolina state line to the north, the Chester County, SC county line to the south, Sugar Creek and the Catawba River to the East and the Broad River to the west.

Land use and land cover trends in York County are a product of the County's agricultural historic, historic settlement patterns, transportation infrastructure, the growth of the Charlotte metropolitan area and other market trends. Land use is defined by the activities that take place on a given piece of land, and the structures and infrastructure that are present to enable those activities. Land use varies in intensity, ranging from forests and open space to farming, and to more intensive uses such as commercial and industrial land uses.

In general the eastern half of the County is more developed than the western half. I-77 and US 21 enter the County in the northeast corner and pass Fort Mill and Tega Cay, cross the Catawba River and travel through the east side of the city of Rock Hill. These highways provide a direct link to Charlotte, North Carolina and Columbia, South Carolina. Residential growth has been fueled by access to jobs within York County, with concentrations in Rock Hill and Fort Mill, as well as job centers across the County line in Lancaster County and those in Ballantyne, Pineville, the Charlotte Douglas Airport Area and Downtown Charlotte in Mecklenburg County. This residential growth has led to growth in commercial uses and office and institutional uses that support services such as healthcare and schools.

US 321 connects the towns of Clover, York and McConnells with Gastonia, North Carolina to the north and Chester, South Carolina to the south. Areas east of US 321 are experiencing increasing growth pressure, whereas areas west of US 321 are more rural in nature and include the towns of Smyrna and Sharon, many large tracts managed for timber, and the largest public land holdings in the County (including Kings Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain National Military Park and Worth Mountain Wildlife Management Area).

### Previous Planning Efforts

In the 2025 York County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2004, included a land use element which analyzed factors for change and growth projections to develop alternative growth scenarios. In response to the scenarios a number of policies and strategic initiatives were developed to accomplish economic development, environmental, land use and transportation goals. The cornerstone of these initiatives was a Future Land Use Map. This map, which the County has used to guide development and infrastructure decisions is discussed further in the Future Land Use section later in this report.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan included a vision of managed, balanced growth along with goals and strategies to achieve it. Achievements include:

*Quality of Life:*

- All four school districts were given an “Excellent” rating by the South Carolina Department of Education in 2014<sup>3</sup>

*Natural Resources:*

- The York County Forever Commission has helped to preserve over 9,000 acres of unique York County resources by 2014, including prime farmland, historic and cultural sites, endangered plant habitats, passive recreational areas, river corridors and watersheds, and scenic open space.
- The Western York Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan was completed in 2014 which serves as a guide and identifies strategies to conserve and enhance the intrinsic qualities of the byway.

*Managed/Sustainable Growth:*

- The majority of growth has occurred inside the Urban Service Area defined in the 2004 plan.
- Despite rapid population growth the number of farms and land in farms remained relatively stable between 2002 and 2012<sup>4</sup>.

*Reuse:*

- There has been increased investment in some of the historic downtowns in the County. Fountain Park recently opened in Downtown Rock Hill. Also, the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District was amended by Rock Hill to encompass the Knowledge Park site.

*Infrastructure*

- \$305 million in infrastructure projects has been funded through the Pennies for Progress program.

*Economic Development*

- Land availability: There is 21,571 acres that has a future land use of Light Industrial / Employment or Industrial / Employment
- There has been increased coordination between York County Economic Development and other groups (i.e. the I-77 Alliance) and recruiting employers

In addition to the previously adopted Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, the County has participated in a number of other planning efforts. Those planning efforts that will serve as an input to the Comprehensive Plan Update are described below.

*Dave Lyle Boulevard Extension Future Land Use Plan:* This plan, adopted in November of 2011, created a future land use plan for 8.5 square miles of land adjacent to the proposed nine-mile extension of Dave Lyle Blvd that would connect Interstate 77 (I-77) and Highway 521 (US 521), two north/south arterials and improve access to Union County, NC. The plan identified potential locations of clustered commercial/mixed use nodes and included a recommendation for a residential density/intensity gradient to help preserve rural character.

*Carowinds Small Area Plan:* This plan, adopted in December of 2010, included a focused plan for development and infrastructure improvements in the Exit 90 / Carowinds Boulevard areas based on stakeholder consensus, staff analysis and a common vision for the area. Major recommendations included transportation improvements on Highway 51, Springhill Farm Road, and at various intersections; revising a portion of the study area in the County future land use plan from industrial to mixed use; and funding a new gateway sign through the Adopt an Interchange Program. The new gateway sign has been completed.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/index.cfm>

<sup>4</sup>In 2002 there were 858 farms and 118,997 acres in farms. In 2012 there were 1,004 farms and 123,929 acres in farms. 2002 data from South Carolina Agricultural Statistics 2003-2005, USDA, 2012 data from 2012 Agricultural Census, USDA

*Lake Wylie Future Land Use Plan:* This plan, although never adopted, included extensive public involvement and analysis and led to a future land use plan which identified potential future mixed use, commercial and industrial areas. The plan also recommended design standards and limiting residential densities to protect water quality and other natural resources.

## SUMMARY OF TRENDS & CONCERNS

The pace of change in York County has been rapid. The County's population grew by over 45% between 2000 and 2013<sup>5</sup>. With this growth comes challenges. In some areas the high quality of life that led many residents to choose York County as a home is impacted by new growth. Traffic congestion is outpacing planned road improvements in some areas. Infrastructure needs have increased and existing and potential future rights-of-ways needed for roads, gas and electric transmission lines need to be protected from encroachment.

Dispersed residential development has increased the demand for shopping options and services and led to overcrowded schools. Increasingly municipal and county budgets are tight due to new demand for services and larger service areas. School facilities and parks and recreation programs are in high demand. New residential growth in rural parts of the County necessitates additional investment in emergency services (police, fire, EMS). Schools, parks and emergency services require up-front investment in facilities and ongoing funds for operation. For instance, county staff has estimated that it can take 22 years or more for initial fees and annual property taxes to amount to the initial costs borne by the County to accommodate school age children<sup>6</sup>. This only includes the up-front costs for schools and does not factor in operation and maintenance costs or costs for additional services (i.e. infrastructure, parks and recreation, and other services). This shows that residential growth alone cannot pay for a high level of services that York County residents have been attracted to, expect and deserve. This is evidence that there is a need to balance residential growth with non-residential growth in the form of office, commercial and industrial development due to the fact that these forms of land use yield a greater return on investment by providing tax revenues that exceed cost of services.

Identifying and protecting land for non-residential uses to provide shopping destinations as well as office and industrial employment for job creation will be an essential part of ensuring a fiscally sound future. Making sure that there is adequate land that could accommodate employment bearing land uses will be an important part of planning for the future of York County.

The Comprehensive Plan Update in 2004 included a Future Land Use plan that identified 21,571 acres as part of Light Industrial / Employment or Industrial / Employment future land use categories. Despite this seemingly large amount of industrial land, additional analysis reveals that only 2,255 acres of land in the County meets the following criteria:

- is vacant, undeveloped, or underutilized land<sup>7</sup>
- located on parcels greater than 40 acres
- within 5 miles of I-77
- inside county jurisdiction
- inside the urban service area (has access to utilities)
- in a zoning district or future land use category that allows for industrial land uses

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<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau

<sup>6</sup> Based on New Home Growth Impact Calculator provided developed by York County staff. This calculation factors in \$2,500 impact fee per new living unit and estimates annual property tax to be \$855 per new home and annual personal property tax to be \$269 per person (for autos/boats). School costs based on \$29 million for Elementary, \$34 million for Middle and \$106 million for High School. Student generation based on 2.69 persons per household, 0.31 students per household for Elementary, 0.14 for Middle, and 0.2 for High. Students per school assumed to be 800 for Elementary and Middle and 2000 for High.

<sup>7</sup> Based on York County and CONNECT Our Future data

A portion of this land is likely already included in development proposals. This leaves a limited amount of land for future employment locations.

Many residents are also concerned about the environmental and cultural impacts of growth. Sedimentation and other forms of water pollution generated from construction and stormwater run-off threaten to muddy the blue waters of Lake Wylie and the Catawba River. Open space in the form of farms and forests is being converted to more intense land uses—particularly residential developments. This conversion reduces tree canopy and negatively impacts aquatic wildlife and water quality. Pre-emptive measures may be needed in order to preserve the high quality recreational opportunities that Lake Wylie, Catawba River, Broad River, and other lakes and streams provide as well as mitigate impacts of growth to avoid more stringent regulations that could be imposed by state or federal agencies if certain species become endangered.

A secondary impact of lost open space is the more intangible loss of scenic cultural and natural assets that contribute to the rural character of some parts of York County. Previous planning efforts recognized the need to protect rural character while accommodating growth. York County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan recommended policies that reduced development pressure on farmland and sought to encourage compatible low density development in rural areas. The recent corridor management plan for the Western York Scenic Byway documents the agricultural, architectural, cultural, military, and natural history and intrinsic resources that make the western part of York County so unique. Moving forward it will be essential to identify ways to maintain a clear distinction between the more urbanized, "built up" areas of York County, its existing rural hamlets and the farmed and forested landscapes between.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Tax parcel information was combined with other datasets to develop an existing land use inventory for the County. A table and graph detailing existing land use is included as Figure 22 below. A map showing existing land use in the County is included at the end of this chapter as Map 13.

The majority of land in the County is vacant or in agricultural uses (219,086 acres or 49%). According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture there were 123,929 acres of York County in farms. Of this land 35% was managed for timber. This includes many tracts in the western part of the County. Some of these tracts cover over 2,000 acres. Other primary agricultural land uses include pasture and cropland. Principle crops include nursery, greenhouse floriculture and sod production, hay, grains, cotton, and fruits.

Rural residential uses make up the second largest land use behind vacant and agriculture lands. Rural residential uses include homes and mobile homes on large parcels (typically > 10 acres). These parcels may also have an agricultural use on part of the parcel. Single family residential uses make up about 14 percent of the land area (61,757 acres). The majority of single family residential uses are located east of US 321. Concentrations of higher density residential uses, marked by smaller lot subdivisions are located in older areas of Clover, York, and Rock Hill, as well as in Tega Cay, west of Lake Wylie, and north of the Catawba River—including throughout the Fort Mill area. Areas of subdivisions with larger lots (~1 acre) are more evenly spread throughout the County, with concentrations east and west of Rock Hill, and also in areas between York, Clover and Lake Wylie.

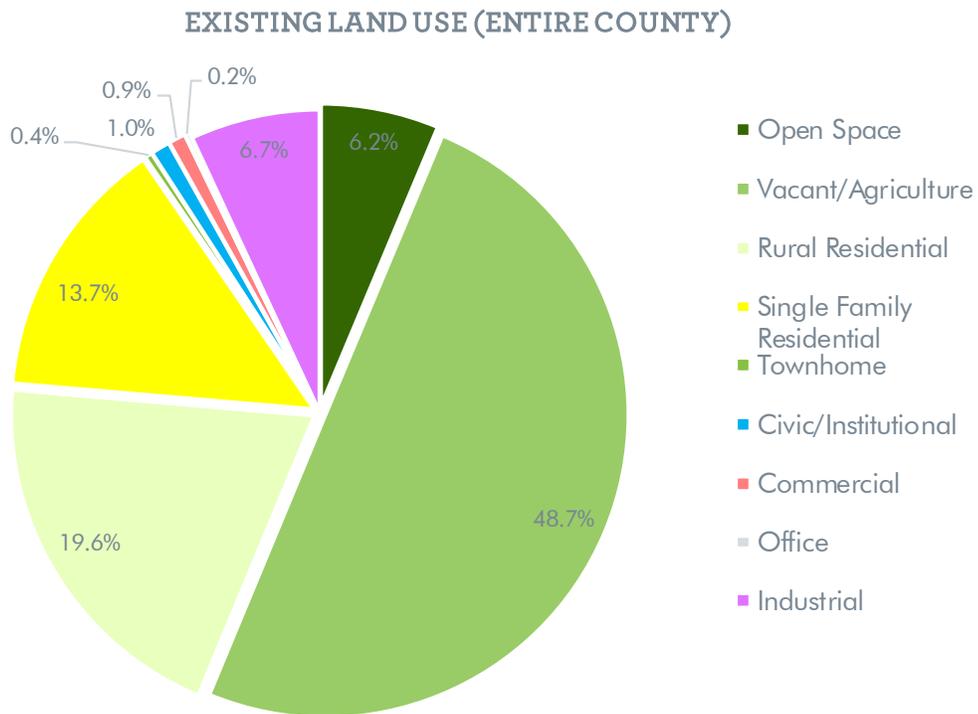
Non-residential uses, including commercial, office, institutional, and industrial make up 8.9% of the land area in York County. These uses are mainly concentrated in the municipalities and along major arterials. Only 2.5% of the land area in the unincorporated portions of York County is utilized for non-residential uses.

Land classified as open space, which includes parks and conservation easements, makes up 6.2% of the land area (27,691 acres). Of this land, Kings Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain National Military Park are the largest tracts make up over 8,000 acres. Other large tracts of open space include Worth Mountain Wildlife Management Area, which is owned by York County and managed by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and the privately managed Anne Close Springs Greenway in Fort Mill.

Table 24: York County Land Use by Type

YORK COUNTY LAND USE BY TYPE				
ELU CODE	DESCRIPTION	PARCELS	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
WATER	Surface Water (Lake Wylie)	4	5,763	1.3%
OS	Open Space (Parks, Easements, Etc.)	1,339	27,691	6.2%
VACANT/AG	Working Farm or Lands with No Significant Structure	16,772	219,086	48.7%
RURAL RES	Large Parcel with House, Mobile Home or Other Improvement, Farming Uses Possible	4,565	88,225	19.6%
SFR	Single Family Residential	72,573	61,757	13.7%
ATTRES	Attached Residential (Townhome, Apartments, etc.)	5,129	1,826	0.4%
CIVIC/INST	Civic/Institutional, Including Schools	411	4,538	1.0%
COM	Commercial	2,863	4,059	0.9%
OFF	Office/Medical Office	643	1,120	0.2%
IND	Industrial	902	30,369	6.7%
UNKNOWN	Additional Information Needed To Classify Parcel	839	5,518	1.2%
Total	Total in County	106,040	449,953	100.0%

Figure 22: Existing Land Use Graph



SOURCE: TAXPARCEL RECORDS, CONNECT OUR FUTURE DATA, AND LANDDESIGN

## Description of Sub-Areas

For the purpose of detailing issues occurring in different parts of the County, this report divides the planning area into four sub-areas. These sub-areas coincide with school districts. The sections below describe each sub-area and summarize issues identified thus far. A map of the sub-areas can be found at the end of this chapter as Map 14.

### *School District 1 (York)*

This is the largest sub-area and includes the towns of York, McConnells, Sharon, Hickory Grove and Smyrna and all of the southwestern parts of the County. The Town of York was once the commercial and social center of the region and was referred to as the “Charleston of the Upcountry” in the 1850s. It remains the County seat and the downtown has many historic structures listed on the National Register.

The majority of residential land uses in the District are concentrated around the towns. Residential growth pressures in this school district are the lowest in the County, but some growth is occurring north and east of York. Commercial areas include downtown York, the York Village Shopping Center and other shopping centers east of York along SC 161, and the Bi-Lo shopping center at the corner of Alexander Love Highway and SC 161 north of York. Major industrial uses in the area include a few manufacturing businesses located south of York along Chester Highway and East York Industrial Park which is located off of York Highway east of York. The largest new non-residential development in this district was the Floyd D Johnson Tech Center and York Comprehensive High School, both of which were constructed on Alexander Love Highway in 2010.

Outside of York, School District 1 is the most rural of the school districts. “Developed” uses (including Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Office and Industrial) only account for 33% of the land area. The majority (65%) of the land area is protected open space, vacant, agricultural, or timber. Distance from the Charlotte metro and limited access to utilities has kept growth pressure low. Privately owned open space and environmental features also define this area, including major timber operations and relatively wide floodplains along Bullock Creek and Turkey Creek. Average parcel size in this area of the County is over 11 acres and average residential parcel size is over five acres. Pastoral and forested views along the rural roads, along with the many historical structures and battlefields were the driving forces for the creation of the Western York Scenic Byway.

A chart showing a detailed breakdown of existing land use in the York School District is included at the end of this chapter as Figure 24.

### *School District 2 (Clover)*

The Clover school district is bordered by Gaston County to the north, Lake Wylie to the east and the Broad River and Cherokee County, SC to the west. The Town of Clover is located in the center of the district. The unincorporated community of Lake Wylie is located on the east side of the district. Most of the commercial development is isolated to these two communities. Collectively commercial land uses make up 651 acres in the school district and account for 0.7% of the land area. Major industrial land uses are the West Gate industrial park in Clover and the Catawba Nuclear Station east of SC 274 on Lake Wylie. Industrial land uses account for 1.1% of the land area (961 acres). Residential development from the Charlotte metro is extending down SC 274 and south from Gaston County, NC. Residential land uses make up 28.7% of the land area, but the majority is rural residential development, which includes homes on large tracts of land that could be subdivided further. Average parcel size in this area of the County is 4.7 acres and average residential parcel size is 2.4 acres. Residential development types vary between areas. Smaller subdivisions with larger lots are common in the area between Clover and Lake Wylie north and south of SC 55. Smaller single family lots (< 0.25 acres) are common inside the older parts of Clover and in the Lake Wylie area. Some apartments and townhomes have been built along SC 49/557 and SC 274 in the Lake Wylie area.

Many of the larger, wooded tracts of land exist along Beaverdam Creek, Allison Creek and Crowders Creek, which all flow east from US 321 to Lake Wylie. Kings Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain National Military Park are located in the northwestern part of the school district. These two parks cover 8,000 acres. Nannys Mountain is a 100 acre park located near the Five Points area west of Lake Wylie.

A chart showing a detailed breakdown of existing land use in the Clover School District is included at the end of this chapter as Figure 24.

#### *School District 3 (Rock Hill)*

The Rock Hill school district encompasses all of the City of Rock Hill, the Catawba Indian Nation, and all lands south of the Catawba River. This school district includes the majority of the industrial areas in the County including the Waterford Business Park, The Antrim, Marine Drive Business Park, Southway Industrial Park and the Catawba South Business Park. Other major industrial land uses include the Rock Hill Municipal Airport (Bryant Field) and the Resolute Forest Products paper mill in the southeastern corner of the County on the Catawba River. Collectively these land uses make up 19% of the land area (27,729 acres). Major commercial centers include the Rock Hill Galleria, the Cherry Road/US 21 corridor, Downtown Rock Hill and the new Walmart shopping center west of Rock Hill on SC 161. Interestingly though commercial parcels account for only 1.3% of the land area (1,913 acres) they make up 10% of the taxable property value in the school district. There are a few large institutional land uses in the Rock Hill area which include Winthrop University, York Technical College, Piedmont Healthcare, and the Applied Technology Center.

Average parcel size in this area of the County is 2.8 acres and average residential parcel size is 1.27 acres. The majority of smaller lot residential areas, with parcels less than 0.25 acres are located west of I-77 in Rock Hill, with some subdivisions located in the India Hook community and in county jurisdiction west of Rock Hill along SC 274. The majority of residential subdivisions east of I-77 and south of Dave Lyle Boulevard have larger lots, due to limited utility service. In some cases underutilized industrial lands are being converted to other uses. The Riverwalk development on the Catawba River in Rock Hill's jurisdiction is an example of this. In Riverwalk, vacant industrial lands are being converted to a mixed use community with multiple housing types, commercial areas, a variety of recreation facilities and industrial land uses.

A chart showing a detailed breakdown of existing land use in the Rock Hill school district is included at the end of this chapter as Figure 24.

#### *School District 4 (Fort Mill)*

The Fort Mill School District is the smallest school district. It is also located the closest to Charlotte and as a result of this proximity, it has become the most urbanized of the districts. Average parcel size in this area of the County is 1.4 acres and average residential parcel size is 0.67 acres. Non-residential land uses, including commercial, industrial, office, civic and institutional, account for 8.6% of the land area. Major commercial centers include the Tega Cay Village shopping center at SC 160 and Gold Hill Road, the Stonecrest Center on SC 160, Gold Hill Road and Pleasant Road area, the Carowinds area, Baxter Village, Downtown Fort Mill, and the Fort Mill Square shopping center on SC 160 east of downtown Fort Mill. Major office and industrial areas include Lakemont Business Park, Kingsley and Bradley Industrial Park.

Residential growth surrounds the Anne Close Springs Greenway, a 2,300 acre park which is privately owned and operated. Due to the presence of water and sewer the majority of subdivisions include lots under 0.25 acres. There are also a number of apartment and townhome communities in this school district. Collectively attached residential land uses make up 511 acres (1.4% of land area) and account for nearly 7% of taxable property values.

A chart showing a detailed breakdown of existing land use in the Fort Mill School District is included at the end of this chapter as Figure 24.

## **LAND SUPPLY**

The County's land supply can be defined as land that is currently not in permanently protected open space (parks or conservation easements) and land not considered "developed" or unlikely to accommodate additional development or redevelopment in the plan horizon. According to data provided by York County and the Connect Our Future project approximately 70% of the County can be considered part of the land supply. A portion of this land is in agricultural uses, a portion is vacant, and a percentage is "underdeveloped" meaning that it could accommodate additional development or is likely to be redeveloped in the plan horizon. A map of the land supply is included at the end of this chapter as Map 15.

## PENDING DEVELOPMENT

Based on an inventory of preliminary plats for developments in the County's jurisdiction as of January 2015 there are 2,953 lots that have received approval and have yet to be built. This does not include developments inside municipal jurisdictions, or developments that have been proposed and have not received approval, nor does it include additional phases of developments that have not received approval at this time. It also does not include lots that were platted but never built because of the recession. Many of these are being filled in now. According to information provided by the City of Rock Hill there are 2,100 units in approved, active developments within the City. Half of these are located in Riverwalk. Additionally there are 8,300 approved or entitled housing units in Fort Mill and 1,274 in Tega Cay.

Table 25: Approved or Entitled Housing Units

	APPROVED OR ENTITLED HOUSING UNITS*
York County	2,953
Rock Hill	2,100
Fort Mill	8,300
Tega Cay	1,274
Total	14,627

## LAND USE PLANNING

### Zoning

The York County Zoning Code includes a description of zoning districts and overlay districts that regulate the use of property for the purposes of protecting public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Every district has standards that specify development density, building height and dimensional requirements.

The largest zoning district (46.5% of land area) in the County is the Agricultural Conservation District (AGC). This zoning district is intended to protect and preserve areas under cultivation and prime agricultural soils for continued agricultural and agriculturally oriented uses and to protect the business of agriculture. Average allowable development density for the AGC district is one dwelling unit per ten acres. The Rural Development District (RUD) covers the second largest area (24.7%) and is intended for low density residential development (1 DU/Acre). The Residential Conservation District (RC-I/RC-II) covers 10.4% of the land area and allows for medium density residential, with densities varying by utility availability (1 DU/Acre with well and septic, 2 DU/Acre with public water or sewer, ~4 DU/Acre with public water and sewer). Patio homes (4,000 sqft lots) are also allowed in this district. Residential Development zoning districts (RD-I/RD-II) allow for a greater mix of housing types including single family homes, patio homes, townhomes, duplexes and apartments.

Commercial zoning districts (Business Development districts including BD-I, BD-II, and BD-III) cover a very limited land area. The most prevalent district is the BD-III, general business district. Major commercial areas in the County are usually in this district. The only exception being those that are part of Traditional Neighborhood Districts (TND) (i.e. Baxter Village).

Industrial (ID) and Light Industrial (LI) districts account for 2.8% of the land area. Much of this land is developed, but large tracts of land remain along I-77 (south of US 21, near the Catawba River, and near the Carowinds area), in the East York Industrial Park, and along SC 274.

The Urban Development District (UD), Planned Development District (PD) and Traditional Neighborhood Districts (TND) are meant to provide flexibility for infill development (UD) and master planned developments (PD and TND).

A detailed breakdown of zoning districts by category is included below. The currently adopted zoning map is shown at the end of this chapter as Map 17.

Additional zoning overlays include the Lake Wylie Zoning Overlay District, Lake Wylie and Catawba River Buffers, Scenic Overlay District, and the Transportation Corridor Preservation Overlay. These are shown at the end of this chapter as Map 18.

Table 26: Zoning District Summary

ZONING DISTRICT SUMMARY			
ZONING DISTRICT CODE	ZONING DISTRICT	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
AGC	Agricultural Conservation District (AGC)	169,695	46.5%
AGC-I	Agricultural Conservation I District (ACG-I)	8,111	2.2%
RUD	Rural Development District (RUD)	90,205	24.7%
RUD-I	Rural Development I District (RUD-I)	9,984	2.7%
RC-I	Residential Conservation I District (RC-I)	27,545	7.6%
RC-II	Residential Conservation II District (RC-II)	10,345	2.8%
RD-I	Residential Development I District (RD-I)	16,142	4.4%
RD-II	Residential Development II District (RD-II)	6,081	1.7%
BD-I	Business Development I District (BD-I)	364	0.1%
BD-II	Business Development II District (BD-II)	318	0.1%
BD-III	Business Development III District (BD-III)	2,001	0.5%
ID	Industrial Development District (ID)	8,435	2.3%
LI	Light Industrial District (LI)	1,976	0.5%
UD	Urban Development District (UD)	6,900	1.9%
PD	Planned Development District (PD)	5,506	1.5%
TND	Traditional Neighborhood District (TND)	1,061	0.3%

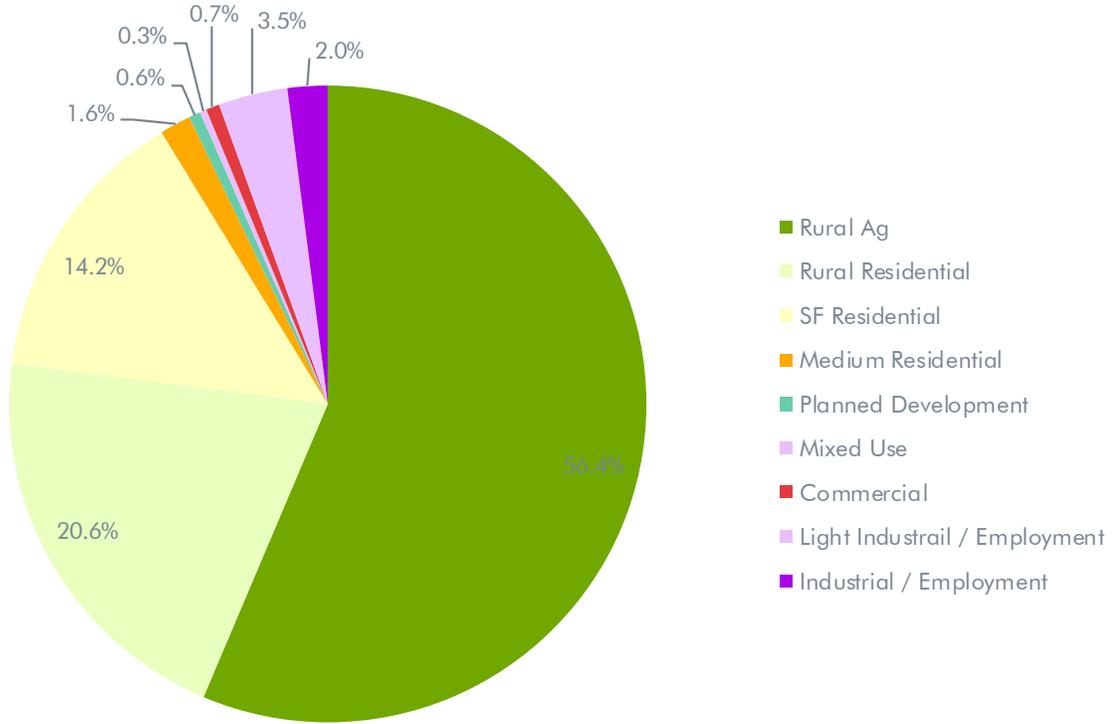
### Future Land Use

The purpose of a Future Land Use Map is to serve as a generalized guide for development and conservation patterns in the County. It is less detailed than the Zoning Map, has a longer time horizon—typically 20 years—and is meant to direct future zoning decisions, including re-zonings. The Future Land Use Map that was adopted in 2004 as part of the 2025 York County Comprehensive Plan and has been updated as recently as 2011. This map will be updated as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update to reflect re-zonings that have taken place since its adoption, current development trends, and an evolving vision for the County that will be developed during the planning process. This update, which will be informed by input from citizens, elected officials and other stakeholders, will include adapting the future land use categories to better represent the intended scale and mix of land uses in areas that are likely to experience change over the next 20 years.

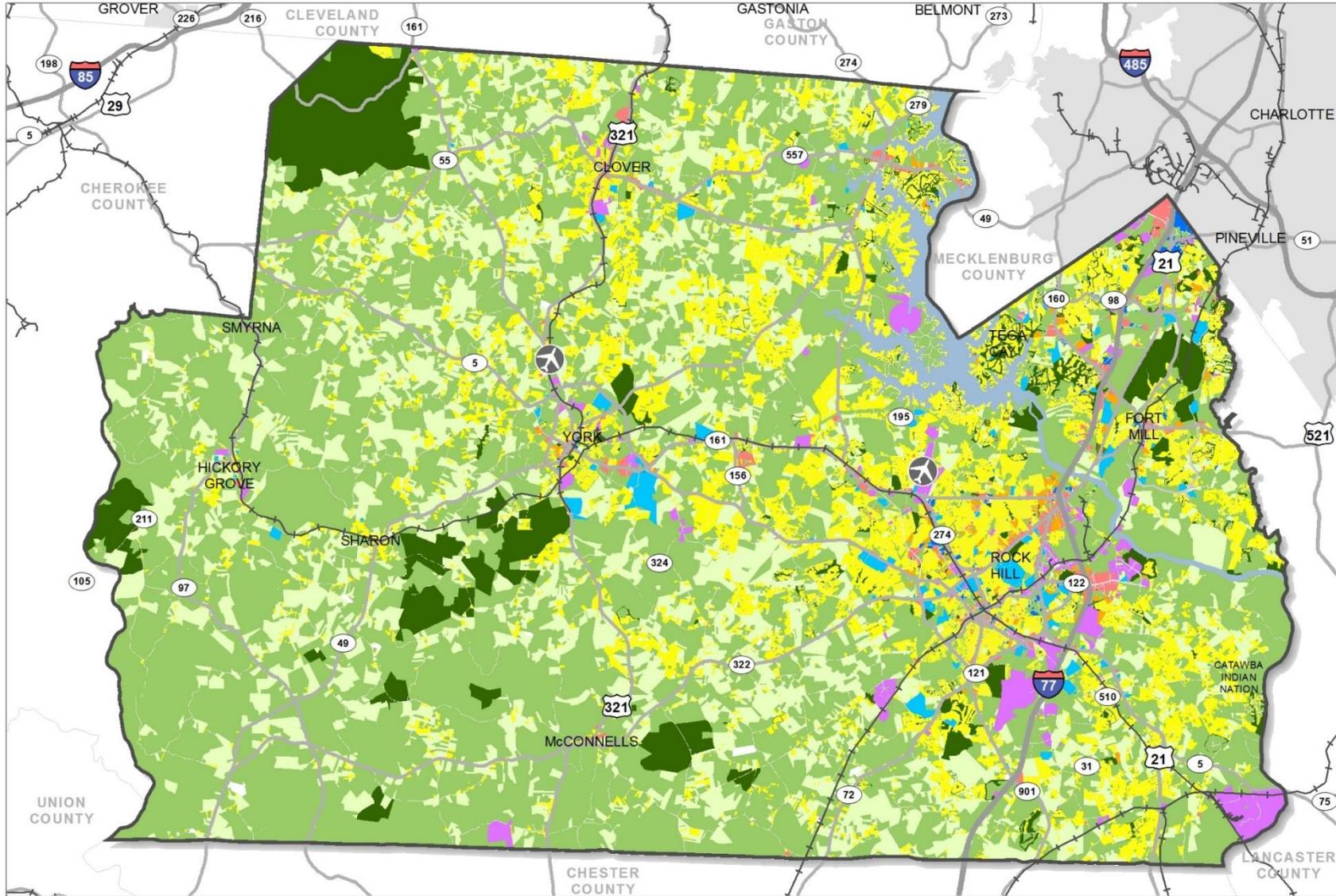
The currently adopted Future Land Use Map from the 2025 York County Comprehensive Plan is shown at the end of this chapter as Map 19. The chart below details the amount of land in different Future Land Use categories.

Figure 23: Adopted Future Land Use (2004)

# FUTURE LAND USE



Map 13: Existing Land Use (Source: York County Tax Parcels (11/14))



**Existing Land Use**

- |                                      |   |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| WATER - Lake Wylie                   | RURAL RES - Large Parcel with Residence | COM - Commercial                 | IND - Industrial          |
| OS - Open Space                      | SFR - Single Family Residential         | OFF - Office/Medical Office      | UNKNOWN - Research Needed |
| VACANT/AG - No Significant Structure | ATTRES - Attached Residential           | CIVIC/INST - Civic/Institutional |                           |



Map 14: School Districts / Sub-Areas

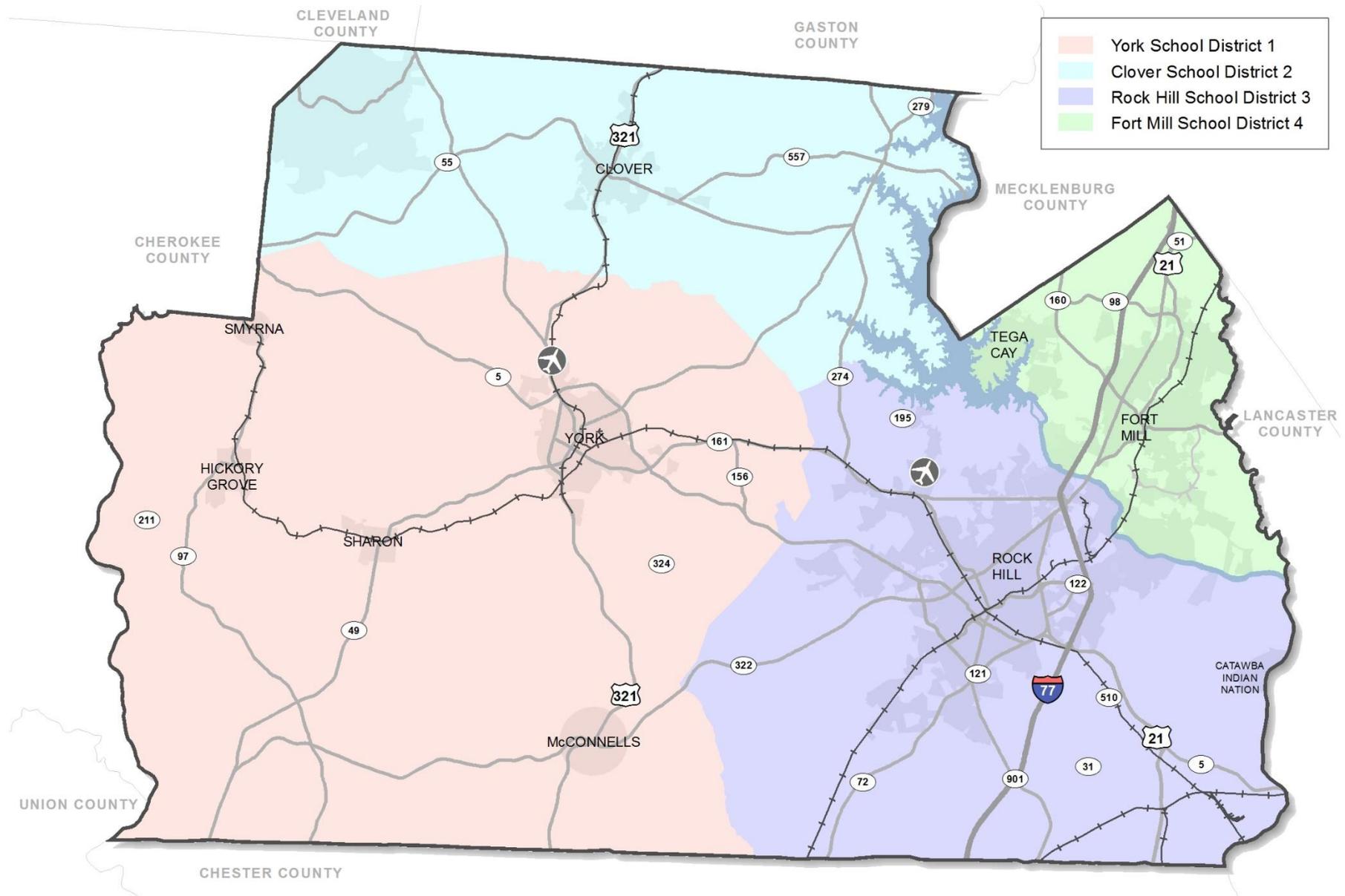
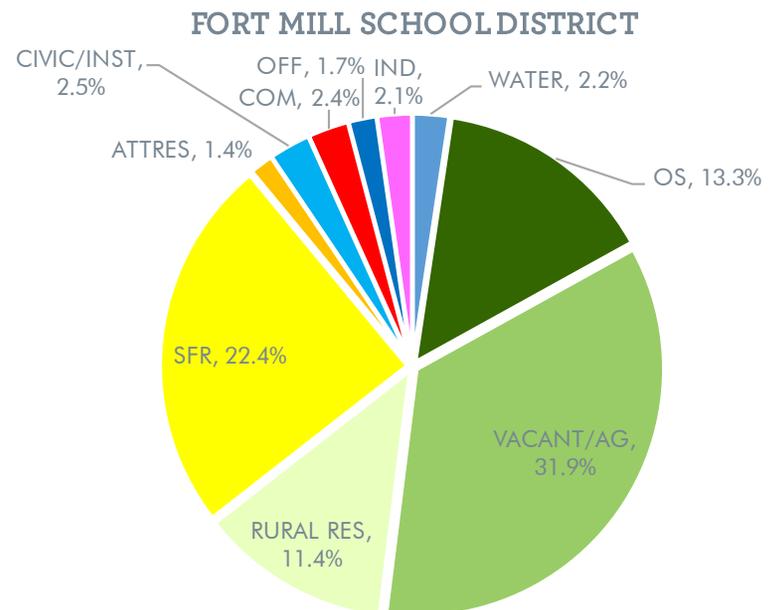
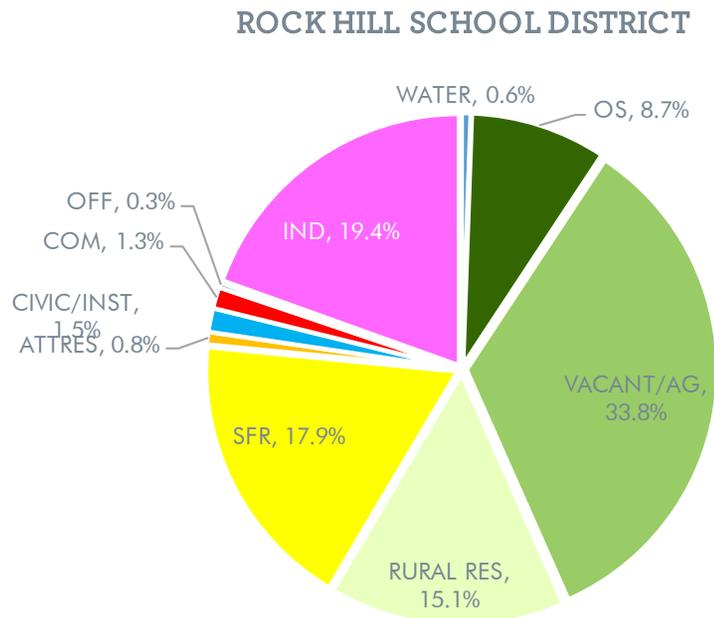
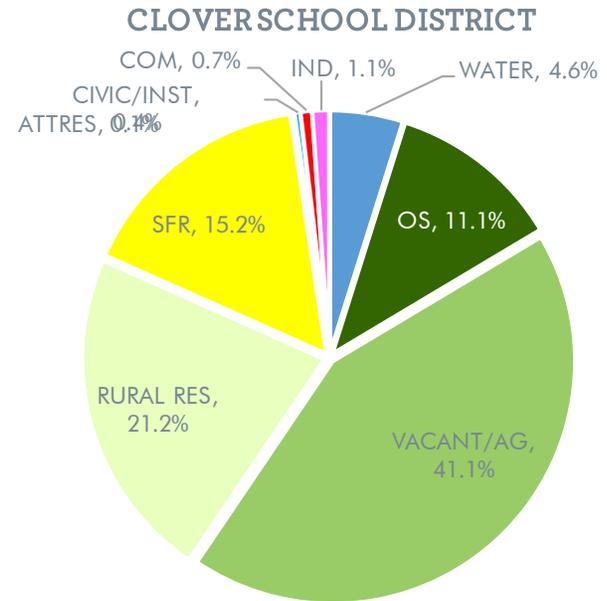
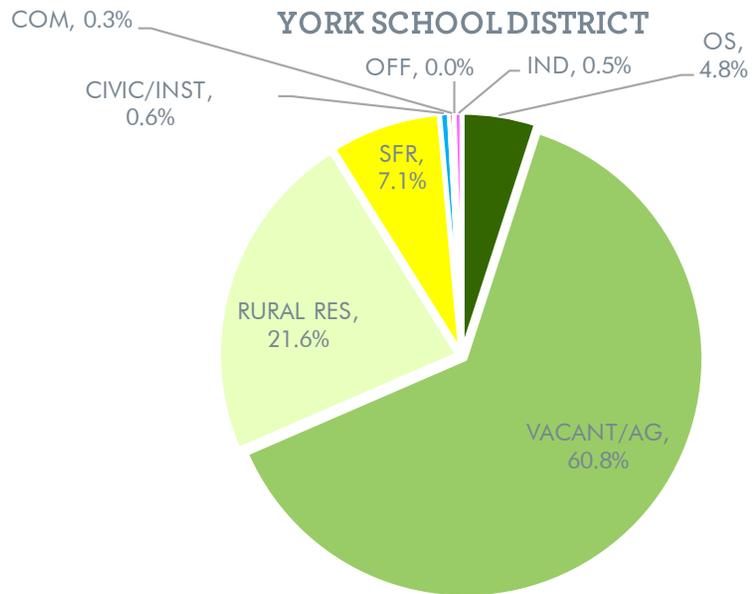
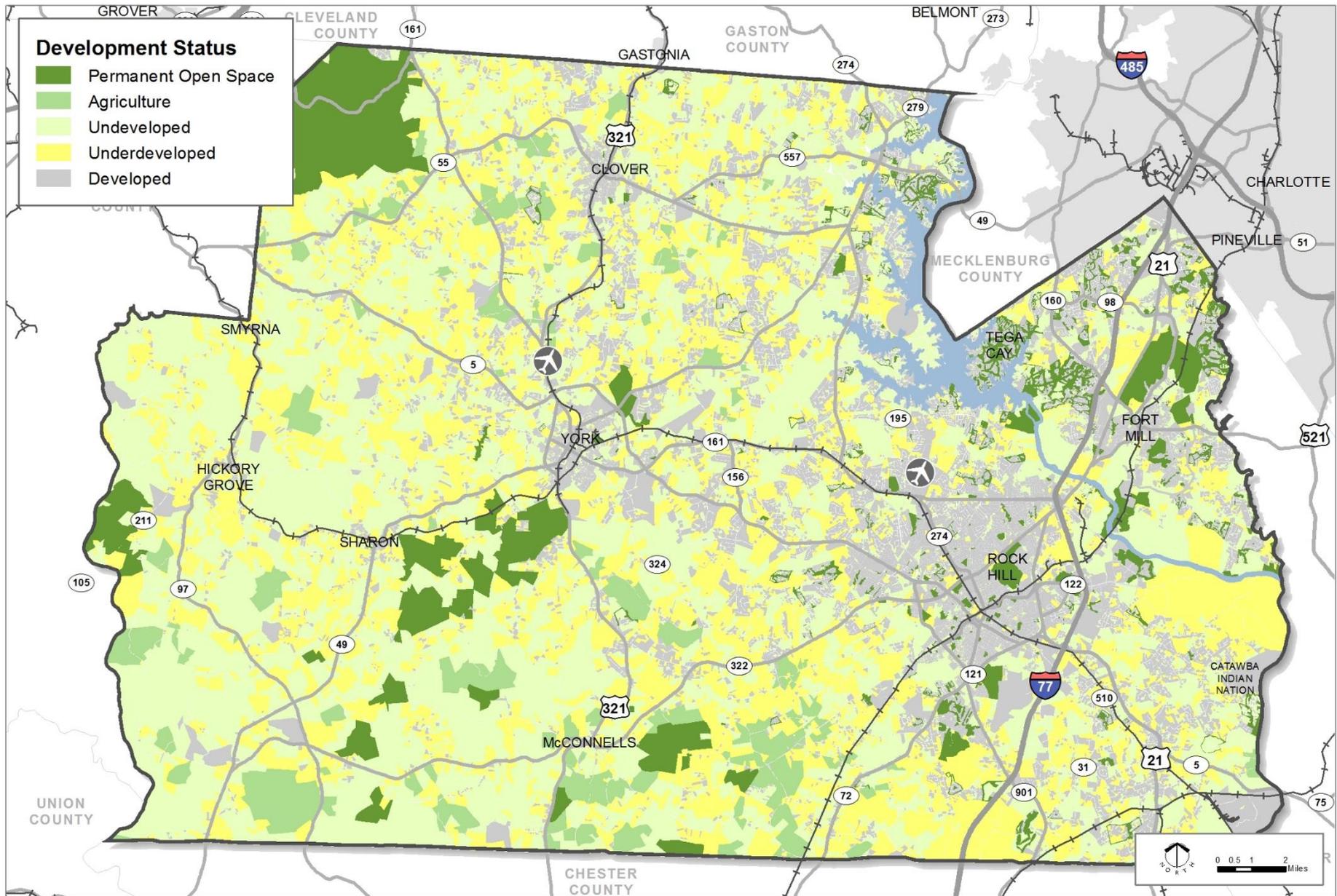


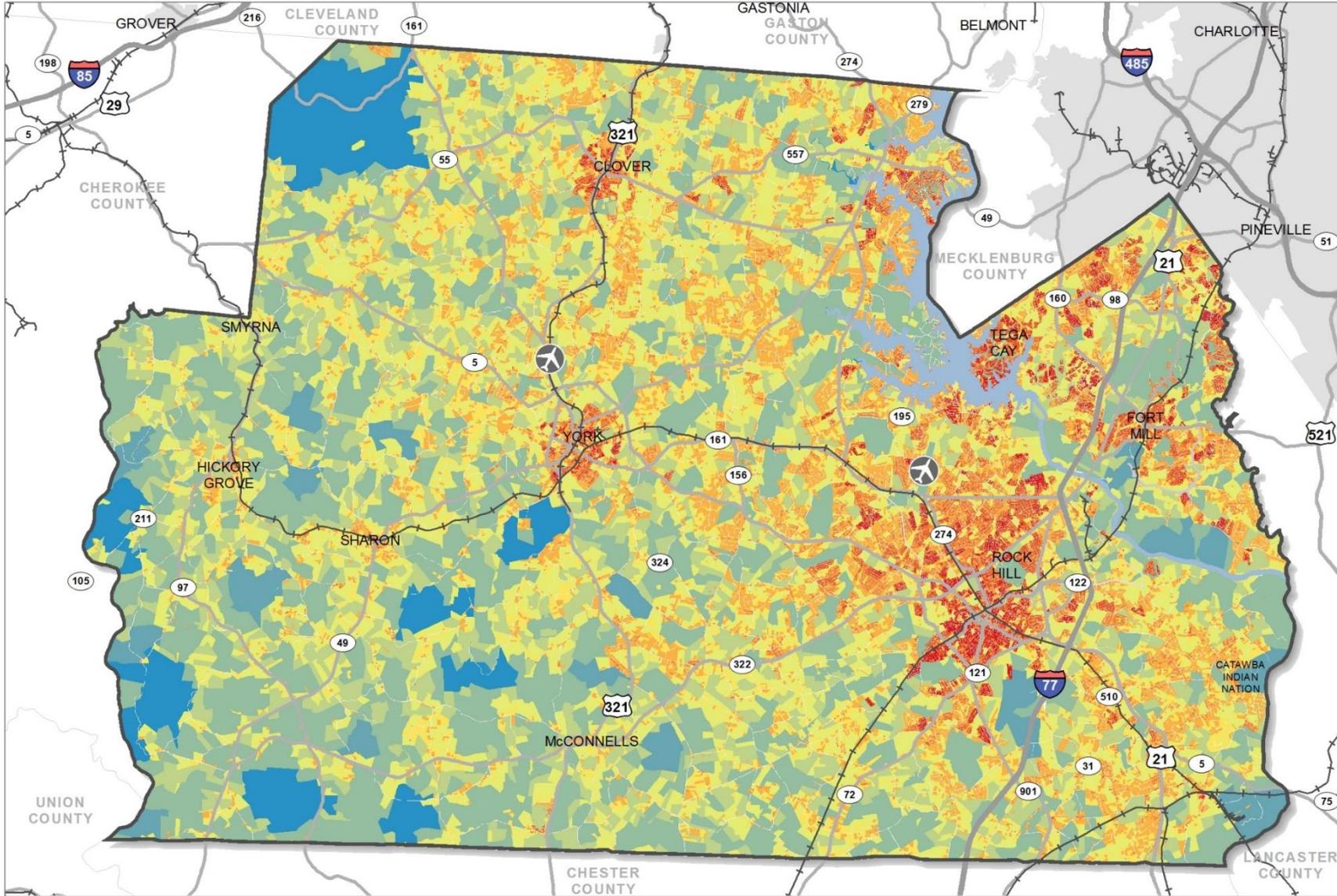
Figure 24: Existing Land Use by School District



Map 15: Land Supply (Source: Connect Our Future, York County)



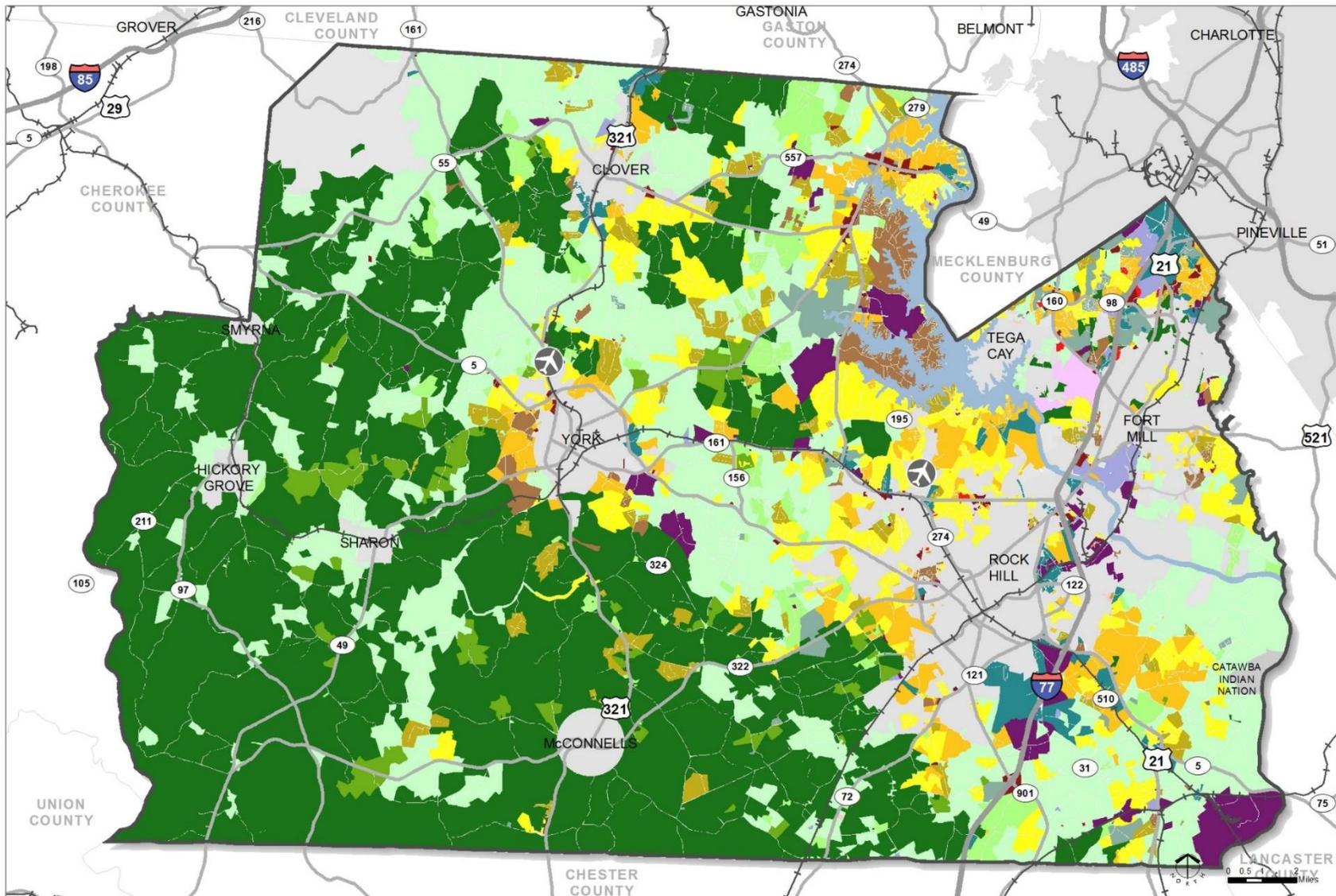
Map 16: Parcel Size (Source: York County Tax Parcel Records (11/14))



**Parcel Size (Acres)**



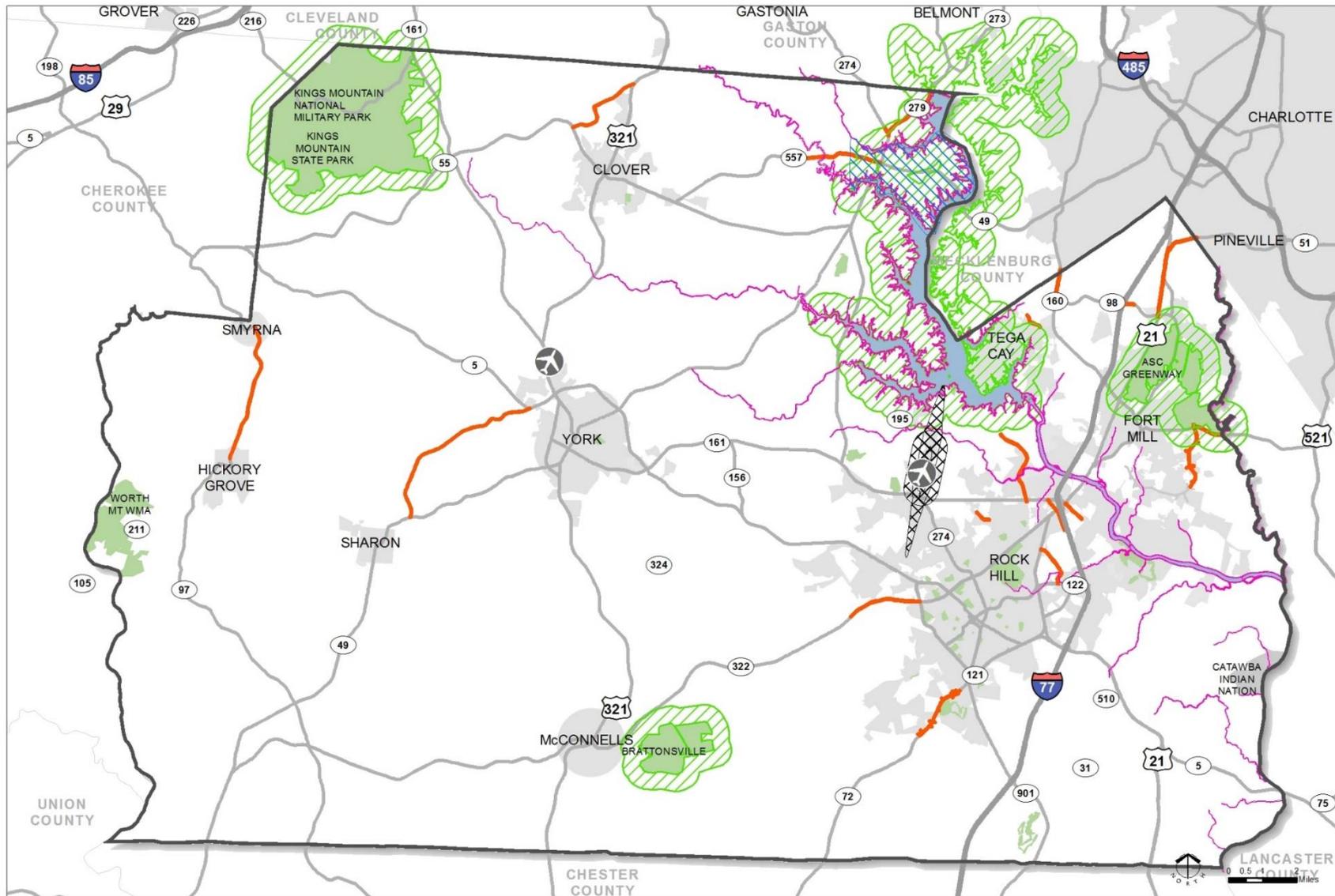
Map 17: York County Zoning Map (Source: York County)



**Zoning**

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkgreen;"></span> AGC (Agricultural Conservation District)          | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow;"></span> RC-I (Residential Conservation I District)      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightcoral;"></span> BD-I (Business Development I District: Convenience) | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue;"></span> LI (Light Industrial District)               |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:mediumseagreen;"></span> AGC-I (Agricultural Conservation I District) | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:gold;"></span> RC-II (Residential Conservation II District)      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red;"></span> BD-II (Business Development II District: Office and Inst.) | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:teal;"></span> UD (Urban Development District)              |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen;"></span> RUD (Rural Development District)                 | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange;"></span> RD-I (Residential Development I District)       | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkred;"></span> BD-III (Business Development III District: General)    | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkgreen;"></span> PD (Planned Development District)       |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:limegreen;"></span> RUD-I (Rural Development I District)              | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkorange;"></span> RD-II (Residential Development II District) | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple;"></span> ID (Industrial Development District)                    | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightpink;"></span> TND (Traditional Neighborhood District) |

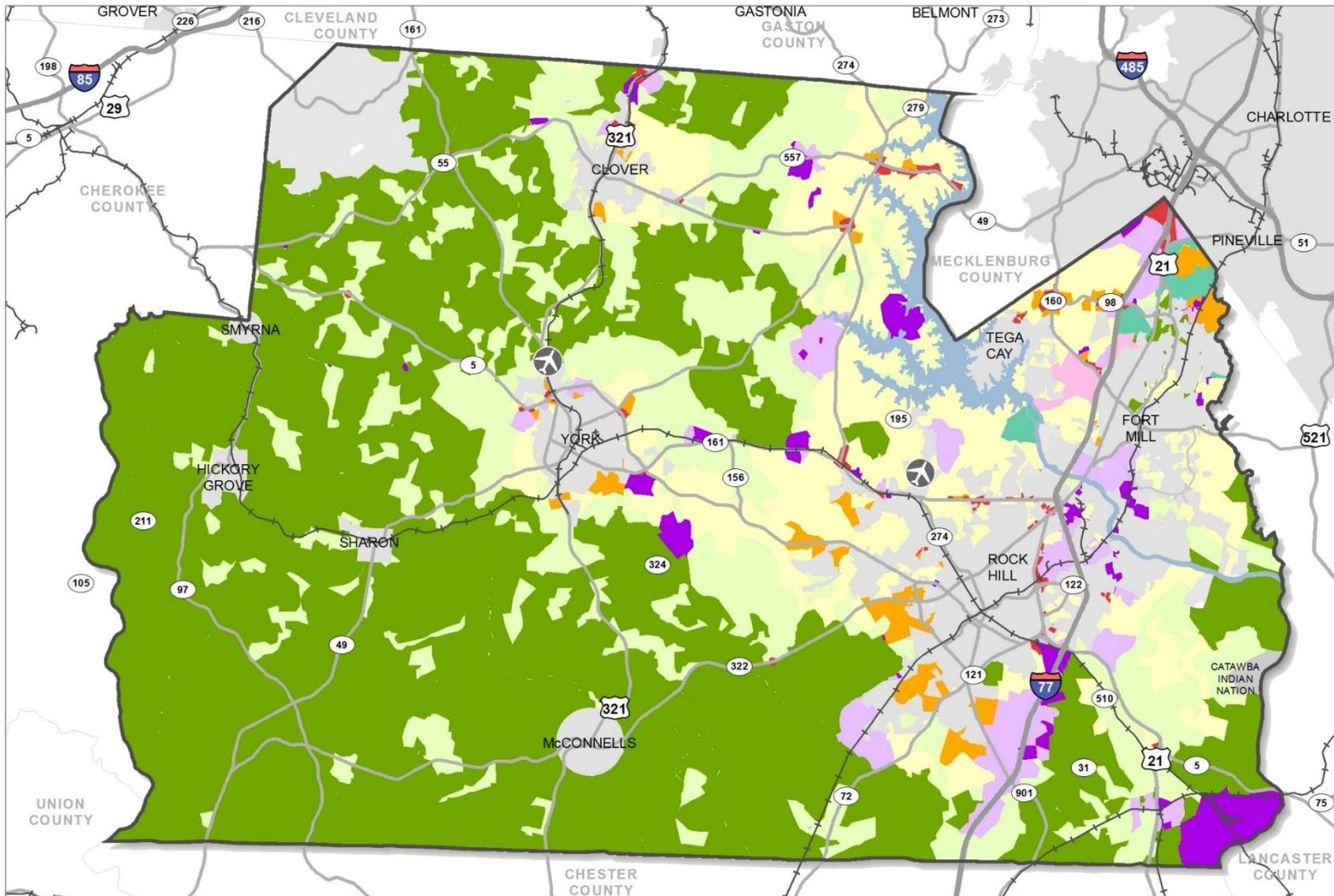
Map 18: Zoning Overlays (Source: York County)



**Zoning Overlays**

- Lake Wylie Overlay
- Airport Overlay Zone
- Lake Wylie Catawba River Buffer
- Scenic Overlay
- Transportation Corridor Preservation Overlay

Map 19: Future Land Use (Source: York County Comprehensive Plan, Adopted 2004)



**Future Land Use**

- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> RURAL AG   | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> SF RES     | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightpink; border:1px solid black;"></span> MIXED USE      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightpurple; border:1px solid black;"></span> LIGHT INDUSTRIAL / EMPLOYMENT |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> RURAL RES | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange; border:1px solid black;"></span> MEDIUM RES | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red; border:1px solid black;"></span> COMMERCIAL           | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkpurple; border:1px solid black;"></span> INDUSTRIAL / EMPLOYMENT        |
|   |  | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:teal; border:1px solid black;"></span> PLANNED DEVELOPMENT |  |



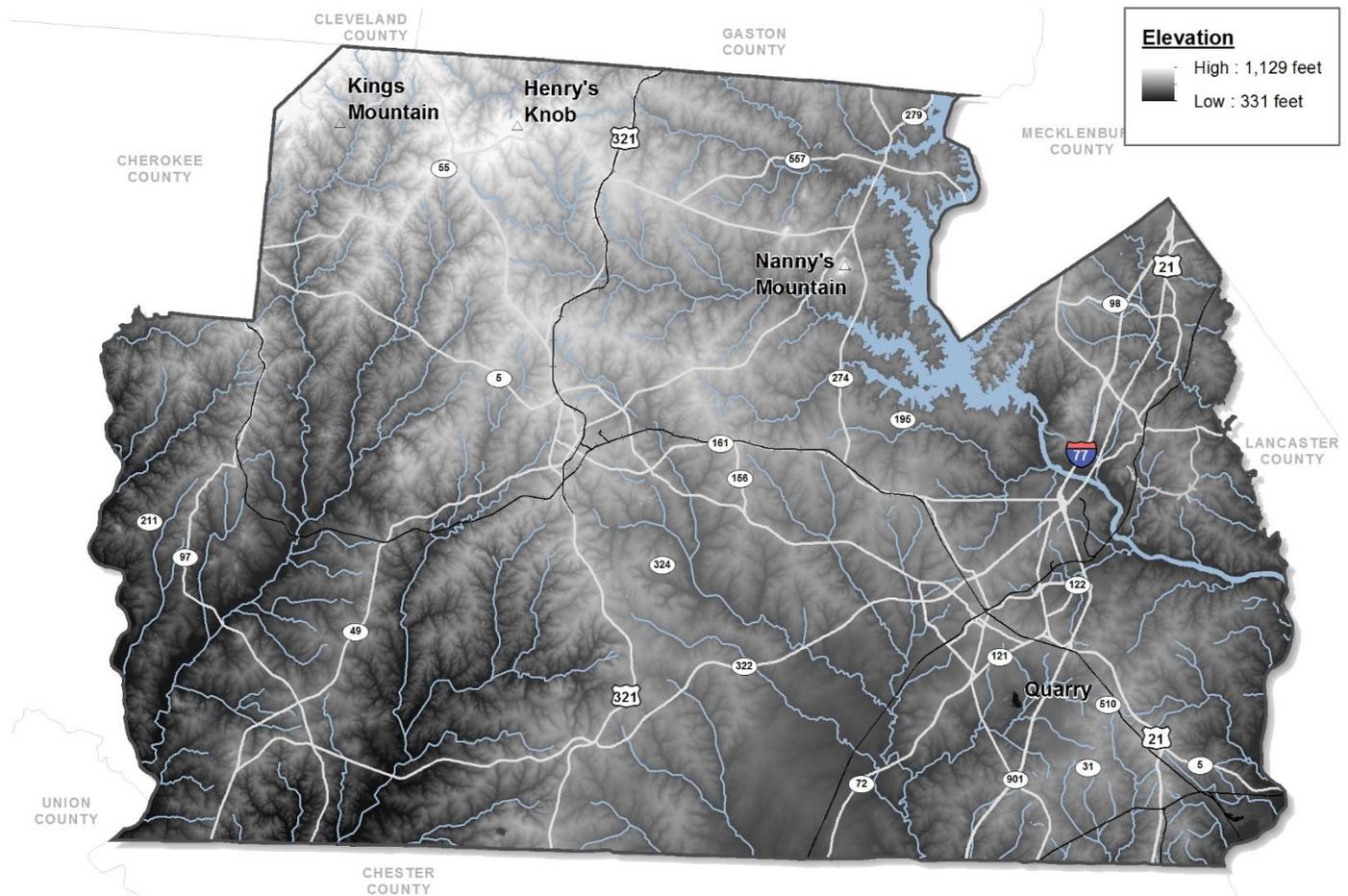
# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

York County is located in the south central piedmont region of South Carolina in a transition area between the Blue Ridge and the Sand Hills. The position in the region provides for diverse landscapes that include the rural, resource rich, and rugged Broad River area, Kings Mountain National Park, recreational opportunities of Lake Wylie, rapidly urbanizing Rock Hill, Fort Mill, and Lake Wylie area, scenic rivers and the gentle rolling mixed agricultural lands of the Black Jacks region. These unique landscapes, geography, and position in the region have shaped the history, environment, land use, economy and lifestyles of the citizens of York County.

## TOPOGRAPHY

According to the 2000 South Carolina Statistical Abstract York County is 695.77 mi<sup>2</sup> (approx. 436,832 acres) of gently rolling landscape located in the Carolinas Piedmont Region of upstate South Carolina. Elevations in York County range from 330 feet to about 1,130 feet above sea level. Henry's Knob in the northwestern part of the County, is the highest point at 1,129 feet. The central area of the County contains gently rolling hills with elevations consistently ranging between 550 and 700 ft. The most prominent topographic features are Nanny Mountain, Barnett Mountain, Henry Knob, and Joes Mountain. The lowest elevation, 332 feet, is at the intersection of the Chester/Union/York County line and the Broad River in the extreme southwestern section of the County.

Map 20: York County Topography



## CLIMATE

York County experiences climatic conditions consistent with humid-sub tropic found in the southeastern United States. This climate is characterized by hot, humid summers and mild to cool winters. Precipitation in the summer can vary in extremes from monsoonal storms originating from warm gulf tropical flows to irregular drought periods. In the winter, precipitation is more consistent with regular periods of precipitation originating from westerly moving fronts. Winters can also experience occasional snowfall, averaging approximately three inches per year. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), temperatures within the last 30 year mean indicated that July was our warmest month with mean temperatures of 81°F and a mean high of 91°F. January is our coldest month with a mean high of 43° F, and a mean low of 33° F. Our annual mean temperature is 62.5°F.

## PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITAT

York County natural areas are encountering rapid growth and development. Open space in the 15-county region surrounding Charlotte is disappearing at a rate of 30 football fields per day (Source: The Herald). In York County, the area around Lake Wylie and other areas are seeing the loss of natural areas, which contain important plants and animal habitats. Natural land cover types prevalent in York County include cropland and pasture, shrubs and rock outcroppings, wetlands and woodlands.

Map 21: Land Cover

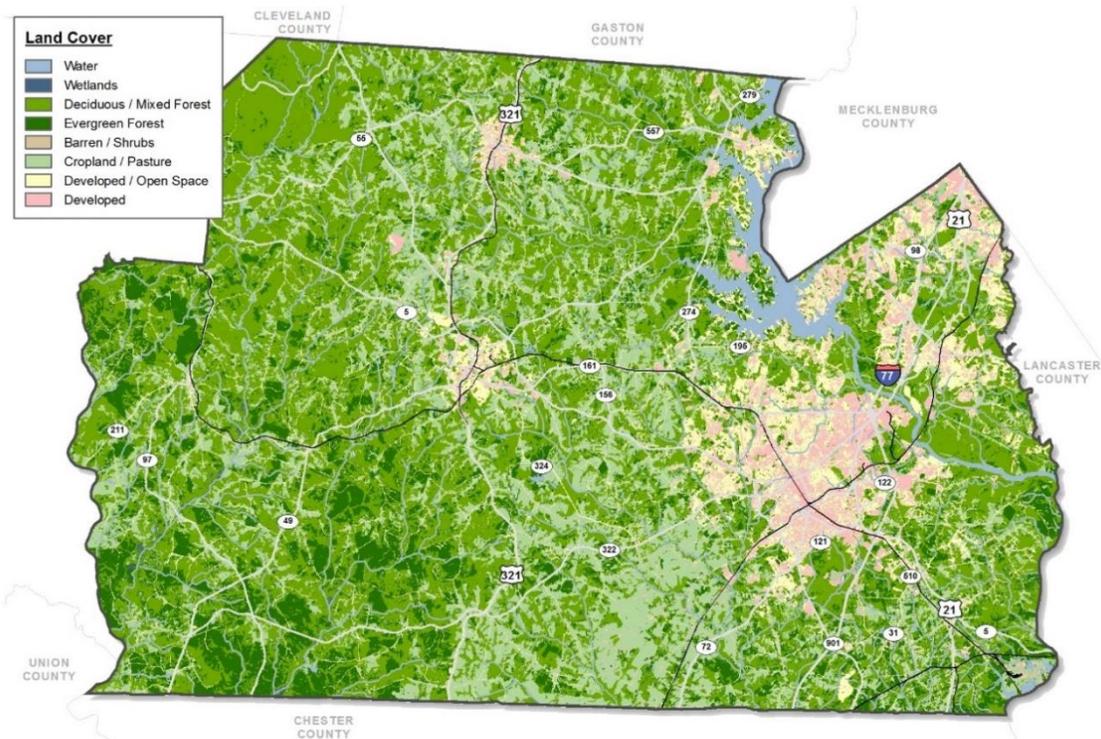


Figure 26: Precipitation

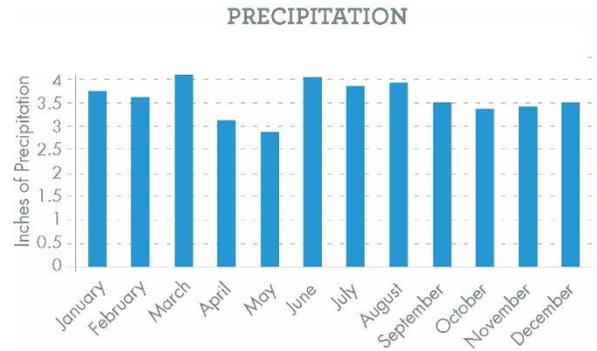
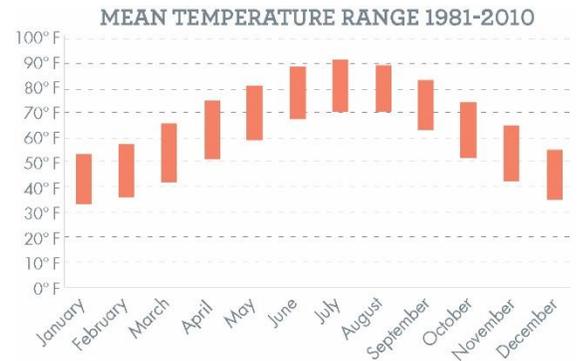


Figure 25: Mean Temperature Range 1981 - 2010



These areas make a diverse habitat home to many different plant and animal species. Plants to be found in York County include Broom Sedge, Bradley’s Spleenwort, Wild Hyacinth, Red Maple, Sycamore, Shoals Spider-Lily, American Beech and Post Oak. Birds to be found in York County include; Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Kingbird, Northern Bobwhite, Green-backed Heron, Barred Owl, Great Blue Heron, Wood Thrush and Red-bellied Woodpecker. A number of species of butterflies can be found as well.

## THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

York County has four plant and animal species that are registered under the Endangered Species Act. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. The purpose of the act is to prevent the extinction of imperiled plant and animal life, and secondly, to recover and maintain those populations by removing or lessening threats to their survival. At the state level the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) implements the state regulatory requirements of the Act. York County currently contains federally designated endangered plant species, the “Schweinitz’s Sunflower”; one threatened plant species “Pool Sprite”; and One species of concern “Carolina Darter”. The SCDNR has designated two species as threatened the “Carolina Darter” and “Bald Eagle”.

Table 27: Threatened and Endangered Species in York County

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES IN YORK COUNTY			
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	USES A DESIGNATION	STATE PROTECTION DESIGNATION
Vertebrate Animals			
Etheostoma collis	Carolina Darter	Species of Concern	Threatened
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle		Threatened
Vascular Plants			
Amphianthus pusillus	Pool Sprite	Threatened	
Helianthus schweinitzii	Schweinitz’s Sunflower	Endangered	
Symphyotrichum georgianum	Georgia Aster	Candidate	

SOURCE: SCDNR

## SOILS AND FARMLAND

Agriculture and farming operations provide a nominal impact to the economy of York County. According to the 2012 USDA AgCensus, the 1,004 farms listed in York County produced approximately \$96 million in products sold for a net income of \$30.5 million. Farms are typically smaller in size as the average farm size is approximately 123 acres. The County ranks first in the state in the production of nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod; and top five in cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops; acres dedicated for forage-land used for all hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop (Cut grass); horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys; and, turkeys; and cattle raised.

In spite of the successful production described above field crop farming activities are limited due to the types and amounts of soils found throughout the County. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Soil Conservation Service (Natural Resources Conservation Service) completed and published a Soil Survey of York County in 1965. The survey provides a detailed description of soil types and their limitations on various development activities. Key to promoting and sustaining the agriculture economy is protecting the prime farmland soils that farmers rely on for crop production. Prime farmland is defined as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops if it is managed according to acceptable farming methods. In Table 29 a breakdown is provided showing the limited amount of prime farmland totaling approximately 78K

acres (17.7% of the total county land area) and 109K acres of Farmland Soils of Statewide Significance (24.5%). Much of these prime farmlands, ideal for field crops contain and are located on flat and well drained soils. Flat and well drained soils are also ideal for development.

Table 28: Land Cover

LAND COVER		
TYPE	ACRES	PERCENT
Farmed Land	10,662.5	2.4%
Developed	69,886.6	15.7%
Forested	263,226.3	59.1%
Grass/Shrub	91,646.4	20.6%
Wetlands	673	0.2%
Barren	316.5	0.1%
Open Water	8,743.9	2.0%
Total Acreage	445,155.2	

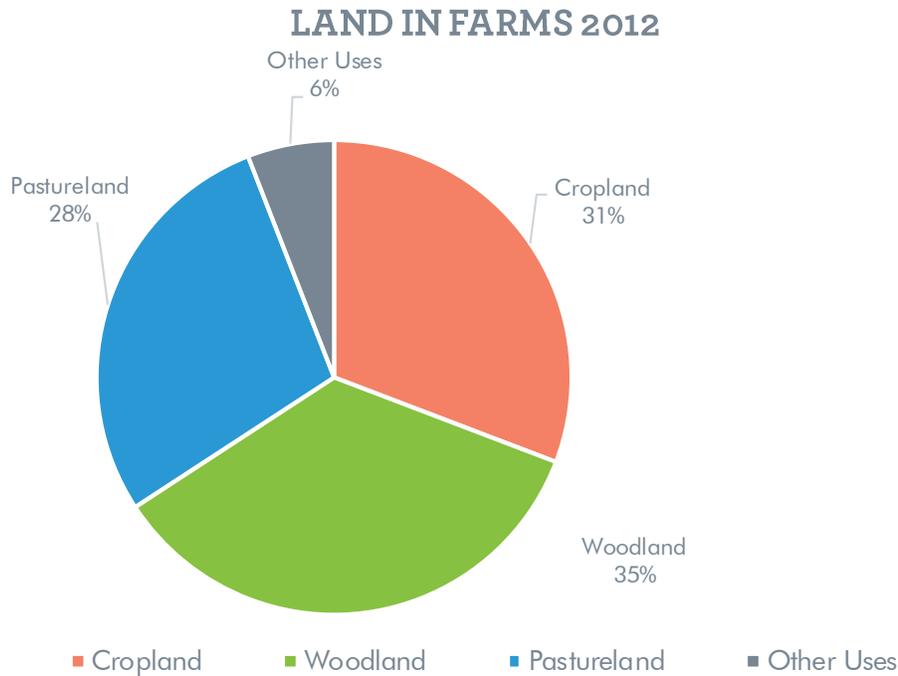
SOURCE: NRCS DATA PROVIDED FROM YORK COUNTY

Table 29: Farmland Soil Classification

FARMLAND SOIL CLASSIFICATION		
SOIL TYPE	ACRES	PERCENTAGE
Prime Farmland Soils	78,721	17.7%
Farmland Soils of Statewide Significance	109,323	24.5%
Prime Farmland Soils if Protected from Flooding	5,066	1.1%
Water	8,690	2.0%
Mine/Rock	431	0.1%
Hydric Soils	12,149	2.7%
Remaining Soils	230,978	51.9%
Total	445,155	

SOURCE: NRCS DATA PROVIDED FROM YORK COUNTY

Figure 27: Land in Farms, 2012 by Land Use



SOURCE: 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE COUNTY PROFILE

## TIMBER PRODUCTION

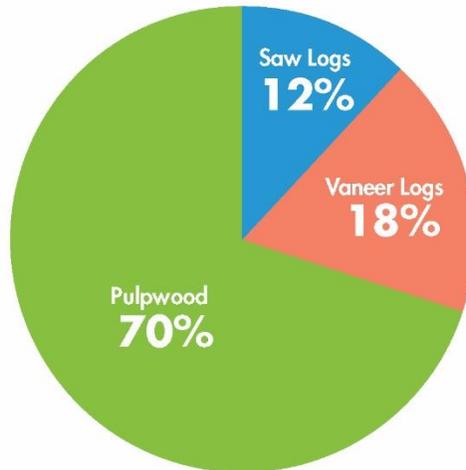
Per the South Carolina Timber Products Output and Use, 2011 report, provided by the United States Department of Agriculture and South Carolina Forestry Commission, York County is the 19th largest County in South Carolina, but is ranked 39th of 46 counties in percentage of land in forested area at 59%, which is below the state total of 68%. Non-forested lands, those lands that include agriculture and urbanized areas, the County ranks 10th in total area with 183 thousand acres. In total forest land, the County ranks 21st with 268 thousand acres; this is directly comparable to its size in the state.

In forest production, the County produces 61 percent “softwood” or Pine, and 39% in hardwoods. The county ranks 40th in production of softwood and 10th in production of hardwood. The County ranks 37th in total production, producing 7.34 million cubic feet of lumber. Directly related to the amount of product produced is the value of the product. Timber production in the County produced a value of 8.45 million dollars in 2011 for delivered timber value, which ranks 37th in the state. Less surprising is the amount of value on the lumber produced, per the report, the County only supplies 1.1 % of the total delivered value of produced lumber in the state. Looking at the value of product produced (\$8.45 Million) in 2011 and the total acreage in forestland (268,672 acres) in the County, this equates to approximately \$31.47 per forested acre total.

The amount of lands in timber and production in delivered value may relate directly to the position in the region, proximity to a large metropolitan area, and land use patterns and parcelization which has fragmented formerly large land holdings.

Figure 28: Wood Production in York County

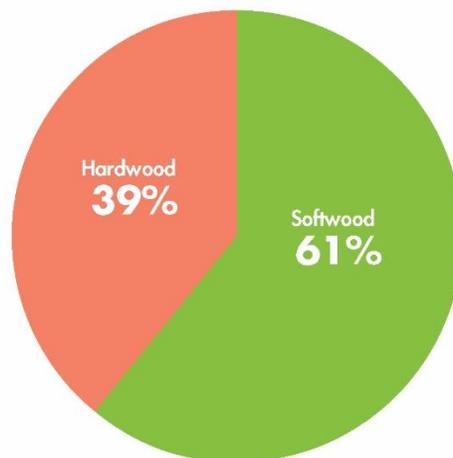
### WOOD PRODUCTION IN YORK COUNTY



SOURCE: SOUTH CAROLINA TIMBER PRODUCTS OUTPUT AND USE, 2011 REPORT SC FORESTRY

Figure 29: Percent Harvested Timber

### PERCENT HARVESTED TIMBER

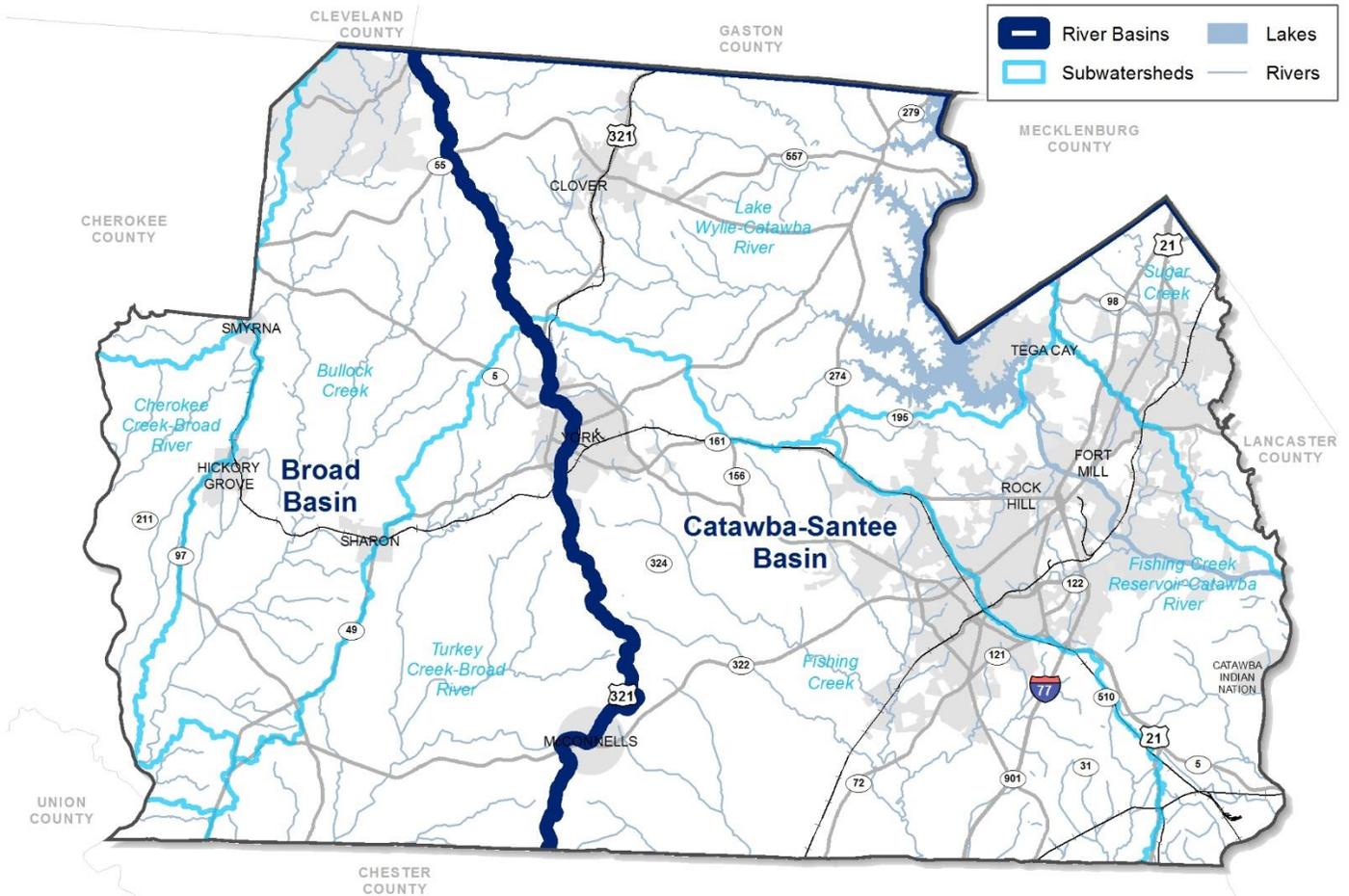


SOURCE: SOUTH CAROLINA TIMBER PRODUCTS OUTPUT AND USE, 2011 REPORT SC FORESTRY

## WATER RESOURCES

York County collects water from surface streams, lakes/reservoirs, and groundwater. Drinking water is primarily provided within the Catawba River basin. Two major watershed basins, the Catawba River basin and the Broad River basin divide York County. The Catawba River basin encompasses the bulk of York County. It is further divided into seven sub-basins, which are either completely or partially located within York County. The York County portion of the Broad River basin is comprised of five sub-basins completely or partially located in the County. The County contains 13.22 square miles (approx. 8,460 acres) of water and is bounded by two major drainage basins and their tributaries; the Broad River Basin on the western border and the Catawba River Basin on the eastern border. York County also contains a portion of Lake Wylie which is shared with Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, is just one of several impounded sections of the Catawba River. The lake has a surface area of 12,450 acres with a maximum and mean depth of 93.15 feet and 22.63 feet, respectively. Approximately 120 square miles of the lake's watershed is located in York County.

Map 22: Watershed Basins



The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (Department) developed this priority list of waters pursuant to Section §303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and Federal Regulation 40 CFR 130.7 last revised in 1992. The listing identifies South Carolina waters that do not currently meet State water quality standards after application of required controls for point and nonpoint source pollutants. York County has a number of streams listed in Table 31 that through monitoring were found to exceed the maximum Total Maximum Daily Loading (TMDL) of listed natural or manmade impairments.

Table 30: 2012 List of Impaired Waters

2012 LIST OF IMPAIRED WATERS		
BASIN	CREEK	LOCATION
Broad	Clark Fork	Into Crawford Lake on unnamed # Rd near SC 161 7 705 Kings Mountain
	Bullocks Creek	At SR 40
	Loves Creek	At SR 97
	Turkey Creek	Ross Br To Turkey Creek At SC 49 Southw est of York
	Turkey Creek	At S-46-41 5.3 mi Southw est of York
Cataw ba	Beaverdam Creek	At Bridge on S-46-64 3.2 Miles East Northeast of Clover
	Lake Wylie	At SC 274 9 mi Northeast of York
	Sugar Creek	Upstream of confluence with McAlpine Creek
	Steel Creek	At US By-Pass 21
	Wildcat Creek	At S-46-650
	Tools fork Creek	At S-46-195 7 miles Northw est of Rock Hill
	Tools fork Creek	Upstream of retention pond in Hawkins Ridge of SR-46-195
	Fishing Creek	At S-46-347 South of York Wastew ater Treatment Plant
	Stoney fork Creek	At SC 121 & 72
	Fishing Creek	At SR 655
	Taylors Creek	At SR 735
	Sixmile Creek	At Bridge on S-46-691 2.6 miles Northeast of Roddey

SOURCE: SCDHEC

## SCENIC RIVERS

The purpose of the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program is to conserve unique and outstanding river resources throughout South Carolina. To accomplish this goal, the program employs a voluntary, cooperative community-based process, which allows landowners, community interests and the DNR to work together towards common river conservation goals.

York County Boasts two such state designated Scenic Rivers. In May of 1991, a 15 mile section of the Broad River from 99 Islands dam in Cherokee County to the confluence with the Pacolet River in Cherokee County was officially recognized by the South Carolina General Assembly as a State Scenic River. This includes all but a one mile section of York County river frontage, which is largely undisturbed. This section of river is popular with boaters as the slow moving, and shallow rocky shoals make an ideal paddling environment.

In 2008, a 30 mile section of river from the dam at Lake Wylie to SC Hwy 9 Bridge in Lancaster and Chester Counties was designated a State Scenic River. Up to 93% of the river frontage is free from development. Though the river is scenic and offers tremendous recreational and cultural value it is listed as the fifth most endangered river in the nation by Americanrivers.org on the 2013 list of most endangered rivers. This is due to the Duke Energy coal fire steam plant and its 3.2 million cubic yards of toxic waste from its 71 acres of coal ash ponds, located up river, on the banks of the Catawba, in Gaston County, NC. If a breach in the dam were to occur, the waste would significantly impact the County's major drinking water source, Lake Wylie, and the overall recreational and environmental value and viability of the river, lake, and community.

## STORMWATER

York County is subject to an MS4 system of stormwater runoff conveyances that includes, but are not limited to, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, pipes, tunnels, and/or storm drains that discharge into waters of the state. For these conveyances or system of conveyances to be recognized as an MS4, a state, city, town, village, or other

public entity must own them. These conveyances must also not be part of a publicly owned treatment facility and may not operate as a combined sewer system.

Operators of large, medium and regulated small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems are required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage in order to discharge pollutants into waters of the state. These designations (large, medium, and small) are based on urbanized areas as determined by the latest census. York County is designated as a small storm sewer system.

York County administers the program and has developed an MS4s program that covers each of the following minimum control measures:

- Public education and outreach
- Public participation/ involvement
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site runoff control
- Post-construction site runoff control
- Pollution prevention/ good housekeeping.

SCDHEC MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEMS (MS4S)

## AIR QUALITY

Because of its proximity to Charlotte, North Carolina, portions of York County, South Carolina have been designated as a nonattainment area for the 1997 ground-level ozone standard. Section 182(a)(3)(B) of the Clean Air Act requires South Carolina's State Implementation Plan (SIP) to contain a requirement for all owners or operators of stationary sources located in the nonattainment area that emit either NOX or VOC to submit a statement of actual emissions annually. As a result, all Bureau of Air Quality permitted facilities inside the nonattainment area of York County, SC are required to report NOX and VOC emissions using DHEC's Emissions Statement form.

SCDCHEC REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUND-LEVEL OZONE NONATTAINMENT AREAS

# CULTURAL RESOURCES

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

York County has a long history rich in cultural diversity. The area was originally the domain of the Catawba Indians, a Siouan band that numbered around 6,000 at the time of their first contact with Europeans. Spaniard Hernando De Soto, in his search for gold that led him to the Mississippi River, was the first European to arrive in present-day York County in the 1540s. Largely settled by Scots-Irish who primarily came down the "Great Wagon Road" from the colonies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, they began arriving in the Catawba River region in the 1740s. These settlers were instrumental in the pivotal Patriots' victory at the Revolutionary War Battle of Kings Mountain in 1780, which served as a rallying point for the American forces as they drove the British to ultimate defeat at Yorktown in 1781.

York County was officially established by an Act of the South Carolina General Assembly in 1785, and with the introduction of the cotton gin in the 1790s, the County's future was established. The county's economy was primarily based on small and medium-sized farm operations prior to the Civil War. Following the Civil War, the expansion of the railroad network that had arrived in the County in 1852, led to the expansion of the commercial and industrial base. Technological advances led to the completion of the Catawba Dam and Power Plant in 1904 that resulted in the eventual establishment of the Duke Power Company (now Duke Energy) and the industrialization of the area with textile mills. York County's proximity to the urban center of Charlotte, North Carolina has led to some developmental pressure, but much of the County remains rural in character and many of its historic and cultural resources endure today.

## HISTORIC SITES AND ORGANIZATIONS

There are 44 National Register sites and historic complexes in York County and 12 historic districts. The downtown *York Historic District* with over 180 contributing structures is one of the largest historic districts in the state. The *Kings Mountain National Military Park* and adjacent *Kings Mountain State Park* provide visitors with an array of historic, cultural, and recreational opportunities, including a preserved battlefield, hiking trails, campgrounds, equestrian facilities, fishing lakes, and a restored *Living History Farm*. A number of other sites both within the municipalities and in unincorporated areas are potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

There are several organizations in York County whose mission is to preserve historic sites and collect and disseminate accurate historical information. *Historic Rock Hill* focuses its efforts on preserving and protecting commercial and residential properties that have historic significance in Rock Hill and in enhancing the livability of the historic areas. Historic Rock Hill owns and programs the *White Home*, the oldest extant residence in Rock Hill, which is open to visitors and available for public events. The *Yorkville Historical Society* fosters and promotes historical preservation and restoration in the City of York and surrounding environs. It regularly publishes historical materials, sponsors lectures and activities, and helps designate and mark historic sites. The *Broad River Basin Historical Society* works to encourage and sustain historic preservation in the western portion of York County with quarterly meetings and annual events.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE SITES AND ORGANIZATIONS

York County supports cultural and historic resource preservation through the Culture & Heritage Museums (CHC) which includes four linked venues and facilities; the York County Forever Commission, which serves as the County's land conservation organization; and with endorsement of the Western York County Scenic Byway.

### Historic Brattonsville (CHC)

This 775 acre Revolutionary War living history site near McConnells allows visitors to enjoy a variety of exhibits, structures, and programs relating to the three generations of the Bratton family which owned and lived on the property.

### Main Street Children's Museum (CHC)

Located in the City of Rock Hill, the museum offers a venue for fun and educational activities for children up to age six.

### McCelvey Center (CHC)

The McCelvey campus in the City of York is home to the Historical Center of York County, the Southern Revolutionary War Institute, and the Lowry Family Theater.

### Museum of York County (CHC)

The museum located in Rock Hill presents permanent and rotating exhibits in science, history, natural history, the arts, and is home to the Settlemyle Planetarium.

### York County Forever Commission

The county's land conservation organization has assisted with the preservation of over 9,100 acres of historic, natural, agricultural, recreational, and scenic open space property within the County. The York County Forever Commission has not been fully funded in the last 5 years. This has limited the amount of land preservation that has been achieved in recent years.

### Western York County Scenic Byway

Designated as a South Carolina State Scenic Byway, this 63 mile route has endpoints at the Kings Mountain Parks and the Town of Smyrna and features many historic, cultural, and scenic resources.

There are other important cultural resource sites and facilities within York County as well. Most municipalities offer an array of parks and recreational areas, as well as a local branch of the *York County Library*, which has a main center in Rock Hill. Rock Hill is also home to *Glencairn Garden*, an eleven acre oasis of landscaped walking paths, and to the *Comporium Telephone Museum*, which presents an overview of life before the wireless age. The *Anne Springs Close Greenway* in Fort Mill is a 2,300 acre nature preserve and a place for activities ranging from hiking to horseback riding to kayaking. The *Catawba Indian Nation*, located in eastern York County, is the only federally recognized tribe in the state. The Catawba Cultural Center preserves, promotes, and protects the cultural heritage of the Catawba through efforts in archives, archeology, tribal historic preservation, native crafts, cultural education, and tourism development. The Town of Sharon features the *Museum of Western York County* with galleries displaying regional and national historical and cultural artifacts and documents, and the *Fort Mill History Museum* collects, preserves, and interprets objects and events representative of the history and pre-history of the Town of Fort Mill.

The *Arts Council of York County* provides leadership in arts education, arts marketing, and arts advocacy. The Arts Council also serves the community with diverse arts programming throughout the year and the small grants program with awards made quarterly. With several facilities in Rock Hill, it provides classroom and gallery space for exhibitions, forums, studios, and offices, and serves as a network center for cooperation among cultural organizations and for public information.

York County is home to three institutions of higher learning. *Winthrop University* has been a Rock Hill landmark for over one hundred years and offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in many fields. Winthrop features a variety of performing arts programs, exhibits the work of local and regional artists, and schedules musical guest performances throughout the year. *York Technical College* emphasizes vocational training and education, and *Clinton Junior College* offers two-year associate degrees.

## FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

There are a variety of annual events and festivals held throughout York County in which visitors can participate and enjoy. The Town of Clover holds an annual *St. Patrick's Day Festival* and a summer *Feis Clobhair*, a Scots and Scots/Irish gathering featuring activities, foods, and crafts. The City of York offers a similar *Summerfest* each August with tours of the historic district, exhibits, and other entertainment, and a December *Christmas Candlelight Tour* of historic homes and churches. *Pioneer Days*, a celebration of upcountry lifestyles, is held each September at Kings Mountain State Park. Kings Mountain National Military Park participates in the annual reenactment sponsored by the *Overmountain Victory Trail March Association* of the route used by the American Patriot army to defeat the British and Loyalists troops at the Kings Mountain battle in 1780. Many events are held at Historic Brattonsville during the year, *Living History Saturdays*, the *Red*

*Hills Heritage Festival, a Christmas Candlelight Tour, and an annual reenactment of the Revolutionary War Battle of Huck's Defeat.* The City of Rock Hill holds a ten-day *Come-See-Me Festival* each spring filled with a number of events, and a similar three-day *Christmasville* holiday celebration in early December. The Town of Fort Mill holds the *South Carolina Strawberry Festival* each May with live entertainment and activities. The Fort Mill area is also home to *Carowinds*, a regional tourist attraction and theme park. *Yap Ye Iswa (Day of Catawba)* is held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving each year to demonstrate and cultivate the Catawba culture. The *Ag + Art Tour* is a self-guided annual June weekend tour of regional farms, featuring local artisans and farmer's markets.

Table 31: National Register Listings in York County

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS IN YORK COUNTY			
RESOURCE NAME	LOCATION	DATE LISTED	MULTIPLE PROPERTY NAME
Afro--American Insurance Company Building	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Allison Plantation	York	1980/09/29	
Anderson House	Rock Hill	1982/05/13	
Banks--Mack House	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
Bethel Presbyterian Church	Clover	1980/12/10	
Bethesda Presbyterian Church	McConnells	1977/08/16	
Bleachery Water Treatment Plant	Rock Hill	2008/03/06	Rock Hill MPS
Brattonville Historic District	McConnells	1971/08/19	
Catawba Rosenwald School	Catawba	2013/07/03	Rosenwald School Building Program in SC, 1917-1932
Charlotte Avenue--Aiken Avenue Historic District	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Clover Downtown Historic District	Clover	1999/07/08	
Ebenezer Academy	Rock Hill	1977/08/16	
First Presbyterian Church	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Fort Mill Downtown Historic District	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
Hart House	York	1977/12/02	
Hermon Presbyterian Church	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Highland Park Manufacturing Plant and Cotton Oil Complex	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Hightower Hall	McConnells	1982/06/28	
Hill Complex Historic District	Sharon	2003/04/18	
Hill, W. L., Store	Sharon	1995/01/20	
Jackson's Furnace Site (38YK217)	Smyrna	1987/05/08	Early Ironworks of Northwestern South Carolina TR
Kings Mountain National Military Park	Bethany	1966/10/15	
Kings Mountain State Park Historic District	Blacksburg	2008/03/14	Historic Resources of South Carolina State Parks
Laurelwood Cemetery	Rock Hill	2008/07/31	
Mack--Belk House	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
Marion Street Area Historic District	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
McCorkle-Fewell-Long House	Rock Hill	1980/08/21	
Mills House	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
Mount Prospect Baptist Church	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Nation Ford Fish Weir	Rock Hill	2007/03/01	Nation Ford Road Area MPS
Nation Ford Road	Fort Mill	2007/03/01	Nation Ford Road Area MPS
National Guard Armory	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
People's National Bank Building	Rock Hill	1999/03/25	

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS IN YORK COUNTY			
RESOURCE NAME	LOCATION	DATE LISTED	MULTIPLE PROPERTY NAME
Reid Street--North Confederate Avenue Area Historic District	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Rock Hill Body Company	Rock Hill	2008/03/06	Rock Hill MPS
Rock Hill Cotton Factory (Boundary Increase in 2008)	Rock Hill	1992/06/10	Rock Hill MPS
Rock Hill Downtown Historic District	Rock Hill	1991/06/24	Rock Hill MPS
Rock Hill Printing and Finishing Company	Rock Hill	2013/02/05	
Sharon Downtown Historic District	Sharon	2001/11/02	
Spratt Cemetery	Fort Mill	2007/03/01	Nation Ford Road Area MPS
Springfield Plantation House	Fort Mill	1985/09/12	

Stokes-Mayfield House	Rock Hill	1984/05/17	
Thornwell-Elliott House	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
Tillman Hall	Rock Hill	1977/12/02	
Unity Presbyterian Church Complex	Fort Mill	1992/06/11	Fort Mill MPS
US Post Office and Courthouse	Rock Hill	1988/01/21	
White House	Rock Hill	1969/12/03	

Table 32: York County Forever Conserved Properties

YORK COUNTY FOREVER CONSERVED PROPERTIES					
PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	COUNCIL DISTRICT	ACREAGE	CONSERVATION TOOL	ACCESS
Abell Farm	Hwy 321	3	230.00	PDR Easement/Joint	Private
Burnette Property	Willowbrook Avenue, Rock Hill	4	0.20	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Chappell Property	Mobley Store Road	5	237.53	Easement Donation Fees only	Private
Clover Granite Property	Hilltop Lane, Clover	2	11.00	Donation by P/O	Public
Darby Property	Brattonsville Road	5	305.00	Easement Donation Fees only	Private
Dave Lyle Boulevard Property	Rock Hill	4	15.25	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Dave Lyle Boulevard (Hewitt)	Rock Hill	4	0.57	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Draper Property	Historic Brattonsville	5	426.00	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Forlines Property	Ferndale Road	5	62.00	Easement Donation Fees only	Private
Kirsh WMA	Burriss Road, McConnells	3	357.00	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Kirsh WMA Extension	N Burriss Road, McConnells	3	282.00	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Lacey's Fort Site	Hwy 322, Bullock's Creek	3	5.00	Easement Donation	Private
Mack Property (NFG)	Doby's Bridge Road	5	28.00	Acquisition	Public
Mendenhall Property	Historic Brattonsville	5	68.00	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Nanny's Mountain	Hwy 49/Hwy 274	2	92.00	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Neely Property	Historic Brattonsville	5	2.90	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Sherer Property	Anderson-Burgess Road	3	91.62	PDR Easement + Fees	Private
Stuck Property	Turkey Creek Road/Hwy 49	3	4500.00	Easement Donation Fees only	Private
Thomason Family Property	Hwy 49, York	3	432.00	Partial Easement Donation + Fees/ Partial PDR + Fees	Private
Whisonant Property	Oakdale Road, Rock Hill	5	307.00	Easement Donation Fees only	Private
White Home	White Street, Rock Hill	4	3.23	Acquisition/Joint	Public
Worth Mountain	Hwy 211, Hickory Grove	3	1647.00	Acquisition/ Bargain Sale	Public

# TRANSPORTATION

The existing network of highway and interstate corridors within York County provides accessibility to Greenville, Columbia, and the larger Charlotte metropolitan region. Regional accessibility is further enhanced by the presence of rail and airport facilities, which offer the potential for intermodal transportation and associated economic development opportunities. The growing presence of bicycle routes and pedestrian infrastructure in the rural and urban areas demonstrates York County's goal to support active lifestyles, and the growing number of public transit options supports the County's intent to improve air quality and offer alternative transportation facilities.

Transportation systems play a critical role in planning for quality growth by influencing where growth will occur, by promoting economic opportunities through appropriate patterns of development and redevelopment, by protecting natural resources, and by enhancing visual character and the quality of life in a community. With positive growth trends in population and employment, as well as significant road maintenance requirements, there are many challenges to providing a safe and efficient transportation system in York County.

## ROADWAYS

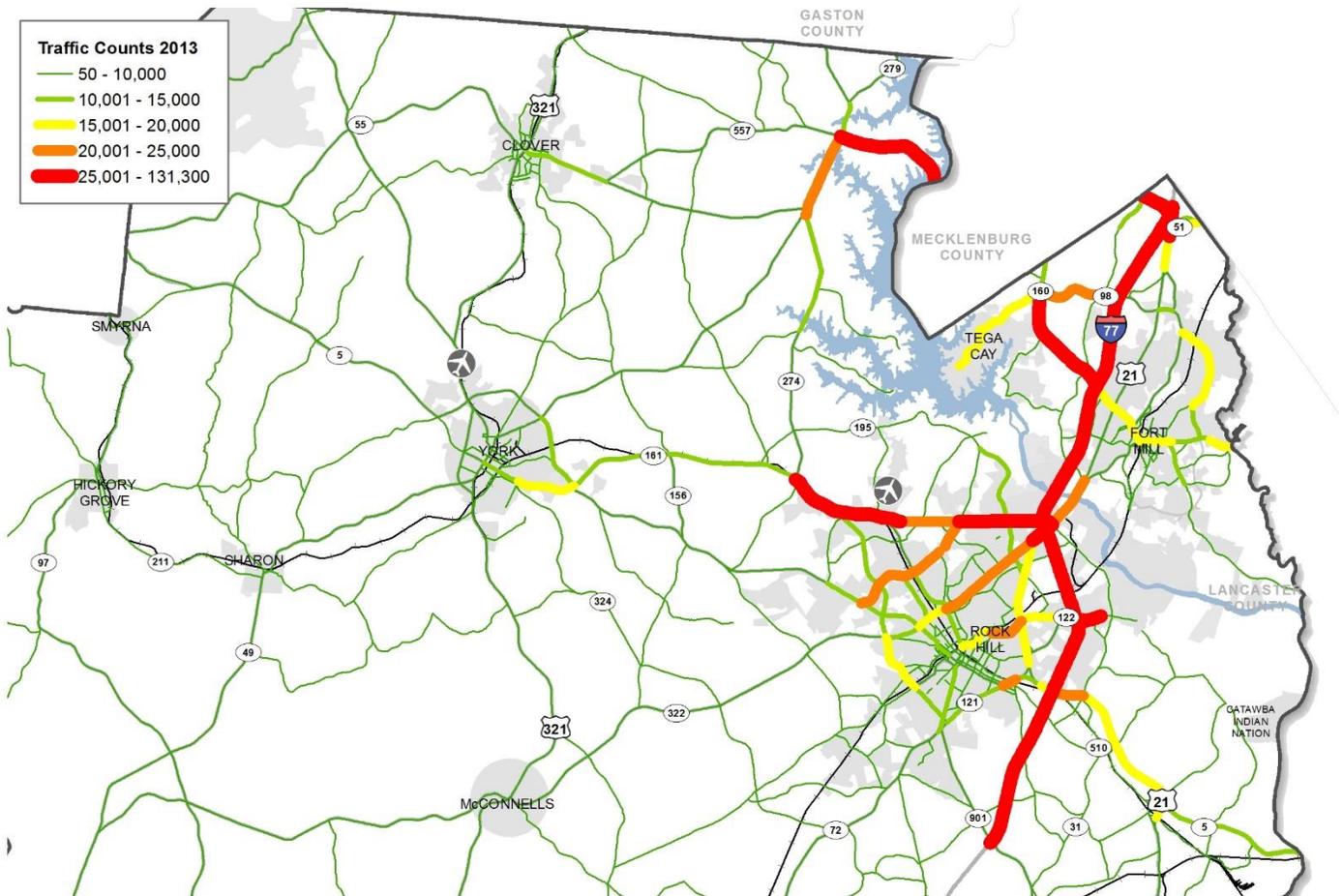
The roads in York County are owned and maintained as public or private facilities by several agencies. The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) system consists of interstate routes, primary routes (SC and US routes), and secondary routes, totaling approximately 1,368 centerline miles of paved roads and bridges. York County's Public Works department maintains the County Road Inventory, with 661 centerline miles of paved and gravel roads. The majority of these roads are local residential streets, with the exceptions being two collector streets: County Route F3-126 Daimler Boulevard, a four-lane facility 1.89 miles in length and County Route J3-107 Regent Parkway, a two-lane facility 2.58 miles in length. Other roads in York County are maintained privately or by municipalities. Routine maintenance of roads in the County Road Inventory is performed by Public Works staff, and York County's Engineering Department administers gravel road paving projects and paved road resurfacing projects for maintenance of public roads.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2003-2004, the County established the Critical Needs Resurfacing program to repair and maintain roads in the County Road Inventory with tax revenue from York County's General Fund. The initial budget was set at \$677,000 with a scheduled increase of 8% per year. At the onset of the program, roadways selected for repair had consistent pavement ranking scores in the 30's. The roads selected in the FY 2012-2013 project had scores in the low 60's, which illustrates the effectiveness of the program. The goal of the Critical Needs Resurfacing program is to maintain a minimum score in the upper 70's and begin implementing pavement preservation measures to maintain that pavement quality status.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation's C-Fund Program, funded by the gasoline sales tax, distributes funding to all of the counties within the state. C-Funds can be spent in public road rights-of-way for transportation improvements, such as paved road resurfacing and gravel road paving. York County also uses C-Funds to provide local match monies for transportation grants for pedestrian improvements. York County's C-Fund Resurfacing and Gravel Road Paving program, administered by the Engineering Department, funds road improvements equally across the County's seven council districts with 15% of all C-Funds received by York County being committed to transportation improvements requested by the York County Economic Development Department to encourage new business growth. A minimum of 25% of the C-Funds allocated to York County must be used on SCDOT-maintained roads, although the typical amount spent by York County on state roads is closer to 75% because of the poor asphalt condition of the SCDOT secondary road system.

In 2010, the Census Bureau reported a population of 226,073, making York County the largest and fastest growing county in the region. As one of the fastest growing counties in South Carolina, York County is experiencing rapid residential growth, which has the potential to create large infrastructure problems. Historically, road systems in York County were designed as farm-to-market, two-lane roads connecting Clover, York, Sharon, Smyrna, Hickory Grove, McConnells, Rock Hill, Fort Mill, Tega Cay, and the Catawba Indian Nation to Interstate 77 and the greater Charlotte region. Because most of the roads in York County are owned and maintained by the SCDOT, it is necessary for York County Planning department staff to communicate frequently with SCDOT staff regarding the location of site access for proposed development projects and to mitigate the anticipated impacts of proposed development on the existing road infrastructure through joint reviews of Traffic Impact Studies.

Map 23: SCDOT Roads with 2013 Traffic Counts



York County Zoning Code Section 155.009 provides definitions for roads or streets as major or minor, and further classifies major roads as principal arterials, minor arterials, or major collectors. The Arterial Roads Development Standards Overlay District in the Zoning Code is a regulation tool intended to improve the quality of land development design that occurs along major roads to preserve and enhance the appearance and operational characteristics of arterial roads to ensure safe travel. Design elements that are addressed in this section include site access, building materials, landscaping, utilities, and parking.

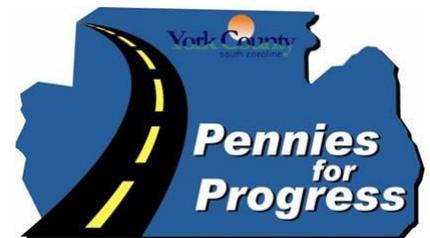
The Arterial Roads Development Standards Overlay District has proven to be beneficial in high-growth areas to reduce the number of new curb cuts that can be permitted on a parcel and to increase the spacing required between curb cuts to allow greater queuing distance near intersections. Unfortunately, this Overlay alone cannot protect the function of the County's arterial roads from the increased level of traffic congestion that is occurring. Additional steps that the County has identified to prolong the capacity of arterial roads is increasing opportunities for street connectivity through the reduced approval of cul-de-sac street designs in subdivisions and the establishment of a thoroughfare plan to legally preserve right-of-way for development of a collector street network to relieve congestion at major intersections.

As the urbanized areas in and around York County continue to expand and state government funding for construction and maintenance of roadways in South Carolina becomes scarcer and more competitive, the cooperative relationships forged between staff from York County, the SCDOT, Federal Highways, and municipalities is vital to coordinate technical and financial efforts for road improvement projects. As a member of the Rock Hill-Fort Mill Area Transportation Study (RFATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Catawba Regional Council of Governments (COG), York County aims to ensure continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning occurs county-wide. The MPO establishes a local forum for transportation decision making; evaluating transportation alternatives; developing and updating a long range transportation plan; developing a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and getting the public involved. The COG assists local jurisdictions and the SCDOT in transportation planning for areas outside of the RFATS MPO. The COG produces a regional long range transportation plan and a rural TIP.

<http://www.rfatsmpo.org/index.php/plans-a-programs/regional>

<http://catawbacog.org/transportation/transportation-planning/>

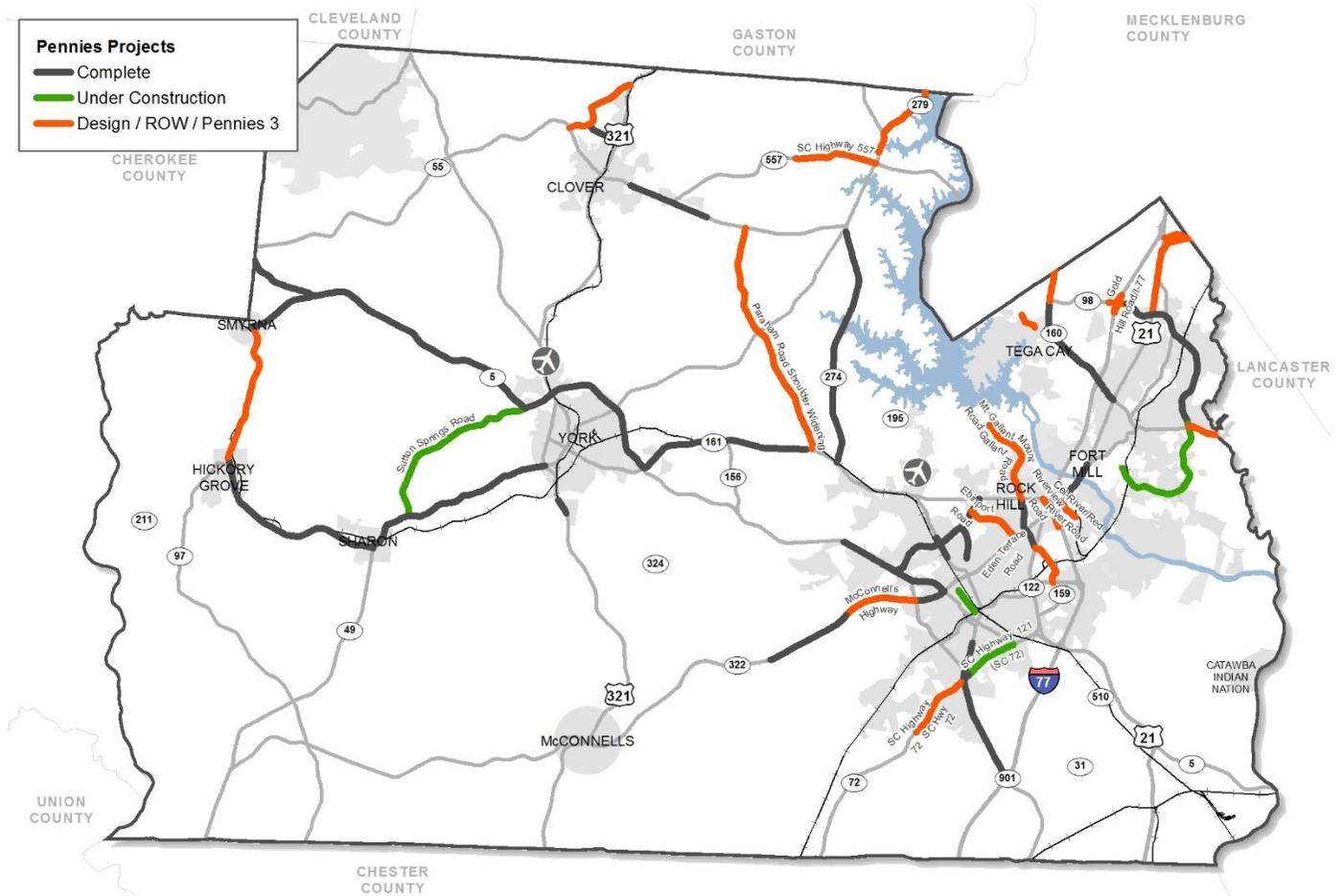
In June 2007, state legislation was passed in South Carolina to restructure and reform the SCDOT. Among the numerous provisions, Section 57-1-370 supported the establishment of a consistent process for identifying improvement projects on state-maintained roads. The SCDOT Highway Commission established nine criteria against which all state roads are compared. In order for state road funding to be applied to a road improvement project, the road to be improved must have a priority ranking and each project must be solicited for public comment. The list of state roads in ranked order is commonly referenced by transportation staff as Act 114 and is updated on an annual basis.



In light of low state funding and the competitive nature of approving infrastructure improvements on SCDOT roadways, York County is fortunate to have a one cent sales tax specifically dedicated to road improvements. Pennies for Progress is the name of the York County Capital Projects Sales and Use Tax Programs. The Pennies for Progress Programs were initiated by York County to provide the citizens with a safer and more efficient roadway system. The projects were chosen by a Sales Tax Commission that represented the citizens of York County and then were approved by the voters in York County. York County was the first county in South Carolina to pass this type of sales tax to improve the road system.

On August 2nd, 2011, the citizens of York County approved the 'Pennies for Progress 3' program, with 82% of the voters in favor. Detailed information about each of the projects included in the Pennies for Progress referendums can be found at [www.penniesforprogress.net](http://www.penniesforprogress.net). A map of Pennies for Progress projects completed, under construction and future projects is located below.

Map 24: Pennies for Progress Projects



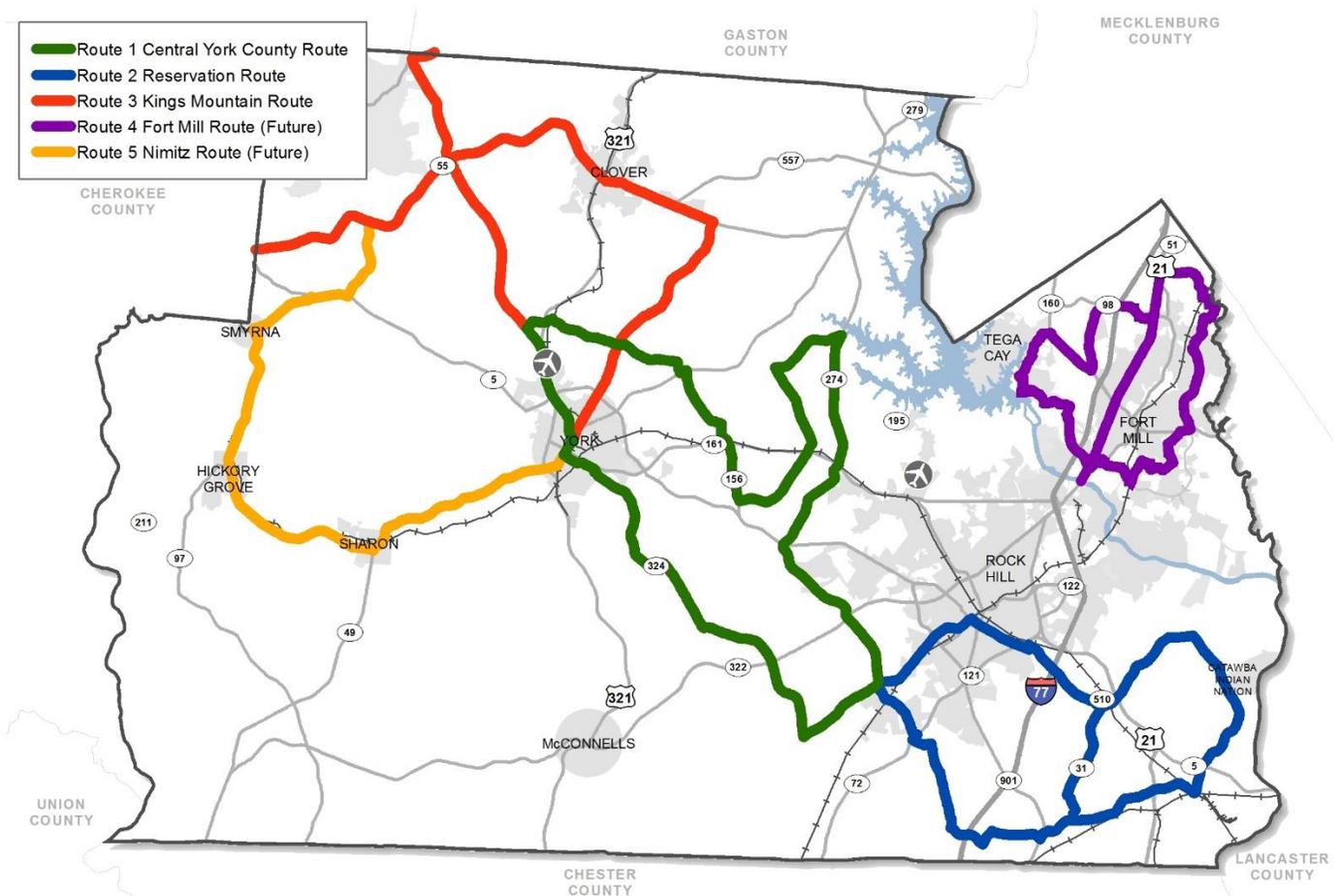
**Program Facts**

- Ensure safer Roads
- Ninety-nine cents of every sales tax dollar raised in York County stays in York County
- The tax is guaranteed to expire in 7 years or less
- Non-residents who use our roads will help pay for the improvements
- This is the principle source of road improvement dollars for years to come
- The projects chosen will affect needs in every part of the County
- You know exactly how the road tax money is being spent
- A penny for roads is a penny for roads only
- Ensure faster response times by police, fire, and medical personnel

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The beautiful landscape and temperate climate make York County ideal for outdoor activities and citizens are making their voices heard that alternative transportation facilities, such as bicycle routes, sidewalks, and trails are desirable amenities. Historically, bike routes were located only within municipal boundaries, usually connecting neighborhoods with parks for leisurely rides. With the adoption of the York County Prioritized Bike Routes and in coordination with the South Carolina Department of Transportation and Eat Smart Move More York County, York County Government is signing five, interconnected routes that link rural areas to all municipalities in York County and the Catawba Indian Nation for the experienced, long distance cyclist or bicycle commuter. Signing the five routes is the first step to creating a safe and functional environment for York County's citizens to be active and to promote bicycles as an alternative form of transportation between the rural communities and urban areas.

Map 25: Prioritized Bike Routes



The public interest in the new routes and the benefits of activity to overall community health and quality of life has been observed by the York County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), who voluntarily designed and printed maps of the County routes with links to city routes and has these maps available to visitors at hotels and welcome centers. The CVB also posted billboards of "Bike York County" along major interstates in North Carolina and the Columbia, South Carolina area. Continued coordination between York County's Planning Department and the CVB is anticipated to occur to advertise newly marked bicycle routes and to promote bicycle tourism throughout the County.

### Eat Smart Move More

As a member of the Eat Smart Move More York County Active Community Environments committee, York County participates in monthly meetings with bicycle and pedestrian advocates to plan and implement facilities that promote sustainable, active communities. County staff realizes the importance of sustainable efforts to increase opportunities to construct additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, the York County Planning Department included \$12,200.00 funding for bike route signage in its Fiscal Year 2014-2015 budget to be used independently or as local match for grant funding. Although grant funding for alternative transportation projects can be minimal, sidewalk and signage projects in York County have benefitted from the SCDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). These grants fund bike and pedestrian projects selected within the RFATS area. TAP funds typically require a 20% local match.

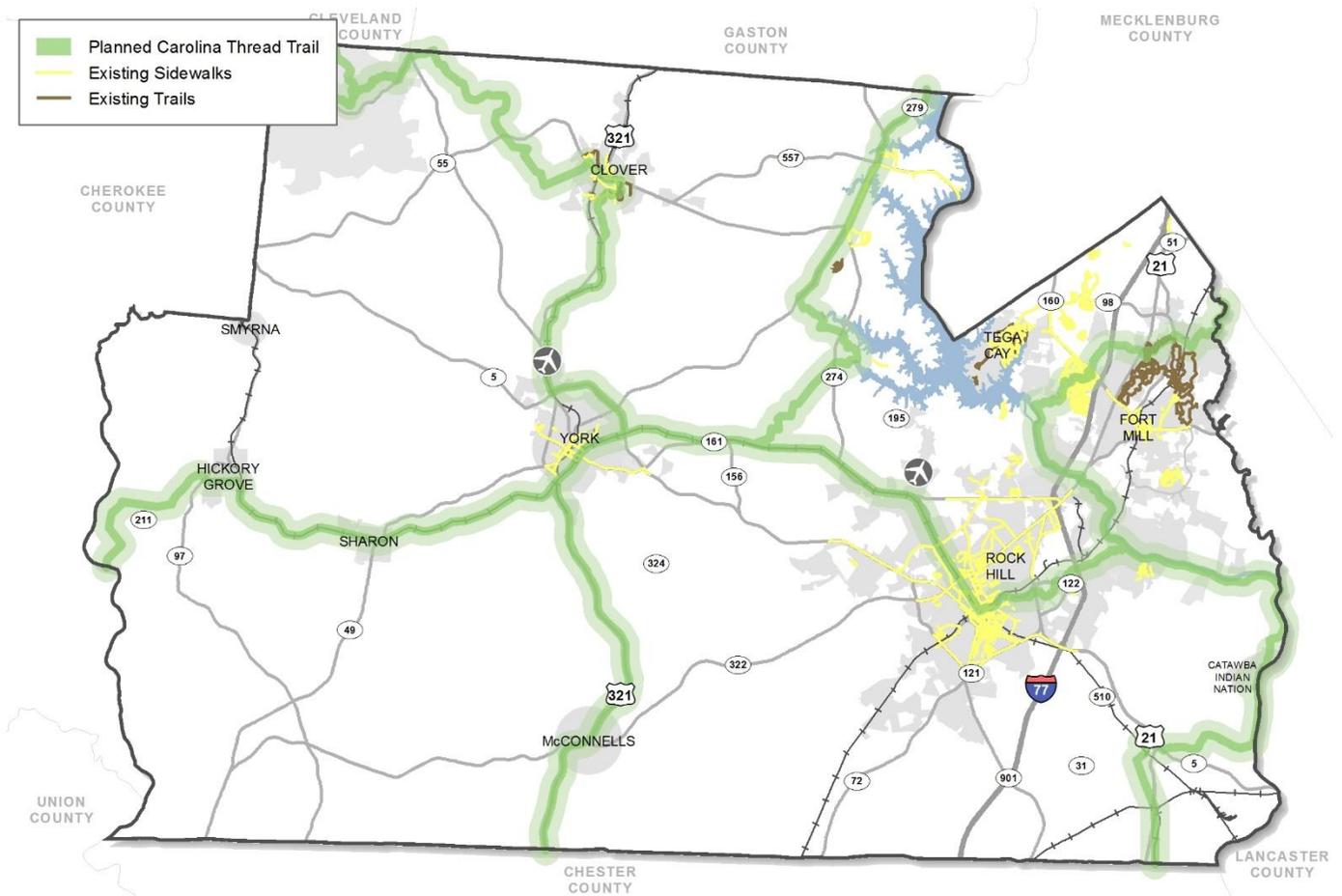


<http://eatsmartmovemoresc.org/yorkcounty/>



Through the Eat Smart Move More York County Active Community Environments committee, York County advocates for pedestrian facilities that are convenient and safe for all users by participating in Safe Routes to School safety and walkability assessments. In 2010, York County adopted its first sidewalk ordinance. This ordinance allows York County staff to require most residential and commercial sites to design and construct sidewalk facilities along publicly- and privately-maintained roadways to facilitate the movement of pedestrian traffic. By holding developers partially responsible for construction of sidewalks, York County Government is able to expand the existing pedestrian network while focusing grant and tax funding on filling in the gaps in the transportation system.

Map 26: Sidewalks and Trails



### Carolina Thread Trail

The Carolina Thread Trail is a greenway trail system that connects fifteen counties in the Charlotte region of North Carolina and South Carolina. The system has grown to include 220 miles of trails that are open to the public. The Carolina Thread Trail preserves natural areas and encourages families to explore nature, culture, science, and history in an environment that promotes physical activity.

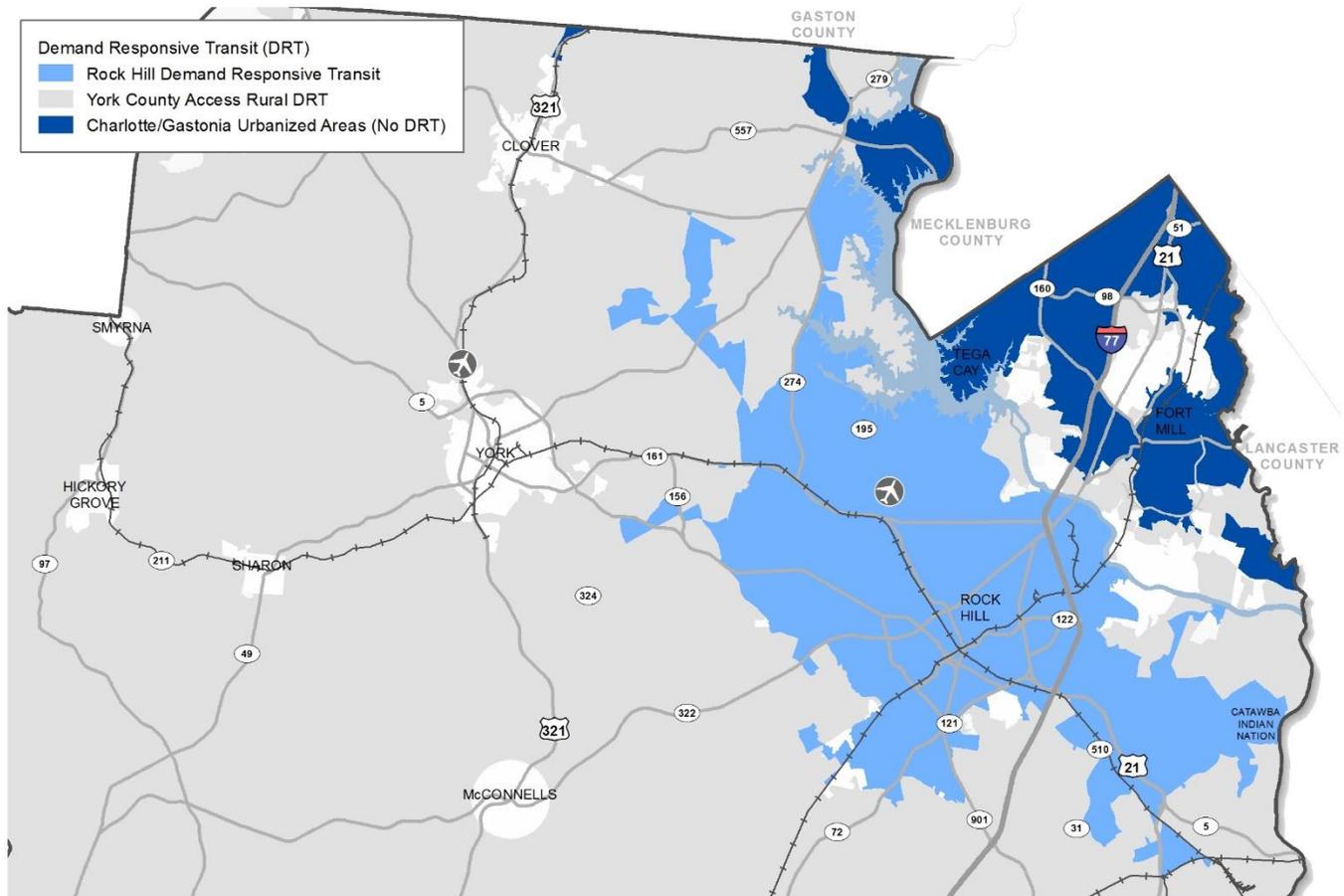
<http://www.carolinathreadtrailmap.org/trails/search-results?q=%2A&f%5bcountries%5d=19>



## TRANSIT

Public transit is an important component to York County's transportation network. Establishing, financing, and sustaining effective publicly-operated transit service in both urban and rural areas of the County is a major challenge.

Map 27: Urbanized Areas/Demand Response Transit

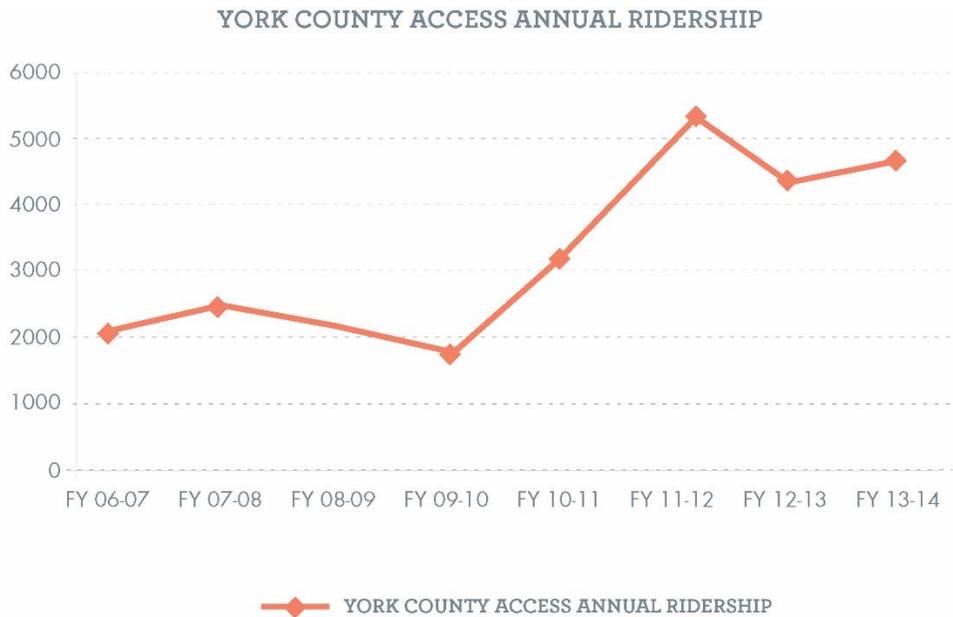


The County receives FTA Section 5311 funds and State Mass Transit Funds from the SCDOT to operate a public transit service, to purchase vehicles, and to conduct transit marketing projects. The County Manager's Office administers the transit program through the Planning and Development Services, Finance, Vehicle Maintenance, and Purchasing Departments.

In 2006, the County initiated public, demand-response transit service throughout the non-urbanized areas and into the Rock Hill urbanized area for trips to essential services. The demand-response program facilitates trips for medical appointments, shopping, and other purposes. The transportation service operates weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The County charges a flat fare of \$2.50 per one-way passenger trip.

In 2103, The County competitively selected the York County Council on Aging (YCCOA) to operate its transit service. The County reimburses the YCCOA at a rate of \$2.10 per passenger mile and has provided YCCOA with four vehicles (cutaway buses). YCCOA is a private, non-profit organization with administrative headquarters in the City of Rock Hill. YCCOA also receives Section 5310 and State Mass Transit Funds from the SCDOT and serves as a regional Medicaid transportation contractor, operating social services for senior citizens in York County. YCCOA provides vehicle operators and dispatchers, purchases maintenance services from local vendors, and collects passenger fares and reports the revenues to the County. YCCOA has a fleet of 10 vehicles - many are wheelchair accessible, which it uses to supplement the four vehicles provided by the County.

Figure 30: York County Access Annual Ridership



York County Access is not provided in the portion of the County north of the Catawba River because that area of the County is part of the Charlotte, North Carolina urbanized area. Similarly, York County Access does not serve the Bowling Green community, located along Highway 321 north of Clover, because that area is part of the Gaston, North Carolina urbanized area. Neither Section 5311 funds nor Section 5307 funds that are apportioned to York County and to Rock Hill may be used for service in the Charlotte or Gaston urbanized areas.



The City of Rock Hill is contracted with the YCCOA to provide demand response service in the City of Rock Hill's urbanized area, as well as a Ride to Work program. These services are supported by Section 5307 funds provided by the City of Rock Hill as a direct grantee of FTA. Other public transportation services are currently available in the study area, including Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) express bus service, feeder buses that connect to the CATS Blue Lynx light rail line, and vanpool services sponsored by CATS.



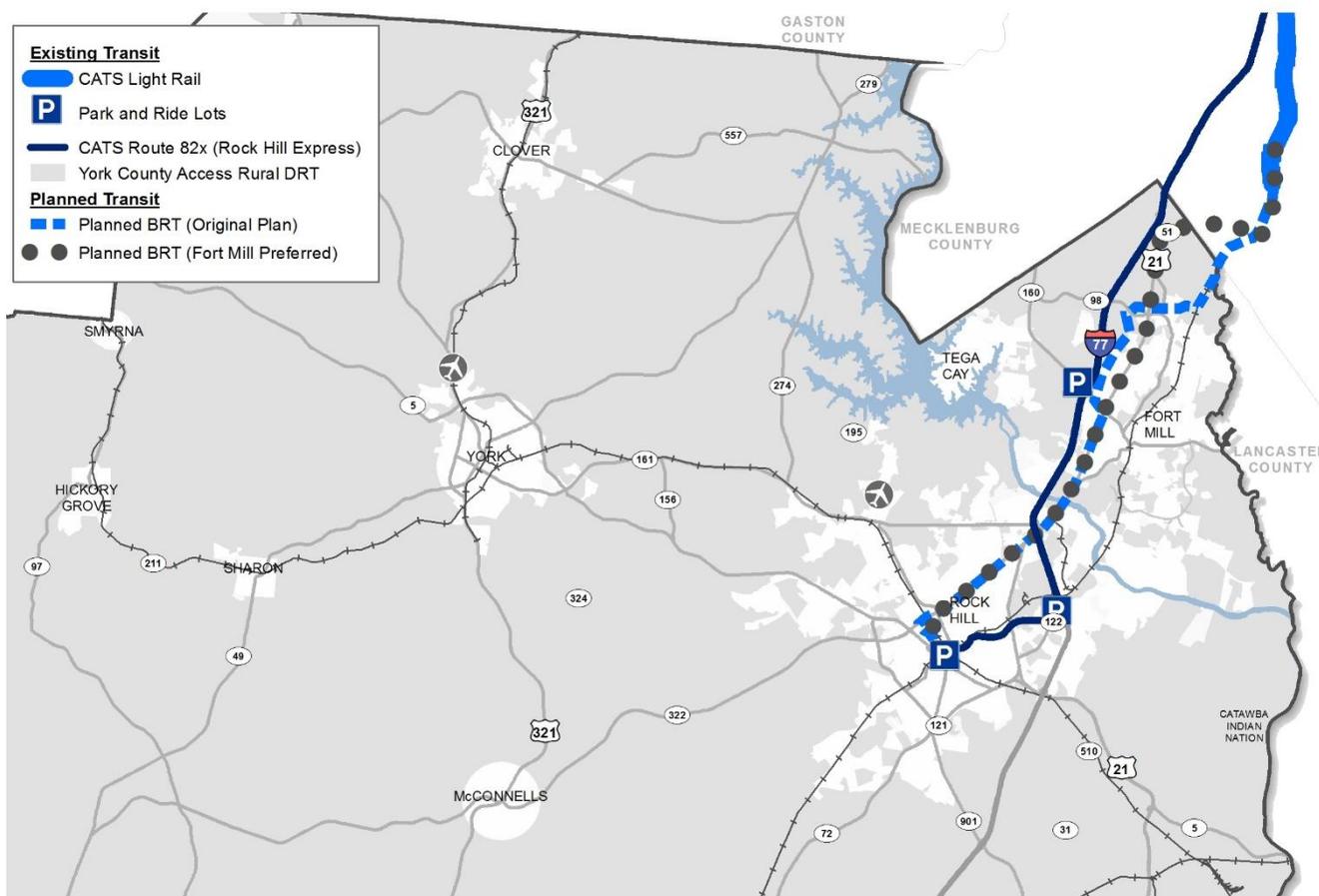
SOURCE: CATS WEBSITE

CATS express bus route 82X is operated by CATS with funding shared between the City of Rock Hill and CATS. This route provides a transportation option for York County citizens commuting between Rock Hill and Charlotte. The service operates during weekday peak hours with stops in downtown Rock Hill, Manchester Cinemas, and Baxter Village. Estimated daily ridership in FY 2014 was 65-80 passengers.

CATS route 42 is a feeder bus route connecting Carowinds Boulevard to the I-485 light rail station. Although the route operates in weekdays and weekends, it only makes stops within York County during weekday peak hours.

The CATS vanpool service is a program that allows groups of commuters to share a ride in either a 7 passenger minivan or a 15 passenger van to a common destination that is not served by a regular CATS transit route. There are a few vanpools currently operating in York County to major employment destinations, such as Duke Energy.

Map 28: Existing Transit



In 2007, RFATS completed the Rock Hill-York County-Charlotte Rapid Transit Study to examine the potential for a fixed-route transit corridor to be supported between the RFATS Study Area and Charlotte’s light rail system. This study concluded that the best option would be a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line running from downtown Rock Hill along US -21, through the Town of Fort Mill’s Kingsley development, ultimately connecting to the I-485 Light Rail station in Charlotte. The BRT line would operate partly on a dedicated busway and partly in general traffic.

Recognizing that making land use and zoning policy changes early in the transit development process makes transit projects more viable and competitive for federal funds, RFATS Study Area participants expanded on this initial study by creating a Technical Team, made up of appropriate staff from participating jurisdictions, and an Advisory Committee,

composed of appointed and elected officials. The Technical Team drafted a Transit Oriented Design (TOD) Model Ordinance that encourages transit-supportive land uses and development regulations, connects major corridor destinations, and preserves rights-of-way for the transit alignment where appropriate through new development areas.

The next step towards implementation included the development of a multi-jurisdictional Memorandum of Understanding supporting the common elements from the TOD Model Ordinance. Unfortunately, a MOU executed by all three of the jurisdictions that regulate property along the proposed BRT route still remains to be completed, due to pre-existing development agreements along specific parcels in the Town of Fort Mill's jurisdiction.

## AIR QUALITY

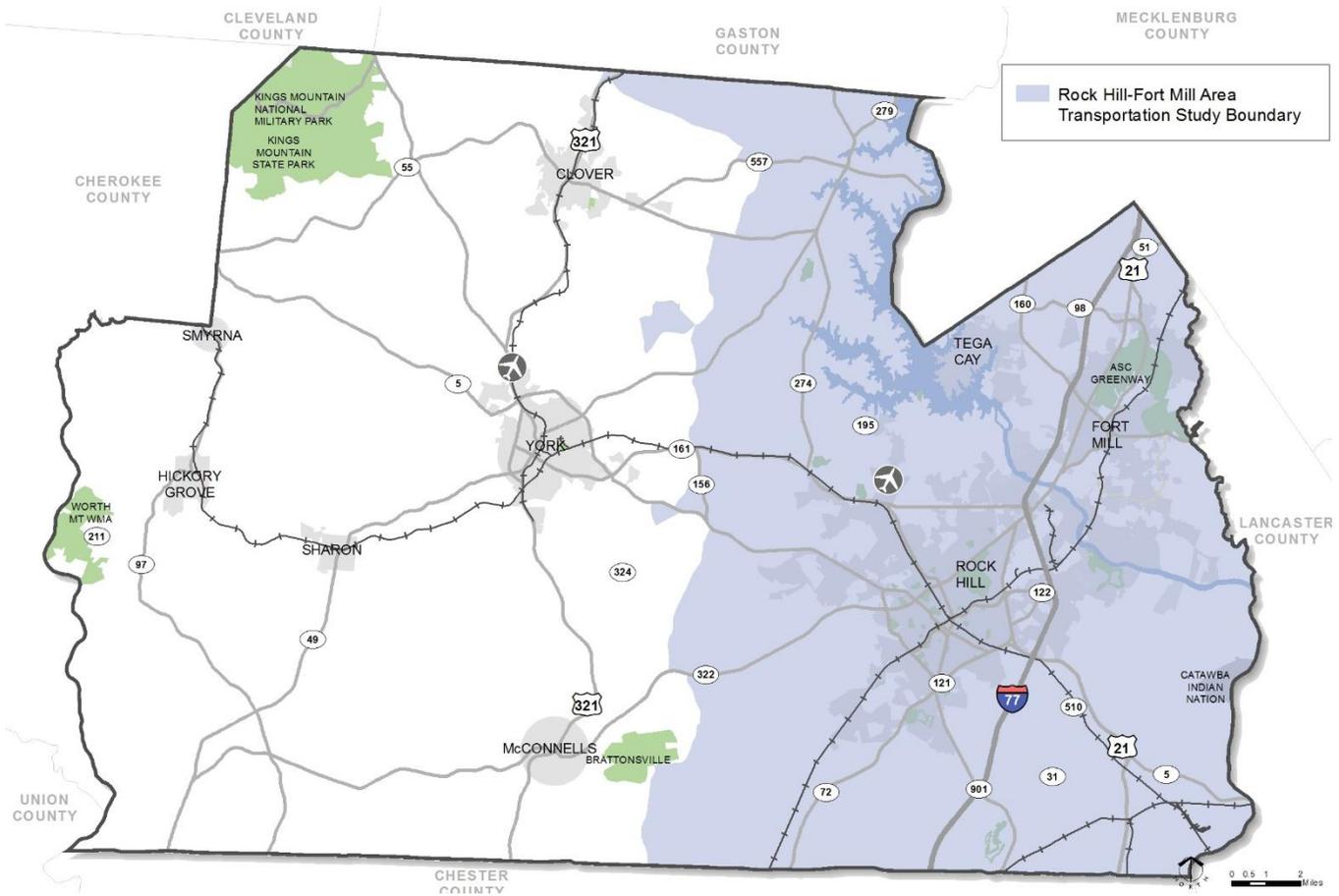
The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set and revise National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment every five years. Using data from each state's ozone monitoring network and recommendations from the respective states, the EPA determines if geographic areas of the state are in attainment (meet the standard) or nonattainment (exceed the standard).

Pollutant emissions, which jeopardize York County's compliance with Clean Air Act standards, include carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that is formed from incomplete combustion and inhibits the body's ability to transport oxygen in the bloodstream. Ozone pollution is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) react in the presence of sunlight. Ozone is normally found in the upper atmosphere, where it filters ultraviolet (UV) rays from reaching the Earth's surface. Ozone found near the Earth's surface has been discovered to be harmful to living creatures. As a result, the EPA has imposed limits on safe exposure to it. Ozone is a byproduct of pollution generated from internal combustion processes, among other sources. Particulate matter (PM) refers to airborne particles that can be inhaled and reduce lung function. Larger particles come from windblown dust, unpaved roads, and street sand. Smaller particles are more hazardous to health and come from motor vehicles, power generation, diesel emissions, and wood smoke.

The EPA designated boundary that encompasses a portion of York County is referred to as the bi-state Charlotte area, which includes the RFATS Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundary for the York County area along with contiguous portions of North Carolina. The eastern portion of York County was designated as nonattainment (above the 1997 standard of 0.08ppm) for ozone in 2004 due to being part of the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA), even though the York County monitor indicated that ozone concentrations were below the 1997 standard at that time. Generally, MSAs and MPOs share transportation, economic, population, and other related air quality factors that contribute to ground-level ozone formation.

In 2012, the EPA issued final area designations for the 2008 ozone NAAQS. At that time, all of South Carolina was classified as being in air quality attainment, with the exception of the eastern, urbanized area of York County which is considered to contribute to violations at air quality monitors in the Charlotte area. The Catawba Indian Nation in eastern York County was deemed in air quality attainment.

Map 29: Air Quality



Although York County is fortunate to not have the extreme congestion problems experienced in more populated counties, delay is becoming more prevalent in the urbanized areas. Beyond the annual hours of delay experienced by drivers, increased fuel expenditures from idling, and economic impacts that congestion causes, vehicles idling in traffic create air quality concerns. As emerging federal air quality standards promise to become more stringent, York County continues to measure proposed transportation infrastructure projects and industrial growth against the boundaries of acceptable pollutant levels established by the EPA. The rapid growth occurring in York County makes development and implementation of strategies for emission reductions an even greater challenge.

The RFATS MPO has been fortunate to receive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant funding for projects that demonstrate reductions in ozone and particulate pollutants within EPA designated non-attainment areas, as well as incident response services. Incident responders make minor repairs to disabled vehicles, assist with traffic control and incident management, and provide first aid until emergency medical service arrives. CMAQ funds typically require a 20% local match. CMAQ funds have been beneficial to York County residents, as they have supplemented local funding to make several major intersections safer and more efficient.

## **AIR/FREIGHT/RAIL**

York County relies extensively on the highway system to move the majority of freight, but it is fortunate to have its own airport for commercial and leisure purposes. The Rock Hill-York County Airport, known as Bryant Field, is a reliever airport owned and operated by the City of Rock Hill. A joint City/County Airport Commission advises the City Council on operational matters and advises both the City and County Councils on planning and capital improvements.

A challenge to this airport's ability to grow is its proximity to the Charlotte Douglas International airport, which recently expanded, and the increased density of residential development in the area surrounding the airport. On the other hand, the smaller size of the Rock Hill-York County Airport can be a bonus to corporate entities in the Charlotte market who seek a more private, relaxed environment with a short commute time to the metropolitan area.

### **Rock Hill-York County Airport Bryant Field Master Plan**

<http://www.cityofrockhill.com/departments/airport/more/airport/master-plan>

As part of the Charlotte metropolitan region, York County must address the need to build a relationship between transportation systems, business development and job growth, and freight-supportive land uses in the rural and urban areas to make the movement of freight more efficient. Through the Catawba Regional Council of Governments, York County supported the Centralina Council of Governments effort to develop a Regional Freight Mobility Plan in 2014. Notice of award of a USDOT grant to fund implementation of the plan is pending approval.

### **Regional Freight Mobility Plan**

<http://www.centralina.org/regional-planning/transportation/freight/>

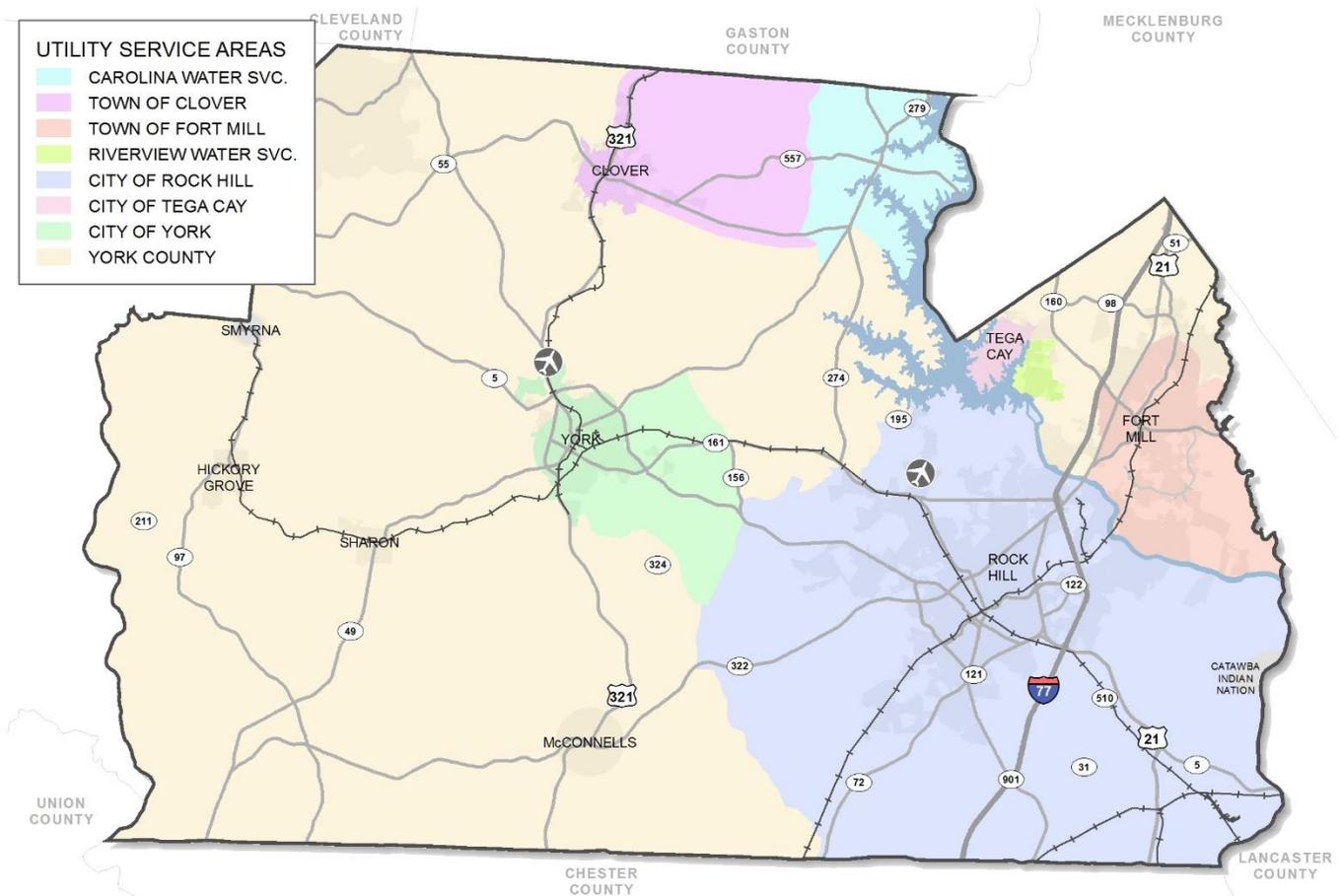
# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## UTILITIES

### Water and Sewer

While most county residences still use wells and septic tanks for their water and sewer needs, many businesses and residences in the County's urbanized areas are served by the local municipality, the County or a private water and sewer service company. The county is divided into eight separate exclusive service areas where each provider has the right to deliver water services. See Map 30 for a map of the different providers and their agreed upon districts.

Map 30: Utility Service Areas



York County operates a system of water distribution lines in the more urbanized areas of the County. Currently the County purchases all its potable water through a wholesale agreement with the City of Rock Hill who maintains the water intake and treatment system. Rock Hill receives its raw water from the Lake Wylie and the Catawba River at two intake points which are located immediately west of the Lake Wylie Dam and at the Catawba River near US-21. The raw water is pumped to the water filter plant on Cherry Road for chemical disinfection and treatment and then distributed to the city's wholesale and retail customers. The City of York is the only other jurisdiction that collects and treats water and distributes water and sewer services to those within their city limits.

The County provides sewage collection services to some areas of the County. The system includes a series of collection lines, gravity flow mains and force mains leading to the City of Rock Hill's Manchester Creek Treatment Facility.

The County's Engineering Department oversees water and sewer capital improvement projects. These projects are funded by the County with some assistance through other sources such as grants and partnerships. A complete list of projects is located on the Engineering Department's page of the County's website. Three current and near future notable projects are:

- Steele Creek sewer pump station improvements (underway)
- New Heritage sewer pump station relocation
- New elevated water storage tank (US Highway 21)

### **Wastewater Treatment**

The City of Rock Hill collects and treats wastewater and produces cleaned water for discharge into the Catawba River. Wastewater is transported from the customer to a series of collection lines to the Manchester Creek treatment facility. At the facility, sewage undergoes a process to remove physical, chemical and biological contaminants. The effluent stream is separated from sludge and discharged back into the environment.

### **Solid Waste**

York County's solid waste collection and recycling program operates and maintains 16 collection centers strategically located throughout the County for the disposal and recycling of household garbage. A sample of the recyclables collected include aluminum cans, cardboard, plastics, newspapers, used motor oil, latex paint and appliances. York County also operates a solid waste transfer station designed for the processing of municipal solid waste. The waste is received from municipalities and private waste haulers and placed onto trailers for transfer and disposal in an approved landfill facility in Richland County, SC. Finally, York County operates an active Construction, Demolition and Land-Clearing Debris landfill with a permitted annual tonnage limit of 62,000 tons.

All County solid waste collection, temporary storage, loading facilities and C&D landfill are operated and maintained as an integral function of the York County Solid Waste Management Plan and the effectiveness of the facilities are evaluated on a day-to-day basis. This Solid Waste Management Plan has served the County well over the past years. As population numbers increase in certain areas of the County and the various centers and services become congested overburdened the County will respond by adding additional service centers or expanding capacity.

### **Electric**

The county is served by a variety of electric utility companies. York Electric Cooperative serves over 43,000 households and businesses throughout the County. Duke Energy is the other private utility company serving York county homes and businesses. Duke Energy supplies and delivers energy to approximately 7.2 million people in the US and 33,000 people here in York County. The third electric provider is the City of Rock Hill who provides electric service to more than 30,000 residential and commercial customers in the greater Rock Hill area. According to discussions during the recent Stakeholder Interview all electric utilities that serve the County consider themselves on a good pace to provide electric service as new residential and commercial developments are brought online.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **Fire Safety**

The Department of Fire Safety offers residents a wide range of fire prevention and fire protection services. Employees are trained and equipped to provide fire safety inspections, fire investigations, and public fire education programs for people of all ages. Because volunteers are crucial to the rural fire system, the department supplies the County's 16 volunteer fire departments with in-depth firefighting instruction at its training facility on Ogden Road in Rock Hill, SC. Additionally, the department's award-winning fire truck building and maintenance program continues to earn a reputation for excellence by saving tax dollars and by providing state-of-the-art equipment.

## Public Safety

The mission of the York County Sheriff's office is to provide for the safety and protection of the citizens and businesses of York County through proven full service law enforcement practices. These practices include both reactive and proactive responses to activities, ensure that public interests and constitutionally guaranteed liberties are protected and that the judicial process is followed according to the law. York County Sheriff's Office personnel achieve this mission by maintaining a high level of work ethics, integrity and ethical standards in the performance of their duty.

## Emergency Management

The York County Office of Emergency Management maintains the Emergency Operations Plan which establishes policies and procedures to assure the maximum and most effective utilization of all resources in the County, minimize the loss of life and or injury to the population and protect and conserve resources and facilities in the County during emergencies resulting from natural and man-made disasters or war.

## PARKS, RECREATION, GREENWAYS & OPEN SPACE

### State and Federal Lands

*The DNR McConnells Tract*- The DNR McConnells Tract consists of 249 acres and lies approximately 1.5 miles west northwest of the town of McConnells. There are currently about 22 acres of open land on this tract that includes wildlife openings and food plots.

*Draper Tract*- The Draper Tract encompasses 806 acres. Originally 1,241 acres, a 435 acre portion was purchased by York County and added to neighboring Brattonville in 1994. In addition to hunting, fishing is available in the three stocked ponds. Although managed for hunting, other forms of outdoor recreation such as hiking, biking, and bird watching are very popular here because of its proximity to Charlotte and Rock Hill.

*Herb Kirsh Wildlife Management Area*- This tract consists of approximately 357 acres and lies about 5.5 miles west of the town of McConnells. Turkey Creek bisects the tract and thus provides a wide bottomland habitat of scattered hardwoods. The remaining acreage is comprised mostly of planted loblolly pine.

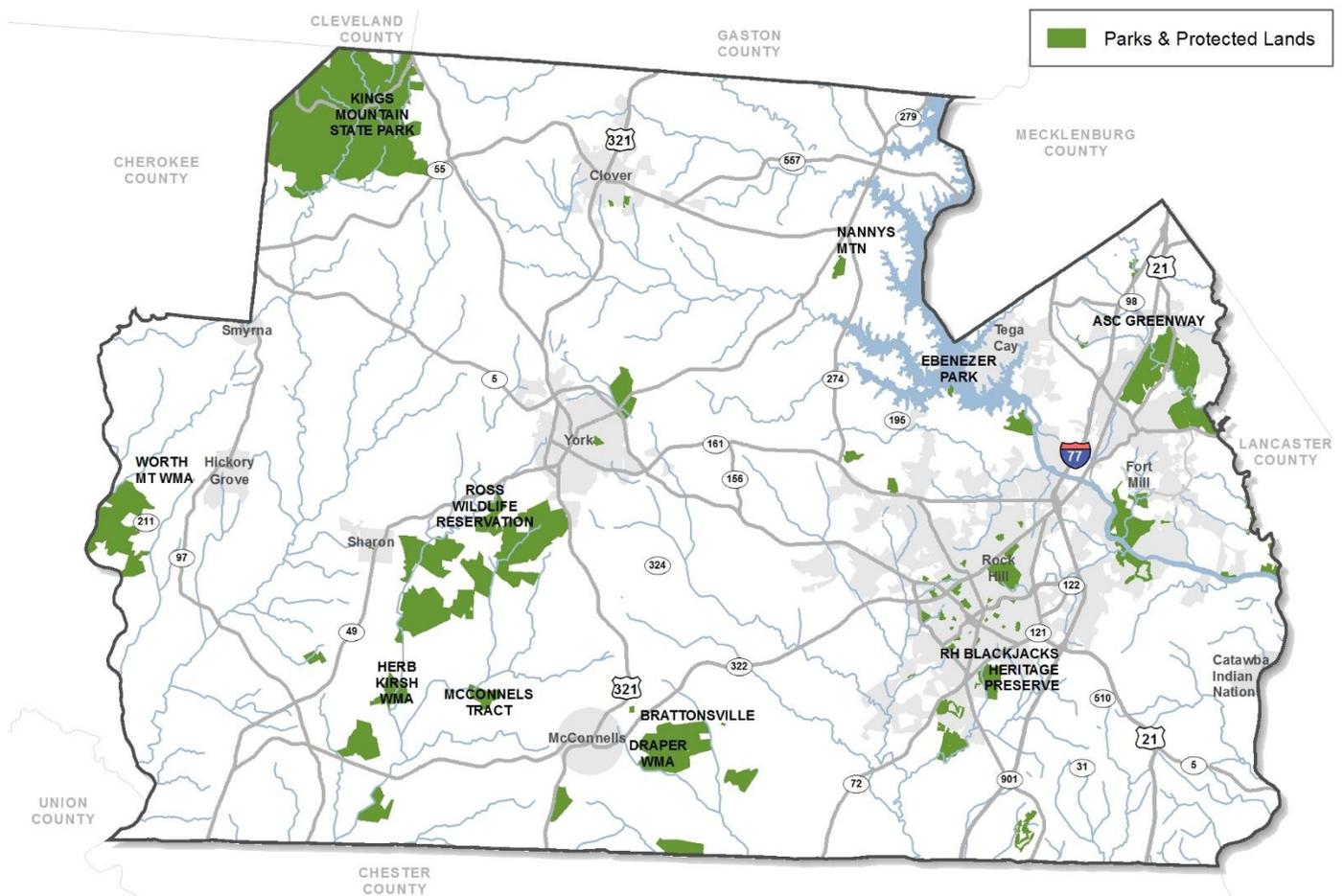
*James Ross Wildlife Reservation*- The James Ross Wildlife Reservation consists of 305 acres and lies approximately 2 miles southwest of the Town of York. Pine timber stands comprise about 150 acres of the land. A significant number of desirable mast producing hardwood species such as red beech and dogwood also occur on the tract and account for approximately 145 acres. Several small wildlife openings are present.

*Kings Mountain National Military Park / Kings Mountain State Park* - The Kings Mountain National Military Park and the adjacent Kings Mountain State Park sit in the eastern foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and offer a significant contrast from area's typically gently rolling terrain. Together, they compose a total of 8,365 acres that including a moderately difficult 16-mile looped trail. The site of a famous Revolutionary War battle, Kings Mountain National Military Park and the adjoining Kings Mountain State Park are popular destinations for recreation of all kinds and a key resource of open space in the County.

*Rock Hill Blackjacks Heritage Preserve* - The Rock Hill Blackjacks Heritage Preserve covers 291 acres at the edge of the City of Rock Hill in York County. This small area is all that remains of the once widespread prairie system in South Carolina. The Blackjacks exist in 12 counties of the Piedmont, and host unique communities of plants and animals. The preserve hosts a walking trail leading through diverse habitats including 3 rare plant communities and 21 rare plant species.

The parks noted above and additional protected lands and natural resources are included in Map 31.

Map 31: Parks and Protected Lands



## County Parks

*Brattonsville* - Brattonsville is the oldest settlement in up-state South Carolina. The first settlers arrived to York County in the 1740's and 50's. In 1994 York County purchased the land. It has since added a 426 acre portion of the Draper estate and the 55-acre Mendenhall tract. These parcels together define Historic Brattonsville as exists today as a 775-acre internationally known historical site. It is one of the most important and often visited cultural attractions in South Carolina, standing as a testament to the pioneering spirit and industry of the Bratton family and to the hard work and sacrifice of their descendants and slaves.

*Ebenezer Park* - Ebenezer Park, consisting of 26 acres, is located in the northern portion of York County on the shores of Lake Wylie. Opened in 1988, the County leases the property from Duke Energy/Crescent Resources. This park is the only county operated recreation area with a full staff which includes a resident superintendent. The park has 69 campsites, 5 picnic shelters, 3 boat ramps, and a playground area. These attractions are very popular during the summer months when the park attracts the bulk of its 27,000 annual visitors.

*Nanny's Mountain* - Nanny's Mountain was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 because of its significance during the Revolutionary War as a rich source of iron. Several iron mines on the mountain supplied Hill's Ironworks which opened in 1779. The ironworks, now thought to be under Lake Wylie, supplied cannons and cannon balls to patriot forces. A 1.1 mile trail leads to the summit where there is an education pavilion, picnic area, and a lookout.

*Worth Mountain* - Worth Mountain is a 1,647 acre tract that has nearly two miles of frontage on the Broad River. The tract was acquired in the mid 1990's through a purchase by York County Forever, an acquisition made possible through generosity of the Dalton family. Formerly the Dalton Ranch, the longtime hunting preserve continues to serve as such as a South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Management Area.

## Proposed Facilities

Currently, the County does not provide formal park and recreation services to its citizens, therefore no monies have been set aside in the Capital Facilities Plan for a future park. However, land has been set in the Lake Wylie area for a future 50 acre park that will service the unincorporated community of Lake Wylie. This park will contain three lighted baseball fields and three lighted multiuse fields. Another facility, Allison Creek Park, that currently contains a boat launch only, located on Lake Wylie is proposed and will contain camping spaces, hiking trails, expanded fishing opportunities, and swimming beach.

## Private Facilities

Open space and trails are provided throughout the more urbanized areas by Homeowners Associations (HOA), faith based organizations, the YMCA, and Nation Ford Land Trust.

## Trails and Greenways

Table 33: Trails and Parks

TRAILS AND PARKS			
CITY	ACRES OF PARKLAND	MILES OF TRAILS	MILES OF PLANNED TRAILS
Fort Mill	2,324	35	48 <sup>8</sup>
Tega Cay	45	3.6	0
Rock Hill	388	21.24	31.64
Clover	85.9	0.8	5.58
York	59	1	0

*Nations for Greenway* - A project of the Nation Ford Land Trust, the Nation Ford Greenway is currently composed of the Springfield Trail just over 2 miles in length. The trail is planned to expand in the coming years into a 31 mile trail system linking the Catawba River, the Anne Springs Close Greenway, the Sugar Creek Greenway in Mecklenburg County, Rock Hill, Fort Mill, Tega Cay, and the future York County Museum of Life and the Environment. When complete, the greenway will host a number of parks, conservation areas and interpretive centers, offering outdoor education opportunities for all ages. The greenway may also connect many other regional points of interest and trails by way of the Carolina Thread Trail.

*Carolina Thread Trail* - In 2008, York County adopted the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan. The plan identifies potential location for approximately 225 miles of existing and future trails and greenways that will link York County to Mecklenburg, Gaston, Lancaster, Chester, Cherokee, and Cleveland Counties. This plan is the outcome of a year-long public process spearheaded by the Carolina Thread Trail initiative and supervised by a steering committee of representatives from York County municipal and county governments as well as interested organizations, businesses and individuals. The Carolina Thread Trail's mission is to bring resources to the 15 county region in the south-central piedmont of North Carolina and the north-central portion of South Carolina in order to create an interconnected trail system with major regional trails designated as The Carolina Thread Trail.

Three priority segments were identified: Kings Mountain State and Military Park to State Line; Lake Wylie Dam to Highway 21 Bridge; Nations Ford Greenway to, along Sugar Creek Greenway to Lancaster County Bridge. The Kings Mountain Segment has been built. The Segment from the Dam to Highway 21 Bridge is currently under planning and easement acquisition. The Sugar Creek Greenway segment, has largely been developed.

Other constructed segments include Ann Springs Close Greenway - Blue Star Trail (Fort Mill) (1 Mile), Piedmont Medical Center Trail; Baxter Community Trail (2.25 Miles); Piedmont Medical Center Trail 2.2 Miles and Manchester Meadows Trail (Rock Hill) (1.1 Miles). These segments and the planned segments of the Carolina Thread Trail can be seen in

<sup>8</sup> Based on Fort Mill Comprehensive Plan

Map 32.

Map 32: Carolina Thread Trail



## Municipal Parks

Park and recreations services in York County for are largely provided by municipal governments. County residents pay proportionate share fees collected from property taxes which are directed to each of the municipalities.

Table 34: Municipal Parks and Facilities

MUNICIPAL PARK FACILITIES			
NOTABLE MUNICIPAL PARKS	ACRES	LOCATION	AMENITIES
Ann Springs Close Greenway	2,300	Fort Mill	Natural open space, mountain bike, pedestrian and equestrian trails; camping; fishing
Doby's Bridge Park	14	Fort Mill	3 lighted softball fields
Stateline Sports Complex	11	Fort Mill	3 soccer Fields (1 lighted)
Runde Park	8	Tega Cay	2 lighted baseball/softball fields
Turner Memorial Field	10	Tega Cay	1 lighted baseball/1 Soccer field
Winthrop University Recreation Complex	350	Rock Hill	1 lighted baseball field; 4 lighted softball fields; 4 lighted lacrosse fields, disk golf; cross country course; track
River Park	70	Rock Hill	Passive Recreation/CanoeLaunch
Manchester Meadows	70	Rock Hill	8 lighted soccer fields including 2 field turf fields
Cherry Park	68	Rock Hill	5 lighted softball Fields; 5 multi-purpose fields
Giordana Velodrome	3.82	Rock Hill (Riverwalk)	250 m World Class Velodrome
Presbyterian Sports Medicine BMX Supercross Track	2.26	Rock Hill (Riverwalk)	2 World Class courses
Riverwalk Parks		Rock Hill (Riverwalk)	2 lighted Soccer Fields (Currently); Mountain Biking Trails; 2.25 Mile Trail; canoe launch; cyclocross (future)
New Centre Park	50	Clover	4 lighted Soccer fields
Clover Community Park	21	Clover	2 lighted baseball fields
York Recreation Complex	30	York	5 lighted baseball/softball fields

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES

### Public Schools

Throughout the greater Charlotte region, York County is well known for providing a first-rate public school education. In fact, all of York County's school districts received a rating of "Excellent" in the 2014 South Carolina Federal Report Card. Fort Mill and Clover school districts have received this rating for the past four years. Additionally, York County students continue to improve their composite SAT scores with three of the four school districts performing better than the state average and one better than the national average during the 2014 test year.

York County's public education system is separated into the following four school districts: York (District 1), Clover (District 2), Rock Hill (District 3), and Fort Mill (District 4). Each district operates individually with its own school board, budget and administration. These school districts serve all County residents, including those residing in the unincorporated area of the County as well as those residing in the towns and cities. Student population continues to increase. This year the district serves 42,248 students which is an increase 874 from the previous school year with most of the new students located in the Fort Mill School District.

#### *District 1 – York School District*

As of the 2014-2015 school year the YSD operated a total of 10 schools, comprising of five elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, one technology center and one alternative education center. The current total school

enrollment is 5,167. According to Superintendent Dr. Vernon Prosser, the York district is in a good position to meet the space requirements of a growing student population.

*District 2 - Clover School District*

As of the 2014-2015 school year the Clover SD operated a total of 10 schools, comprising of six elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school and one alternative school. The current total school enrollment is 6,867 students. They have 400 acres of land and 1.4 millions square feet of education and administrative space. A new elementary school is currently under construction and is scheduled to open for the in August 2016. It will accommodate 750 students and help relieve the overcrowding at Crowders Creek Elementary School. The 2014 bond referendum will provide funding for a new elementary school, a new (replacement) middle school, renovation of current middle school into a ninth grade academy, athletic facility upgrades and a new aquatic and fitness center.

*District 3 - Rock Hill District*

The Rock Hill School District is the largest school district in York County with a student population of approximately 17,400. The district operates a total of 27 schools, comprising of one preschool, 17 elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools and one career/technology center. They have 1,136 acres of land and 3,118,248 square feet of education and administrative space. The Rock Hill School District has not experienced the rate of growth like Clover and Fort Mill. Therefore, most of their schools are within capacity limits. However, as the areas to the north reach build out, it is likely the school district will begin to experience new growth pressures.

*District 4 - Fort Mill School District (FMSD)*

As of the 2014-2015 school year the FMSD operated with a total of 15 schools, comprising of nine elementary schools, four middle schools and two high schools. Serving one of the fastest growing areas of the County, the August 2014 enrollment was estimated to be over 12,500 which is a 6-7% increase over the previous year. In order to keep pace with the growth and remove the enrollment freeze in a few schools, the district opened two new elementary schools for the 2014-2015 school year. In January 2015 the new Riverview Elementary School opened allowing for the expansion of Fort Mill HS into the current Riverview building. The school district is currently considering a new bond referendum to properly prepare for the continuous and rapid student growth population that is projected over the next five years.

## Private Schools

There are approximately 15 private schools in York County serving 1,800 students. The vast majority of the schools have a religious affiliation. Below is a list of the larger private schools in York County.

Table 35: Private Schools in York County

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN YORK COUNTY			
SCHOOL	LOCATION	GRADES	STUDENTS
Blessed Hope Baptist School	York	PK-12	158
Comenius School for Creative Learning	Fort Mill	K-12	140
St Anne School	Rock Hill	PK-8	262
Trinity Christian School	Rock Hill	PK-12	247
Walnut Grove Christian School	Fort Mill	K-12	119
Westminster Catawba Christian School	Rock Hill	PK-12	467
Lake Point Academy	Lake Wylie	K-12	127

## Colleges and Universities

York County is home to three higher education institutions: Winthrop University, York Technical College and Clinton College.

*Winthrop University* is a public, comprehensive university that is committed to be among the very best institutions of its kind in the nation. Through an educational experience that blends liberal arts, professional programs, global awareness and civic engagement; Winthrop students develop the knowledge, skills, and values that prepare them for all the future holds. Winthrop's campus encompasses a rich architectural blend of neo-Georgian buildings and is included in the National Register of Historic Places. An attractive recreational area surrounds Winthrop Lake and includes a 6,100-seat coliseum, a 2,000-seat ballpark, softball, track, soccer and tennis complexes, a 9-hole golf course, an 18-hole disc golf course, and numerous recreational athletic fields. Winthrop has 6,130 students representing 41 states and 47 countries. The University offers 42 undergraduate programs and 40 graduate programs. The average class size for undergraduate lecture courses is 22 students.

*York Technical College*, a member of the South Carolina Technical and Comprehensive Education System, is a public, two-year institution of higher education that offers a variety of associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates. Through maximizing student success, the College seeks to contribute to the economic growth and development of York, Lancaster, and Chester counties and of the State. York Technical College has an open admissions policy for qualified students and annually enrolls 8,000-10,000 credit students. Through excellence in teaching and learning, the College provides program offerings, in a variety of delivery methods, in the areas of engineering technology, industrial technology, information technology, business, health sciences, and public service and transfer to senior colleges and universities. In addition, the College offers a comprehensive selection of corporate and continuing education courses designed to promote occupational advancement, personal interest, and business and industry growth.

*Clinton College* was one of many schools established by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church during Reconstruction years, to help eradicate illiteracy among freedmen. Clinton is the oldest institution of higher education in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The College has operated continuously for 120 years. IN May 2013, the Transnational Association for Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) approved the College to offer two four-year programs; a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. In view of the four-year programs, the school's name was changed from Clinton Junior College, to Clinton College. In keeping with its 120 year tradition, Clinton College offers an academic environment that not only promotes intellectual growth, but also fosters positive moral, ethical, and spiritual values. The school has a proud heritage as a Christian College, striving to prepare men and women to be lifelong learners, active participating citizens, and good stewards of society.

## **LIBRARIES**

The York County Library is headquartered in Rock Hill, with branches in Clover, Fort Mill, Lake Wylie and York. In addition, the Library provides its Bookmobile, which visits nursing homes, daycares and other locations throughout the York County community, and homebound and outreach services.

Continuing its commitment to learning for education and entertainment, the York County Library offers a variety of free programs for adults, teenagers and children. From local author visits to theatre performances, everyone can find something to meet his or her interests. The Library also provides classes for learning to use computers and the Internet.

Along with its collection of books, periodicals, audio books, DVDs and video cassettes, and more, the York County Library offers numerous electronic resources through its website and its numerous subscription databases, most of which can be accessed around the clock from any computer. With computer terminals featuring Internet access, educational software and more available at the main library and each branch, York County Library is well-equipped to meet the needs of the community in this digital age.

## **GOVERNMENT FACILITIES**

The County government currently has offices in 31 different locations which are either owned or leased. The services at these various facilities can be organized into five main categories: administration, emergency services, sheriff services, the court system and finally planning, development and public works. Most of the facilities are clustered in downtown York, the Moss Justice Center or Heckle Boulevard in Rock Hill. The County is currently reviewing a facilities study that considered the age, ownership, location, and operation of all county facilities. The results will determine the most cost efficient and effective use of the County's current facilities and provide direction for new facilities and the proper funding mechanisms.