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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION & FOCUS OF UPDATE

The Town of Lexington continues to be a community of exceptional schools, accessible services, good jobs and opportunities, and an enviable quality of life. As such, the Town continues to experience tremendous residential growth, which increases the impact on schools, public services and infrastructure. Since the last comprehensive plan update in 2016, population has increased 19.7% (over the 2010 Census), as estimated by the U.S. Census (July 1, 2019).

The town adopted its first comprehensive plan under South Carolina’s 1994 Planning Enabling Act in 1998. The town completed a five-year review of that plan in 2003. In 2008 a 10-year update to the plan was completed. In 2013 a five year review of that plan was completed. Due to rapid growth resulting from increased construction activity and annexations, the Town completed an additional review of the plan in 2016.

This update is focused on aligning the comprehensive plan with the Town’s Vision Plan. The Vision Plan has spurred approximately $16.7 million in public, capital improvements, which have positively impacted tax revenues and the local economy. Equally important, the Vision Plan projects have exponentially improved the cultural, commercial, residential, and recreational aspects through a revitalized Main Street, improved and additional parks and trails, standards that promote quality development, and facilities and events that bring the community together.

The Vision Plan is the foundation of decisions made by Town Council and staff and serves as the north star when considering the future growth of the town. Town leaders want the comprehensive plan to work in concert with the Vision Plan, creating a unified, intentional focus for managing future land use and growth. In 2012, Town Council was forward-thinking, creating guiding principles and goals that continue to shape decision and continue to reflect the needs and the desires of residents.

The focus of this 2021 update is land use. While other elements are updated (data and recommendations), modernizing the land use element and, thereby, the land use and zoning ordinances is most important and critical to ensuring the Vision Plan’s vision, guiding principles and goals continue to shape the future of the town. Therefore, this update brings together the Vision Plan and the Comprehensive Plan to address and meet future needs with the same intentional success the town has experienced since the adoption of the Vision Plan in 2012.
TOWN COUNCIL GOALS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

During the November 2020 Town Council Vision Plan Retreat, Town Council agreed to the following intentions and goals of the comprehensive plan and ordinance update:

- Manage growth.
- Create a walkable downtown and walkable centers/districts throughout town.
- Build a comprehensive sidewalk and trails network through town and future annexed areas and connecting to Saluda Shoals Park.
- Encourage and support more diverse housing to meet growing population needs.
- Continued investments in downtown, throughout the historic downtown district (The Triangle).
- Build a Higher Education campus in town (Vision Plan).
- Concentrate high-density development (residential and commercial) in high traffic areas.
- Encourage mixed-use redevelopment of vacant or non-performing shopping centers.
- Identify a non/sub-performing shopping center and invest in a redevelopment master plan, development pro forma and initial infrastructure construction that includes opportunities for multi-modal transportation to recruit private investment.
- Update development regulations to ensure conformance with access management, pedestrian connectivity, parks/green space, traffic management, etc.
- Preserve low-density/open space character of Old Chapin and Old Cherokee roads.
- Create hubs of development and activity that are connected, where possible, to expanded sidewalks and trails network.
- Transform Highway 378/Augusta Highway into a tree-lined boulevard leading into the historic downtown (Vision Plan).
- Incentivize more Class A office and research space to meet demands and encourage more business creation and entrepreneurial activity.
- Focus on helping local businesses thrive.
- Require the preservation of trees – no clear cutting, require this in development agreements.

These intentions have influenced the updates and were confirmed through several stakeholder meetings.
Town of Lexington Vision Plan

To understand the influence of the Vision Plan, one should understand the vision that was written for the Town in 2012 as well as the guiding principles and goals. This vision statement brings together the ideas of hundreds of residents and business leaders and illustrates what is possible when the community works together with shared principles, values and goals. Many parts of the vision have become reality.

The Vision Plan statement envisioned the Town of Lexington in 2016 on a beautiful autumn day when the town is flourishing through a vibrant downtown, fun community events that draw hundreds from across the state, and a thriving tourism environment built on the historic, cultural and natural resources of the town. The following excerpt from the Vision Plan statement captures the spirit of the town and tells a story of dreams that have come true and that are still driving the future of Lexington.

*The intangible gift of the town's commitment to this vision is that the residents of Lexington are happier, healthier and have become stewards for the future. They have realized the value of public investment in the arts, preservation, conservation and in creating an environment that welcomes and inspires private investment. On any given weekend, a festival will be happening downtown, a regional soccer tournament will be taking place and a concert will be opening at the Lake Murray Piazza. Lexington is a center of culture and of people coming together. The public investments made over the past five years and the revenue generated by the Triangle Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District have yielded millions of dollars in private investments. Each neighborhood in town is flourishing due in large part to the systems of sidewalks and trails throughout town that connect residents to parks, downtown, grocery stores, restaurants, recreation, and entertainment venues and to the region. Because of the renewed quality of life in town, the Saxe Gotha Industrial Park and the Lexington County Industrial Park were built out in 2013. Plans are underway to expand options. The diversity and authenticity of Lexington’s economy provides jobs for all ages and skill and educational levels.*

2012 Vision Plan

Town Council has committed to annual updates of the Vision Plan to ensure that public investments are founded on the guiding principles, bringing the vision to life more each year. In some years, Town Council has shifted project priorities to better address the successes of the Vision Plan projects and the changing dynamics of a growing town. However, Town Council never waivers from the vision or the guiding principles.
VISION PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES & GOALS

Guiding Principles of the Vision Plan


Sustain Main Street and downtown as the heart of Lexington from the Old Mill to Sunset Boulevard, historic Triangle area, the original boundaries of the town and the government center.

Sustain Lexington’s sense of community, its most important and endearing quality, which is exemplified through family values, award-winning schools, neighbors helping neighbors, safe, welcoming, natural beauty, unique history and preservation of historic resources, natural resources, and economic prosperity.

Enhance Lexington’s small town feel in concert with continued development while respecting and maintaining the rural nature.

Strive for intentional, sustainable, and authentic development that enhances Lexington’s natural beauty, sense of community, history, and opportunities for prosperity.

Increase connectivity by creating places and connections within town that engage people with people and people to places (transportation, communication, civic activities), which is paramount to retaining an authentic small town appeal.

Strive for innovation and sustainability in all developments and programs to increase Lexington’s prosperity.

Require the highest quality design and development in all projects and developments to reflect the spirit of Lexington and the intent and values of the Vision Plan.

Build multi-jurisdictional and regional partnerships to continually improve and to sustain the region’s quality of life through preservation of the natural environment, improved infrastructure, accessibility and connectivity, cultural and recreational opportunities, economic development, housing, education, public safety, and wellness.
Goals of the Vision Plan


**Improve Traffic Flow**
Implement transportation strategies that are innovative, progressive, provide options and enhance the quality of life; diminish traffic from being Lexington’s story; work in concert with the county.

**Create a Vibrant Destination Main Street**
Host regular and diverse events for all ages; recruit local and national businesses and retail shops to invest in Main Street (improve local economy), support free Wi-Fi hot spots throughout town (business establishments and public places); encourage alternate truck routes.

**Support and Encourage an Iconic Presence on Lake Murray**
Support a multi-use development for residents and visitors that improves connectivity and access between the town and Lake Murray.

**Preserve and Celebrate the Origins of Lexington**
Many feel as if the history of Lexington is slipping away. Work to preserve and celebrate the treasured history of Lexington through signage, tourism opportunities, design standards, community events and local businesses.

**Create a Welcoming Atmosphere with Beautiful, Landscaped “Front Porches”**
Design and construct unique and beautiful “front porches” that welcome all to this historic town with landscaping that provides beauty and shade; install signage (I-20 interchanges, in town and throughout the county) that directs people to places in Lexington; work in concert with the county.

**Improve Pedestrian and Bike Access, Connectivity and Safety**
Create a comprehensive trail system that connects people to venues in town and throughout the region (Lake Murray, Saluda Shoals Park, Three Rivers Greenway, Palmetto Trail, etc.) in concert with county and evaluate town sidewalk network relative to existing conditions, safety, and new development requirements.

**Remain a Charming Small Town in the Face of Exponential Growth**
Adopt planning districts throughout town with appropriate design and development standards that reflect the unique character and use/activity of each district; enforce/encourage authentic efforts that celebrate the spirit of Lexington; connect and enhance what’s here.

**Provide for the Social and Recreational Needs of Residents**
Meet the needs of all residents, but particularly youth and young professionals, beyond organized sports by encouraging more in-town opportunities for movies, entertainment, food, cultural activities, access to Lake Murray, social and passive recreation, etc.
Respect the Unique Rural Character of Lexington
Institute rural development standards that are sustainable while encouraging continued economic activity, work in concert with the county.

Be a Welcoming Home to a Growing International Community
The Town of Lexington is becoming home to a growing international community. The Town welcomes and celebrates this convergence of cultures while maintaining Lexington’s unique character through events, inclusive engagement of residents and creating an atmosphere of unity.

Improve the Business Environment
Welcome and support new businesses and industries in the Town of Lexington by providing a business-friendly process. Institute regular training for staff in working with potential businesses, explore incentives for small, local businesses, improve access to information and work in concert with the Chamber to promote Lexington as a friendly and prosperous place for doing business.

Promote and Build the Economy through the Celebration of Lexington’s History
In concert with the goal of preserving and celebrating the origins of Lexington, establish collaborative relationships to build a unique economy through tourism, special events, and programming. Preserve and then promote to draw residents and visitors to downtown to celebrate what is unique and authentic about Lexington. Historical tourism is an untapped resource yet can be a sustainable economic development driver.
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

The following Comprehensive Plan vision statement reflects the Vision Plan vision, guiding principles and goals and input shared by Town Council, the Planning Commission, community stakeholders and staff. This vision statement specifically addresses how the Town of Lexington can ensure land use is managed for the common good for years to come.

Comprehensive Plan Vision

The Town of Lexington, through land use policies adopted for the sustained health, prosperity and common good of all residents, businesses and the natural and built environment, is a thriving testament to appropriate and intentional planning and zoning. Population and businesses continue to increase and prosper in concert with managed growth and protection of the beautiful natural environment in Lexington.

Lexington is a model of integrating residential and commercial density while preserving the historic, small town character beloved by residents and visitors. Traffic challenges no longer define the Town. Instead, Lexington is celebrated as one of the safest and prettiest communities for walking and biking and has become a popular weekend destination for cyclists throughout the Midlands due to the extensive network of paths that connect to the Johnny Jeffcoat Walkway, Saluda Shoals Park, and the Three Rivers Greenway.

The new neighborhood centers and mixed-use developments continue to attract young professionals, young families, and a growing number of retirees. These areas are vibrant live, work, play neighborhoods allowing residents and employees to walk to work or to any of the numerous pocket parks, civic greenspaces, local restaurants, and nightlife.

Building on the success of the Main Street revitalization and the Icehouse Amphitheater, Lexington is a cultural destination for music, theater, and the visual arts.

A key to this success is the clarity and accessibility of doing business in Lexington. Developers, home builders, business owners and entrepreneurs take full advantage of the Lexington Development Toolbox, which outlines the Town’s Vision, the development opportunity areas, the ordinances, standards, and processes. While there are always challenges, those doing business in Town appreciate the clarity and the commitment to the Vision and the Town’s willingness to do the upfront work to ensure success for all parties.

The Town of Lexington is an exemplar of having a vision and sticking to it.
This word diagram illustrates the top words Town Council and staff shared to define Lexington’s quality of life. The bolder and larger the word, the more the word was used. Community spirit and the schools are the major quality of life elements for the Town. The group recognized that these two elements also bring challenges since they are the key motivators for people continuing to move into town.

When we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, “See, this our fathers did for us.’

John Ruskin, 1880
English critic, essayist, and reformer (1819 - 1900)
Part 2: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

1 Population

The population element includes information related to historic trends and projections; the number, size, and characteristics of households; educational levels and trends; income characteristics and trends; race; sex; age; and other information relevant to a clear understanding of how the population affects the existing situation and future potential of the area.

Inventory

Since the mid-70s, the Town of Lexington has seen a substantial increase in its population. In 1980, 2,131 people resided in the town limits. By the 1990, the Town’s population had nearly doubled to 4,046 residents. At that time the Town was the second fastest growing municipality in South Carolina. During the next decade the Town’s dramatic growth continued and by the year 2000 the population of Lexington had grown by 142% to 9,793. In 2010 the Town’s population had again shown strong growth increasing to 17,870 residents. The 2020 US Census Bureau confirmed the Town’s total resident population increased to 23,568 people, which is a 31.89% increase since 2010 (see Figure 1.1).

The Town is the 25th largest city in South Carolina and has an annual growth rate of 2.35% (2020 to 2021). There are 7,907 households with an average of 2.5 people per household.
Town of Lexington Population Growth

![Population Growth Graph](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy)

**Figure 1.1**

*Source: [https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy)*

**Population Figures**

**Race:** The 2020 Census noted that 80.4% of the Town’s population is Caucasian, down from 80.8% in the 2010 Census. As a percentage of the overall population this statistic shows slight growth of the minority population since the 2010 Census. According to the 2020 Census, the Black or African American population is 11.5%, the Hispanic or Latino population is 5.3%, and the Asian population is 4.4%. The Black population increased 19.2% from 2010, 2,264 to 2,700 people. The Hispanic population increased 148.7% since 2010, from 165 to 409 people.

**Gender:** According to the 2020 Census females make up 47.9% of the population, down from 51.8% in 2010.

**Age:** The percentage in each of the age categories remains fairly stable. During the 2010 Census the median age in Town was 34.8 years with the median age for women in Town being slightly higher than men. Voting Age population increased from 13,479 in the 2010 Census to 17,606 in the 2020 Census, an increase of 30.62%. 2020 median ages are:
- Total Population: 36.2 years
- Males: 34.9 years
- Females: 37.5 years
**Education:** According to the 2020 Census, 43.5% of the population age 25 and older attained at least a bachelor’s degree. 93.5% of the population age 25 and older attained a high school degree.

According to the March 2018 *Central Midlands region Population Projection Report 2020-2050*, the Town of Lexington will experience some of the highest growth over the next two decades. As stated in the report: Figure 4 (below) shows the projected population change in Lexington County between 2020 and 2050. Lexington County, where the population has grown by 21.5% since 2010, is projected to be the fast-growing county in the Central Midlands Region and is expected to add a further 262,452 residents to the county’s population by 2050. This represents a projected population increase of 82.4% and a projected total population in 2050 of 581,135. The majority of the growth in Lexington County is anticipated to be in the central portion of the county, in and around the Town of Lexington as well as in the Red Bank and White Knoll communities. The Gilbert area to the west of the county seat and the Pelion area (along SC 302 and Highway 6, especially) are also expected to see significant growth, while growth is also expected to be strong in the Chapin area north of Lake Murray.

This growth is due in large part to the high quality of life the Town of Lexington offers. As noted on page 10, contributing factors to the quality of life and resulting population trends are the exceptional schools, the community spirit, public safety, the central location adjacent to Lake Murray, major interstates and the Columbia Metropolitan Airport, major universities and colleges, the availability of land for development, and a thriving economy.
Needs

For the past two decades, the Town of Lexington has been in the enviable position of having rapid growth. While the growth the Town has seen has been positive, the Town should make sure that future growth does not negatively impact the character and services of the town.

Sources: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lexingtontownsouthcarolina,SC#
https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/lexington-sc-population
The economic element includes historic trends and projections on the numbers and characteristics of the labor force, where the people who live in the community work, where people who work in the community reside, available employment characteristics and trends, an economic base analysis and any other matters affecting the local economy. These may include factors such as tourism, manufacturing, and revitalization efforts.

**Inventory**

According to the American Community Survey (ACS), 9,859 civilian residents over 16 years of age were employed. The ACS ranked the top industries in Lexington (2019).

- Most Common Industries, by number of employees: Health Care and Social Assistance (1,318 people), Educational Services (1,183 people) and Retail Trade (1,042 people)
- Most Specialized: Finance and Insurance (1.86 times higher than expected), Public Administration (1.67), and Other Service, except Public Administration (1.33 times)
- Highest Paying by Median Earnings: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining ($100,139) and Manufacturing ($75,449)

Figure 2.1 illustrates the Employment by Occupation of the Town’s civilian workforce.

*Figure 2.1 Sources: [https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy)*
Figure 2.2 identifies the major employers in the Town of Lexington and Lexington County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexington Medical Center</td>
<td>6699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington County School District 1</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominion Energy</td>
<td>3066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelin</td>
<td>2080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Lexington</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS</td>
<td>1546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington County School District 2</td>
<td>1043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nephron Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter P Rawl &amp; Sons</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.2**

The 2020 Census stated that the median household income is $74,996 (7% 1-year growth) – see Figure 2.3. The largest share of households has an income between $75,000 - $100,00 (13.9%). The next largest share is 12.4% of households with an income between $100,000 - $125,000. Residents living below the poverty line is 9.11% (5.64% 1-year increase).

**Figure 2.3**

Source: Town of Lexington

Source: [https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lexington-sc#economy)
Finally, it is important to note the continual growth in the number of business licenses issued in Town as well as the growth in retail sales. Between 2010 and 2015 the Town issued 14,760 thousand annual business licenses. This is 22% more licenses than the number issued between 2007 and 2012. Additionally, between 2010 and 2014 (the last year data was available) annual retail sales grew by 58%. These facts combined with continued economic growth through construction and annexation support the notion that the Town continues to evolve from the bedroom community that it once was into a vibrant commercial and industrial center.


Figure 2.4  
Source: SC Department of Revenue

Needs

It is important that the Town continue to position itself as a regional destination, but not let development overshadow the character of the town.
This element includes information on slope characteristics, prime agricultural and forest land, climate, wetlands, flood plain and flood way areas, soil types, natural hazards, and other matter related to the natural environment of the area.

The Town of Lexington is the county seat of Lexington County and is centrally located at the junction of US 1, US 378, and SC 6.

**Inventory**

**Soil and Slope**

Two soil associations are prominent in the Town: the Georgeville-Nason and the Lakeland-Blaney.

The Georgeville-Nason Association is a gently sloping to moderately sloping topography; the steeper slopes being adjacent to streams. Limitations are moderate to severe as foundation material for roads, building sites and septic-tank absorption fields, although limitations vary with individual soils and locations.

The Lakeland-Blaney Association is found on broad ridge tops where the landscape is irregular and gently sloping, and on long side slopes that range from 2 to 25 percent. The range of ridge top slopes is from 0 to 6 percent. Many streams and drainage ways dissect the areas. Limitations for road locations, building sites, and septic-tank disposal systems are moderate to severe, but specific limitations and suitability for uses vary with individual soils.
Climate

The temperate climate provides hot and usually humid summers due to warm, moist air from the Atlantic Ocean. The winters are moderately cold but short. They are tempered by the Appalachian Mountains to the northwest, which impedes cold air movement from the north. The average annual precipitation is 48 inches with peak precipitation during June, July and August. Prevailing winds are from the southwest with an average wind speed of nine miles per hour. Figure 3.1 presents average temperatures for the area.

![Figure 3.1]

Streams, Wetlands and Other Areas

The heart of Lexington is situated between Twelve Mile and Fourteen Mile creeks, an area known as the Twelve and Fourteen Mile Creek Basin. Most of the wetlands in the town that are listed in the National Wetlands Inventory are located along Twelve and Fourteen Mile creeks.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the wetlands areas, water bodies and flood zones.
Figure 3.2 - Please reference full page image in the appendix

Natural Hazards

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) prepared An All Natural Hazard Risk Assessment and Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Central Midlands Region of South Carolina Report in 2011 as a result of a comprehensive planning process that began in 2004. CMCOG updated the plan in 2016. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the South Carolina Emergency Management Division approved this document. The document identifies potential hazards within the region and establishes a process that the general public, local governments and emergency management officials can follow to assess risks and establish plans for mitigating hazard events. sets the stage for a vulnerability assessment and later an Action Plan to mitigate the effects of high priority hazard events when they occur. The study assessed the risks of lightning, severe storm, tornado, wildfire, wind, winter weather, and social vulnerability throughout each municipality, providing a risk score for each as well as an overall hazard risk. Given the detail contained within the plan, for the purposes of this comprehensive plan, it will be included as reference: http://www.centralmidlands.org/pdf/CMHMP%202016%20-%20Final.pdf.
Needs

The study area has a significant inventory of natural and scenic features available. To preserve and protect the natural and scenic features the town should encourage development that is sensitive to the natural resources. The town also should develop a program to preserve the natural and scenic resources in concert with growth management policies.
This element could include historic buildings and structures, unique commercial or residential areas, unique natural or scenic resources, archeological sites, educational, religious or entertainment areas or institutions, and any other feature or facility relating to the cultural aspects of the community.

Historic Background

As the City of Columbia developed in the early 1800s, the Village of Granby simultaneously declined. By 1837 the Village of Granby was virtually deserted primarily because of its generally unhealthy location due to the number of mosquitoes and the frequent flooding that occurred in the area. This situation prompted the General Assembly to change the county seat to a new location called Lexington on December 18, 1818. The new location was near the geographic center of the county on a hill near Twelve Mile Creek. The village of Lexington grew, but eventually large numbers of its citizens departed during the first half of the 19th Century in the huge westward migration that followed the expansion of the southern cotton kingdom. Later population growth and the need to create a municipal corporation around the new county courthouse resulted in the citizens forming the Town of Lexington in 1861.
The town continued slow growth during the reconstruction period. It expanded to assume its historical urban morphology during the prosperous decades from 1893-1920. The town and environs benefited from the Depression and the coming of the boll weevil as the rural population moved to the urban areas. After World War II, the town grew slowly, and the county gained in population.

In 1970, the town recorded a population of 969 persons. New subdivisions grew as developers took advantage of the town’s ability to provide water and sewer services as well as the proximity of Interstate 20 to the Town. These factors contributed to the beginning of a rapid growth period that continues today.
Inventory

Historic Sites
One of the most historically significant sites in the town is the Lexington County Museum. The County has owned and managed the museum since its founding in 1970. Structures and furnishings focus on the early history of Lexington County and interpret the everyday lives of its residents from ca. 1770 until the Civil War. The Museum complex, located in the heart of the historic downtown, encompasses seven acres and features 36 historic structures.

Most notable among the buildings are the following.

- Corley Log House: the oldest documented house in Lexington
- John Fox House: the first building to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Lexington County
- The Hazelius House: Also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this house was a part of the Lutheran Theological Seminary and is where evangelist Charlie D. Tillman wrote down the spiritual “Give Me That Old Time Religion.”
- The Leaphart/Harman House

*Lexington County Museum*

Other notable historic buildings in downtown Lexington include the Palmetto Collegiate Institute, the Old Mill, the original County Courthouse, several commercial building on Main Street, St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church, and many other houses, churches and other buildings.
Between July and September 2005, the “Town of Lexington, South Carolina Historic Resource Inventory Fall, 2005” was published. This study documented 469 historic sites in and around the Town of Lexington concluded. The sites were categorized based on the following criteria:

1. Historic and/or cultural associative values
2. Architectural merit
3. Architectural incidence in the community
4. Effect of alterations and impairment of the original fabric
5. Evidence of structural soundness as a condition of possible preservation success.

For the purposes of the comprehensive plan, the data in this study as well as its findings and recommendations are incorporated by reference.

Cultural Events
The Town of Lexington hosts a Wine Walk (May), Octoberfest, the Snowball Festival (December), a farmers’ market, and the Lexington Live Concert Series each year. The Town hosts several ticketed shows and co-hosts a variety of community events at the Icehouse amphitheater throughout the year. The Town also participates in parades celebrating St. Patrick’s Day, Veterans Day and the Snowball Festival Christmas Parade each year.

The Town completed construction of the 900-seat Icehouse amphitheater in the heart of the downtown area and opened with its first concert in October 2016. The amphitheater, located at the corner of Main and Church Streets, has become a focal point for a variety of cultural events in the area, drawing audiences from across the Midlands.

The Market at Icehouse is Lexington’s farmer/grower and local artesian market that uses a community-friendly atmosphere to promote, support and encourage local production, while educating citizens on the benefits of eating local, fresh produce and supporting local artists and the Certified SC program. The market runs from May through September and features live music and food trucks.

Lexington is home the Village Square Theatre that hosts several productions as well as various religious and school groups.

In 2021 the Town completed the Icehouse pavilion adjacent to the amphitheater. This facility will enhance the ability to host additional events in the downtown area.
Performance at the Icehouse Amphitheater

**Needs**

The town should define and update the inventory of significant historic sites and consider which sites are eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Protecting the town’s historic sites becomes more important as the town grows. This also will inform design and development standards for new development, ensuring the charm and character of the historic downtown will remain.

The town should leverage the tourism opportunities of the Lexington County Museum with the cultural events in downtown. Creating a tourism and downtown economic development plan will advance the cultural environment, creating a sustainable economic engine.
This element includes many activities and services essential to the growth, development, or redevelopment of the community, which are guided by plans such as the following.

a. water supply, treatment, and distribution plan
b. sewage system and wastewater treatment plan
c. solid waste collection and disposal plan
d. fire protection plan
e. emergency medical services plan
f. plan for any necessary expansion of general government facilities (e.g., administrative, court or other facilities)
g. plan for educational facilities
h. plan for libraries and other cultural facilities
Inventory

WATER AND SEWER

**Water**: The Town currently owns 6.5 million gallons a day (MGD) of water capacity at West Columbia’s Water Treatment Plant and pumps an average of 3 MGD.

**Sewer**: The Town’s Coventry Woods plant was recently decommissioned increasing the average flow that is diverted to the City of Cayce regional treatment plant to 4 MGD. With an eye to future capacity needs, the Town paid for 12.5 MGD in this facility and continues to complete hydraulic modeling on various portions of the collection system to accommodate future growth.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the utility service areas for the town.

*Figure 5.1 - Please reference full page image in the appendix*
SOLID WASTE

Residential: The town currently contracts residential solid waste collection to a private company. The town uses 90-gallon roll carts and picks up once a week at the curbside. This service is financed through property tax collections.

Commercial: The town has no responsibility for the collection of commercial solid waste, with the exception of businesses that yield no more than one 90-gallon roll cart of solid waste in a week.

Recycling: Recycling service is available through curbside pickup every other week and is currently contracted out to the same company that picks up residential solid waste. Where appropriate and feasible, the town should seek or assist in expansion of these programs to foster and maintain a “green community.”

PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire: Fire services for the Town of Lexington are provided by the Lexington County fire service from four different fire stations. The stations serving the Town of Lexington are the Lexington, Lake Murray, Red Bank and Corley Mill stations. There are a total of 45 career staff and 14 volunteer staff with ten total vehicles assigned to these four stations. Vehicles assigned to service the Town of Lexington include one tower, four engines, two tankers, two service vehicles and one brush truck. The County fire service has a total of 235 career staff, 55 volunteer staff with 89 vehicles. These assets are stationed throughout the County.

EMS: Emergency Medical Services in the Town are provided by the Lexington County EMS which has 141 total certified personnel that provides 24-hour-a-day initial response to an incident. During peak times, the County has up to 19 ambulance units with 40 personnel available. This includes two captains per shift, who respond to incidents in Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs). The Division uses dynamic deployment to maximize coverage throughout Lexington County.

Lexington County EMS is also the host agency for the Midlands Regional Medical Assistance Team (SC-RMAT-03). This team can provide surge capacity to local hospitals or can be a free standing treatment facility in the case of a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI). This team is comprised of Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics from Lexington County and augmented by nurses and emergency room physicians. SC-RMAT-03 is capable of being self-sustaining for 72 hours and treat up to 300 patients, prior to state and federal assets arriving at an incident.

Police: In 1999, the Lexington Police Department was accredited by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Association in recognition of its policies and practices regarding accountability, internal management, and operations. In 2009, the Department received international accreditation and has maintained this standard since then.
The Lexington Police Department has 62 sworn officers and three civilian positions. The Department is broken down into five divisions: Administration, Patrol, Criminal Investigations, Special Operations and Professional Standards.

**Administration:** Administration includes the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, and three civilian employees. This division is responsible for the maintenance of records, administration of day-to-day operational activities, and the oversight of standards and compliance activities.

**Patrol Division:** The Patrol Division consists of 25 employees. It is responsible for providing general police protection and service to the community including the enforcement of criminal and traffic laws, response to calls for service, and protection of property. The town also has one Reserve Officer.

**Criminal Investigations Division:** The Criminal Investigations Division consists of ten certified personnel who are responsible for the investigation of reported crimes. This division also includes one certified officer who is the Department’s Victim Advocate. This officer provides services to victims and witnesses of crime.

**Special Operations Division:** The Special Operations Division consists of five traffic unit officers, nine school resource officers, and three Community Action Team officers. This division under the supervision of a Lieutenant and two Sergeants, coordinates community programs and special events, and administers the Department’s training sessions.

**Office of Professional Standards:** The Office of Professional Standards consist of three employees. The Office of Professional Standards is responsible for the department’s compliance and standards activities. This Division is under the supervision of a Lieutenant and consists of an Inspector and TAC officer.

**Multi-jurisdictional involvement:** The Department has several ongoing multi-jurisdictional efforts. First, the Department collaborates with other local law enforcement agencies to complete homeland security training and to share information about readiness resources. Second, the Department participates in the Lexington/Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council’s Alcohol Enforcement Team, which implements programs designed to combat underage drinking in the greater Midlands area. Third, the Department also participates in the Lexington County Narcotics Enforcement Team, a multi-agency task force that targets the manufacture, transportation, distribution, and sale of illegal narcotics. The department is a member of the FBI Violent Crime Task Force.

**Citizens’ Academy:** The Department holds a Citizens’ Academy in the spring and fall to provide citizens with an inside look into all aspects of its work.

**Substations** The Department operates one substation located in the Hope Ferry Station shopping center.
RECREATION

**Parks:** Currently nine public parks are located in the town limits: Virginia Hylton Park, Corley Street Park, Gibson Pond Park, Willie B. Caractor Park, Lexington Square, the Palmetto Collegiate Institute, the 14 Mile Creek Trail, the Icehouse Amphitheater, and the Lexington Paw Park.

**Virginia Hylton Park:** Virginia Hylton Park that was dedicated in 1991. With the addition of the Boozer property (2.03 acres), the Roof property (2.21 acres) and the Aldridge property (2.03 acres), the park now encompasses 16.83 acres. It has numerous amenities including three gazebos, a large stage, a playground, a horseshoe pit, Koi ponds, and several gardens. Additionally, Virginia Hylton Park has a special needs section for physically-challenged people, which was the first of its kind in the region. This area contains a wheelchair accessible swing and picnic table, a raised sandbox, and various other amenities, but is very dated (24 years old). The park is located behind Town Hall and across the street from the Palmetto Collegiate Institute.

With the age of Virginia Hylton Park, the town is moving forward with park improvements. These include an active spray fountain, teen area, new all-inclusive playground equipment, additional restrooms, new picnic shelters, an expanded walking path that is ADA compliant with exercise areas along the way, and locations for public art. The Pat Jeffcoat Serenity Garden and additional parking were completed in 2019.
Corley Street Park: The Corley Street Park, the first park in the Town, was previously leased by Lexington County. The Town regained control of this park in 1998 and expanded it in 2004. The park now encompasses 6.5 acres and contains a playground, picnic tables, restrooms, and a monument to honor veterans buried under Lake Murray. The town has ongoing efforts to preserve the historic cemetery area and to improve equipment, landscaping, and parking.

Gibson Pond Park: In July 2007, the town held a grand opening for Gibson Pond Park. This park consists of 15.24 acres of land and 45.36 acres of water surface. The park contains three family-size picnic shelters with grills, a large shelter (1,700 square feet) with a barbecue hut and fireplace, restrooms, and a walking trail. In 2015, a thousand year flood destroyed the century old dam and emptied the pond. A new dam was completed in 2021 as well as additional parking, picnic shelters and trails.
Willie B. Caractor Park: In June 2009 the town opened the Willie B. Caractor Park between Hendrix and Grey Street. The park features three picnic shelters, a fountain, a playground, a spray fountain, and a restroom. It is located on a .49-acre site behind Lexington Hospital.

Lexington Square Park: The Town completed development of the Lexington Square Park located at the corner of Main Street and South Lake Drive in 2012. This park was created in cooperation with Lexington County to provide a beautiful town square for community events and is the home of the Lexington County Law Enforcement Memorial.

The Palmetto Collegiate Institute served as the primary school for the town until 1907. Located on the corner of Church and Hendrix Streets it was renovated and rebuilt by the Town in 2007. Today, the building provides approximately 1500 square feet of indoor meeting space as well as a beautiful landscape, appropriate for a variety of public and private events.

The Lexington Paw Park had its grand opening in April 2014. The park is located at the water tower on Hendrix Street. It contains approximately four acres of fenced in land. It provides amenities appropriate for residents to enjoy being outdoors with their dogs.

The 14 Mile Creek Walking Trail is a passive park that was opened in 2014. It is located along property bordering 14 Mile Creek near the intersection of Old Cherokee Road and North Lake Drive. The park includes a ¾ mile long walking trail that is wheelchair accessible, has numerous benches and an outdoor classroom for environmental education sessions.

The Icehouse Amphitheater was completed in 2017 at the corner of Main and Church Streets in the heart of downtown Lexington. It features a 900-seat amphitheater that is used for a variety of cultural and community events. In 2019, the Farmers Market was relocated to the Icehouse. The Icehouse Pavilion was completed in the Spring of 2021, providing additional space for community events and the farmers’ market.
The Old Mill Walking Trail is a public/private partnership to develop a 6,800 foot walking trail around the Old Mill Pond. The project being completed in concert with the dam restoration.

Potential park sites The Town owns the following land that may provide opportunities for future park development: a Twelve Mile Creek parcel between the Mallard Hills and Woodcreek subdivisions (58.09 acres.) For years, the town has been acquiring parcels in the flood zones along both Twelve Mile Creek and Fourteen Mile Creek in the hope of connecting them to form a large park in the future. These future parks may consist of hiking and nature trails, playground equipment, water recreation, picnic areas, basketball courts and other amenities.

Facilities: The only available public active recreation facilities in the town limits are those of the Lexington County Recreation & Aging Commission. A leisure center, located at 108 Park Road, offers aerobics, crafts, racquetball, basketball, weight training, and venue rented for meetings and dances. A soccer complex is located off Gibson Road and Hendrix Street and a new gym has been built on Barr Road.
SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

Schools: The Town of Lexington is home to one of the best public school systems in the state of South Carolina: Five schools are currently located in the town limits: Lexington Elementary School, Meadow Glen Elementary school, Lexington Middle School, Meadow Glen Middle School and Rosenwald Community Learning Center. Other schools in the Lexington area include Midway Elementary School, Lake Murray Elementary School, New Providence Elementary School, Oak Grove Elementary School, Pleasant Hill Elementary School, Rocky Creek Elementary School, Pleasant Hill Middle School, Lexington High School and River Bluff High School. A new school, Lake Side Middle, will replace Lexington Middle School. Also, a K-12 charter school is planned for the area near Industrial Drive.

According to the school district, Lexington District One is the largest school district in Lexington County both geographically and in student enrollment. Currently, the district operates 31 schools with over 27,000 students and over 4000 employees. During the last ten years the district has been one of the fastest growing school districts in the State with the student population increasing by an average of 475 students per year.

Residents of the Town of Lexington have numerous institutions of higher learning and technical training opportunities from which to choose. These include Midlands Technical College, The University of South Carolina-Columbia, Benedict College, Allen University, Columbia College, and Columbia International University. These institutions provide Lexington with a well-educated and well-trained work force available to fill both low- and high-tech jobs.

Libraries: The current Lexington County Library headquarters is located in the Lexington branch at 5440 Augusta Road. This is a move from the long-time location of the headquarters in Batesburg. The Lexington branch is 48,000 square feet and has a maximum capacity of 150,000 books.
Figure 5.2 illustrates the locations of community facilities throughout the town.

Figure 5.2 - Please reference full page image in the appendix

**Needs**

Town Council, during the 2020 retreat, recognized the need for more equitable locations and diverse amenities for parks throughout town. Virginia Hylton Park is the premiere and much-beloved park. However, with population growth, residents can be better served with at least one additional, large park similar to Virginia Hylton Park in another part of town.

The town is making strides in building a well-connected sidewalk system throughout town. Similarly, the town should focus on building a well-connected trails system that connects parks, neighborhoods, recreational and athletics fields, and cultural facilities as well as downtown, retail centers and, eventually, to Lake Murray, Saluda Shoals Park and regional trail systems.

The town should consider a parks and trails master plan and determine, as mentioned above, the level of service to provide relative to parks and open space, such as one major park per 3,000 households. This will guide investments of impact fees to priority areas.

The town should expand the recycling program to include collection every week to encourage more sustainable practices throughout town.
Housing

This element includes an analysis of existing housing by location, type, age, condition, owner and renter occupancy, affordability, and projections of housing needs to accommodate existing and future population as identified in the population and economic elements.

Inventory

The 2020 Census documented 8,565 housing units in Town, a 5.7% increase from the 8,101 housing units documented in the 2010 Census. Of these 8,565 units, 69% are single housing units with a 65% rate of home ownership.

The median property value of owner-occupied housing units is $190,500, which represents a 3.93% 1-year growth rate. The largest share of households (18.7%) has a property value between $200,000 and $250,000.

The Central Midlands Council of Governments projects the Town of Lexington’s population will increase to 109,362 (2018 Central Midlands Region Population Projection Report). With a simple calculation of the 2035 midpoint projection (approximately 54,681 residents) divided by the current 2.5 persons per household, the Town will need 21,872 housing units by 2035. This estimates that the Town will need 13,307 new units above the current inventory to meet housing needs.

In 2015, the average construction value rose to $167,938 or 28% higher than the value recorded in 2010. According to Redfin Real Estate (redfin.com), the 2021 (through August 2021) average sale price for homes in the Town of Lexington was $227,000, a 13.1% increase over 2020. These statistics are a strong indicator of the increasing home values due to the continuing growth in the Town.
Needs

The Town has seen a tremendous building boom over the past two decades, which continues. The resulting housing stock in Town is a mix of housing types and prices. To meet the increasing population growth and to help address the traffic challenges that follow housing developments, the town should modernize the land use and development ordinances to support a diverse mix of housing with a focus on appropriate densities and walkable, well-connected neighborhoods.

In addition, with the trends in co-working and working from home, the Town should encourage housing that supports alternative live-work spaces and mixed-use developments. This opens opportunities for less commuting, which can have a positive impact on traffic. This will create more vibrant walkable neighborhoods with diverse price points and amenities. Trends show that multiple generations are drawn to these types of housing.

With its historic downtown, older established neighborhoods, new commercial development areas, and the outlying agricultural and suburban environments, the Town of Lexington can and should provide a diverse, affordable and sustainable mix of housing for residents.

![New Construction Permits](image)

*Figure 6.1  Source: Town of Lexington*
This element deals with the development characteristics of the land. It considers existing and future land use by categories including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, mining, public and quasi-public, recreation, parks, open space, and vacant or undeveloped land.

Note: The local government must adopt the land use element before adopting a zoning ordinance. S.C. Code § 6-29-720 (A).
Inventory

Existing Land Uses

The 2016 Future Land Use Map, see Figure 7.1, illustrates a typical suburban development model focused on car-centric corridors that are double-loaded with strip commercial development. All other land uses feed from these commercial corridors. The focus of the 2021 updated Future Land Use Map is to encourage well-managed growth through development nodes that enhance the diverse character areas (residential, recreation, commerce) in concert with improved connectivity (such as pedestrian, multi-modal, neighborhoods, parks) throughout town.

![Figure 7.1: Existing Future Land Use Map (2016 Comprehensive Plan)](image)

Commercial: The commercial pattern for the Town of Lexington is predominately along US 1, US 378 and SC 6. The Town’s zoning ordinance favors commercial development along these arterial roads. While much of the development along US 1 and US 378 is automobile-oriented, North Lake Drive is poised for
significant growth. Fortunately, the inclusion of sidewalks and bike lanes as part of the road improvements has helped to make North Lake Drive a more multi-modal corridor than US 1 or US 378.

The Main Street area – the historic Triangle – is a good example of walkable downtown. Pedestrian safety and access have been improved over the past few years with road improvements and a focus on revitalizing downtown. Historically, the Triangle was the center of commerce and where most people lived: the original mixed-use neighborhood. Today, a nice mix of commerce and residential is located within walking distance of the town’s historic neighborhoods. Businesses, particularly retail and restaurants, parks and events encourage people to park and walk along Main Street, Maiden Lane and Church Street.

**Residential:** A majority of the original homes along US 1, US 378 and SC 6 have given way to other commercial uses. A small section of original downtown housing remains within the historic Triangle, an area created by the intersection of the three major routes – Highway 378, Main Street and North Lake.

Conventional subdivisions have become the predominant style of residential development in the town. With road-frontage land at a premium, residential developers have chosen to create “Lolly Pop” developments in more rural parts of the town, which require long access drives from main arterials to the subdivisions. Single-family subdivision developments tend to sprawl outward from town but remain close to the major routes as the availability of land in town decreases.

While the majority of developments in town are still traditional single-family, detached units, the town has seen a trend toward patio, cluster and townhouse developments as well as larger homes on smaller lots (therefore, smaller yards to maintain).

The town has seen an increase in the development of senior facilities including full nursing care, assisted living and retirement facilities.

Historically, Lexington has been known for its rural character, defined by decreasing tracts of agricultural land on the northern and western edges of town. Many former farms and open tracts have been developed into residential neighborhoods. These developments meet housing needs; however, they contribute to the increasing traffic challenges. The town needs to be intentional about planning for future development in these areas, ensuring that they are developing in concert with infrastructure capacities and that they are built with street connectivity (internal to the neighborhood and externally) and are connected with safe and accessible sidewalks or trails.

In addition, preservation of open space or conservation areas for public parks and habitat protection will increase property values and resiliency of the areas, while maintaining some rural character. Higher density development should be focused around major or secondary roads and existing commercial centers and should provide appropriate pedestrian and bike connectivity.
Industrial: The predominant corridor for industrial development is along the Norfolk/Southern Railway Systems line. This line runs east-west along the Town’s southern border, parallel to I-20. The industrial corridor extends primarily from the I-20 - U.S. 1 interchange to the I-20 - S.C. 215 (Long’s Pond Road) interchange with Industrial Drive and Glassmaster Roads being primary access roads in the industrial corridor. There is a significant amount of land that remains available for development along this corridor. This area has become the unofficial industrial park for Lexington, primarily due to the location of the interstate and the railway but also the availability of utilities in the area.

Existing Zoning

The Town of Lexington’s zoning ordinance is a hybrid between performance and Euclidian zoning, see Figure 7.2. The more commonly used Euclidian zoning divides a geographic area into different types of uses such as general commercial, limited commercial, single-family residential, multi-family residential, industrial, and so forth. In performance zoning, the performance standards required in the zoning districts are designed to protect existing residential development from incompatible commercial and industrial development.
Needs

The two most common tools used by the Town to influence land use development are the Zoning Ordinance and the Land Development Regulations (LDR). The Zoning Ordinance includes the text and the zoning map. The text sets forth the zoning districts, the uses permitted in each district, general and specifics standards and procedures for administration and enforcement. The zoning map sets for the location and boundaries of the zoning districts. The LDR controls site design, street layout, provision for water and sewer services and other matters related to the development or redevelopment of land.

The town has updated some ordinances to better reflect the Vision Plan such as the sign ordinance and the Architectural and Appearance Design Manual. However, the town needs to update and modernize its zoning ordinance and land use regulations to encourage and require development that reflects the guiding principles and goals of the Vision Plan and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, accommodating a greater variety of uses, requiring comprehensive street and sidewalk connectivity, appropriate densities, and other improvements necessary for managed growth and strategic development that continues to elevate the quality of life in the Town of Lexington.
Also, the Town should define development areas by its vision for the future, defined through qualities, characteristics, purposes, and how an area should develop rather than by use alone. A Future Land Use Map based on character areas will provide visionary guidance for the updated ordinances and future development.
The transportation element considers transportation facilities including major road improvements, new road construction, and pedestrian and bicycle projects. Implementation of transportation facilities is most efficient when coordinated with land use planning.

**Inventory**

The Town of Lexington is conveniently located on several major highways (U.S. 378, U.S. 1, and S.C. 6) and an interstate (I-20), near a major airport and two additional interstates (I-77 and I-26), and on a major rail line. In recent years, the Town has invested significant resources in making improvements to the transportation infrastructure.

**Air**

Air transportation is available through a number of major airlines at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport: Delta Air Lines, American Air Lines, United Airlines, and Silver Airways. A 60-acre cargo terminal, a 480-acre airport industrial park, a new multi-modal industrial hub (803Park), and recent terminal renovations continue to enhance this important asset. United Parcel Service has a major hub at the airport that provides direct access to next-day airfreight service. Federal Express as well as several smaller freight carriers also operate facilities at the airport. The 2020 total enplanements were 282,324 with a total of 577,187 passengers, which is positive relative to the impacts of COVID-19 on air travel.

The regional airport continues to improve its infrastructure through a variety of projects both related to the terminal and air operations and has land availability for future expansion.

**Roads**

The Town of Lexington is intersected by three major highways: U.S. 378, U.S. 1, and S.C. 6. Being located at the intersection of these arterial roads has benefited the town by providing it with tremendous access. However, congestion on these roads has been a significant issue for many years. In 2012 the Town of Lexington developed a Vision Plan for the Town, which created avenues to address various needs including traffic and transportation. In 2014, the Town completed phase-one of the 2005 Unified Traffic Plan which provided intersection improvements along Columbia Avenue near the intersection with West Main Street. The cost of this project exceeded 10 million dollars and has helped to improve the traffic flow through the heart of Town. Since 2014, the Town has made significant investments in road infrastructure and traffic efficiency improvements.
In 2014, Town Council created a new Transportation department and hired a full-time professional engineer to assist with traffic planning, project management, street and signal maintenance, and development of future transportation improvement projects. This department has grown to nine full-time employees.

Beginning in 2015, the Town accepted operation and maintenance responsibility for the traffic signal system within its boundaries and has added adaptive signalization throughout. This system has since expanded to along the primary 378 corridor though neighboring jurisdictions and Lexington County. On September 8, 2015, the Town adopted a Hospitality Tax (H-Tax) that is projected to fund $35,000,000 to traffic improvement project. This tax will be used to pay for needed improvements at three major locations in Town: downtown, US-378/SC-6 crossroads, and Corley mill gateway at I-20. As these large projects developed, the Town recognized the need to identify smaller traffic issues throughout the towns so created the Lexington Transportation Improvement Plan (LTIP). Figure 8.2, (LTIP Status Chart), provides a snapshot of the Town’s intentions to guide transportation infrastructure investments.
Lexington Transportation Improvement Plan (LTIP) Status Chart

- Identified Long Range Transportation Needs and Scope
- US 1 @ Cedar Road/Dooley Road: Adaptive signals
- SC 6 @ Parker Street: Left-turn Lanes on SC 6, right turn lane on Parker
- US 378 @ Whiteford Way: Dual left turn and single right turn, connecting road between Whiteford and Saluda Springs
- US 378 @ Mineral Springs Road: Add auxiliary lanes at Mineral Springs onto 378:
  Right in/right out for Powell Road and deceleration lane eastbound on 378
- Corley Mill Road @ River Bluff High School: Widening to accommodate left-turn lanes
- US 378 @ Hope Ferry Road: Deceleration lane westbound 378 and driveway and median work
- US 1 @ Gibson Road: Add 3rd southbound approach lane on US 378, extend northbound left-turn lane (Gibson)
- Old Cherokee Road @ Old Chapin Road: Roundabout
- SC 6 @ I-20 Signals: Adaptive Signals
- US 378 from Coventry to Walmart: Right-turn lanes and median (see Figure 8.7)
- US 378 @ Chick-fil-A: Right-turn Lane
- SC 6 @ Roberts Road: Left-turn Lane on SC 6
- SC 6 @ Railroad Avenue: Right in/right out
- Hope Ferry at Midway: Defined T Intersection
- Gibson Road @ Hendrix Street: Roundabout
- US 378 @ Park Place Trail: Right-turn deceleration lane
- SC 6 @ Gibson Road: Signal
- Barr Road @ Wildlife Road: Westbound left-turn lane on Barr Road
- Mineral Springs Road @ Woodside Road: Tree clearing for intersection sight distance
- Old Chapin Road @ Maxie Road: T Intersection
- Zenker Road @ Industrial Drive: Right-turn lane on industrial and additional turn lane on Zenker
- Barr Road @ Hendrix Street: T intersection
- Pilgrim Church Road @ Settlers Trail: Left-turn lane on Pilgrim Church
- Northside Boulevard @ Ginny Lane: Roundabout
- US 1 @ K-mart Signalized Driveway: Signal alteration, drive-way reconstructions, concrete median on 378
- Northside Boulevard @ Ginny Lane: Signal
- US 378 @ Old Cherokee to Scotland Drive: Access control via median and connection between Wellmore Drive and Scotland Drive
- Parker Street @ Schwartz Road: Defined T intersection
- Snelgrove Road @ Old Chapin Road: Widening to accommodate left-turn lanes at each end
- US 378 @ Old Cherokee Road: Construct 2nd westbound right-turn lane and signalize right-turn movement
Completed Projects

Downtown Improvement Projects: The first hospitality tax funded projects focused on improving downtown traffic flow and increasing available parking. The SC 6 One-Way Pair (see Figure 8.3) was the first H-Tax project completed in September 2018 converting parallel streets into a one-way pair system. This included converting two parallel streets: Church Street and North Lake Drive (SC-6), into a one-way pair system and adding approximately 150 downtown parking spaces in two new municipal lots.

The objective of the SC-6 One-Way Pair Project was to address the congestion issue at the intersections of US-1 Main Street and SC-6 North Lake Drive. By splitting the northbound and southbound movements, the signals at Lake Drive and Church Street now serve twice as many vehicles each day compared to the no-build. The result is more green signal time being allotted to the east and west US-1 Main Street direction and Lake Drive. Travel time along Main Street has decreased on average 18%, while the saturation time has decreased 73%.

For additional information and a video showing the flow of traffic for the One Way Pair please visit the Town of Lexington website at https://www.lexsc.com/271/Downtown-Improvements
Current Projects

The overall Crossroads Improvements Project is multi-phased and aims to address traffic congestion and safety along a primary corridor within the town that connects the downtown with the Dreher Shoals Dam, schools, and the Corley Mill Gateway at I-20 areas. The North Lake widening project addresses a bottleneck congested area near Lexington Elementary and will provide increased capacity along SC-6 connecting the One Way Pair project downtown with the US-378 shopping area.

Simultaneously, the Harmon Street Extension is under construction and requires a full realignment and will see a new traffic signalized intersection along North Lake Drive. The intended goal of this project is to improve traffic efficiency at US-378 and SC-6 intersection by removing a minor street, Dreher Street, from the intersection. While this adds a new traffic signal along the North Lake corridor efficiencies will be seen by increasing the green light time available for the major roadways.

The North Lake Corridor will be improved over several phases starting at the end of the One-Way Pair to the North Lake Drive at Sunset Boulevard intersection. The improvements will focus on safety and operations along this corridor that serves over 40,000 vehicles per day.

The final phased improvement along this corridor will be to improve the intersection of SC-6 and US-378 at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and North Lake Drive. The project will add both capacity for the northbound dual left turn lanes and an additional southbound lane as well as improved safety enhancements and improved mobility through the area.

Phases 1 and 2, which include the widening of North Lake Drive and Harmon Street Extension, are slated to be completed in Fall 2021 (see Figure 8.4).
Phase 3: Continued improvements along the North Lake corridor will begin at the completion of Phases 1 and 2. The final design of this project will be complete in late 2021 with construction anticipated to start early 2022 (see Figure 8.5).

**Figure 8.4**

**Additional Current Traffic Improvements in the Town of Lexington**

**Corley Mill Road at Sunset Boulevard Gateway Improvements**

The Town of Lexington is committed to easing the traffic burdens at the Corley Mill Gateway, thus embarking on a long-term corridor redevelopment plan to address traffic and safety. The project is under review by the SC Department of Transportation. This approach has identified a long-term master plan for the corridor that is broken into multiple smaller projects that fit available funding and work in harmony.
with current conditions until the whole is completed. To date a few projects have been completed, including overall master traffic plan, Ginny Lane widening, I-20 Westbound exit ramp improvements, and signal modifications at Cromer Road and US 378.

Project Focus
The focus of the project is to improve current traffic flow through the Corley Mill Road and U.S. 378 intersection which serves as the primary gateway to the Town. Currently, the average daily traffic on U.S. 378 (Sunset Boulevard) is approximately 34,000 vehicles per day and on Corley Mill Road 10,000 vehicles per day.

Funding
The funding identified to date is multi-sourced and will not address the whole of the project plan. The initial funds are identified as part of the hospitality tax program in 2015. As the scope of the project grew, a second source of funds was identified in 2018 through a TIF (tax incremental financing) associated with future development tracts in the Corley Mill Rd corridor. Between these two sources the Town expects to construct a large portion of the master plan, known as the US-378 Sunset Split. This task will divide east and westbound directions of 378 into a one-way pair system providing significant increase in capacity and corridor efficiencies. Funding for the remaining portions of the overall project is still undetermined but the Town and Lexington County are pursuing additional funds as mechanisms become available.

Local Transportation Improvement Plan
In 2017, Town Council chose to identify traffic related issues throughout town to ensure that new development would mitigate further impact to these select areas. This document, adopted in 2018, has seen nine out of 30 identified locations be impacted by various development. The Town has worked with various project developments to implement portions of each. Two other projects from the LTIP have been funded by council as standalone capital projects.

US 378/Sunset Boulevard at Mineral Springs Road Right-Turn Lane
This project, identified in the LTIP, includes a dedicated right-turn lane from US 378/Sunset Boulevard onto Mineral Springs Road to improve traffic flow through the intersection. Additionally, a landscaped median island will be included along the west leg of US 378 to eliminate left-turn conflicts to and from Powell Drive. Traffic desiring to turn left to/from Powell Drive will be served by rerouting to Claystone Drive to access the existing traffic signal at the nearby intersection of US 378 at Palmetto Park Boulevard. This project is slated to begin in late 2021 pending reviews and approvals (see figure 8.6).
US 378 at Old Cherokee Right Turn Lane

This project adds a second dedicated right-turn lane from US 378/Sunset Boulevard westbound onto Old Cherokee Rd and provides new signalization. The purpose is to prevent cross over conflicts from the adjacent side street and/or left turns from US 378 EB. Additionally, a landscaped median island will be extended from Old Cherokee Road eastward towards Scotland Drive. This eliminates left turn conflicts and improves overall corridor efficiency. Businesses would be served by improve interconnectivity and rear access to side streets (see Figure 8.7).
In 2020, the Town adopted a development impact fee that provides additional revenue to improve traffic flow. These impact fees are used to fund projects such as: Old Cherokee Turn Lanes, Mineral Springs turn lanes amongst others.

The Town has been very successful in interconnecting commercial developments, particularly along Sunset Boulevard. This interconnection allows shoppers to travel from one commercial development to another without having to get back onto a major thoroughfare. The town is working to create more connectivity between neighborhoods.

**Railroad:** Norfolk Southern Corporation services the Lexington area with a major line that runs through the town. Passenger service is available through Amtrak in Columbia.

**Public Transit:** Currently, the town does not have public transit service. The Town is along a potential commuter rail line from the City of Columbia to the Town of Batesburg-Leesville.

**Bike/Pedestrian:** The town continues to add to its extensive sidewalk network through commercial areas and residential neighborhoods. Adding these connections between the commercial and residential components is necessary to complete the sidewalk network. Bike lanes were included in the SC 6 (North Lake Drive)/SC 60 (Lake Murray Boulevard) widening to the Town of Irmo. This was a significant addition since a considerable number of residential subdivisions access North Lake Drive and Lake Murray Boulevard.

**Needs**

As discussed, traffic congestion continues to be a growing problem in the Town. Relieving congestion in the town requires a series of steps including land use policies that encourage bicycle/pedestrian facilities and access throughout town, connecting neighborhoods to parks and commercial and retail areas as well as development that is compatible to the infrastructure and transit access. The town should continue to encourage and facilitate a multi-step approach to improving traffic flow and encouraging multi-modal transportation.

In addition, the town’s regulations and ordinances need to reflect the guiding principles and goals of the Vision Plan, ensuring that development policies and transportation policies work in concert to build the envisioned future for the Town of Lexington.
This element recommends public infrastructure and facilities during the next 10 years and projects for those funds. These recommendations are to be coordinated with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies (counties, other municipalities, school districts, public and private utilities, transportation agencies, and any other public group that may be affected by the projects).

**Existing Conditions**
As a full-service municipality, the town has considerable influence over most of the infrastructure items that impact development such as water and sewer. The town does rely on coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies for significant infrastructure items such as roads, schools and fire protection. These include jurisdictions and agencies such as Lexington County and municipalities throughout Lexington County, the cities of Columbia, West Columbia and Cayce, the Central Midlands Council of Government, the SC Department of Transportation and other state agencies, and the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

**Roads**
The town continues to work with the SC Department of Transportation to identify short-term and long-term solutions for the road congestion in the town. Many of the east-west trips in the county pass through the Town of Lexington on either US 1 or US 378. The congestion not only impacts commuter trips and local trips within town.

**Schools**
The relationship between schools and residential development is clear, regardless of which one drives the other. Over the last few years, Lexington School District One has made significant investments in the area to address growth with new schools on Corley Mill Road and Ginny Lane. These schools have impacted the development of new housing as well as a variety of other planning related issues such as traffic, utility expansion, law enforcement needs, or fire/EMS service needs.

**Fire Service**
Unlike police service, which is operated by the town, fire service is operated by the County with a combination of full-time and volunteer fire fighters. In the past, rapid growth in Town raised the question of whether the Town should absorb this service but, recent enhancements to the fire service as well as the strategic location of fire service facilities seems to indicate that the County is well positioned to continue this service.
Needs

**Corridor Development:** Major corridors through Lexington such as Sunset Boulevard and Highway 6 represent a significant concern and a significant opportunity for the Town. Developing these corridors to be safer, more efficient and more welcoming will have a positive impact on the greater Lexington community. Some strategies that should be considered include expanding the landscaped “front porch” areas, continuing to improve connectivity and expanding sidewalk installation.

The North Lake Drive section of Highway 6 from the town limits to the Lake Murray Dam was widened to five lanes with the addition of sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes. A significant portion of this corridor is underdeveloped or has the potential for redevelopment. Most of this corridor is currently not in the town limits, which offers the potential for strategic annexation.

**Downtown/Historic Triangle:** The town has invested significantly interest in the redevelopment of the historic downtown including streetscape projects, implementing design guidelines, creating a façade improvement program, developing Lexington Square, the Icehouse amphitheater and pavilion, and expanding and improving Virginia Hylton Park. Efforts in this area need to continue focusing on improving connectivity, promoting the unique characteristics of the area, and supporting development that will draw people to this vital area of Town, particularly to live in downtown.

**Improve Connectivity and Bike/Pedestrian Safety:** The Town should continue to facilitate projects that improve the connectivity and walkability by providing more transportation choices through the development of safer streets, walking trails and travel ways. The town should work with the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CM COG) to develop a bike/pedestrian master plan that will improve connectivity and safety in town while connecting the town to the existing and planned regional trails network such as the Saluda River Greenway, Saluda Shoals Park and the Three Rivers Greenway. This will require multi-jurisdictional planning and have a significant impact throughout the Midlands.

**Convention Facilities:** While the town has been an investor in the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center and benefits from the events there, the development in Lexington since 2012, particularly in downtown, has demonstrated that the town and the county can benefit and support a regional convention center. The growing number of shows and audiences at the Icehouse amphitheater, the increasing number of recreational athletic events and the increasing tourism opportunities make the case for studying the feasibility of a facility in Lexington. This will require multi-jurisdictional planning and cooperation and increase the economic capacity in the Midlands.

**More diverse housing:** There is a critical need for more diverse housing as well as higher density housing in downtown that will provide a range of demographics and income groups, such as service providers, young professionals, older residents who want to age in place, and agricultural workers. This housing should be developed in concert with multi-modal transportation options and near job centers, schools and basic needs retail, such as grocery stores. The town should work collaboratively with Lexington County to ensure these diverse housing needs are met with quality development.
The Priority Investment Areas: The Big, Bold, Ideas

Council and staff discussed the plethora of bold ideas presented during the July 2021 retreat. When tasked to focus on the boldest ideas that will have the most significant impact while propelling the town’s vision, the group unanimously agreed that creating a presence on Lake Murray and connecting to Saluda Shoals Park will be bold, impactful moves.

The other ideas shared are worthy and will stay on the table for future consideration. However, the marching direction was loud and clear: get on the Lake and provide a pedestrian and bike connection to Saluda Shoals Park!

These projects will bring to life several of the Vision Plan’s guiding principles and goals. The associated principles and goals are included with each. In addition, these priority investment areas relate directly to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and will shape the vision and strategies of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update, specifically the following elements:

- Economic
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Community Facilities
- Housing
- Land Use

2020 Vision Plan Update: Priority Investment Areas

2030 Goals for New Projects

- A public destination on Lake Murray
- Expanded and diverse parks, green space, and trails throughout town, connected to regional trails
- More diverse residential in downtown that supports neighborhood businesses
- More diverse, local businesses downtown
- Be responsive to current development demand through collaborative planning and development standards with Lexington County
- Managed growth in sync with continued infrastructure improvements
- High density/mixed-use development in appropriate areas with sustainable and connected framework/infrastructure
- Comprehensive and authentic cultural and recreational programming for all ages

The successful implementation and positive impact of these projects on the Town of Lexington and throughout Lexington County and the Midlands will require collaborative planning and cooperation.

In addition to the Vision Plan projects, the Town has committed to and budgeted funding to support capital improvement projects for water and sewer and general government infrastructure needs through FY 2026. These projects are major investments to support the future needs and growth of the Town.
Town of Lexington
Water & Sewer Capital Improvements Plan 2022 – 2026

Sewer Projects:

- 12/14 Mile Creek System Upgrade – Ph III Div I (parallel lines MPR to Cayce) $18,700,000
- 14 Mile Gravity System Upgrade $500,000
- Pisgah Church Rd Gravity Sewer $1,300,000
- Manhole Rehab (Various locations) $72,000
- Sewer Line Replacement (Groucho’s section) $120,000
- Waverly Place Sewer Line Replacement $80,000
- Sewer Line Relocation (I-20 @ U.S. 1) - SCDOT $387,000
- Sewer Line Relocation (Sunset @ Old Cherokee) – HTax $250,000
- Sewer Line Relocation – Lex1 LMS Project $250,000
- Corley Tract (Persimmon Grove) Pump Station Improvements $130,000
- Corley Mill Regional Gravity and Force Main System $4,900,000
- East Lexington Sewer Improvements $3,300,000
- Easement acquisition $500,000
- Line and Manhole Rehab & Improvements – Wise Ferry @ 378 $80,000
- Line and Manhole Rehabilitation & Improvements $2,043,000
- Shore Road PS Improvements $750,000
- Lake Murray and Hwy 6 Sewer Expansion $1,225,300
- Future Sewer System, FM, and PS Improvements $300,000

Total $34,887,800

Sewer Projects – I-20 Service Area

- Pump Station Construction, Renovations & Improvements $4,700,000
- Sunset Blvd. Sewer Improvements Project $2,700,000
- Lagoon Closeout and Decommissionings $1,000,000
- Gravity Line Renovations, Replacements & Improvements $1,250,000

Total $9,425,000

Sewer Projects – Watergate Service Area

- Old Chapin Regional Pump Station and Forcemain $4,800,000
- Old Chapin Road Force Main $830,000
- Pump Stations Repairs & Improvements $5,450,000
- Sewer Line Renovations, replacements & Improvements $430,000

Total $11,510,000
Water Projects:
- Water Plant Pumping Capacity Increase 1,500,000
- Water Line Relocation (I-20 @ U.S. 1) – SCDOT 716,500
- Water Line Relocation (Sunset @ Old Cherokee) - HTax 250,000
- Water Line Relocation – Lex1 LMS Project 250,000
- Wise Ferry Road Pressure Zone 5,120,000
- Ground Storage Decommissioning 620,000
- Brunner Road Material Storage Cover 75,000
- Lake Murray Water Expansion 274,700
- Future Water main Replacements 300,000

TOTAL CAPITAL SPENDING $ 64,929,000

Town of Lexington
General Government Capital Improvements Plan
FY 2022 – FY 2026

Parks & Recreation:
- Virginia Hylton Park $ 8,000,000
- Old Mill Trail 1,700,000
- Mill Pond Park 750,000
- Saluda Shoals Bridge 7,000,000

Total 17,450,000

Transportation:
- Old Cherokee/Sunset 1,600,000
- Whiteford Way/Sunset 750,000
- Gibson Rd/US 1 & 378 1,000,000
- North Lake/Dreher Street 1,850,000
- Sunset Split 19,400,000
- North Lake connector 3,000,000
- Martel 1,000,000

Total 28,600,000

Municipal Facilities:
- North Church Street Parking 1,300,000
- Signal Shop 500,000
- Brunner Rd Covered Storage 850,000
- Park Headquarters 2,250,000

Total 4,900,000

TOTAL $ 50,950,000
Part 3: IMPLEMENTATION

LAND USE & GROWTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the following recommendations addresses the population growth projected for the Town of Lexington as well as specific comprehensive planning elements. The relevant and relative elements addressed by each element are noted by the icons below.

Comprehensive Plan Elements

1. Population
2. Economic Development
3. Natural Resources
4. Cultural Resources
5. Community Facilities
6. Housing
7. Land use
8. Transportation
9. Priority Investment Areas
1 **RECOMMENDATION:** Implement the recommendations of the 2020 and 2021 Vision Plan Updates.

2 **RECOMMENDATION:** Ensure land use patterns and decisions support the Vision Plan Guiding Principles and encourage development that is sustainable, economically and environmentally viable, and elevate the quality of life for all.

Strategies

- Adopt the proposed Land Use Character Areas and Future Land Use Map
- Adopt utility service policies that support the overall recommendations of the plan and the Future Land Use Map including limiting availability to support density recommendations in the proposed Character Areas.
- Update the town’s existing ordinance to allow for the implementation of the recommendations and strategies outlined in the Vision Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.
- Adopt policies that promote growth and development in areas the Regional and The Triangle and existing residential areas on the Future Land Use map.
- Provide clear and accessible standards for developing and building in the Town of Lexington.
- Elevate the minimum standards to better reflect community values and the guiding principles of the Vision Plan
- Encourage infill development that takes advantage of and enhances existing infrastructure
- Limit gratuitous clear-cutting and mass grading of all development sites
- Create and provide a user-friendly Land Development Toolbox for developers
- New development, particularly in established neighborhoods, should build on the positive design elements and scale of the neighborhoods.
- Commercial development should enhance the qualities, scale and sense of community in the surrounding neighborhood and should not decrease the value or potential of the area.
- Encourage sustainable and quality residential development
  - Provide and promote clear rules and guidelines for developers.
  - Keep big apartments at the interstate and regional nodes
  - Revise setbacks, especially front and side setbacks, to create safe, walkable communities
  - Consider if larger minimum lots are appropriate suburban areas on the outskirts of town
  - Encourage well-designed multi-family scaled for appropriate character areas
  - Encourage well-designed smaller lot neighborhoods in appropriate areas that enhance the character area and vehicular and pedestrian connectivity
  - Appropriate recreation and open space areas for higher density developments
  - Update ordinances to allow a variety of housing relative to densities, housing types (not based on price) and housing styles or design
- Encourage infill housing in existing neighborhoods that meets alternative needs, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), while reflecting the neighborhood character
- Encourage connectivity between neighborhoods to effectively reduce traffic congestion on major thoroughfares.

- Discourage conventional, suburban strip Commercial Development
  - Update ordinances to reflect desired standards for each character area
  - Encourage pedestrian-scale mixed-use development nodes with shared parking and minimized curb cuts
  - Re-evaluate commercial driveway cut standards
  - Limit high intensity non-residential development to the regional nodes, directly adjacent, connected areas, and corridors with appropriate density in The Triangle.
  - Encourage better street connectivity (internal and external) and stub-out standards
  - Increase design and development standards on the major corridors (Highway 1, Highway 378)

- Identify Nodes for Public Investment
  - Lake Murray
  - Bridge to Saluda Shoals Park
  - Infill development in downtown, beyond Main Street

3 Recommendation: Establish land use patterns that minimize sprawl and traffic, reduce the number and length of motor vehicle trips, and encourage pedestrian and bike connectivity.

Strategies
- Continue to implement the recommendations and projects of the Lexington Transportation Improvement Plan (LTIP)
- Increase development standards, especially for multi-family and nonresidential: make sure new development builds sustainable value in the community
- Continue to bolster downtown and focus growth in appropriate areas
- Increase greenspace and parks with new development
- Allow for appropriate density and infill development in and around downtown
- Centralize growth downtown and in identified neighborhoods and mixed-use nodes, taking advantage of existing infrastructure
- Extend bike and pedestrian connectivity throughout the town, connecting to regional trails/paths
4 **RECOMMENDATION:** Lexington becomes more beautiful, more enjoyable, and more fun with special places throughout the community where people can gather and contribute to and enjoy the livability of the Town.

**Strategies**
- Create a long-term parks master plan ensuring equitable access to parks and open space throughout town for all residents.
- Promote a vibrant Main Street and downtown and Regional Nodes by encouraging outdoor activities such as dining, music and merchandise displays on sidewalks, plazas and courtyards.
- Encourage new development to improve or provide internal and external pedestrians and bicycle connectivity
- Provide safe places and enjoyable activities for all ages that build the sense of community.
- Create a public art plan that celebrates Lexington’s history and the diversity of its residents: incorporate public art into all civic spaces, encourage private developers to incorporate art into open, public areas
- Recruit and support a Higher Education presence in downtown.

5 **RECOMMENDATION:** Increase the diversity of residential types, size, and prices to meet growing population and changing demographic needs.

**Strategies**
- Promote a mix of residential uses that are consistent with the Vision Plan.
- Create variety in residential and mixed-use districts zoning ordinances that will accommodate diverse residential densities.
- Encourage neighborhood development standards that model “Complete Streets” with a focus on pedestrian safety and access in concert with appropriate street widths, setbacks, sidewalks, and parking accommodations.
- Allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within existing neighborhoods and new neighborhoods to accommodate the housing needs of aging residents and younger residents, particularly those who want to live close to their families in areas where lot sizes are appropriate.
- Encourage, possibly through incentives, pedestrian connectivity within and between neighborhoods (existing and new) and the expanding regional greenways/trail network.
- Encourage the renovation and re-use of existing and historic homes, especially within the Historic Town Center and throughout the more rural parts of the Town.
- Preserve existing neighborhoods and increase pedestrian connectivity to these neighborhoods and integrate commercial development standards to reflect the neighborhoods scale and character.
- Improve all existing neighborhoods to reinforce the strong community fabric within the Town.
- Encourage an authentic sense of community for new development through design guidelines that reinforce traditional neighborhood design principles through inter-connected, sidewalks, garages at the back (not as front doors) with possible back alley access.

6 **RECOMMENDATION:** Establish development nodes and corridor plans to guide development in the Town’s unique areas/districts.

**Strategies**
- Adopt the new Character Areas and update ordinances to reflect desired land uses, standards and regulations
- Develop corridor management plans for the following corridors that increase design and development standards and define appropriate land use to support the Vision Plan, guiding principles and character of the town
  - Highway 378/Sunset Boulevard/West Main Street/Columbia Avenue
  - Highway 1
  - Highway 6
  - North Lake and Old Cherokee
- Develop a corridor management plan for Corley Mill Road (increase standards, appropriate land use to support the vision and character of the town)
- Create a joint planning zone/overlay district for the area contiguous to and in close proximity to the Town of Lexington boundaries and formalize on a map.
- Create a small area plan for each Character Area node to address and guide future growth.
- Create a development plan and urban/suburban transect: determine location, scale, and density of development; determine opportunities for greenspace and connectivity

7 **RECOMMENDATION:** Ensure the conservation and intentional expansion of greenspace and parks throughout town to preserve and enhance the natural environment and watersheds and to provide equitable access to outdoor recreation for all residents.

**Strategies**
- Explore density bonuses or streamlined approval processes for developers willing to preserve important environmental features, viewsheds and open space, particularly if they include walking paths, trails and/or sidewalks to connect to local or regional networks.
- Aggressively identify and preserve/dedicate future conservation areas
- Preserve and enhance existing parks
- Plan and build a large park in another area of town, similar to Virginia Hylton Park
- Provide safe places to gather and activities for 6th to 12th graders
8 **RECOMMENDATION:** Obtain property on Lake Murray and create a public amenity on Lake Murray.

**Strategies**
- Create regional and multi-jurisdictional partnerships to explore opportunities for a Town of Lexington presence.
- Commit to stewardship and enhancement of the Lake Murray environs and watershed through all development.
- Establish a development framework that honors the history and the natural environment of Lake Murray.

9 **RECOMMENDATION:** Preserve and revitalize the historic downtown and historic resources in the town.

**Strategies**
- Create an ongoing education program for property owners and developers on historic preservation, historic tax credits (local, state and federal), and the processes and benefits of preservation and rehabilitation.
- Encourage infill and mixed-use development that increases the vibrancy and economic impact of The Triangle and Main Street and encourages people to live, work and play in this historic area.
- Create a long-term, comprehensive economic development plan leveraging Lexington’s historic resources.
- Update the 2005 inventory of historic properties with a focus on identifying those properties (building and landscapes) that are significant due to architectural merit (style, materials, construction methods), that represent significant architectural periods since the Town’s founding, and that are connected to the Town’s notable people and events.
- With the inventory update, determine which properties (buildings and landscapes) are sacred to the Town of Lexington’s history (from the beginning to present time) and create policies or incentives to protect these treasures.
10 RECOMMENDATION: Establish and Implement Collaborative and Cooperative Land Use and Corridor Planning with Lexington County

Strategies

▪ Identify Urban and Suburban Development Nodes/Centers; Create nodes/hubs of activity/ecosystems/character: 1) downtown; 2) Old Mill; 3) 378/Highway 1 split; 4) Highway 6/Cheerokee/old theater

▪ Formalize coordination with Lexington County: greenspace, density, sidewalks, development standards, etc., with potential to extend Town annexation ability over a larger area to ensure compatible development standards

▪ Implement Complete Streets policies to connect neighborhoods and centers
FUTURE LAND USE CHARACTER AREAS

A character area describes the intended land use pattern to reflect what makes the community or the area unique and to guide zoning and future development. The proposed Future Land Use and Character Areas for the Town of Lexington demonstrate the vision and goals for the future development of the Town, as shared by Town Council, the Planning Commission and community stakeholders. Furthermore, these encourage development that will bring the Vision Plan and guiding principles to life.

Character areas can take the form of Corridors or Nodes.

**Corridor Development Areas:** linear areas along the major corridors leading into town that are located adjacent to existing major economic drivers.

**Nodes (Districts):** These areas are generally within a ¼ mile radius up to a ¾ mile network distance, typically where major or local roads intersect, and new development is likely or scheduled to occur within an existing area. Each node is unique (something to offer or a unique destination or collection of intense uses) and complimentary to the existing area/neighborhood. Pedestrian connectivity is a key element in Node development.

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the corridor development areas, nodes and the land use character areas, Figure A.1. The land uses and character areas strive to guide development while encouraging growth and protecting and enhancing Lexington’s natural, historic, economic, and aesthetic assets.

**Proposed Character Areas**

The following Character Areas are defined and explained on the following pages.

- The Triangle (TT)
- Conservation and Open Space (COS)
- Employment/Light Industrial (ELI)
- Regional Node (RN)
- Suburban Residential (SR)
- Mixed Regional/High Density Residential (HDR)
Figure A.1: Future Land Use Map
Please reference full page image in the appendix
The Triangle (TT)

The historic town center of Lexington, known as “The Triangle,” is a unique area of town with a concentration of historic buildings (residential and commercial) and traditional downtown and residential densities, typical of town development in the 1800’s. As the seat of government for Lexington County, there is a well-defined town center with a concentration of civic buildings and places: Town Hall, County Courthouse (old and new), Virginia Hylton Park, Lexington Square, Icehouse Amphitheater and Pavilion, the Lexington County Museum, Lexington Elementary School, the Palmetto Collegiate Institute, and the Old Mill. In addition to Main Street retail and restaurants, The Triangle is home to several churches, professional services offices.

Neighborhoods within the Triangle should be representative of the original development pattern of the town and the growth of the historic and older neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are characterized by compact and walkable network of interconnected streets, sidewalks, and parks. These neighborhoods are predominantly single-family. Accessory dwelling units and some small-scaled services, restaurants and office are encouraged in appropriate areas with good pedestrian and well-managed vehicular access.

**General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities:** Historic town center of Lexington with a mix of uses and architecture; small to medium-scaled buildings that stand side-by-side creating a dense, pedestrian-scaled environment. Residential neighborhood character is representative of the original architecture of the neighborhood. The relationship between the house and the street encourages community and neighborliness. Most houses have front porches or stoops.
Representative Areas in Town:
Main Street, Town Hall/Virginia
Hylton Park/Icehouse
Amphitheater, Old Mill, Shirey
Building, Icehouse Pavilion, Craig
Reagan Clothiers, Berly Street, Fox
Street, Meetze Avenue area
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Typical Components</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</strong></td>
<td>Up to 15. Only as upper story residential on Main Street, North Lake Drive, and Columbia Ave. Smaller multi-family up to 30 units may be allowed on second row properties with significant buffers around existing traditional residential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lot coverage (by primary building)</strong></td>
<td>Limited by allowable height; buildings pulled up close to the street</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building or structure height (feet)</strong></td>
<td>4 stories or 55’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
<td>Formalized on-street parking or parking areas in the rear of lots. May be accessed by service alleys. Structured parking should be wrapped on the ground level by active uses or leasable space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max. block length (feet)</strong></td>
<td>500’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedestrian facilities</strong></td>
<td>Wide sidewalks on both sides. Street trees in tree grates between edge-of-curb and the main pedestrian thoroughfare. Min. 2’ “shy area” along areas where vehicles are parked. Outdoor dining and sales encouraged.</td>
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</table>

**Uses:** mix of government center, civic buildings, public spaces, cultural facilities, retail, restaurants, offices, entertainment; infill, mixed-use development is encouraged throughout The Triangle that provides diverse residential, live/work and office and retail space to meet growing population needs while expanded economic development potential. Sidewalks should be wide enough to support outdoor dining and social interaction. Residential uses should be primarily single-family, detached homes on smaller single lots with a variety of products (patio homes, townhomes, granny flats or garage apartments and context-sensitive apartments.)

**Buildings and Parking:** Historic buildings with new buildings that respect the historic scale and character. Parking should be accessible throughout The Triangle with continued improvements to existing parking and future parking facilities (access, signage, lighting). Development should replicate the traditional compact densities and minimal setbacks of the town center.

**Streets and Connections:** Recent road improvements have significantly increased the pedestrian-focused environment, particularly along Main Street to Town Hall, the Icehouse Amphitheater and Virginia Hylton Park. Pedestrian-focused connectivity and improvements should continue throughout The Triangle.
Conservation and Open Space (COS)

The Town of Lexington has an underlying agricultural identity due to the prominent agricultural economy throughout Lexington County. The Town is crossed by numerous waterways and watersheds that lead to Lake Murray and the Saluda River, such as Twelve Mile Creek and Fourteen Mile Creek, and the 100-year floodplain. This designation includes areas influenced by the natural environment containing but not limited to wetlands, flood plain areas, woodlands, utility rights-of-way, scenic views, and shorelines. These areas are worthy of conservation to maintain and enhance the natural environment beloved by residents, particularly with the continued and consistent population growth.

During the 2020 Vision Plan Update, Town Council established as a priority investment area to increase the number, types and quality of parks and greenspace throughout the Town, providing greater access to outdoor recreation for all residents. This designation includes parks such as but not limited to pocket parks, neighborhood parks, trails and greenways, playgrounds, and open space preservation.

General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities: The natural environment should be reserved and enhanced as much as possible. This includes maintaining the natural ground cover, topography and protected native species of flora and fauna. The natural environment can aid in storm water mitigation and flood management, improving air quality and increasing the beauty of the town.

Parks should reflect the scale, the character and the needs of the surrounding community. As much as possible, parks and open space should provide inclusive access. Amenities should respect the context, such as lighting, activities that can produce loud sounds and large crowds. Pedestrian and bike connectivity should be a key design element to all parks and open space, contributing to the expansion of the town’s trail system and regional network.
Representative Areas in Town: Gibson Pond Park, Virginia Hylton Park, Old Mill Pond and walking trail, 14 Mile Creek Trail and Park, Barr and Gibson Road soccer fields

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<th><strong>Typical Components</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>None allowed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lot coverage (by primary building)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Varies from very low (for passive recreation sites) to much</td>
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<tr>
<td>higher (for active or developed recreation sites, such as</td>
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<tr>
<td>community centers, tennis courts, community pools, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building or structure height (feet)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varies by district. Usually only 1 story; should blend with</td>
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<tr>
<td>the natural environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-street lots. On-street may be utilized in urban locations. Gravel lots may be permitted in very rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max. block length (feet)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varies by district or context; utilize neighboring areas/district to determine. Walkability should be considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedestrian facilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As appropriate for the surrounding context. Goal is to connect people to destinations. Sidewalks should be on one or both sides of the streets, as needed. Multi-use trails and/or bicycle paths (preferably separated can also form a major component of the network).</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Uses: Uses include but are not limited passive and outdoor recreation, athletic fields, multi-use paths and trails, playgrounds, dog parks, skateparks, memorial gardens, community gardens. Where possible, parks and public open space should be connected by and accessible by sidewalks and trails, which encourages multi-modal (non-vehicular) transportation.

Buildings and Parking: Buildings are low-impact design, minimal footprint and should support use of the parks, trail, greenspace (such as public restrooms, picnic shelters, concessions). Parking lots should be minimal with pervious surfaces.

Streets and Connections: Where possible, parks should be located in existing neighborhoods or neighborhood/activity centers to encourage pedestrian and bike connectivity. Parks should be connected to the Town’s and the regional sidewalk and trails system. Pedestrian safety and access are key considerations for the planning and construction of new parks. Streets and connections should link conservations, not cross them except for trails that provide access through areas. Preserve the natural integrity of conservation areas while providing sustainable ways to access and enjoy these areas.
Employment/Light Industrial (ELI)

This designation includes industrial, office, maker space, flex-tenant space, and storage with allowances for truck circulation and 24/7 operations. The majority of business activity takes inside of the buildings; however, outdoor storage and making/manufacturing may be allowed. Site layout should provide for sight and sound buffers between dissimilar uses. Buildings and landscapes that front major corridors, such as Interstate 20 and South Lake, should reflect the Town’s architectural, sign and landscape design standards.

General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities (context sensitive): The design of buildings and the site support the functions of the specific business. Landscaping can reflect the Town’s standards while providing separation and screening between sites and to articulate traffic and parking flow. Buildings in this area can reflect a more industrial aesthetic. Care should be taken to minimize noise, smell, vibration, and light impacts from sites onto the neighboring area.

Representative Areas in Town: Areas along Industrial Drive, Avtec
## Typical Components

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<tr>
<td>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</td>
<td>None allowed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lot coverage (by primary building)</td>
<td>Very high; Building location may vary, based on individual needs. Often lots of exterior screening and landscaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building or structure height (feet)</td>
<td>4 stories or 55', but may vary by district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Formalized off-street parking areas predominate. Buildings may separate vehicular traffic by sales/office vs. operations. Service alleys may be utilized if they serve several sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. block length (feet)</td>
<td>Typically 600’, although some mega-campuses may have larger block lengths and/or have developed previous to regulation of block length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian facilities</td>
<td>Sidewalks should connect front entrances to the public street network, although it is recognized that these sites are mostly automobile oriented. For sites that are more publicly-facing or -serving, additional pedestrian consideration is appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses:** Uses include but are not limited to light industrial, technology and research hubs, medical laboratories, light manufacturing, artists’ studios, storage and warehousing, distribution centers, offices, and conference facilities.

**Buildings and Parking:** Buildings and parking are designed to meet the specific purposes of the business. Site design should provide for adequate vehicle/truck circulation and loading. Loading and service areas should be screened from the public right-of-way.

**Streets and Connections:** Streets are designed to accommodate larger vehicles and trucks that service the businesses. Sidewalks should be incorporated at a minimum on one side of all streets to accommodate pedestrians and connectivity to the regional sidewalk and trails system. Care should be taken to identify and make safe truck/vehicle entrances and exits. Landscaping should be used to buffer between uses.
Regional Node (RN)

Lexington has commercial centers that serve the greater region. Whether traveling along Interstate 20, shopping along Highway 378, or doing business in the industrial areas, or on the way to Lake Murray or western Lexington County. These crossroads areas are designated as Regional Nodes due to the medium to high intensity commercial, retail, hospitality businesses (predominantly regional or national brands) and offices that cater to those traveling along major corridors.

General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities: While the majority of the businesses are car-oriented and draw from a wide-geographic area, the area accommodates all modes of travel and is connected to the regional sidewalks and trails system. National and regional brands are evident, but the buildings reflect the Town of Lexington’s architecture, landscape and signage standards. Public space is prioritized and serves as places for people to gather, outdoor dining and entertainment and green/landscaped space. Amenities such as outdoor seating, festive lighting and banners, bike racks, public art, water features and shade trees are encouraged.
Representative Areas in Town

- I-20/Highway 378/Sunset Boulevard/Ginny Lane/Corley Mill
- I-20/Highway 6/South Lake/Industrial Drive
- I-20/Highway 1/Augusta Road
- North Lake/Sunset Boulevard/Old Cherokee Road/ Mallard Lakes Drive
- Highway 378/August Highway/ West Main Street
## Typical Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</td>
<td>Up to 15, although these sites are mostly non-residentially-focused. Residential should only occur located on the main thoroughfare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot coverage (by primary building)</td>
<td>Medium to high. Structures should be pulled to the street, with parking in the rear and a strong pedestrian connection and presence on the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building or structure height (feet)</td>
<td>1.5-4 stories, although some variation exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Formalized on-street parking on side streets. Often larger sites share parking areas. Cross access between adjacent nonresidential or mixed uses is important. May be accessed by service alleys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. block length (feet)</td>
<td>600’-700’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian facilities</td>
<td>Sidewalks on both sides of the street. Bicycle facilities should be separated from vehicular traffic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses:** Mixed-use to include large-scale retail (including big box and chains), corporate offices, restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues.

**Buildings and Parking:** Building heights range from 1.5 to four stories and front all streets and roadways. Parking is integrated throughout the site with trees and landscaping to decrease heat island effects and to manage stormwater sustainably. Ground floors are retail/restaurant-oriented to contribute to the sense of community and walkability of the node.

**Streets and Connections:** Access from major corridors is central to the success of the node. A network of internal streets and sidewalks as well as shared parking will reduce the number of curb cuts, turning movements and traffic congestion. Complete Streets guidelines should be utilized as sites are developed or redeveloped, particularly in concert with planned LTIP projects.
Suburban Residential (SR)

Reflective of residential/subdivision development over the past 30 years, SR provides for lower density, generally two to five dwellings per acre. While more auto-oriented, SR developments should include sidewalks and streets that connect to parks, nearby commercial, schools and other civics uses. SR strives to integrate with the larger streets and corridor networks, particularly the expanding local and regional sidewalk and trails system.

**General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities:** Low density single family, detached housing on large lots. Houses are typically set back from the road with large front and rear yards and off-street parking provided on the lot. Maintaining the existing tree canopies as well as increasing the number of appropriate trees and native landscapes will increase property values and improve the quality of the natural environment. New developments are to adhere to the Town’s principles and ordinances to minimize tree removal.

Representative Areas in Town: Woodcreek, Hope Ferry Plantation
Typical Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot coverage (by primary building)</td>
<td>Low to Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building or structure height (feet)</td>
<td>1.5-3 stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Off-street serving each lot with occasional on-street parking (may be informal), as appropriate by street type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. block length (feet)</td>
<td>500’-600’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian facilities</td>
<td>Sidewalks on both side of the street, although perhaps only on one side in short cul-de-sacs. Street trees present, although sometimes may be on individual lots instead of in the right-of-way. Higher density neighborhoods should be alley loaded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Well-designed smaller lot neighborhoods that enhance the area and provide appropriate vehicular and pedestrian connectivity may be considered on a limited basis.

**Uses:** Primarily single family, detached homes with sewer service.

**Buildings and Parking:** Homes and parking will be designed to the neighborhood covenants (if they exist). Building heights range from one to three stories.

**Streets and Connections:** Building and enhancing streets and sidewalks connections within neighborhoods and to other neighborhoods is key to creating vibrant, walkable neighborhoods and to building lasting communities. New developments should connect with adjacent neighborhoods when possible.
Mixed Regional/High Density Residential (HDR)

This designation covers a limited but targeted geographic area and includes diverse residential options including but not limited multi-family, townhouses, patio homes and live-work units. HDR is only located close to major thoroughfares intersecting with Interstate 20. HDR density and structure height may be limited in The Triangle to preserve the historic character.

**General Character and Aesthetic Opportunities:** HDR can be new construction or redevelopment of an existing building. Landscaping and architectural details can distinguish the residential buildings from the surrounding mixed-use buildings.

\[\text{Representative Areas in Town: The Reserve at Mill Landing, Lullwater at Saluda Pointe}\]
Typical Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential density (gross dwelling units per acre)</td>
<td>Up to 16, although in practice this is often more limited by parking and site design requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot coverage (by primary building)</td>
<td>Medium to High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building or structure height (feet)</td>
<td>3-5 stories or 65’. Structures should be street-fronting, creating an urban streetscape with stoops, balconies, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Off-street parking lots in the rear of structures, or alley-accessed where individual lots have parking. Higher density neighborhoods (e.g. – less than 40’ average or median lot width) should be alley-loaded. Formalized on-street parking for guests or deliveries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. block length (feet)</td>
<td>500’-600’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian facilities</td>
<td>Sidewalks on both side of the street, street trees in the right of way between street and sidewalk. Tree grates and wider sidewalks where appropriate. Min. 2’ “shy areas” where pedestrian facilities abut vehicular use areas (parking, travelways, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses:** All types of multi-family residential development (apartments and townhomes) are allowed. Some mixed use (vertical) structures could be appropriate, with residential-supportive commercial and service uses permitted on the ground floor, and apartments on upper stories.

**Buildings and Parking:** The development houses the residential units, parking and amenities on site and is protected/buffered from adjacent development through landscaping and controlled access. The buildings can range from three to six stories.

**Streets and Connections:** The development is connected by sidewalks or trails to the Regional Node or other neighborhoods, making it a desirable place to live with life’s necessities within walking distance.
APPENDIX
Town of Lexington Comprehensive Plan Update

2022 Comprehensive Plan Update

Town of Lexington Comprehensive Plan Update

Future Land Use Character Areas

Future Land Use

Industrial

Commercial

Study Area

Residential

Historic District

Commercial Core

TOWN LIMITS

Lake Murray

Town of Lexington Comprehensive Plan Update

Future Land Use Character Areas

Future Land Use

Industrial

Commercial

Study Area

Residential

Historic District

Commercial Core

TOWN LIMITS

Lake Murray
Town of Lexington Community Facilities Map