

GREEN CITY - ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING

Our Vision for 2010

Planned growth has improved both the livability and legibility of Aiken. A city-wide network of paths - walkways, bikeways, parkways, trailways for horses, and downtown arborways - connects the past with the present, the aesthetic with the economic. New development has been designed to complement, rather than compete with, the natural environment. As a result, tourism is flourishing. Families from other areas come to Aiken to enjoy the green spaces and timeless quality of this community - to play, to relax, and to enjoy the community's very human and healthy environment. Aiken citizens have created a life-nurturing green city, one free of urban clutter and filled with the timeless qualities that offer the good life for all residents.

Growth strategy

Garden Paths

Hopeland Gardens

Our progress since 1992

- Developed and implemented landscape plans for entrance corridors into Aiken
- Developed parkway master plans and improved parkways for Hampton Avenue and York Street
- Provided public restroom facilities in key locations
- Completed update of comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance
- Began development of Festival Market site on Newberry Street
- Moved forward with project to resolve storm drainage issues in Hitchcock Woods
- Provided sidewalk along Laurens Street to Hitchcock Woods

In Process -- Goals for 2000-2001

- Develop a partnership between the City of Aiken and the Open Land Trust
- Promote development of a comprehensive Downtown Master Plan which addresses design, land use, and economic issues
- Develop festival site on Newberry Street
- Identify and promote projects which would give growth momentum to the north side.
- Develop comprehensive neighborhood center and park plan to identify new park locations and facilities
- Hitchcock Woods
 - o Study and develop policies related to the enhanced use of the Woods
 - o Continue effort to resolve storm drainage issues in the Woods
 - o Continue active coordination with Hitchcock Foundation
- Approach County to encourage completion of storm drainage improvements in Kalmia Hills
- Hopeland Gardens
 - o Complete garden path in Hopeland Garden and Rye Patch
 - o Complete overlook
 - o Improve entrance way
- Bike paths/pedestrian
 - o Continue to develop a complete master plan with citizen input and use of tasteful signs
 - o Study the possibility of placing trails along South Boundary

GREEN CITY - ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING

Our Future Goals -- 2002-2010

- I. Review water and sewer boundaries and infrastructure investment policies to conform to strategic growth plan
2. Update investment strategies and capital improvement program
3. Build neighborhood center, park, and swimming facilities on north side
4. Develop additional sidewalks and streetscape for important thoroughfares.
 - *Which thoroughfares do citizens consider the most important for additional sidewalks and streetscape?*
5. Promote growth planning and update the City's Comprehensive Plan to include outlying areas
6. Hitchcock Woods
 - a. Complete garden trail along the edge of Hitchcock Woods
 - b. Encourage a police presence and patrolling of Hitchcock Woods
 - c. Address the need for additional parking to accommodate Hitchcock Woods visitors
7. Hopeland Gardens
 - a. Complete lake walk
 - b. Complete playground area
 - c. Complete old-fashioned rose garden
 - d. Expand stage
 - e. Complete Pleached Allee (Arborway)
 - f. Expand parking lot
8. Establish strong junkyard abatement standards
9. Encourage sign ordinance amendments to reduce sign clutter by consolidating signs where possible
10. Construct Bobby Jones connector between Aiken and Augusta
11. Complete widening of Hitchcock Parkway
12. Widen SC 19 to 1-20
13. Widen Silver Bluff Road to beyond Woodside Plantation
14. Amend ARTS plan to include Aiken-Augusta Parkway and Aiken Medical Center/1-20 connection
15. Identify how other cities have successfully dealt with urban sprawl problems and incorporate successful approaches into zoning ordinance updates
16. Bike paths/pedestrian- Study bike paths in the downtown area

THE HISTORIC CITY - HISTORY/PRESERVATION

Our Vision for 2010

Old Aiken is a thriving village, admired for its historic character as well as its racial, social, and economic diversity. Its distinctive parkway neighborhoods symbolize both the city's origins and the civic-minded values of local residents. Landscaped parkways, colorful gardens, gracious homes, a dynamic downtown, and other amenities define Old Aiken as a truly unique place - one that fosters a way of life cherished by residents and emulated by other cities.

Garden Parkway

Residential Infill

A Walking History Trail

Our progress since 1992

- Developed incentives to encourage residential development in downtown
- Enabled downtown housing projects - adopted zoning changes to encourage downtown and Old Aiken housing
- Developed new downtown parking area
- Upgraded traffic signals to improve traffic flow and circulation
- Adopted zoning changes to further encourage housing in Old Aiken
- Continue to obtain funding and implementing housing rehab program in targeted neighborhoods
- Identify target areas for additional housing

In Process Goals for 2000-2001

- Implement a landscaping plan for boundary streets over a ten year period
- Continue implementing a landscaping plan for the five major entry corridors into Aiken
- Develop a landscape master plan for remaining parkways
- Improve parkways to support substandard neighborhoods
- Establish a process for selection of public art
- Utilize the City's utility plan for Old Aiken area to provide street improvements and control utility development in the parkways
- Develop median with trees on downtown streets
- Attract visitor-related businesses to downtown
- Complete one residential project of 8-28 units in Old Aiken
- Attract developers to construct new housing in target areas
- Encourage establishment of a downtown historic district through guidance by Council to the Historic Commission
- Develop new downtown parking areas
- Construct Phase II of the arbor ways project

THE HISTORIC CITY - HISTORY/PRESERVATION

Our Future Goals -- 2002-2010

1. Develop and implement Chesterfield Street renewal project (streetscape, parkways, etc.)
2. Implement years 5 through 10 of the landscaping plan for boundary streets (streets bordering old Aiken)
3. Implement years 5 through 10 of landscaping plan for entry corridors
4. Expand innovative street and parkway improvements to improve target neighborhoods.
 - *What neighborhoods do citizens see as most in need of improvement?*
 - *What innovative ideas do citizens have?*
5. Upgrade heavily traveled roadways to improve traffic flow and circulation
 - *Which roadways do citizens see as needing improved traffic flow or circulation?*
6. Raise funding and develop replica of old train depot
7. Attract visitor-related businesses downtown
8. Expand marketing program to international level
9. Continue parkway improvements
10. Assemble property for the development of a residential project in targeted areas
 - *What areas do citizens see as needing development or infilling?*
11. Build new parking deck as required
12. Construct Phase III Arborway extension
13. Complete downtown master plan
14. Identify downtown historic sites

THE FAMILY CITY - FAMILY, QUALITY OF LIFE, NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Our Vision for 2010

Aiken is a city that celebrates families. Residents enjoy a peace of mind unknown in most other cities. Comprehensive health care, an array of community services provided by public and private agencies, outreach efforts of Aiken's vibrant faith community, and innovative public safety efforts mean every family can feel secure. Family and community-oriented programming in the arts has led to a cultural renaissance; young and old alike enthusiastically attend - and participate in - concerts in the park, art classes, exhibits, and local theatre productions. In 2010, Aiken has become a model for other cities, a harmonious community perfectly suited to the physical, aesthetic, and spiritual needs of its residents.

Health and Human Services Community Services and Facilities Retirement Culture and the Arts

Our progress since 1992

- Completed phase 1 and began Phase 2 of Citizens Park complex
- Began planning for Tennis Complex expansion
- Commenced work on neighborhood initiative strategies to enhance neighborhoods and empower citizens
- Supported Center for the Arts renovation/program improvements
- Completed several improvements to recreation facilities (gymnasium addition, walking track improvements)
- Established community health clinic
- Provided assistance to reduce infant mortality rate

In Process Goals for 20001-2001

- Develop a "model neighborhood" to provide home ownership opportunity
- Develop process mapping for social service agencies
- Work with Youth Advisory Committee and Governor's Youth group on teen programs
- Establish a CPR training program within the schools through physical education programs
- Undertake community initiatives on the needs of families
- Continue model home ownership program
- Stimulate and support neighborhood enhancement programs
- Continue underground wiring and utility program
- Support housing and market sites accessible to seniors
- Expand senior resource center as a one-stop center, with seminars and intergenerational opportunities
- Establish a Senior Citizens Center or develop a roving public program among retirement homes and centers
- Plan and designate an Arts District with a walking map
- Develop plans for and support an Arts Center in downtown Aiken

Our Partners 2001-2010

These projects are led by others in the city and have limited City involvement.

- Develop temporary housing for homeless
- Establish a multi agency building to provide one-stop shopping for basic health care
- Expand adult day-care facilities
- Establish a child care resource and referral center
- Expand child care options
- Pursue school based health program with specific policy on exams, CPR training, etc.
- Support community discussions on positive race relations
- Establish public transportation program to include senior citizens as well as young people and those in welfare-to-work program
- Establish a program to coordinate programs for seniors in the community
- Begin annual senior Resources Seminar to communicate available resources
- Improve health care access to seniors and other citizens
- Develop vision and plan for a more meaningful relationship between the retirement community and USCA
- Develop and implement a plan for collaborative funding and marketing of arts activities
- Establish a comprehensive arts calendar

THE FAMILY CITY - FAMILY, QUALITY OF LIFE, NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Our Future Goals -- 2002-2010

- 1) Expand and continue development of the Community of Character program
- 2) Complete storm drainage improvement of Edisto and Valley Road areas
- 3) Complete University of South Carolina!Aiken Regional Medical Center/I-20 connection
- 4) Develop a medical park around ARMC and I-20 connector
- 5) Open year-round swimming pool
- 6) Begin Senior Olympics
- 7) Open additional retirement facilities.
 - *What facilities do citizens see as being needed for our senior population?*
- 8) Establish Aiken as premier location for senior equestrian events
- 9) Expand Arts Festival to attract regional, national, and international visitors
- 10) Develop master plan for building and financing arts related facilities in Aiken
- 11) Consider, commission, and install public arts projects

THE BUSINESS CITY - BUSINESS/TOURISM

Our Vision for 2010

Aiken has achieved national eminence as a place where businesses thrive. An impressive roster of firms - from startups to Fortune 500 - have invested here, prospered, and become valued corporate citizens. They were drawn to Aiken by our business climate, our way of life, and our solid record of educational progress. This substantially diversified economic base and greatly improved educational reputation have provided Aiken and its citizens with a profitable and sustainable future.

Education

Business

Equine

Equestrian Trails

Our progress since 1992

- Created the Aiken Development Corporation
- Established marketing campaign
- Continued to attract substantial jobs and investments in smaller industries to Aiken (Summit Business Park and Ventures Industrial Park)
- Developed small business loan program
- Established a visitor center in conjunction with new Chamber of Commerce facility
- Attracted visitor-related businesses to downtown
- Established a horse drawn carriage tours for downtown area
- Established the Greater Aiken Local education Foundation (GALEF) which has established high educational goals and performance measures for Aiken schools
- Educational improvements – developed programs to reduce drop-out rate, completed expansion of Kennedy Middle School
- Developed a speculative building at the City's industrial parks
- Extend City water along SC 19 to 1-20
- Began plan for new airport terminal
- Develop school readiness program for children
- Establish visitors center in conjunction with the new Chamber building
- Establish a committee to represent the horse industry and to determine industry needs
- Continue promotion of Aiken through media contacts
- Attracted four new businesses/industries to the area
- Pursued outreach with our Italian sister city, Orvieto and Australian sister city, Sholhaven
- Developed small business loan pool
- Pre-plan sites and land within the City's industrial parks
- Pursued sister city relationship in Germany

In Process Goals for 2000-2001

- Assist the South Carolina Downtown Development Association in an assessment of the economic health of downtown and improvement strategies if necessary
- Construct new terminal building at airport
- Identify infrastructure needs for property in the City's service area
- Establish a coordinated public transportation program to include the entire community
- Establish a Senior Citizen's Center, or develop a roving public program among retirement homes and center
- Explore benefits of community-wide continuous improvement process
- Attract 1,500 jobs and investment of \$30 million, bringing new small and medium sized industries to Aiken
- Develop a plan for retention and expansion of small business and service industries
- Extend main runway at airport to 5,700 feet and strengthen the runway
- Structure incentives to promote large mixed use development on the north side
- Approach phone company and authorities to request local exchange service between Aiken and Augusta

THE BUSINESS CITY - BUSINESS/TOURISM

Our Partners 2001-2010

These projects are led by others in our city and have limited City involvement.

- Implement plans for a Lifelong Learning Center for professional development, continuing education, and to meet needs of area business
- Develop learning opportunity courses for the workplace
- Review public transportation needs to work areas
- Identify and achieve new funding sources for education
- Continue assessment of the dropout problem in Aiken County and determine solutions for improvement
- Develop a bike rental program at the visitor center
- Market Aiken's equestrian facilities and special events nationally and internationally
- Construct new equestrian trails
- Attract regional and national equestrian events to Aiken

Our Future Goals -- 2002-2010

- 1) Implement second and third strategic marketing plans
- 2) Continue generating income from projects
- 3) Reinvest income to fund 100% of new projects
- 4) Attract 3,000 jobs and investment of \$60 million toward new small and medium-sized industries
- 5) Construct first medical offices along University Parkway corridor
- 6) Build out University Parkway corridor
- 7) Pursue federal funding to install an instrument landing system at Aiken Municipal Airport
- 8) Determine the types of industries that the community should attract for economic impact and environmental responsibility
 - *As citizens, what are your thoughts as to types of industries that we should try to attract?*
- 9) Develop plans for a high-Tee/High amenity industrial park
- 10) Sell out Ventures, Verenes, and Aviation Business Parks
- 11) Expand equestrian trails to parkways in northern part of City
- 12) Centralize tourism development under one organization
- 13) Annex Aviation Park, Ventures, and the airport
- 14) Develop industrial development partnerships with landowners outside the industrial parks