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## **Chapter II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

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A Comprehensive Plan is only as good as the quality of the public involvement utilized during its development. The Planning Commission has created a series of options for public participation and input throughout the 18-month Comprehensive Plan update process to reflect the broadest cross section of community interests and concerns. To ensure that residents were provided opportunities to be involved in the planning process in a manner that fits their schedules and interests, meetings were scheduled for lunch times and evenings as well as other times and citizens were invited to participate via email.

Between October 9, 2018 and adoption of the plan on December 2, 2019, there were 28 public input sessions to gather input and information, 12 Planning Commission meetings with public input opportunity related to the Comp Plan, 8 Planning Commission workshops on the Comp Plan open to the public, 2 formal public input sessions for a review of the completed draft of the Comp Plan, and 2 City Council meetings with public input leading up to the First and Second Readings on the Comp Plan by City Council.

### A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEES

The *Clemson 2024 Comprehensive Plan* document is organized around ten elements, nine required, and one additional element unique to Clemson. In January of 2018, committees were formed to guide the review of each of the elements. These committees were charged with reviewing background data and existing conditions and developing a report on the goals and strategies of each element. The element committees met three to four times over several months in order to to accomplish this task. Then, on September 26, 2018 these committees publically shared the results of their reviews and thus began the update process of the Comp Plan.

### B. CITIZEN OPTION SURVEY

In January of 2019 a city-wide on-line survey was done to help establish priority areas of interest. This survey was advertised via blast emails, posting on Nextdoor and Facebook, posting on the City website, and the use of hang tags on roll-carts, letters to churches and other civic groups, and the offer to assist those without computers to complete the survey. There were 636 responses. While not statistically valid due to the sampling method, the survey provided insights in the concerns of Clemson citizens.

The 2019 update considered the results of this survey in decision-making.

### C. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Upon receiving a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission and prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City Council held two formal public hearings to receive further public input.

## D. OVERVIEW

Located in the Upstate of South Carolina, the City of Clemson has experienced significant changes over the last thirty years. During that time, the City's population doubled in size, business corridors expanded along the City's primary arterial roadways, the number of residential dwellings rose sharply, and significant investment was made in public improvement projects designed to enhance the City's appearance and overall quality of life. The impetus for much of these changes can be attributed to two primary sources: the rapid growth during the last several decades that typified most of Upstate and the advancement of Clemson University as a nationally known research institution and their decision to significantly increase enrollment.

Despite these changes, Clemson has retained much of the small college town atmosphere for which it has always been known. Originally named Calhoun, the town was settled in 1872 along the railroad at a stop that served the local agricultural community, most notably the Fort Hill Plantation. The land around the rail line, still locally known as Calhoun, contains some of the oldest structures in the City. With the establishment of Clemson College in 1889, the center of town began a gradual shift away from the railroad toward the college. New businesses and several churches developed along routes that are now known as College Avenue and Old Greenville Highway, establishing a new 'downtown' for the emerging town and forging a permanent link between the City and the college. Neighborhoods slowly emerged near the new commercial center, providing housing in large part for the faculty and staff of the College.

The town was formally incorporated as the Town of Calhoun in 1937, but was renamed the City of Clemson in 1943 to eliminate confusion with Calhoun Falls and to officially recognize the "town-gown" partnership. Along with the College's growth in the post-World War II era, due in large part to the "GI Bill," the new City continued to expand. The college town became a lakefront community in 1963 with the completion of Lake Hartwell by the US Army Corps of Engineers, enhancing both the natural beauty of the area while greatly expanding recreational opportunities. The 1960s also saw the construction of US Highway 123, providing the City with a direct a connection to the emerging Greenville/Interstate 85 corridor.

As the City looks to its future, several significant opportunities and challenges must be considered. This document seeks to analyze these factors and offers appropriate strategies to address each one. Chief among these issues is the obligation to promote and protect the quality

of life in Clemson. Clemson is first and foremost a university town. Effective partnerships between the City and Clemson University must be strengthened and enhanced as the future of both is interconnected in many ways. As the only lakefront municipality on Lake Hartwell, preservation of that resource is vital and must be considered as part of an overall commitment to protecting the City's natural resources. The City must also contend with the lack of significant undeveloped land area within its current corporate limits. This factor, coupled with obstacles to future expansion, will continue to impact land costs in the City. Escalating land costs will have a serious impact on housing costs in the City and will also impact the types of available dwellings. As the Upstate of South Carolina and Clemson University continue to grow, the City will also continue to grow and change accordingly. Strategies must be developed to allow the City to effectively manage and respond to growth as it occurs both within and outside of its boundaries.