

7. Community Facilities

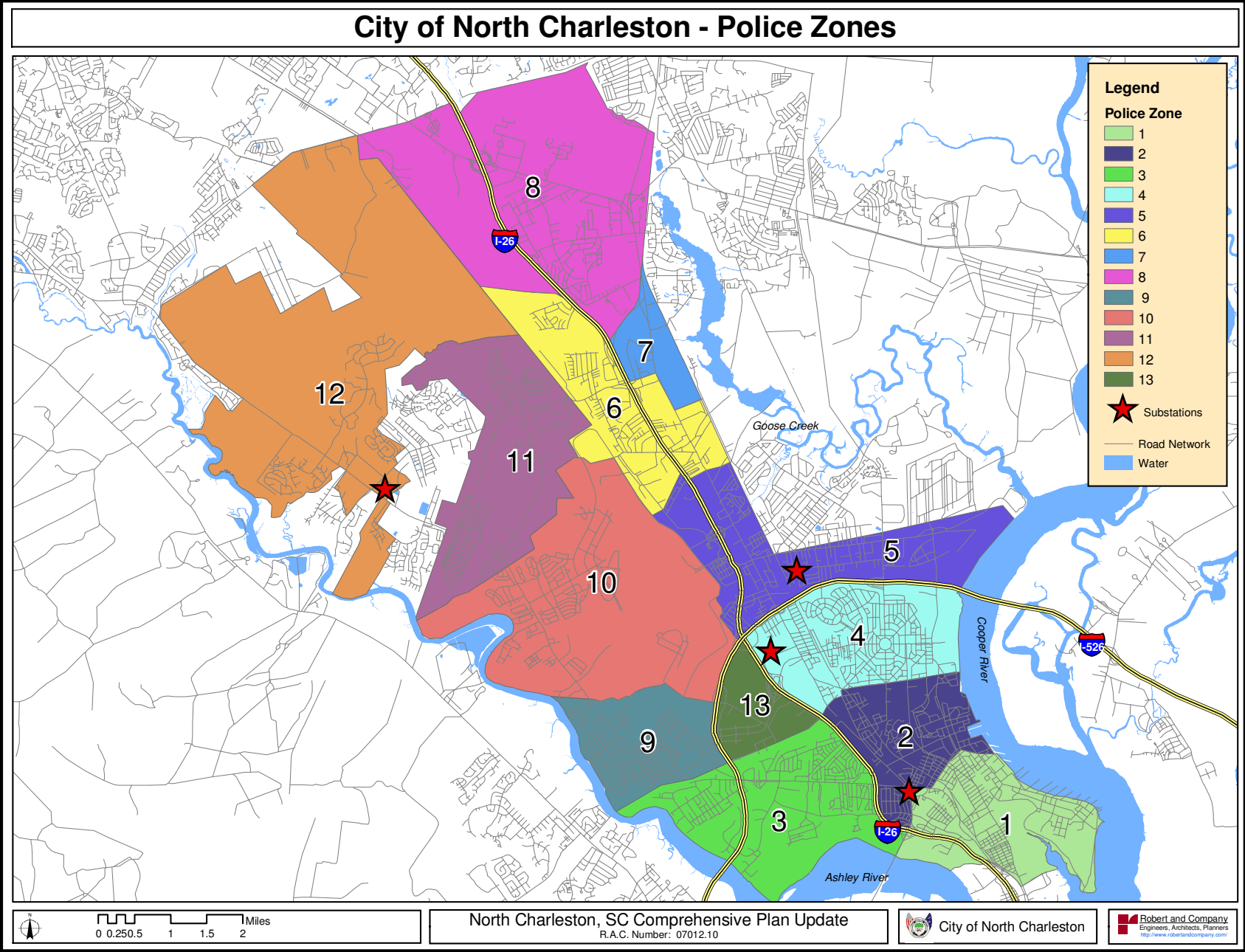
7.1 Public Safety

Police

The North Charleston Police Department employs 286 sworn police officers and 92 civilians. Currently there are 11 police stations and zones, and a twelfth is being planned for the Dorchester County area.

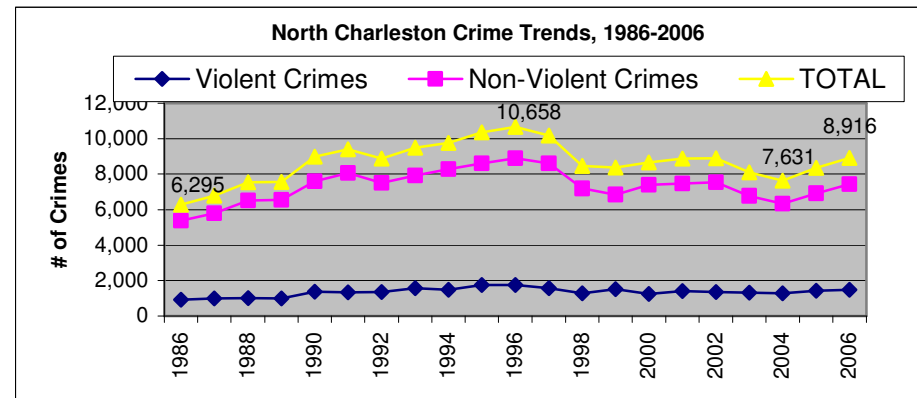
In 2007, the North Charleston Police Department received national accreditation, making it just one of 338 local police forces nationwide to receive this status. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies awards this status for meeting the high standards for enforcing the law. North Charleston joins the previously accredited departments in the area of Charleston, Mount Pleasant, Goose Creek, Isle of Palms, Charleston County, and Charleston County Aviation Authority.

Map 7.1 – Police Zones



Crime

The graph to the right shows North Charleston's criminal activity over the last 10 years. After several years of declining crime numbers since 1996, the city's criminal activity has been back on the rise since 2004. The majority of crimes committed are non-violent crimes, and they make up the highest percentage of the increased numbers. However, as the next two graphs below show, violent crimes such as robberies and murders have increased significantly since 2004.



Most alarming is that violent crime rates, reached all-time highest levels in 2006 and 2007. As with criminal activity in general, the robbery and murder rates have risen and fallen over the years, however both charts below show that even with the peaks and valleys, there are general rises in these two categories since 1986, along with significant increases in 2005 and 2006.

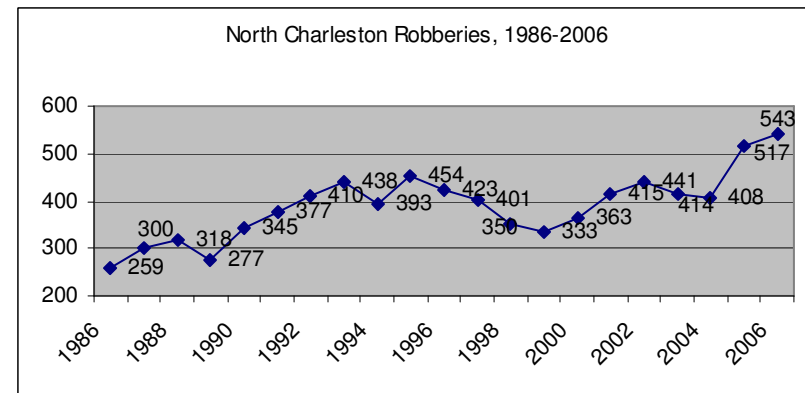
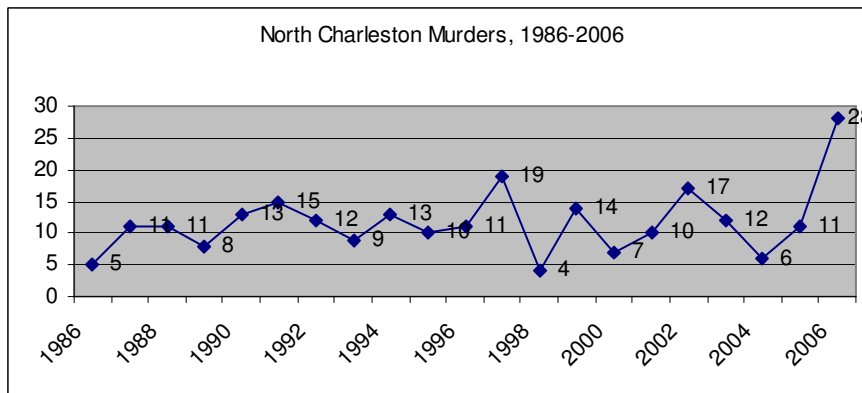


Table 7.1.1 below shows the areas of the city with the highest amounts of violent crime in 2005, 2006, and 2007. In each of the three years, Chicora-Cherokee has had the most significant share of violent crime, with increases in numbers each year. Charleston Farms and Terrace/Waylyn neighborhoods are the next two most violent neighborhoods; these two areas have also had increases in numbers of violent crimes for each year.

Table 7.1.1 – Percentage Share of Citywide Violent Crime by Neighborhood, 2005-2007

2005			2006			2007		
Neighborhood	#	%	Neighborhood	#	%	Neighborhood	#	%
Chicora-Cherokee	135	10.3%	Chicora-Cherokee	141	10.3%	Chicora-Cherokee	159	11.2%
Terrace/Waylyn	101	7.7%	Terrace/Waylyn	108	7.9%	Charleston Farms	110	7.8%
Charleston Farms	90	6.9%	Charleston Farms	101	7.4%	Terrace/Waylyn	110	7.8%
Midland Park	81	6.2%	Midland Park	69	5.1%	Olde Village	89	6.3%
Olde Village	61	4.7%	Ferndale	67	4.9%	Midland Park	88	6.2%
Ferndale	41	3.1%	Olde Village	55	4.0%	Centre Pointe	43	3.0%
Russelldale	34	2.6%	Pepperhill	34	2.5%	Ferndale	36	2.5%
Deer Park	32	2.4%	Deer Park	25	1.8%	Deer Park	29	2.0%
Pepperhill	29	2.2%	Liberty Hill	17	1.2%	6520 Dorchester	28	2.0%
Liberty Hill	24	1.8%	Russelldale	17	1.2%	Russelldale	25	1.8%
						Pepperhill	25	1.8%

Source: North Charleston Police Department

There are several factors that contribute to criminal activity in North Charleston, including high unemployment rates, poor area schools with high dropout rates, poverty, an abundance of vacant properties, and poor lighting. Another contributor is lack of homeownership – North Charleston has a higher percentage of renters to buyers. Although this figure has improved in recent years, the percentage of renters is still higher than homeowners. Illegal immigration associated with the rising Hispanic population has also put some strain on police resources. Along with an increase in gangs, prostitution, and drugs, this segment of the community also presents a language barrier. There are very few bilingual officers on the force, and additional bilingual officers are hard to find because they are in such high demand throughout the country.

Weed & Seed

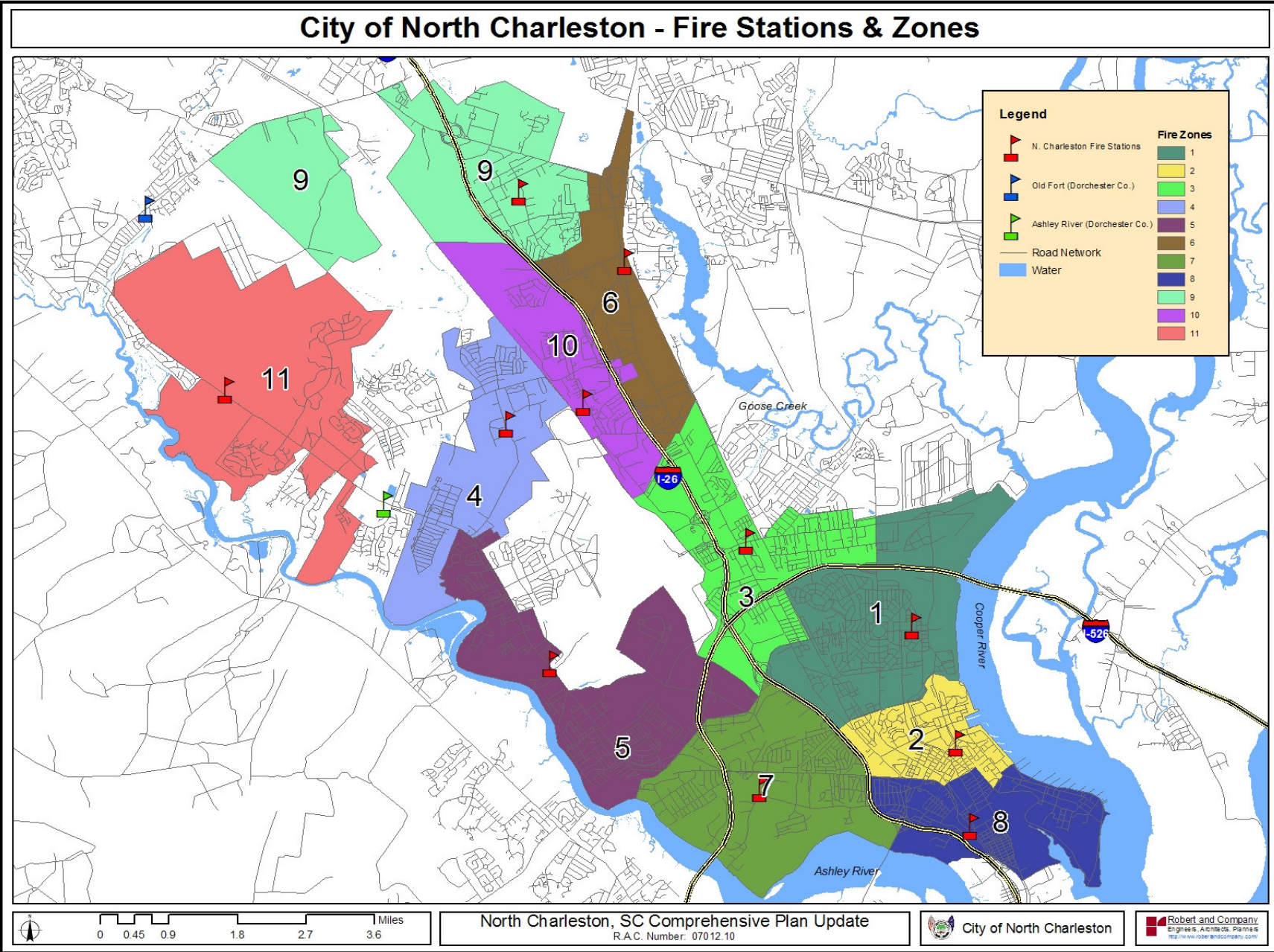
The U.S. Department of Justice's Weed & Seed program aims to prevent drug abuse, gang violence, and violent crimes in high crime areas throughout the nation. The program concentrates law enforcement efforts and resources in these target areas, and encourages communities to self-police themselves to help prevent criminal activity. North Charleston has established Weed & Seed programs for the following neighborhoods: Ferndale, Russelldale, Charleston Farms, Liberty Park, Highland Terrace and Singing Pines. This concentrated area is generally the Remount Road corridor, and Rivers Avenue corridor between Aviation Avenue and Montague Avenue.

Fire

North Charleston's Fire Department consists of 11 fire stations. The department is divided into two battalions, the North Battalion, with 6 stations, and 5 stations in the South Battalion. The department also has a Training Division, with facilities at Station 4 on Cross County Road; a Fire Investigations Division, which investigates causes or origins of fires, bombings, and other explosions; and a Fire Inspection Team, which inspects commercial properties for adequate fire prevention. Currently, NCFD operates with 210 staff, and the following equipment:

- ❑ 11 engine companies
- ❑ 3 ladder companies
- ❑ 1 heavy rescue company
- ❑ 2 light squad companies
- ❑ 1 service company
- ❑ 1 HAZMAT truck
- ❑ 1 technical rescue truck

Map 7.2 – Fire Stations and Zones



7.2 Schools

Public School Districts

Two public school districts serve North Charleston. Charleston County Schools, District 4 serves the Charleston County areas of North Charleston (Planning Areas 1,2 & 4). Dorchester County, District 2 serves Planning Area 3, which includes North Charleston's upper Dorchester corridor and Watson Hill areas. The two school districts differ greatly in demographic makeup and economic levels of their students, and face differing challenges in providing a quality education to their students.

Dorchester Schools

In the public participation process, North Charleston's Planning Area 3 citizens lauded the reputation of Dorchester County Schools, and suggested that many residents choose to live in North Charleston's upper Dorchester corridor so that their children can attend Dorchester's schools. Although performance in Dorchester 2 Schools remains well above state averages, the influx of new residents has created overcrowding in schools, creating the need for more school facilities, as well as concern that the school district will be unable to maintain the high quality of its education as significant resources are focused on capital improvements. Dorchester County Schools that currently serve North Charleston include 1 high school (Fort Dorchester), 2 middle schools (Oakbrook and River Oaks), and 3 elementary schools (Fort Dorchester, Windsor Hill, and Eagle's Nest).

Dorchester District 2's main challenge is the successful accommodation of the growing student population. The pace of residential development in southern Dorchester County, including North Charleston has increased the number of local students dramatically and strained the capacity of their schools to accommodate the growing number of students. The next figure (7.2.1) shows the enrollment of each of North Charleston's Dorchester County schools since the 2001-02 school year. Eagle's Nest Elementary and River Oaks Middle are both in their first year of operation. As the 2007-08 school year numbers show, the opening of these two schools have relieved some of the capacity strain of the elementary and middle schools. A new high school, Ashley Ridge, will open in the 2008-09 school year, and will help relieve crowding in Fort Dorchester High School – currently the only high school serving Planning Area 3. However, it is expected that these three new schools will only provide temporary relief, as southern Dorchester County will likely continue growing at a rapid pace indefinitely. An adequate facilities ordinance was recently adopted in Dorchester County, requiring large developments to show that their projects will not overburden schools, roads and other public services in order to be issued permits. This may help keep Dorchester County Schools from being overwhelmed by local population growth. Ashley Ridge will be

located on the west side of the Ashley River, so it will serve any future populations within the North Charleston's Watson Hill tract, and any future annexations by the city adjacent to Watson Hill.

Table 7.2.1 – Dorchester District 2 School Enrollment

School Enrollment - Dorchester 2 Schools								Building Capacity	Capacity, w/ Trailers
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08		
Eagles Nest ES (new)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	761	800	850
Windsor Hill ES	1,039	917	881	879	870	932	877	975	1,025
Ft. Dorchester ES	N/A	747	831	1,021	1,318	1,523	1,045	975	1,200
Oakbrook ES	858	784	856	945	1,032	1,154	1,097	835	950
Oakbrook MS	1,032	917	881	879	870	932	943	850	1,050
River Oaks MS (new)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	730	900	900
Ft. Dorchester HS	1,918	1,960	2,092	2,211	2,372	2,437	2,550	1,950	1,950
Rollings School of the Arts	598	634	629	628	621	611	602	475	625
TOTAL	5,445	5,959	6,170	6,563	7,083	7,589	8,605	7,760	8,550

Dorchester County Schools, District 2

Charleston County Schools

Whereas Dorchester County is struggling to build schools fast enough to keep up with growing populations, several of Charleston County's schools are actually declining in number. This is reflective of the population losses that Planning Areas 1 & 2 have experienced historically, with some areas only now beginning to experience a renewed growth of populations. Like much of the public infrastructure in the older sections of the city, Charleston County schools in North Charleston are much older than Dorchester's; therefore, much of the school facilities planning deals with expansions, renovations, and upgrades to existing schools that are no longer adequate in capacity or infrastructure. The school system has in place a building program that works on 5-year cycles. For the first cycle, years 2000-2004, the focus was on critical infrastructure needs – replacing roofs, plumbing, HVAC, and other systems in great need of replacement or repair. During this period, the most deteriorated elementary schools were either replaced or renovated. The 2005-09 program is focused on renovating or expanding middle and high schools, as well as purchasing land for a new middle school (off Dorchester Road) and a new high school (on Ashley Phosphate Road).

Charleston County District 4 Schools in North Charleston include:

- ❑ 14 Elementary Schools – Chicora, A.C. Corcoran, Dunston, Mary Ford, W.B. Goodwin, Hunley Park, Malcolm Hursey, Ladson, Lambs, McNair, Midland Park, North Charleston, and Pepperhill.
- ❑ 3 Middle Schools – Alice Birney, Brentwood, and Morningside
- ❑ 2 High Schools – North Charleston and Stall

Charleston County Schools also has five specialty schools located in North Charleston that are countywide – Academic Magnet High School, The School of the Arts, Charlestowne Academy, Military Magnet, and Garrett Academy of Technology.

As Table 7.2.2 (next page) shows, many of District Four's schools are declining in student enrollment, and very few schools are at or above either the building or campus capacity (campus = main building + trailers). During the 2006-07 school year, Ladson Elementary, Midland Park Elementary, Goodwin Elementary, Corcoran Elementary, Pepperhill Elementary, and Birney Middle were above building capacity. Only Pepperhill Elementary was enrolled beyond campus capacity. Clearly, Charleston County District 4 does not deal with the capacity issues that Dorchester 2 deals with. However, Charleston County Schools in North Charleston face an even tougher challenge in serving areas with high amounts of poverty.

Table 7.2.2 – Charleston County District 4 Neighborhood Schools Enrollment

School Enrollment - Charleston County, District 4								Building Capacity	Capacity, w Trailers
SCHOOL	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07		
Chicora ES	485	383	320	346	282		318	353	353
Burns ES	663	633	586	656	514		508	615	615
Lambs ES	551	526	517	574	449		439	616	616
Ladson ES	560	574	583	595	491		488	470	534
McNair ES	352	295	263	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	427	427
Midland Park ES	554	528	534	588	521		571	503	657
North Charleston ES	595	500	466	540	413		530	619	619
Hursey ES	378	360	361	397	380		294	445	445
Goodwin ES	681	685	749	817	676		608	499	674
Dunston ES	422	452	385	455	255		257	213	229
Corcoran ES	496	494	502	565	471		521	504	528
Mary Ford ES	458	401	381	447	368		426	489	516
Pepperhill ES	602	563	526	552	485		542	517	517
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	6339	5993	5792	6085	4937		5076	5781	6214
Birney MS	1073	1035	959	614	823		684	643	1013
Brentwood MS	999	954	853	459	731		429	729	872
Morningside MS	712	723	674	421	791		484	540	601
TOTAL MIDDLE	2784	2712	2486	1494	2345		1597	1912	2486
North Charleston HS	1379	1333	1414	1365	1251		939	1440	1674
Stall HS	995	1083	1006	1108	1029		919	1202	1351
TOTAL HIGH	2374	2416	2420	2473	2280		1858	2642	3025

Charleston County School District

School Performance

Below (Figure 7.2.3) is a report of average SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores in each of the two districts over the last five years. Although SAT scores are only one measure of student performance, it is an important indicator of performance as most colleges and universities use SAT scores when evaluating applicants to their school. Charleston County students' test scores are consistently below the national average, while Dorchester 2 students' scores are consistently higher than

the national average, and close to the best in the state. Although Charleston County scores rank at about the middle of South Carolina's 85 districts, South Carolina is consistently one of the lowest performing states in the nation, and only the top school districts in the state perform above the national average.

Figure 7.2.3 – Average SAT Scores by School District, 2002-2006

District	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Charleston	950	966	964	987	973
Statewide Rank (of 85)	45th	T-43rd	42nd	35th	T-33rd
Dorchester 2	1022	1046	1030	1050	1022
Statewide Rank (of 85)	T-16th	6th	8th	4th	10th
National Average	1020	1026	1026	1028	1021

South Carolina Department of Education

Dorchester students averaged 1022 on their SAT scores in the 2006-07 academic year. This is well above the state average (985), and in line with the national average (1021). For ACT scores, Dorchester 2's average of 20.7 was slightly higher than South Carolina (19.5), and slightly lower than the nation (21.1). Approximately seventy percent (70%) of Dorchester 2 graduates go on to enroll in post-secondary education (4-year, 2-year, or technical colleges). Recent studies have shown that while Dorchester schools are continuing to outperform most local districts, the schools have failed to improve over the last couple years. As rapid growth continues in Dorchester County and the district struggles to build enough capacity to keep up with growing student numbers, it will be a challenge to maintain the quality of education that it has been able to provide. It is important that North Charleston and Dorchester County work with the Dorchester Schools to ensure that new development does not continue to outpace the capacity of the school system.

Charleston's countywide schools, five of which are located in North Charleston, consistently have excellent performance that is on par, and in some cases better than Dorchester County Schools. This is also true of Charleston County Schools that are located in more affluent areas of the county, indicating that the poor performance of District 4 schools is more a result of location and socioeconomic conditions, rather than the school district itself. In addition to the low performances that result from high poverty and the unstable learning environment it fosters, high-poverty schools create the need for more school district resources spent on them. District 4 spent \$8,268.53 per pupil in 2006-07, compared to only \$6,131 per pupil in Dorchester 2 Schools in the same school year. Three District 4 schools (Brentwood Middle, Hursey & Dunston

Elementary) had spending over \$10,000 per pupil, and several other schools were over \$9,000. This clearly shows that low performance in Charleston County School District is not due to a lack of funding.

School Performance and Poverty

The differences in school performance between Dorchester County Schools and Charleston County Schools is not an indictment of Charleston County Schools, but rather it is a reflection of the socioeconomic struggles in North Charleston's older city core (Planning Areas 1 & 2). Much of the problems that exist in the Charleston County district are societal, related to poverty and the disadvantages that come along with it. Both school districts serving North Charleston offer free or reduced priced lunches to students from low-income households. Table 7.2.4 (below) shows the income eligibility criteria for Charleston County Schools' Free & Reduced Lunch Program. The table also shows regional income levels that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determines as Low Income, Very Low Income, and Extremely Low Income. The income levels that qualify for free or reduced lunch do not match up exactly with HUD's levels for Low, Very Low and Extremely Low Income households, but this comparison shows that families eligible for reduced lunch prices are in most cases considered Low Income or worse by HUD standards.

Table 7.2.4 – Free & Reduced Lunch Income Criteria vs. Area Median Income Limits, by Family Size

Income Chart for Free & Reduced Lunch			
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$18,889	\$1,575	\$364
2	\$25,327	\$2,111	\$488
3	\$31,765	\$2,648	\$611
4	\$38,203	\$3,184	\$735
5	\$44,641	\$3,721	\$859
6	\$51,079	\$4,257	\$983
7	\$57,517	\$4,794	\$1,107
8	\$63,955	\$5,330	\$1,230
Each add'l person	+\$6438	+\$537	+\$124

Source: Charleston County School district; 2007-08 Year

Area Median Income Limits, Charleston- N. Charleston MSA			
Family Size	Low Income (80% AMI)	Very Low Income (50% AMI)	Extremely Low Income (30% AMI)
1 Person	\$31,550	\$19,750	\$11,850
2 Person	\$36,100	\$22,550	\$13,500
3 Person	\$40,600	\$25,400	\$15,200
4 Person	\$45,100	\$28,200	\$16,900
5 Person	\$48,700	\$30,450	\$18,250
6 Person	\$52,300	\$32,700	\$19,600
7 Person	\$55,900	\$34,950	\$20,950
8 Person	\$59,550	\$37,200	\$22,300

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2007

For the 2006-07 school year, 72% of Charleston County's District Four students received free or reduced lunches. This means that approximately 3 out of every 4 students in this district come from families that are at a Low Income level or poorer. If the five county-wide schools are taken out of the equation, 84% of District 4's local students get free or reduced lunch. By comparison, only 33% of Dorchester 2 Schools' students receive free or reduced meals, indicating that although southern Dorchester County is not devoid of poverty, the concentration is much less severe. Seven of District Four's 21 schools (one third) had at least 90% of its students receive free or reduced lunches for the 2006-07 school year - Brentwood Middle, Burns Elementary, Chicora Elementary, Dunston Elementary, Hursey Elementary, Mary Ford Elementary, and North Charleston Elementary. All of these schools are located in Planning Area 1 or 2, and all except Dunston Elementary are located inside I-526.

These numbers are unfortunately a sober reminder that there is still a significant racial gap in income that is pervasive in this part of the country. Dorchester 2 schools draw from a predominately white population (2000 Census shows 71% white population in North Charleston's Planning Area 3), while Charleston's District 4 is comprised of 70% black students, and only 20% white students. This is highly reflective of the general population demographics between North Charleston in Dorchester County and North Charleston in Charleston County (especially Planning Areas 1 & 2).

The reduced and free lunch program provides the basis for Title I schools that are eligible to receive funding through the national No Child Left Behind Act. Title I schools are designated low-income schools. Schools that are at least 35% low-income (on free or reduced lunch) are considered Title I and are eligible for funding on a competitive basis. Schools that are 75% low-income are Title I schools that **must** be funded under the No Child Left Behind Act. In Charleston County District 4, every school except Academic Magnet High School and School of the Arts are Title I schools with at least 35% of its students on free or reduced lunch. Of the district's 21 schools, 14 have are at least 75% low income, and thus are Title I schools with mandatory funding. By contrast, Dorchester County has only one Title I school in North Charleston – Windsor Hill Elementary.

Clearly, the lower performance of Charleston County Schools is influenced greatly by socioeconomic conditions and associated impacts that have a negative influence on the learning environment. North Charleston, Charleston County, and the State of South Carolina all must work cooperatively to improve local schools. High crime rates are certainly contributors to school quality in some areas of North Charleston. An unsafe or unstable home environment fails to produce a proper learning environment for school aged children. The city has made efforts to combat crime with

programs such as Weed & Seed Program, but it must continue to improve the social and physical environment in order to create a student body that is focused on learning.

Children that come from a stable home, have proper nutrition, and have a safe learning environment at home are going to have an advantage over those who do not. Without a stable home and proper learning environment, only the most driven or resourceful children are likely to excel in school. Head Start programs help children of low-income families overcome the disadvantages of poverty, giving them a better chance to succeed in school. Head Start helps provide resources for families in the following areas:

- ❑ Curriculum assessment
- ❑ Health & nutrition
- ❑ Social services
- ❑ Parental involvement

Currently there are the following Head Start Programs in North Charleston:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ❑ Burns Elementary School | ❑ Hursey Elementary School |
| ❑ Chicora Elementary School | ❑ Naval Base Head Start Center |
| ❑ Dunston Elementary School | ❑ Pepperhill Elementary School |
| ❑ Goodwin Elementary School | |

Additional programs should be pursued for Charleston County Elementary Schools that are not currently served by the Head Start Program. This would include Corcoran ES, Lambs ES, Ladson ES, McNair ES, Midland Park ES, and North Charleston ES.

Head Start can only produce moderate benefits without improvements in the community environment. Reduction in crime, increases in homeownership, and a more active community are necessary societal improvements that will greatly affect the ability of children to succeed in school. Otherwise, a continuous cycle of poverty leading to poor school performance, leading to poverty, and so on will persist in Charleston County areas of the city. A strong, three-pronged effort- (improvement of schools, student readiness, better learning environment) is needed to break the cycle.

Schools as Community Centers

Schools, when used as community centers, help provide safer surroundings and a better learning environment for kids and adults. Children can benefit from recreation fields that are open later, to get the proper exercise they need. They

can also use the libraries as a place to study if their home is too disruptive. Adults benefit from the use of the library as a learning resource, and classrooms can be used at night for continuing education or support group meetings. In general, schools when used after hours can help create a closer-knit community.

The Noisette Community Master Plan proposes that its Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Districts set aside 25% of the projected funds for improvement to schools. To be eligible for the funds, new schools or school renovations must meet LEED standards. These requirements have not yet come to fruition, but would be worthy steps towards creating high quality schools that create closer-knit neighborhoods, and provide constructive outlets for at-risk youth after school hours. LEED design for schools sets higher standards for energy efficiency, as well as providing better air quality and more natural lighting. It has been argued that better air and light quality in classrooms improves students' school performance. Reductions in energy costs can help schools spend less money on building operations, and more money on teacher salaries, cafeteria food, or classroom resources – aspects that have more impact on the students. Additionally, the schools must function as neighborhood centers, sharing their facilities (recreation fields, assembly halls, libraries, etc.) for community functions. This provides numerous benefits to the community, and helps the city save its resources by reducing the need to purchase land and build new recreation fields, libraries, performance venues, or community centers. Even school buses can be used as local public transportation during nights and weekends.

North Charleston donated \$1 million towards the construction of Dorchester County's two newest area schools - Eagles Nest Elementary and River Oaks Middle School, and the city also provides maintenance for the schools' recreation facilities. In return, the recreation facilities are open to use by North Charleston residents. Charleston County schools also provide use of several of its schools' facilities for the community, and the city is hoping to create additional opportunities in both districts. The newly built North Charleston Elementary School was constructed to LEED standards, and although it was not designed specifically for community use, several of its facilities are shared with the public. As shared facility agreements between the city and the school districts prove to be successful and beneficial to the community, it is hoped that numerous future opportunities are sought out and created throughout the North Charleston.

The use of schools as community centers is especially important in the neighborhoods with the worst crime rates or economic levels. Providing after-hours programs, especially for at-risk youth, provides safe, constructive outlets for kids and helps them avoid the negative influences of blighted neighborhoods. If the students cannot achieve a conducive learning environment at home, they should at least have an opportunity to seek it elsewhere in their community. North Charleston should work with Dorchester and Charleston County School Districts to ensure that all schools serve some sort

of community function or sharing of facilities, with a high priority for this to occur in schools that are in high poverty and/or high crime neighborhoods.

It is recommended that the city partner with the counties and school districts, especially Charleston County School District, to formulate a 5 or 10-year plan for school related capital improvements, initiative programs, public safety, and community improvements that help address the needs and challenges of providing quality education. This would identify future capacity needs, as well as identify, prioritize, and coordinate funding for shared facility opportunities. Perhaps more importantly, this plan would formulate strategies for, and coordinate community resources towards reducing the societal ills that foster a disadvantaged learning environment for students from low-income areas.

Colleges & Universities

Trident Technical College

Trident Tech is a commuter campus technical school located off of Rivers Avenue. There are approximately 12,000 course credit students, plus another 3,000 to 4,000 continuing education students. Approximately 7,500 students attend full-time. There is no school-provided housing either on or off campus. Trident Tech's campus is currently 168 acres, but it owns another 87 developable acres just to the north of campus for future expansion.

As Trident Tech continues to expand, it may create further traffic congestion given that it is a commuter school with no on-campus housing. If efforts were made to provide multi-family housing within a walking commute of Trident Tech, this would greatly reduce any negative traffic impacts that the campus may create. North Charleston should consider working with Trident Tech to explore opportunities to house students closer to campus. It is unlikely that Trident will seek to provide on-campus housing, but with its available land perhaps it can work with the city to provide affordable student housing off-campus.

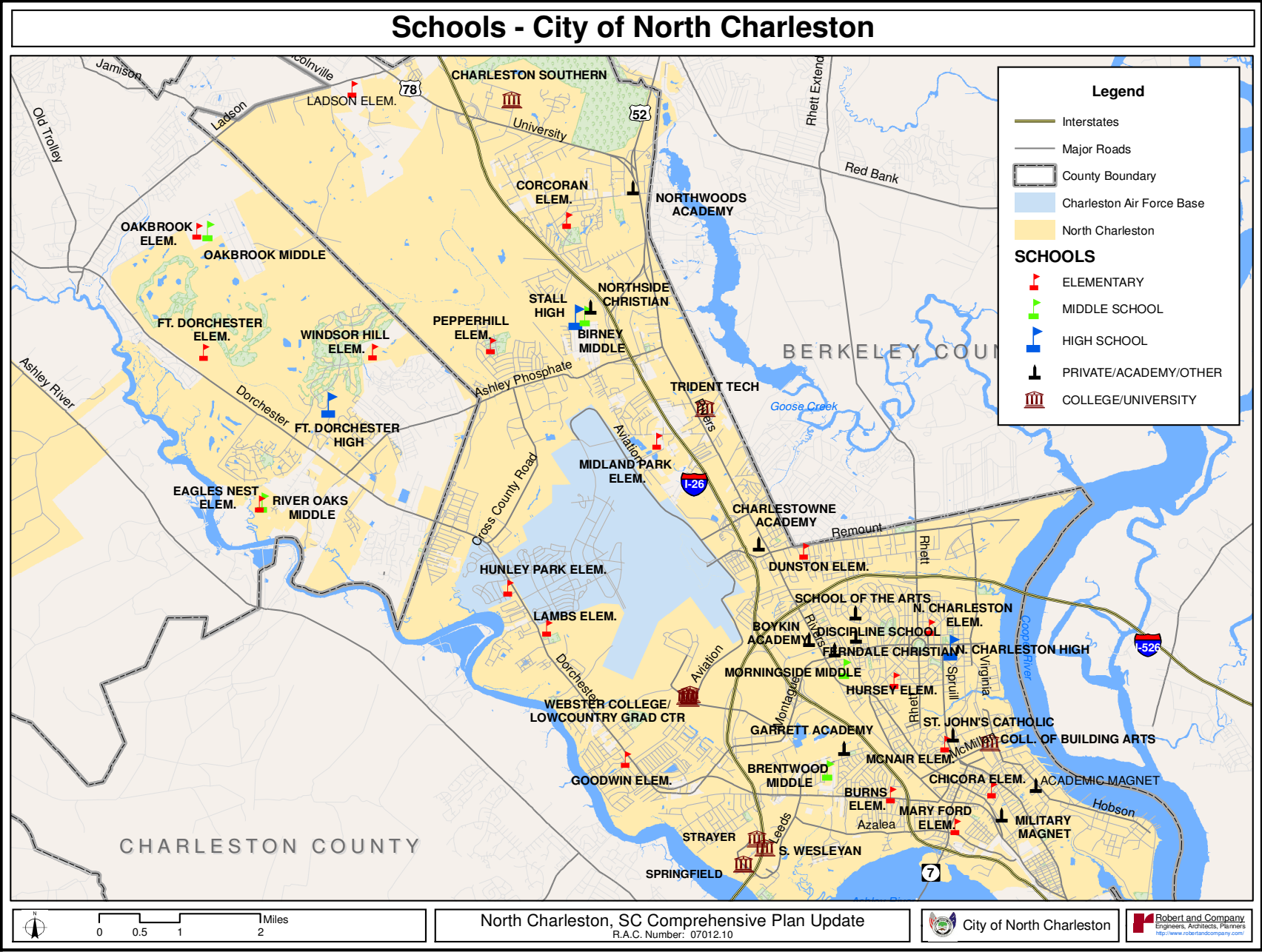
Charleston Southern University

Charleston Southern is a Baptist University, located on the north side of University Drive, just east of the I-26 interchange, across from Trident Medical Center.

In addition to CSU and Trident Tech, North Charleston is also home to several specialty and satellite colleges (Map 7.3).

- ❑ Lowcountry Graduate Center/ College of Charleston North Campus
- ❑ Webster University
- ❑ Southern Wesleyan University
- ❑ American College of Building Arts
- ❑ Strayer University
- ❑ Springfield College

Map 7.3 - Schools



7.3 Parks & Recreation

City Parks and Community Centers

North Charleston owns and operates several parks, athletic fields, and community centers. The 1996 North Charleston Comprehensive Plan reported a total of 220 acres of city parks and recreation fields. The city has added approximately 65 acres of park and recreation space since that time. This does not include golf courses, boat landings, or any shared facilities with schools or churches

National Park Standards generally suggest a range between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of park space per every 1,000 in population. The following table lists each planning area's parks, recreation fields and community centers, with the amount of acreage each provides.

Table 7.3.1 - Park Acreage, Planning Area One

Park	Type	Acres	Park	Type	Acres
Park Circle	Recreation/Playground	13.0	Ralph Hendricks	Passive/Playground	10.0
Danny Jones/Armory	Recreation/Playground	13.5	Triangle	Passive/Playground	0.5
Russelldale	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.5	Pump House	Passive/Playground	0.5
Persephone Moultrie	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.5	Mosstree	Passive/Playground	4.0
Felix Pinckney	Comm. Center/Recreation	5.0	Naval Base/Sterett Hall	Comm. Center/Recreation	20.0
North Park Village	Recreation/Playground	12.0	Gethsemani	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.5
Whipper Barony	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.0	Park South	Passive/Playground	11.0
Highland Terrace	Recreation/Playground	3.5	Accabee	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.5
Live Oak	Passive/Playground	2.0	Liberty Hill	Comm. Center/Recreation	3.5
Ferndale	Comm. Center/Recreation	1.0	Charleston Farms	Comm. Center/Recreation	1.5
Ceramics House	Comm. Center/Recreation	2.0	Four Poles Park	Passive/Open Space	27.0
O'Hear	Passive/Playground	0.5	Riverfront	Passive/Open Space	24.0
Quarterman	Passive/Playground	16.0	Horizon Village	Recreation/Playground	2.0
Westvaco	Recreation/Playground	15.0	TOTAL		199.5

The 2000 population of Planning Area 1 census, including city and unincorporated parcels was 33,154. Per every 1,000 in population, there are approximately 6 acres of park space. This is just shy of the recommended 6.25 acres of park space per 1,000 of population ratio that the NRPA recommends. If the area population grows, as is suggested by the number of newly permitted housing units, the amount of park space will become more inadequate unless new park land is established. Proposed parks near Filbin Creek (16 acres off East Dolphin Street), and north of the GARCO site should help provide additional park space.

Table 7.3.2 - Park Acreage, Planning Area 2

Park	Type	Acres
Collins Park	Recreation/Playground	15.0
Cooper River	Recreation/Playground	3.5
Minor Crosby	Comm. Center/Recreation	5.0
Mary Ford	Recreation/Playground	3.0
Murray Hill	Recreation/Playground	6.0
Bernie Varnadore	Recreation/Playground	2.0
Wye Lane	Passive/Open Space	3.0
Ferrara Drive	Passive/Open Space	3.0
TOTAL		40.5

Planning Area 2's 2000 population was 34,004, so the 40.5 acres of local parks is well short of producing an adequate amount of recreation and open park space for the area. To meet the 6.25 ratio, 212.5 acres of park space is needed to adequately meet the population's needs. The city is hoping to acquire park space along the Ashley River near the intersection of Michaux Parkway and Dorchester Road, and some park space will be provided as part of the Ashley River Center development; however, this will still fall well short of meeting the areas needs. Joint use of school and/or church recreational facilities is critically needed in this Planning Area, as available land for parks in this district may be hard to come by.

Table 7.3.3 - Park Acreage, Planning Area 4

Park	Type	Acres
Three Oaks	Recreation/Playground	3.5
Pepperhill	Comm. Center/Recreation	10.0
Northwoods	Recreation/Playground	20.0
Simmons	Recreation/Playground	7.0
Vistavia	Comm. Center/Recreation	4.0
TOTAL (Local Parks)		44.5
Wannamaker County Park	Regional Park	1,015
TOTAL		1059.5

Planning Area 4 is fortunate to be home to Wannamaker County Park, which totals 1,015 acres of recreation and passive open space. Without the County Park, local parks provide 44.5 acres for its population of 16,210. New park space provided with the development of Ingleside Plantation should help provide that all areas of Planning Area 4 have reasonable access to parks and recreation.

Planning Area 3 currently has no established local or regional parks, except for golf courses and the shared use of some of the school owned recreational facilities. However, North Charleston has recognized this deficiency, and is working towards providing new park space, and more shared recreational facilities to meet this rapidly growing area. A new park will be located behind the Dorchester Road fire station near Wescott Plantation that will provide 25 acres of sports fields and park space. Additional practice fields will be built behind Riverbluff Baptist Church, and off of Park Forest Parkway. The city recently donated \$1 million towards the new Eagles Nest Elementary and River Oaks Middle schools, and reached an agreement for the public to use the schools' recreational facilities. Although much more park and recreational land is needed for this area, the city is making encouraging steps towards remedying the situation, and it should continue its efforts.

In its most recent publications, the NRPA suggests a movement away from a national standard of a set amount of acreage per 1,000 of population. It suggests instead that communities involve the public and assess their populations' specific needs for space. The NRPA still provides detailed guidelines for different types of parks and recreational facilities, but it discourages a simple ratio to judge the adequacy of a local park system. Additionally, a network of bicycle and

multi-use trails do not constitute acreage per se, but do provide a valuable addition to a park system. Chapter 8 provides a detailed plan for providing a recreational trail network in North Charleston.

Simply put, North Charleston needs more park space, particularly in Planning Areas 2 & 3. However, an in-depth park and recreation plan should be performed within the next 5 years to assess the city's needs, determine how much and where park space is needed, and produce a plan for acquiring land and producing additional parks. Sometime shortly after the 2010 Census population figures are available would be an opportune time for producing such a plan.

County Parks

There are three Charleston County Parks located in North Charleston. Wannamaker Park is located on the north side of University Boulevard, near the intersection of US-78 and US-52. Wannamaker is a 1,015-acre regional park with nature trails, picnic areas, wetlands, a pond, and Whirlin' Waters Adventure Waterpark.

The County Farm Boat Landing on the Ashley River and the Cooper River Marina are also county parks, providing recreational boating opportunities.

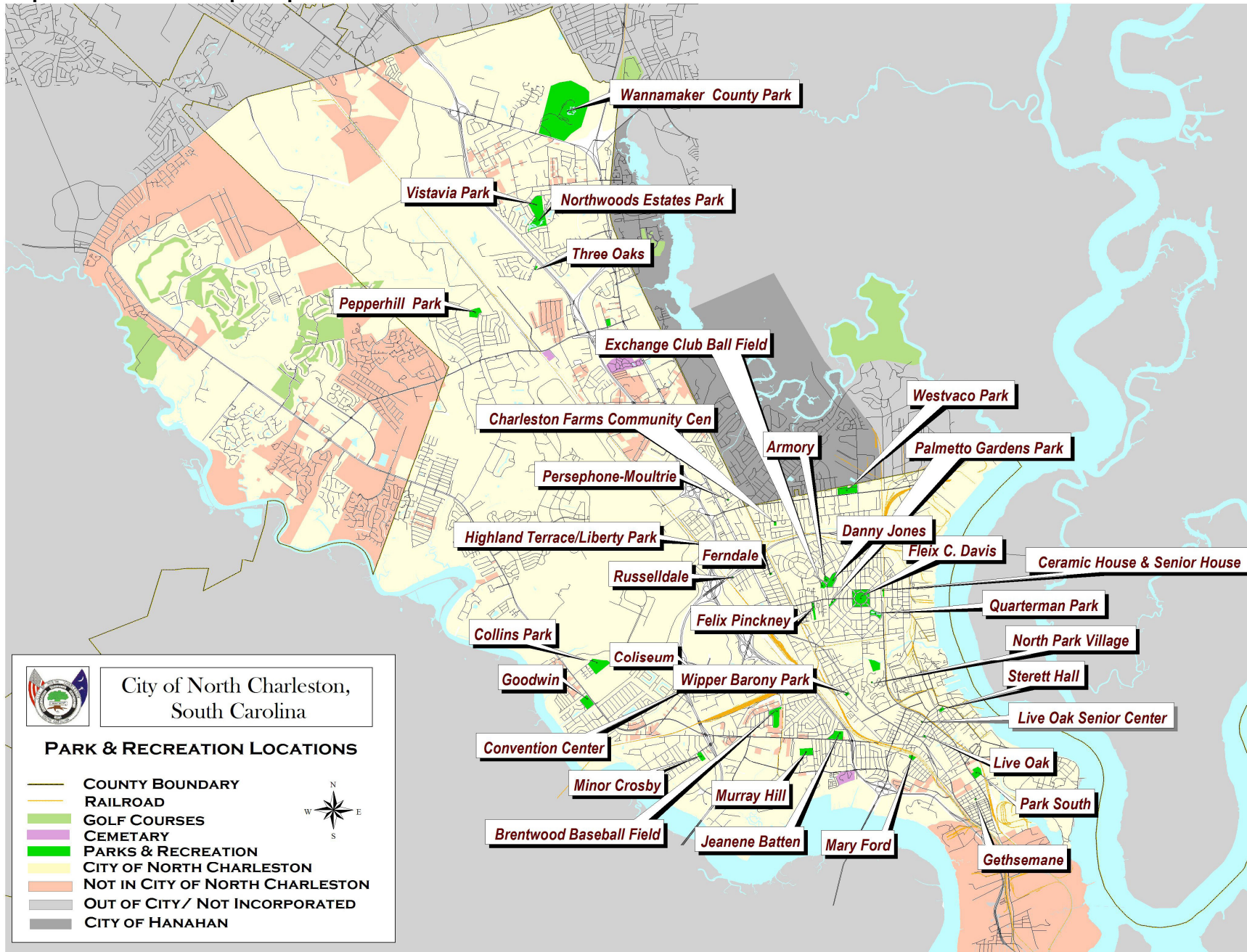
Dorchester County provides only a few parks and recreation areas, none of which are located in North Charleston.

State & National Parks and Forests

Although there are State and National Parks or Forests within accessible driving distances, there are none within North Charleston.

The map on the next page (7.4) is a city map of North Charleston's parks.

Map 7.4 – Parks and Open Space



7.4 Water and Sewer

The city of North Charleston does not provide water or sewerage services, which instead are provide by other authorities.

Water Supply

The primary provider for water in North Charleston is Charleston Water System (formerly Charleston Public Works). Charleston Water System (CWS) provides water directly to areas of North Charleston within Charleston County, and provides wholesale water to Charleston Air Force Base and Dorchester County Water and Sewer. In the CWS system, raw water from the Edisto River and the Bushy Park Reservoir in Goose Creek is treated at the Hanahan Water Treatment Plant.

Sewer Service

The North Charleston Sewer District provides sewer and wastewater treatment for North Charleston, excluding Dorchester County areas. The district primarily serves North Charleston, but also portions of unincorporated Charleston County, Ladson, Lincolnville, and Summerville. The district is entirely within Charleston County's boundaries. In 2000, the Sewer District serviced a population of 108,513 with 518 miles of sewer lines and 52 pump stations. Treatment is provided at the Felix C. Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant, with a capacity of 27 million gallons per day. The plant is located at the south end of the city off Herbert Street, by the confluence of Shipyard Creek and the Cooper River.

Felix C. Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant

The NCSD began construction in 2007 to increase its treatment capacity to 32 million gallons per day. In 2006, the district's average daily influent flow was 12.1 million gallons per day, with a peak daily flow of 26.1 MGD. The BCD Water Quality Management Plan estimated that NCDS facilities are adequate to meet the demand through 2020.

Dorchester County Water & Sewer services Planning Area 3 of North Charleston. They have a treatment facility located off of Appian Way adjacent to Coosaw Creek, just upstream from where it flows into the Ashley River.



7.5 - Waste Management

Solid Waste & Recycling

Solid Waste

The Sanitation Division of North Charleston's Public Works Department is responsible for residential garbage and trash collection, which is done curbside within the city limits and within the full Planning Areas of North Charleston (not including Watson Hill currently). Collection is done on different days in different areas of the city, but trash and garbage collection are performed in the same areas on the same day. Garbage is considered household waste that is collected in city provided rolling cart containers, while trash includes separated curbside piles of lawn/grass clippings, old appliances, construction materials, and tree limbs, branches or stumps.

The city also provides a Convenience Center for drop off garbage needs, located on Columbia Street near South Rhett Avenue. As with the garbage and trash picked up in the regular service, waste from the Convenience Center is delivered to Charleston County's landfill located off Bees Ferry Road.

Recycling

The City of North Charleston collects recyclables from residences in city areas of Dorchester County, and provides recycling bins for participating recyclers.

The Charleston County recycling program administers recycling services in North Charleston areas of the county. Charleston County provides curbside pickup of Cans (aluminum, steel), plastic bottles and jugs (#1, #2), glass (brown, green and clear), paper (office paper, brown paper bags, magazines, mixed paper, newspapers and inserts, paperboard, telephone books), and motor oil bottles.

- Charleston County also has drop sites for recycling at the following North Charleston locations:
- Chas. Air Force Base, 100W. Stewart Ave. and Arthur St.*(also accepts oil filters)
- Chas. City Marina, 17 Lockwood Dr.
- Chas. County Detention Center, 3841 Leeds Ave.*
- Chas. County Library, Dorchester Rd. Branch, 6325 Dorchester Rd.*
- Chas. County Public Service Bldg., 4045 Bridgeview Dr. *

- Cross County Road Fire Station, 7270A Cross County Rd
- Fox Music Parking Lot, 3005 W. Montague Ave.*
- North Chas. High School, 1087 East Montague Ave.
- North Chas. City Hall, 4950 Lacrosse Rd.
- North Charleston Coliseum, 5001 Coliseum Drive (off W. Montague)
- Trident Technical College, 7000 Rivers Ave.*
- Wando Woods Community Center, 3901 Paramount Dr.

7.6 Energy & Other Public Utilities

Electric & Natural Gas Utilities

Electricity

South Carolina Electric & Gas Company is an investor-owned utility with corporate headquarters located in Columbia, SC. It provides electric service to approximately 633,000 customers in 24 counties in the central and lower half of the state, which included service to 121 municipalities. The electric distribution system consists of 13,300 miles of overhead lines and 4,500 miles of underground lines. The City of North Charleston is a part of the 186,900-customer Metro Charleston District, which has 1,800 miles of overhead lines and 1,350 miles of underground in the area, extending from Edisto Beach to McClellanville and inland to US 78 & I-26. SCE&G's local office, located on Ashley Phosphate Road, provides electric operations and maintenance to the City of North Charleston area. There are 13 substations and 42 circuits with a total of 400 miles of overhead line and 310 miles of underground lines located in the general boundaries of the municipality. SCE&G has approximately 39,000 residential meters, 7,300 commercial meters and 87 industrial electric meters in the City of North Charleston.

Natural Gas

South Carolina Electric & Gas Company provides natural gas service to the North Charleston area. The SCE&G Southern Division manages the business operations of the

Gas SBU in five southern and coastal counties of South Carolina with division offices located on Leeds Ave in North Charleston. The division served by this office includes the three regional counties of Dorchester, Berkeley and Charleston. In addition to operating and maintaining their natural gas system, SCE&G also markets and sells natural gas to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. SCE&G operates and maintains approximately 2,400 miles of gas main in the Southern Division, and has approximately 16,000 residential meters, 1,700 commercial meters and 40 industrial gas meters in the City of North Charleston.

Defense Fuel Pipeline

The Defense Fuel Support Pipeline (DFSP) carries jet fuel from the DFSP terminal along the Cooper River to the Air Force Base for use in aircraft, vehicle, and equipment operation. Jet fuel is necessary to carry out AFB operation, and the pipeline system ensures that the fuel is carried to its destination safely. However, jet fuel is highly toxic, explosive and flammable both in liquid or vapor form, so it is imperative that the pipelines location is known to prevent damage

Location: The pipeline starts from the DFSP terminal at the South Annex of the Naval Weapons Station. It runs south approximately in line with North Rhett Avenue, then west in line with Remount Road, across I-26 and onto the Air Force Base property. The pipeline is marked above ground at road crossings and other locations.

Any digging, excavation, or utility projects along this pipeline, or installation of sidewalks, driveways, fencing, sprinkler systems, or other projects could have potential impacts that could cause damage to the pipeline and create jet fuel leaks. Therefore, any public or private development or infrastructure project in the vicinity of the pipeline should involve coordination with the U.S. Defense Energy Support Center (DESC) to accurately identify the pipe's location and assess any potential impacts.

7.7 Community Facilities Goals and Policies

Goal 7.1: Reduce crime rates, especially murder and other violent crimes.

- ❑ Policy: Increase community involvement between law enforcement and neighborhoods.
 - Provide permanent community resource officers in areas of highest criminal activity.
- ❑ Policy: Promote community-based crime watch organizations.
- ❑ Policy: Continue police and code enforcement priority in highest crime areas.
- ❑ Policy: Increase the number of bilingual, Spanish-speaking officers
 - Action: Provide foreign language training to police officers and other city staff, on a voluntary basis.

Goal 7.2: Provide adequate, cost-effective emergency services throughout all areas of the city

- ❑ Policy: Maintain high level fire protection throughout all areas of North Charleston
 - Action: Identify appropriate locations for future fire stations.
 - Action: Resolve any gaps in fire service response times.
 - Action: Add fire hydrants where lacking.
- ❑ Policy: Maintain efficient coordination of EMS and 911 services with the counties.

Goal 7.3: Provide a high-quality education and a good learning environment for all students

- ❑ Policy: Provide public safety at schools to ensure a safe learning environment
- ❑ Policy: Take measures to reduce the educational disadvantages for Charleston County School students.
 - Action: Increase social service resources for underprivileged students.
 - Action: Help provide additional Head Start or similar programs in low-income areas of North Charleston.

Goal 7.4: Provide cultural arts venues and programs in all parts of the city

- ❑ Policy: Provide additional libraries, performance spaces, and other cultural facilities in Planning Areas 2, 3, & 4.
- ❑ Policy: Provide a high-quality civic and cultural arts complex that will be a source of community pride

Goal 7.5: Provide an adequate and equitable system of parks and recreation facilities

- ❑ Policy: Ensure equal opportunity of North Charleston's citizens to enjoy quality open space and recreation facilities.
 - Action: Provide a large, signature public park for each planning area

- Action: Provide a system of smaller, neighborhood pocket parks, evenly distributed throughout the city.
- ❑ Policy: Increase the amount of public park and recreation space in Planning Areas 2 & 3
 - Action: Prioritize park space acquisition and development in Planning Areas 2 & 3
 - Action: Continue working deals with schools and churches to share recreation facilities.
- ❑ Policy: Increase use of underutilized parks by increasing safety, lighting and security.
- ❑ Policy: Provide more public access to North Charleston's waterfronts.

Goal 7.6: Provide quality water and sewer services throughout North Charleston

- ❑ Policy: Ensure that adequate water and sewer infrastructure is available to support anticipated growth and development.

Goal 7.7: Reduce capital expenditures through shared public facilities and energy-efficient design standards.

- ❑ Policy: Seek additional opportunities to use school or church facilities (libraries, auditoriums, classrooms, recreation facilities) for multiple community functions.
- ❑ Policy: Build and renovate public facilities with energy-efficient design (LEED or similar).