

CHAPTER 4

Historic and Cultural Resources

Calhoun is South Carolina's among the state's newest counties, created from portions of Orangeburg and Lexington Counties in 1908 after several years of local efforts to establish the new county. Calhoun County's historic and cultural resources are documented in this section, and goals, objectives, and strategies for implementation are recommended.



St. Matthews Lutheran Church

The county has a rich history that includes early Native American settlements, important frontier settlements and trading posts, colonial plantations, Revolutionary War battles, and some of the earliest railroad development in the nation. Cultural and recreational resources in the county are remarkable for a county of this size and population.

A full accounting of the county's history is beyond the scope of this plan, although a brief history of the county is presented below. Rather, the purpose here is to highlight the most important historic events and sites and share the county's history with residents and visitors.

The Calhoun Museum and Cultural Center houses a large collection of historic documents and artifacts

and is a key element of historic preservation and cultural awareness in the county. The Calhoun County Museum website, at www.calhouncountymuseum.org, and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History website at www.scdah.sc.gov provide much greater detail on the history and historic places than can be provided in this report.



At left: Calhoun County Museum and Cultural Center

Brief History

Calhoun County lies near the center of South Carolina on the Congaree and Santee Rivers. The Cherokee Path from the coast to the Blue Ridge runs through the county, roughly along the route of US Highway 176 and SC Highway 6. The county's central location and established trade routes were the reason Fort Motte was one of three sites considered for the new state capital in the 1780s. With few good roads, travel to Charleston, the state capital prior to 1790, was difficult for upcountry planters. River travel was important, and the three sites considered for the state capital – Fort Motte, Taylor's plantation (now Columbia), and Stateburg (near Sumter in the High Hills of Santee) all had access to the Santee River system. All three sites also were on high ground, away from "vapors" and disease associated with swamps and lowlands, and advantageous for breezes to counter South Carolina's summer heat.



View of the Congaree River valley from the bluff at Fort Motte Battlefield.

Situated just south of the fall line in the upper coastal plain, Calhoun County's landscape ranges from rolling sand hills to bottomland forests to fertile coastal plains, which have sustained farms and plantations since the early colonial period. The first land grant in the county was in 1704 to George Stirling, 570 acres along Lyon's Creek near SC Highway 6. Plantations growing indigo and cotton flourished beginning in the late 1700s.

Two archaeological sites in the county have documented settlement by the Congaree and Santee Indians. Traders moved along the Cherokee Path beginning in the early 1700s, and settlers soon



An interpretive event at Fort Motte Battlefield

followed. Early townships were Saxe-Gotha, Orangeburg, and Amelia. In 1768, St. Matthew's Parish was established.

Colonel William Thomson was a revolutionary war leader, who played important roles in several battles to drive the British troops from the center of the state. Rebecca Motte, a widow who inherited her husband's extensive property in Charleston and plantation on the Congaree River, helped Francis Marion capture her plantation house which the British had fortified and named Fort Motte.

Cotton farming anchored the economy following the revolutionary war. A branch line of the South Carolina Railroad was built in the 1840s, and the town of Lewisville developed, and was later renamed St. Matthews. The railroad cut through the center of St. Matthews, hand-dug by contracted slave labor from local plantations, was a monumental infrastructure project for its' time. Cameron, Creston and Lone Star developed around a second railroad through the area.

Efforts to create Calhoun County failed in the state legislature in 1890 and again in 1896. However, a change in the state constitution enabled creation of new counties by super majority vote of in the proposed area for the new county, and in 1908 the referendum for the proposed Calhoun County was approved by a wide margin. Leaders of the movement to create the county from portions of Lexington and Orangeburg were merchant Ed Wimberly, Dr. T. H. Dreher and J. E. Wannamaker.

Local residents raised money for a new courthouse, and construction of the building commenced in 1913. St. Matthews and the surrounding county prospered initially, but as the boll weevil decimated cotton crops nationwide, the local economy declined. Many farmers lost their land as a result, and 100 years later Calhoun County's population remains lower than in 1920.

Agriculture still is a major economic driver in the county, and cotton remains an important crop, but the labor productivity gains brought by modern farming equipment and methods means that agriculture no longer requires the extensive labor for planting, cultivating and harvesting crops that was the case in the 1920s.

Large scale "solar farms" have established a foothold in the county, attracted by relatively low land costs and flat terrain. Covering hundreds to thousands of acres, these solar installations are a source of concern as county farmers, residents and elected officials struggle to balance the competing interests of agricultural heritage, clean energy production, tax base growth, and farm profitability.



One of three large scale solar farms in Calhoun County

Manufacturing increasingly supports the economy in Calhoun County. Taking advantage of Interstate 26, Calhoun County Industrial Park and Sandy Run Industrial Park have attracted new industry, including a Starbucks' coffee roasting facility, plastic manufacturer Zeus, and others

More extensive history of the county can be found on line at The South Carolina Encyclopedia (<https://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/calhoun-county>), and on the Calhoun County Museum website reference earlier.

National Register of Historic Places

South Carolina Department of Archives and History records, available on the department's website, have been used to document buildings and sites listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

NRHP listing does not protect buildings or sites from demolition, and does not impose limits or restrictions on private owners of listed properties. Owners enjoy the same rights after listing as they did before and they do not need permission to make alterations or additions to the listed property. NRHP listing does create a requirement that repairs and renovation of listed structures must follow the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* if any federal funds, grants or tax credits are involved in the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a NRHP listed site.

Local ordinances can create Historic Districts and provide protection from demolition or historically inappropriate modification or development of the historic properties.



The railroad depot and other surviving buildings in Lone Star have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

Table 4-1 lists the NRHP listed properties in Calhoun County, properties that have been determined eligible for NRHP listing, and a few other historic properties of note identified by Calhoun County Museum, which National Register eligibility has not been determined.

Map 4-1 shows the locations of historic and cultural resources in the County, except for those which have restricted address and location information to protect the resource. Church property boundaries and cemeteries have been identified from county tax records.

Map 4-2 shows detail of the sites in St. Matthews.

Table 4-2 lists other historic resources identified by Calhoun County Museum. These sites are not mapped, but each site has a link on the County Museum website with full descriptions of the history and significance of the site.

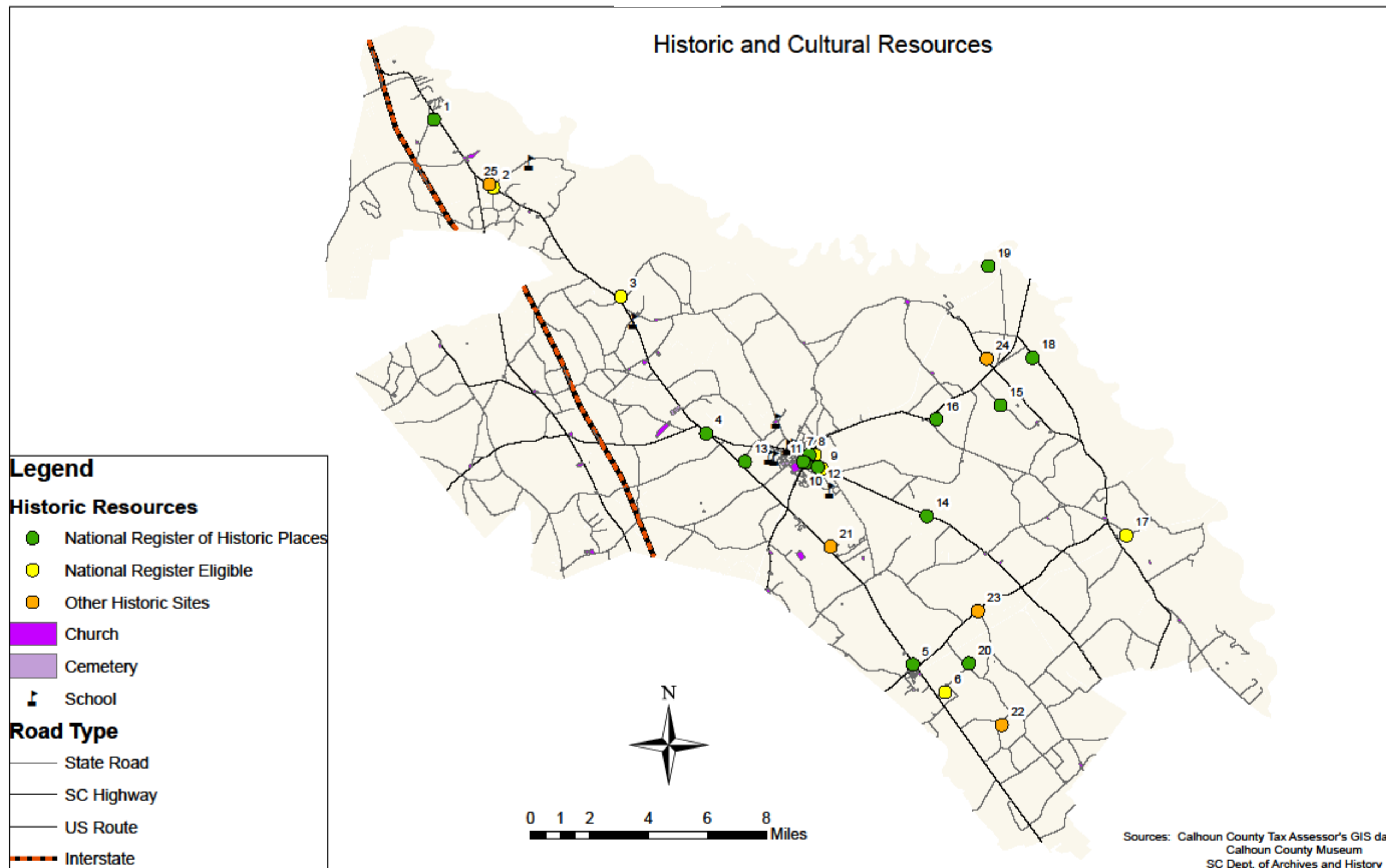
**Table 4-1
Historic Resources and National Register Status**

Number	Name of Historic Resource	NRHP Status
1	William Baker House	Listed
2	The Red Store	Eligible
3	Culclasure-Geiger Farm	Eligible
4	David Houser House	Listed
5	Ulmer-Summers House	Listed
6	Saint John Schools	Eligible
7	St. Matthews Armory and Garage	Eligible
8	Calhoun County Library	Listed
9	Guinyard Elementary School	Eligible
10	Col. J.A. Banks House	Listed
11	Calhoun County Courthouse	Listed
12	Col. Olin M. Dantzler House	Listed
13	Puritan Farm	Listed
14	Sterling Land Grant	Listed
15	Oakland Plantation	Listed
16	Midway Plantation	Listed
17	Lone Star Depot Complex	Eligible
18	Zante Plantation	Listed
19	Fort Motte Battlefield	Listed
20	Haigler House	Listed
21	Tabernacle Church Cemetery	Unknown
22	Jericho Methodist Church	Unknown
23	Shady Grove Methodist Church	Unknown
24	St. Matthews Episcopal Church	Unknown
25	Sandy Run Lutheran Church	Unknown
26	Lang Syne Plantation	Listed*
27	Buyck's Bluff Archaeological Site	Listed*
28	Prehistoric Indian Village	Listed*

* Location is restricted, not shown on map

Sources: SC Department of Archives and History
Calhoun County Museum

Map 4-1



Map 4-2

Historic and Cultural Resources
St. Matthews

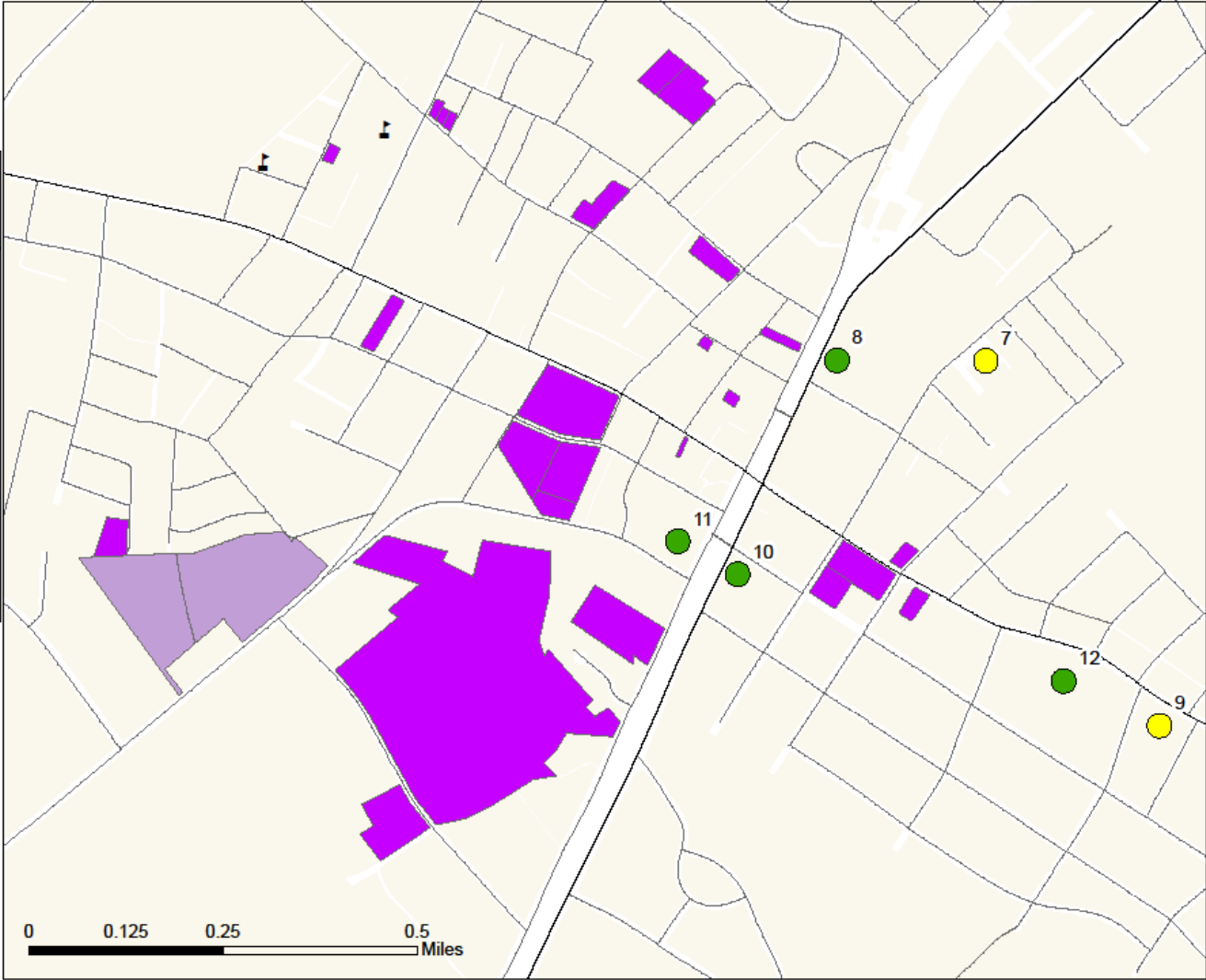
Legend

Historic Resources

- National Register of Historic Places
- National Register Eligible
- Other Historic Sites
- Church
- Cemetery
- ⚡ School

Road Type

- State Road
- SC Highway
- US Route
- Interstate



Sources: Calhoun County Tax Assessor's GIS data
Calhoun County Museum
SC Dept. of Archives and History

**Table 4-2
Other Historic Places and Sites**

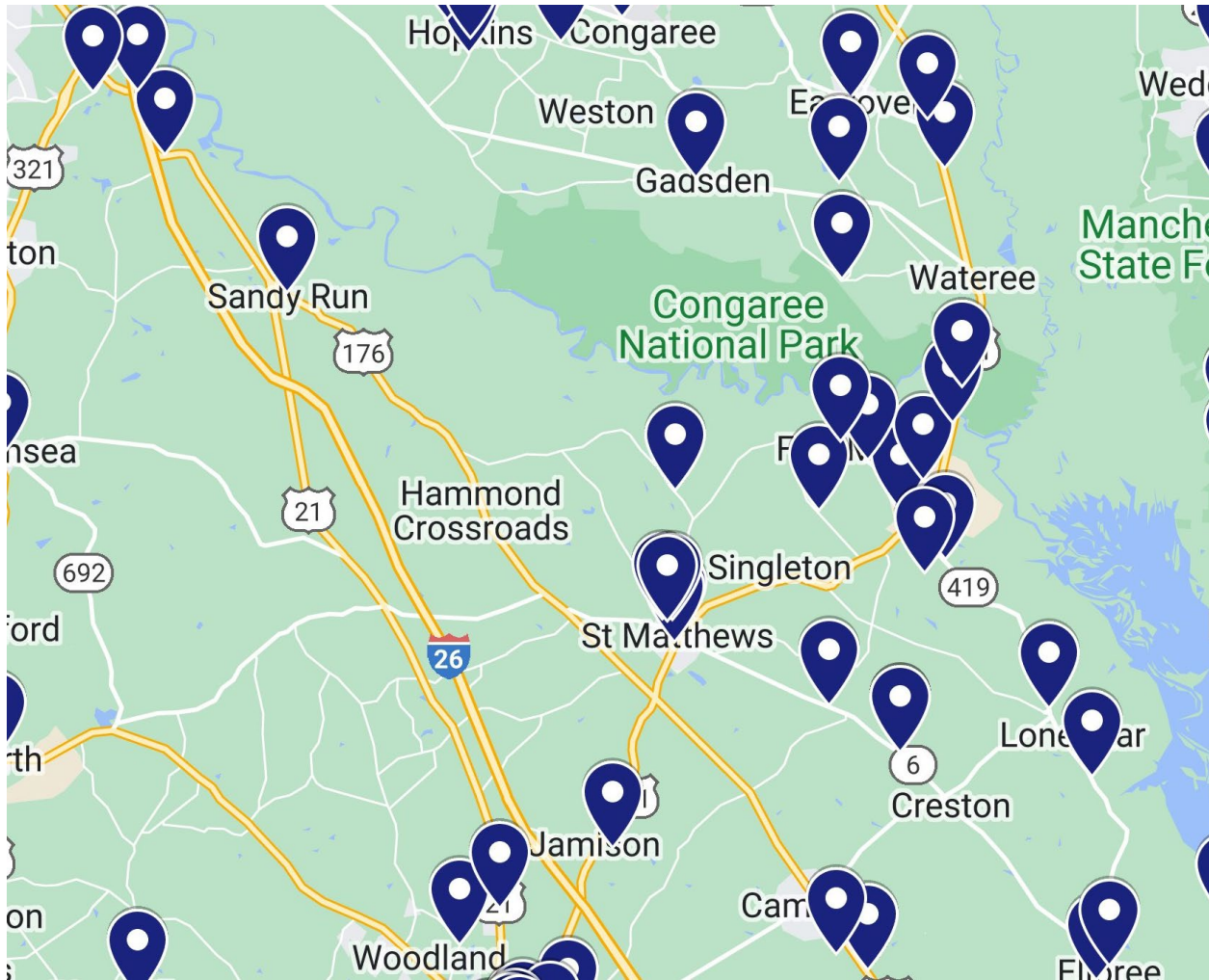
Aeolian Hill
Battle of Thomson's Plantation - February 23, 1781
Bellebroughton Plantation (Bell Broughton)
Belleville Plantation & Cemetery
Cain - Duensing House - Church St., St. Matthews, SC
Cave Hall
Edward Monts Rast Home
Edward Wimberly House - Dantzler Street, St. Matthews, SC
Fort Motte Town Site
Gillon's Retreat
Haig's Hill
Heatly Hall Cemetery
Hennon-Zimmerman House
James A. Dantzler House
Jericho Methodist Church
John Adam Treutlen Marker
McCord's Ferry Site
Raysor-Weeks Home; East Bridge Street, St. Matthews
Rich House
Sandy Run Lutheran Church
Shady Grove Methodist Church
St. Matthews Parish Episcopal Church
Tabernacle Church Burying Ground
The Clark House - Railroad Ave., St. Matthews, SC
The Red Store
Totness Town Site
Whetstone House

Source: Calhoun County Museum

Historical Markers

Twenty-three historic sites have been marked in Calhoun County by the South Carolina Department of Archives and History’s Historical Marker Program. These are summarized in Table 4-3 below. **Appendix 4A** at the end of this chapter contains the text of each of these markers. One additional marker on US Highway 601 in Richland County marks the Congaree River Ferries and is included for its’ relevance to Calhoun.

Map 4-2 Historical Marker Locations



Map Source: SCDAH Website

**Table 4-2
Historical Markers in Calhoun County**

Historic Marker Name	Location
Savany Hunt	U.S. Hwy. 21, 20 mi. N of St. Matthews (removed, stored at SCDAH)
Sandy Run Church	1927 Old State Rd. (U.S. Hwy. 176), just SE of Big Beaver Creek Rd.
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church	1887 Old Belleville Rd., St. Matthews vicinity
Fort Motte Rosenwald School Site	Fort Motte Rd., W of Spigner Rd., Fort Motte
St. John Good Samartian Lodge Hall and Cemetery	S.C. Hwy. 419, across from Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Fort Motte
British Outpost at Belleville Plantation	W side of U.S. Hwy. 601, 1/4 mi. S of Congaree River, Fort Motte vicinity
Lang Syne Cemetery	Near the intersection of Old Lang Syne Rd. and Adams Rd., Fort Motte
St. Matthew's Parish	1164 Fort Motte Rd., Fort Motte
Congaree River Ferries	U.S. Hwy. 601, near crossing of Bates Old River, Lower Richland
True Blue Cemetery	True Blue Rd. between S.C. Hwy. 601 and Fort Motte Rd.
Oakland Cemetery	New Bethany Rd., Fort Motte vicinity
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church	Fort Motte Rd. (S.C. Hwy. 419) near its intersection with Adams Rd.
First Land Granted in Calhoun County Area	S.C. Hwy. 6, about 4 mi. SE of St. Matthews
Shady Grove Church	Cameron Rd. (S.C. Hwy. 33), 3 mi. NE of Cameron
Pine Grove Evangelical Lutheran Church	2688 McCord's Ferry Rd., Lone Star
Good Hope Picnic	McCord's Ferry Rd. (S.C. Hwy. 267), between Lone Star and Ellore
Camp Harry E. Daniels	Camp Daniels Rd., 1/2 mi. E of State Rd. S-9-203, Ellore vicinity
Mt. Lebanon Cemetery	Mt. Lebanon Rd., just SW of Old State Rd. (U.S. Hwy. 176), near Cameron
Jericho Methodist Church Mile and a Half East	Intersection of U.S. Hwy. 176 and Jericho Rd., 2.5 mi. S of Cameron
St. Matthews C.T.S. Site	125 Herlong Ave., St. Matthews
West End Public Library	1708 Calhoun Rd., St. Matthews
John Ford High School	304 Agnes St., St. Matthews
Calhoun County	Calhoun County Courthouse, S. Railroad Ave., St. Matthews
Bethel A.M.E. Church and School	410 S. Railroad Ave., St. Matthews

Source: SC Department of Archives and History, Historical Markers Program

Places of Worship and Cemeteries



County tax records have been used to identify places of worship and cemeteries in the county. The listing of places of worship is believed to be essentially complete, but the list of cemeteries is incomplete, as many small family cemeteries exist but are not documented. Appendix 4B contains a list of churches.

Local Arts, Entertainment, Festivals and Recreation

Arts express the character and values of a community and provide opportunities to build friendships and comradery. Entertainment opportunities are an important element of the quality of life of a place, while festivals and recreation can build community pride and connections.

Encouraging and fostering arts and cultural interaction helps local businesses thrive, keeps residents engaged and active in their community, and helps build a vibrant community image that attracts investment.

Arts

- Calhoun County Museum and Cultural Center, St. Matthews
- Calhoun Players, Cameron

Community Resources

- Calhoun County Library, downtown St. Matthews
- Calhoun County Museum and Cultural Center, St. Matthews
- John Ford Community Center, St. Matthews

Recreational Resources

- Calhoun Hills Golf Complex, St. Matthews
- County Recreation Complex, St. Matthews
- Congaree Heritage Preserve, on the Congaree River near Fort Motte
- Lake Marion

Festivals

- Purple Martin Festival, downtown St. Matthews
- Sandy Run Chili Cook Off, Sandy Run
- Sunny Plain Historic Tractor Pull, Sunny Plain

Regional Resources

While outside of the county's boundaries, the regional resources listed here are important to and used by Calhoun residents and visitors. These regional destinations are within a one-hour drive of Calhoun County, and can play a role in leveraging local resources to support and promote economic development and tourism in Calhoun County.

- Santee State Park, on Lake Marion near Town of Santee
- Sesquicentennial State Park, northeast Richland County
- Congaree National Park, lower Richland County.
- Orangeburg Cultural Council, City of Orangeburg
- Riverbanks Zoo, City of Columbia
- Columbia Museum of Art, City of Columbia
- South Carolina State Museum, City of Columbia
- Three Rivers Greenway, Cities of Cayce, West Columbia, and Columbia
- Congaree River Blueway Trail, Congaree River from downtown Columbia to US 601

Leveraging Cultural Resources for Community Development

Tourism, entertainment, parks, and outdoor recreation are often elements of community economic development strategies, and almost always are a component of downtown revitalization. Calhoun has opportunities to use its' historic and cultural resources more effectively to support local businesses and improve tax base. The county's rich agricultural heritage, historic sites, and proximity to a National Park could support development of a tourism economy built around these resources. Congaree National Park now attracts over 200,000 visitors annually. Attracting some of those visitors with agri-tourism, historic tourism, and eco-tourism opportunities could help revitalize downtowns and rural villages, attract new investment, and build a stronger sense of community. Farmer's markets, historic driving tour routes, river paddling trips, and similar efforts could provide a good first step toward development of the economic potential of these resources.

Arts express the character of a community and provide opportunities to build friendships and comradery. The arts, entertainment, festivals and recreation nearly always play a key role in revitalizing communities and commercial districts that have experienced declines in commerce and population.

Community investment in parks, recreational trails, and access to recreational waters frequently leads to new investment in retail shops, cafes, restaurants, and other tourism-supported businesses nearby. Examples can be found in South Carolina towns such as Travelers Rest, where park and trail investments have spurred a remarkable revitalization of the town's business district, and in Cayce and West Columbia, where proximity to the Three Rivers Greenway has spurred strong economic growth, supported new business development, and attracted new residents.

Calhoun County's investment in a new park in St. Matthews is a good step toward improving quality of life in the county, building community connections and pride, and supporting the future economic vitality of the area. Strong communities are built around positive interaction among their residents, and parks are a key to encouraging and sustaining community spirit.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Final goals, objectives and strategies related Historic and Cultural Resources will be developed based on input from the County Planning Commission and from comments received in public meetings that will be held during the development of the comprehensive plan. Below are draft Goals and Objectives based on analysis of the data in this chapter and the input received to date.

Goal HC1. Develop Historic, Cultural and recreational tourism opportunities in the county.

- Objective HC1.1** **Encourage and develop community farmers markets, both private and public-sponsored.**
- Strategy: work with the Town of St. Matthews to develop a monthly downtown event with music, food trucks, and farmers market booths
- Objective HC1.2** **Improve Congaree River access to support the Congaree River Blueway Trail from Columbia to the US 601 Bridge.**
- Strategy: improve facilities and security at the existing US 601 landing and seek opportunities to develop a secure, dawn to dusk landing at a midway point between Columbia and US 601.
- Objective HC1.3** **Attract Congaree National Park visitors to visit historic sites in Calhoun County.**
- Strategy: develop an historic tourism brochure for the county and provide these at Congaree National Park.
- Strategy: develop historic tour routes in the county and support these with wayfinding signage along the routes.

Goal HC2. Promote local visual and performing arts and artists.

Objective HC2.1 Develop affordable spaces to showcase local artists, musicians, and theatrical performances.

Strategy: identify existing publicly-owned land in downtown St. Matthews or another appropriate location to improve with a simple stage and electric power, and seek grant funding or other sources for initial improvements.

Strategy: identify a space in St. Matthews suitable for a “pop-up” art gallery to showcase local artists, from school students to professional artists.

Strategy: work with Calhoun County Museum and Cultural Center to enhance and increase the number of art installations and events at the Cultural Center.

Strategy: collaborate with Calhoun Players to develop an outdoor theatrical production to support this objective.

Goal HC3. Protect and enhance historic and cultural resources.

Objective HC3.1 Work with private property owners to preserve and improve historic sites and properties.

Strategy: identify sites that can be nominated for National Register of Historic Places.

Strategy: identify preservation options for Fort Motte Battlefield that are acceptable to the current owner.

Strategy: assist owners to seek grant funds through SC Department of Archives and History and other agencies for improvements to existing historic properties.