

CHAPTER 10

Community Investment Priorities

Effective, focused, strategic investment by the County is critical to achieve the goals and vision of this plan. County resources alone will not be sufficient to meet all of the investment priorities identified here, but can be very effective if used to leverage grant funding, other existing federal and state funding, and private sector investment.

Based on the goals and objectives identified in all of the prior elements of this plan, investment of the County's capital resources should be focused in four functional areas and geographically targeted in areas where needs and opportunities are greatest. The Community Investment **functional areas** are:

- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Community Vitality and Community Image
- Tourism, Hospitality and Retail Development

These functional areas are listed in a general order of priority. Continued and sustained economic development investments will help build the tax base needed to provide funds for investments in the other three areas, which are also listed in general order of importance.

Five **geographic areas** are identified as focus areas for community investment:

- I-26 Corridor and Sandy Run
- US 601 Corridor
- Lake Marion Area
- I-26 Corridor South
- Town of St. Matthews

The boundaries of these areas are intentionally generalized, but are drawn to contain areas where infrastructure investment needs have been identified in previous sections of this plan, where growth and development is currently occurring (I-26 Sandy Run and Lake Marion), where economic development can be facilitated with public investment (US 601 and I-26 South), or where public investment can help revitalize developed areas (St. Matthews).

In addition to the five focused geographic areas, a number of investment priorities have been identified that are not geographically specific, but have county-wide benefits and will not necessarily be implemented in one of the geographic focus areas.

Table 10-1 is a matrix that presents the recommended community investment priorities by functional area and geographic area.

Map 10-1 identifies the key geographic areas where investment needs are greatest -- based on existing infrastructure deficiencies and economic challenges – and where public investment is most likely to advance economic development and support other goals identified during the planning process.

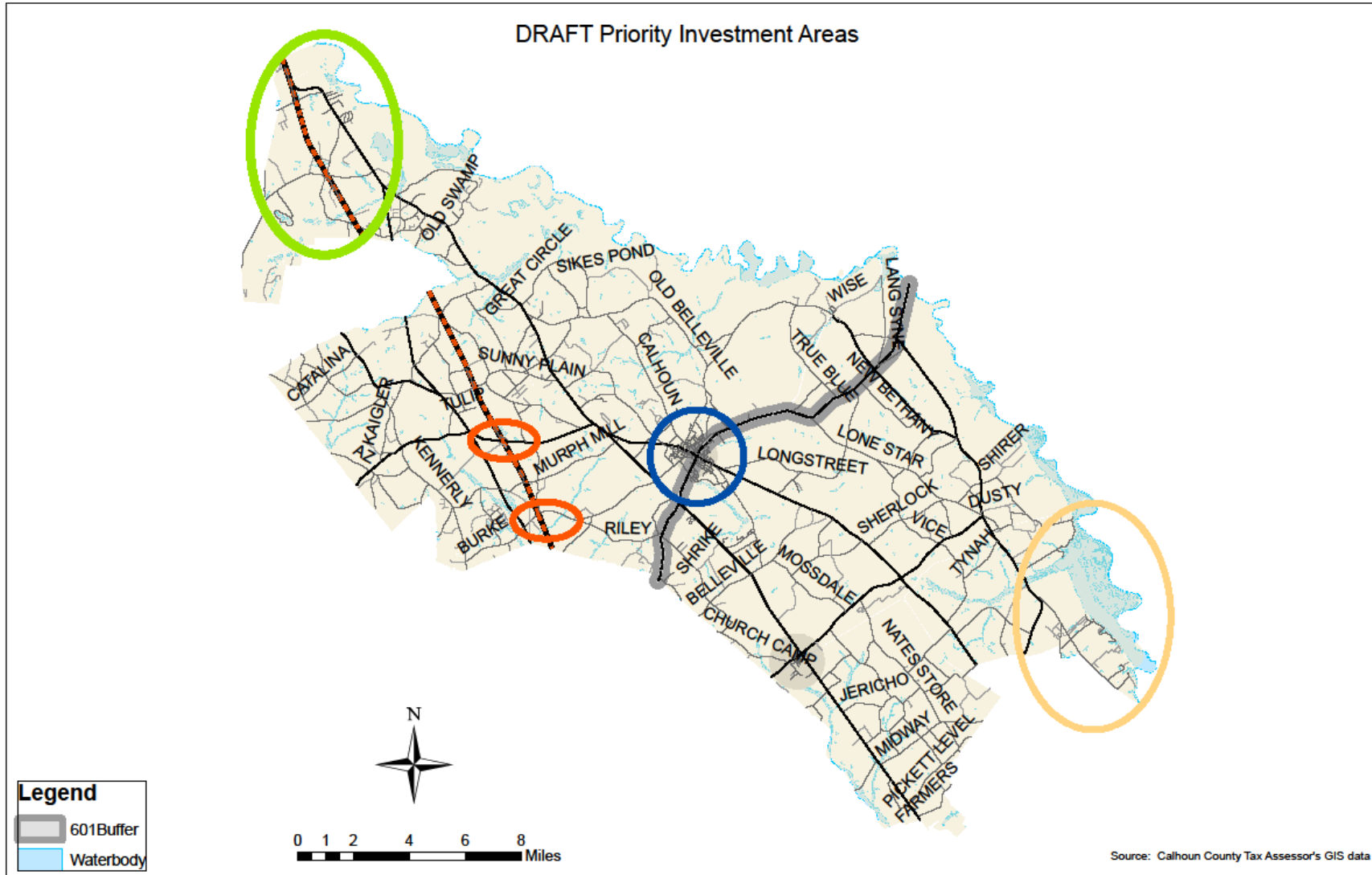
The investment priorities identified in this chapter are not fully developed and scoped projects, but are instead intended to define categories in which specific projects will be developed as this plan is implemented. For example, the investment priority “Purple Martin Festival Facilities” in the Tourism, Hospitality and Retail functional area in St. Matthews might lead to development of a specific investment project to provide better facilities for festival vendors and food trucks, such as improved electric service in the vendor and food truck staging area.

The community investment priorities identified here are not developed in sufficient detail to begin to establish cost estimates. However, order of magnitude ranges of costs are approximated in Table 10-2 below, which lists the projects from Table 10-1 in each functional area and groups them by order of magnitude costs. Investments that require primarily ongoing operational costs for staffing or maintenance are listed as “not determined.” For example, adding full time fire fighters will have an ongoing annual budget impact that will depend on the number and compensation of staff. Costs for other items, such as a vehicle replacement plan for public safety services, are beyond the scope of work for this plan, but should be determined and scheduled in a five-year Capital Improvement Plan which will be an important tool for the county to develop and adopt as part of the implementation of this plan.

In Table 10-2, low-cost investments are those that are likely to have an initial one-time cost less than \$20,000 and have little impact on on-going operating expenses for the county. Moderate cost projects will range from \$20,000 to \$100,000 and may have on-going impact on annual operating costs for the county. High-cost projects are those that are likely to be well above \$100,000 and will likely also create additional on-going operating costs.

**Table 10-1
Community Investment Priorities**

		Community Investment Functional Areas			
		Economic Development	Public Safety	Community Vitality and Community Image	Tourism, Hospitality and Retail Development
Geographic Focus Areas	I-26 Corridor/ Sandy Run	Industrial infrastructure improvements	Evacuation route improvements/connectivity	Streetscape at I-26 Interchange	
		Recruit target Industries			
	US 601 Corridor	Expand sewer service area near St. Matthews		Landscaping at gateways	Continue to improve Congaree River access
		Work to increase sewer capacity in St. Matthews			
	Lake Marion Area	Infrastructure improvements to support growth	Reduce EMS response times		Improve lake access
	I-26 Corridor South	Extend water and sewer service to interchanges		Landscaping improvements at interchanges	Restaurant and hotel recruitment
	Town of St. Matthews	Infrastructure improvements to support growth		Façade repair program with grants and incentives	Continue to improve County Museum and Cultural Center
		Recruit assisted living centers		Streetscape project	Purple Martin Festival facilities
		Enable new housing		Arts promotion	Monthly music or arts events
	County-wide	Public school improvements	Full time firefighters	Wayfinding Signs	Develop farm-to-table events
		Regional cooperation on water and sewer facilities	Emergency Operation Center	Recruit and improve senior housing options	Coordinate promotion of the County with Congaree Nat. Pk.
		Workforce training OC Tech	Vehicle Replacement plan	Gateway improvements	Develop historic driving tours



**Table 10-2
Order of Magnitude Costs of Community Investments**

		Community Investment Functional Areas			
		Economic Development	Public Safety	Community Vitality and Community Image	Tourism and Retail Development
Order of Magnitude Cost	Low Cost, under \$20,000	Recruit assisted living centers		Recruit and improve senior housing options [4]	Continue to improve Congaree River access [4]
		Recruit target Industries		Arts promotion	Develop farm-to-table events
		Enable new housing [1]		Wayfinding Signs	Purple Martin Festival facilities
				Coordinate promotion of with Congaree Nat. Pk.	Monthly music or arts events
				Develop historic driving tours	Restaurant, hotel recruitment
	Moderate Cost, \$20,000 to \$100,000	Expand sewer service area near St. Matthews [1]		Façade repair program with grants and incentives [4]	Continue to improve County Museum and Cultural Center
				Streetscape projects [3]	
				Landscaping at gateways [3]	
	High Cost, over \$100,000	Infrastructure improvements to support growth [1]	Evacuation route improvements/connectivity [3] [4]		
		Extend water and sewer service to interchanges [1]	Vehicle Replacement plan		
		Work to increase sewer capacity in St. Matthews [4]			
		Industrial infrastructure improvements [2]			
	Cost Not Determined	Public school improvements	Full time firefighters		Improve lake access [4]
		Regional cooperation on water and sewer facilities [3]	Reduce EMS response times		
		Workforce training OC Tech	Emergency Operation Ctr [4]		

- [1] Opportunities for private sector participation and funding
- [2] Economic development grant funding and coordination with industry recruitment
- [3] SCDOT funding and/or CTC funding
- [4] State and federal agency grant opportunities

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Final goals, objectives and strategies related to Priority Investment 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 PI1. Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of public investments.

Objective PI 1.1 Leverage County funds to the maximum extent possible to match state and federal grants and programs.

Strategy: identify and apply for grant funding sources that are consistent with the investment priorities identified.

Strategy: Develop and/or coordinate grant applications and matching funds with towns and adjacent counties when mutually beneficial.

Objective PI 1.2 Coordinate investments with towns and neighboring counties to avoid duplication of efforts.

Strategy: continue to consult and coordinate with LSCOG and individual local governments regarding key infrastructure investments and plans.