



Population growth directly impacts the physical growth and land use of a community. Population increases are accompanied by increased demands for housing, education, health care, human services, water and sewer, recreation, and other key community services. In turn, population characteristics and the prevalence of special populations shape the scope and delivery of these essential community services and infrastructure.

The Population Element provides the foundation for the other elements of the City of Camden Comprehensive Plan through the detailed assessment of Census data along with other social indicators. The Element provides an overview and analysis of key demographic aspects of the City including: historical growth trends and population projections for the City, municipalities, and surrounding region; household income and family status; educational levels; race, gender, and age characteristics; the prevalence of special populations; and related factors that can impact future growth. The Population Element provides the context for understanding the existing and future needs of the City of Camden with respect to housing, employment and job growth, education, community services and infrastructure, and future land development.

2.1. Demographic Trends

Demographic data is primarily provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition to conducting a decennial Census, the Census Bureau also conducts an annual nationwide *American Community Survey* (ACS), collecting a wide range of demographic, social, economic, and housing data. The data is compiled into one-year and five-year estimates, with the latter compilation considered to be the most accurate data depiction. While the main function of the decennial Census is to provide



population counts for Congressional apportionment, the primary purpose of the ACS is to measure the changing social and economic characteristics of the U.S. population. Data from the most recent five-year ACS is referenced where data from the 2020 Census is not yet available.

The City of Camden is located in the Midlands region of South Carolina along the Interstate 20 corridor that links the Columbia Metro region to Atlanta, Georgia to the west and Florence and the Interstate-95 corridor to the east. Camden is the Kershaw County seat and the largest of the County’s three municipalities in terms of land area at 12.12 square miles and in population with 7,788 residents. The City ranks 48th largest among South Carolina’s 265 municipalities in population, with a population density of 643 persons per square mile (Table 2-1).

Table 2-1. Size and Density of Kershaw County and Municipalities

JURISDICTION	AREA (SQUARE MILES)	2020 POPULATION	PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE
Kershaw County	740.31	65,403	88.35
Bethune	1.11	315	283.78
Camden	12.12	7,788	642.57
Elgin	1.10	1,634	1,485.45

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

Kershaw County ranks 14th largest among the State’s 46 counties in area at nearly 740 square miles and 21st in terms of population. Nearly 14 square miles of the total area is comprised of water, with Lake Wateree and the Wateree River forming the County’s northwestern border.

Comparative data on population growth in the City of Camden, Kershaw County, and South Carolina since 2000 shows that the City posted an overall 16.6% population gain over the past two decades, boosted by a 13.9% increase from 2010 to 2020 (Table 2-2). By comparison, Kershaw County grew by 24.2% from 2000 to 2020, slightly behind the statewide population growth rate of 27.6%. While the County must rely primarily on net migration and births for population growth, its municipalities can increase population and potential for new growth through annexation. Figure 2-1 illustrates the population trends for the City, County, and the State from 1990 to 2020.

Table 2-2. Population Change by Decade, 2000 to 2020

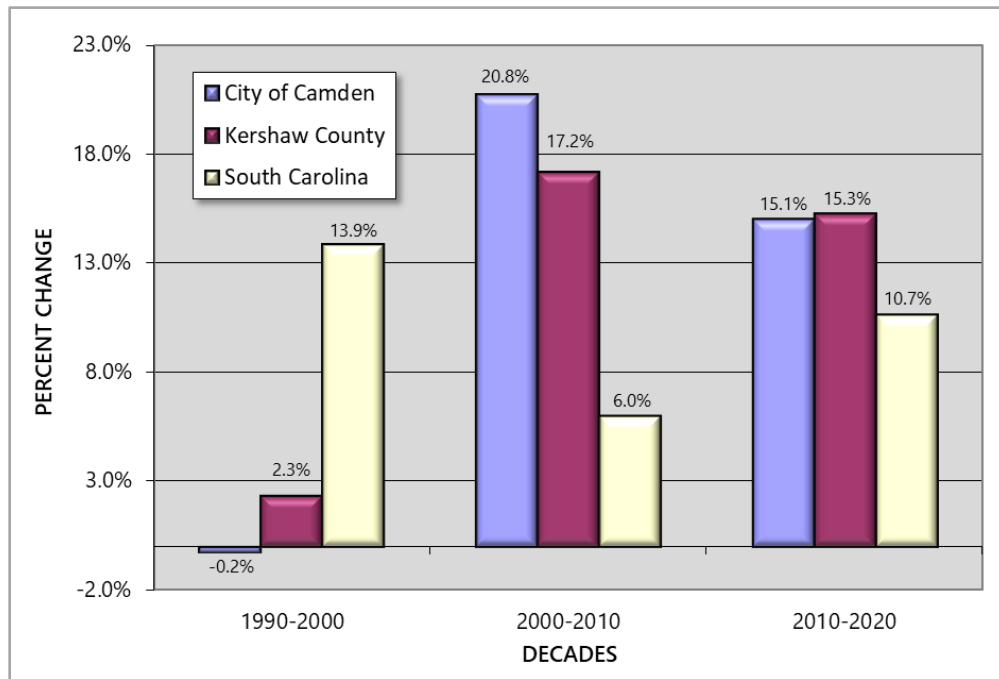
YEAR	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	TOTAL	% CHANGE*	TOTAL	% CHANGE*	TOTAL	% CHANGE*
2000	6,682	---	52,647	---	4,012,012	---
2010	6,838	2.3%	61,697	17.2%	4,625,364	15.3%
2020	7,788	13.9%	65,403	6.0%	5,118,425	10.7%
CHANGE 2000-2020	1,106	16.6%	12,756	24.2%	1,106,413	27.6%

* Percentage change from previous decade.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census; S.C. Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, S.C. Statistical Abstract, 2016



Figure 2-1. Population Change, 1990 to 2020



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census; S.C. Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, S.C. Statistical Abstract, 2016

The City of Camden grew by 1,106 residents from 2000 to 2020 for a 16.6% growth rate. The City also annexed 45 properties totaling 1,290 acres from 2000 through 2020. Based on City staff estimates, approximately one-third of Camden population growth from 2000 can be attributed to annexations. Much of the annexed land remained undeveloped at the end of the decade. Although the City of Camden outpaced the Town of Bethune in population growth from 2000 to 2020, it was eclipsed by major growth in the Town of Elgin at nearly 103% over the same period (Table 2-3).

Table 2-3. Population Change for Kershaw County Municipalities

JURISDICTION	2000	% CHANGE 2000-2010	2010	% CHANGE 2010-2020	2020	CHANGE 2000-2020	
						#	%
Kershaw County	52,647	17.2%	61,697	6.0%	65,403	12,756	24.2%
Bethune	352	-5.1%	334	-5.7%	315	-37	-10.5%
Camden	6,682	2.3%	6,838	13.9%	7,788	1,106	16.6%
Elgin	806	62.7%	1,311	24.6%	1,634	828	102.7%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Census

An analysis of population growth by Census block group illustrates patterns of population change throughout the City. As illustrated in Map 2-1, several block groups also encompass sizable areas outside of the City. Some block groups from the 2020 Census are much different than in the 2010 Census, including changed boundaries (9705.00-1 and 9708.00-3) and totally renumbered block groups (9708.00). For these reasons, direct comparison to the 2000 to 2010 population growth by Census block group included in the City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028 is not possible. However, growth continues in the northern and southeastern areas of the City, while areas in the mostly built-out central area of the City continue to lose population.



As provided in Table 2-4 and illustrated in Map 2-1, four of the block groups that include portions of the City of Camden experienced a population loss from 2010 to 2020. Included are areas in the central, northeastern, and southwestern portions of the City. The largest population increase in the City of Camden occurred in Census block group 9705-3, at a rate of 33.7% and an increase of 295 people. Higher rates of growth also occurred in block groups 9705.00-5 at 15.9% (213 people) and 9708.00-3 at 11.2% (187 people). The population data was provided through the 2010 and 2020 Census, which though largely considered to be accurate has been found to include some miscounts. For this reason, the population data will undergo careful vetting in the 2037 Comprehensive Plan ten-year update to ensure accuracy based on staff knowledge and permitting data.

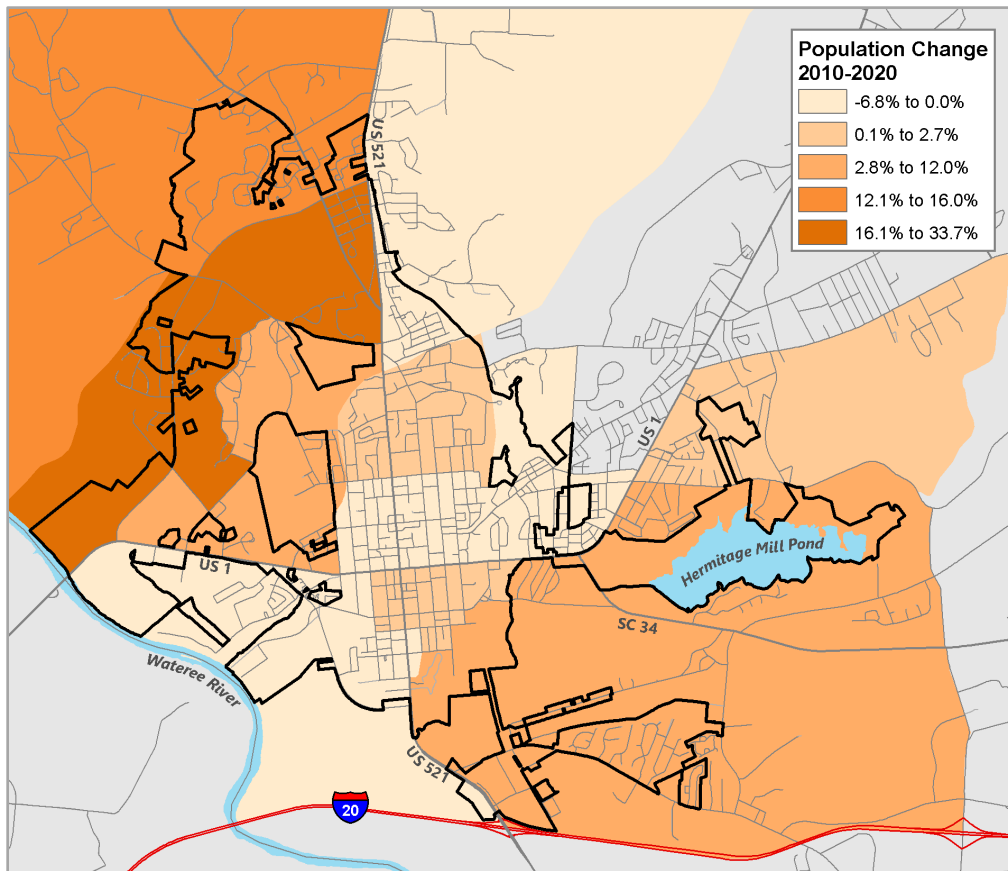
Table 2-4. Population Change by Census Block Groups (BG)

TRACTS	2010		2020		CHANGE 2010-2020	
	BLOCK GROUPS	POPULATION	BLOCK GROUPS	POPULATION	#	%
9705.00	1 (split)	1,095	1	1,070	-25	-2.3%
	2	1,327	2	1,333	6	0.5%
	3	876	3	1,171	295	33.7%
	4	936	4	961	25	2.7%
	5	1,339	5	1,552	213	15.9%
9706.01	5	1,020	1, 4 (partial)	1,023	3	0.3%
	6	963	2	1,048	85	8.8%
9708.00	2	857	1	815	-42	-4.9%
	4	497	2	504	7	1.4%
	9708.00 - BG 5 9707.00 - BGs 1 & 2 (partial)	1,669	3	1,856	187	11.2%
	6	1,332	4	1,242	-90	-6.8%
	1	1,267	5	1,886	-39	-2.0%
	3	658				
Totals		13,836		14,461	625	4.5%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census



Map 2-1. Population Change by Census Block Groups* (BG)



* Based on 2010 Census Block Groups
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census

2.2. Demographic Outlook

The percentage of the aging population with the financial resources to relocate will increase as more of the “baby boomer” generation enters retirement. The Midlands region is emerging as an attractive destination for both in-state and out-of-state retirees. South Carolina ranked sixth among states in population growth from 2020 to 2021 (*U.S. Census Bureau, December 2021*). *Wallethub.com* ranked South Carolina twelfth highest among the “Best States to Retire” in 2022, with a ranking of third in affordability. Census data continues to indicate that retirees are continuing their move from the North to the South but are also moving from Florida northward. The frequency and severity of natural disasters, such as recent hurricanes affecting popular retirement destinations along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, combined with rising property taxes, housing costs, and sharp increases in coastal insurance premiums have led many retirees to seek less expensive, less vulnerable communities further inland that offer many of the same amenities.

This trend is augmented by a new wave of domestic migration in response to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic. An increasing number of residents from Northern and Western states are relocating to the Southeast. South Carolina ranked among the top three destination states in 2021, behind only Vermont and South Dakota and leading all southeastern states including Florida, Alabama, and Tennessee (*United Van Lines National Movers Study, 2022*). Factors such as the



ability to work remotely and the desire for less densely populated communities are fueling this trend. The City of Camden is especially attractive to retirees seeking convenient regional access through the Interstate, cultural venues, abundant historic resources, and the natural amenities offered by Lake Wateree, the Wateree River and local parks, as well as unique events and facilities for equestrians provided by the South Carolina Equine Park. For many of the same reasons, families and individuals looking for an historic, small city setting with a passion for horses or an alternative to the more densely developed and congested areas of the Midlands may find the City of Camden to be an appealing option.

As noted in the City’s 2028 Comprehensive Plan, Camden’s growth rate reversed from a population loss in the 1990s to a modest gain of 2.3% (156 residents) from 2000 to 2010. In the most recent decade ending in 2020, the City gained 950 residents with a 13.9% growth rate that was more than six times that of the previous decade.

Annual estimates and five-year projections of population and other demographic data are produced by the Environics Analytics Company. The Company’s Claritas Pop Facts® data combines proprietary methodologies with Census and American Community Survey data to estimate current population and five-year projections for a range of geographies including counties and municipalities. The current edition provides 2023 estimates and 2028 projections for counties, municipalities, and states based on the 2010 Census.

Assuming consistent growth through the coming decade, City population projections through 2033 can be made based on these five-year growth projections. Claritas Pop Facts® estimates indicate that the population of the City of Camden is 7,902 in 2023, with a projected 2.6% increase to 8,318 residents by 2033 (Table 2-5). Projected ten-year growth rates are slightly higher for Kershaw County at 3.2% and the State at 4.3%.

Table 2-5. Population Estimates and Projections

JURISDICTION	2010 ² CENSUS	2023 ³ ESTIMATES	2028 ³ PROJECTIONS	2033 ¹ PROJECTION	PROJECTED CHANGE 2023-2033	
					#	%
Camden	6,815	7,902	8,110	8,318	208	2.6%
Kershaw County	61,694	66,619	68,767	70,915	2,148	3.2%
South Carolina	4,625,391	5,256,977	5,484,131	5,711,285	227,154	4.3%

¹Population projections may be impacted by new and future residential developments
Sources: ²U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; ³Environics Analytics, Claritas Pop Facts®, 2023

As detailed in the Housing Element, several new residential subdivisions are planned or underway in the City of Camden that could substantially increase available housing, and therefore population, in the coming years. A total increase of up to 409 homes citywide could result if these three subdivisions are fully developed as planned. Approximately 284 additional housing units are also anticipated in three existing subdivisions that have not reached build out. However, these housing unit totals may change, or construction may be delayed as plans are amended in response to a range of variables such as market conditions, labor and materials availability, mortgage rates, funding, infrastructure, and permitting.



While not all the residents of these potential future housing units will be new to the County, it is possible that given an average household size of 2.24 persons in the City (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS*), the population of the City could increase by as many as 1,552 persons in association with these new developments.

Given multiple factors including proximity to major transportation routes, natural and cultural resources, and other resources and amenities available in more urbanized areas, as well as past development trends, it is anticipated that much of the future residential development and growth in the City of Camden will occur through the annexation of existing residential areas to the north and east of the City and future residential development to the north of the City.

2.3. Demographic Composition

Consideration of population data relating to age, race, gender, educational attainment, income, and household composition is essential to the planning process. This information is requisite for siting new services or facilities such as parks, schools, emergency service centers, transit routes, health care facilities, and senior centers.

2.3.1. Age and Gender

The large number of baby-boomers, combined with increased life expectancy, has contributed to an aging population nationwide. The City of Camden population mirrors this trend to an even greater extent than the County and State. More than one in five City residents are aged 65 or older – higher than individuals in this age group in Kershaw County and statewide at 18.4% and 17.7%, respectively. Seniors aged 85 and older comprise 3.8% of the City's population – more than twice the percentage in the County and the State. The percentage of younger baby boomers aged 45-to-64 years old residing in the City is also slightly higher at 28.1% than that of the County (27.3%) and the State (26%). This group also represents the largest age segment of the City population. More than 19% of the City's population is comprised of children under the age of 18 years, while children under age five make up 6.6% of the City population.



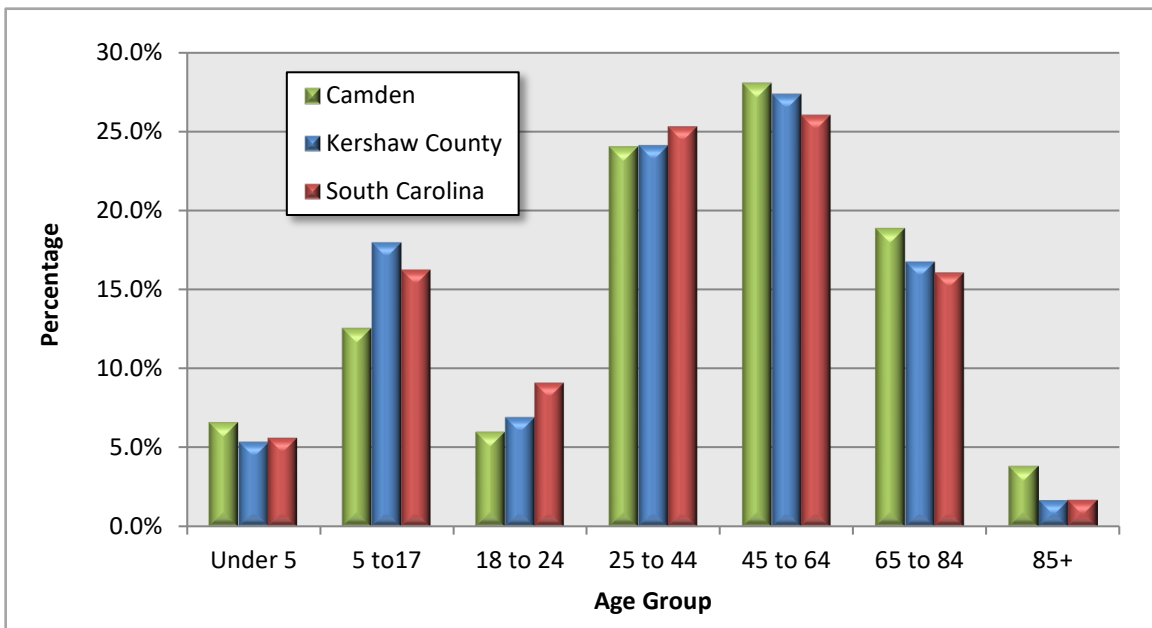
Table 2-6. Population by Age Group

AGE GROUPS	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Total Population	7,666	100.0%	64,989	100.0%	5,078,903	100.0%
Under 5 yrs.	507	6.6%	3,444	5.3%	285,472	5.6%
5 to 17 yrs.	963	12.6%	11,673	18.0%	824,331	16.2%
18 to 24 yrs.	460	6.0%	4,486	6.9%	461,929	9.1%
25 to 44 yrs.	1,843	24.0%	15,653	24.1%	1,284,043	25.3%
45 to 64 yrs.	2,151	28.1%	17,765	27.3%	1,321,631	26.0%
65 to 84 yrs.	1,448	18.9%	10,877	16.7%	815,448	16.1%
85+ yrs.	294	3.8%	1,091	1.7%	86,049	1.7%
Total under 18 yrs.	1,470	19.2%	15,117	23.3%	1,109,803	21.9%
Total 18+ yrs.	6,196	80.8%	49,872	76.7%	3,969,100	78.1%
Total 65+ yrs.	1,742	22.7%	11,968	18.4%	901,497	17.7%
Median Age	45.8 years		41.1 years		39.8 years	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Figure 2-2 compares the age distribution of City, County, and State residents. The largest population segments of each jurisdiction are within the 25-to-44 and 45-to-64 year age groups. However, the City of Camden has a comparatively larger percentage of residents aged 65-to-84. The City has a much lower percentage of residents in the 5-to-17 year age group.

Table 2-2. Comparative Age Distribution



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Geographically, the City’s youngest median ages ranging from 35.7 to 38.2 years are found in the block groups in the southern area of the City (Table 2-7 and Map 2-2). Block groups in the northwest area of the City posted the oldest median ages at 62.7 and 67.3 years.

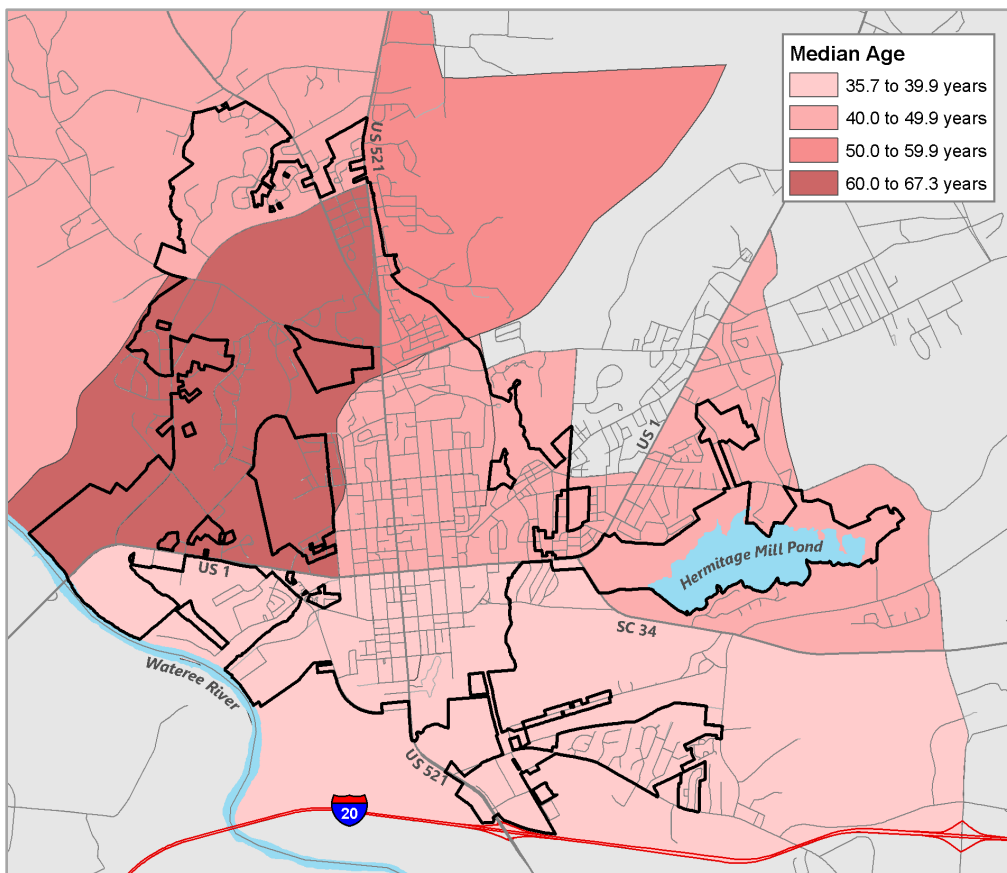


Table 2-7. Median Age by Census Block Group

BLOCK GROUPS	MEDIAN AGE (YEARS)
9705.00-1	56.4
9705.00-2	42.5
9705.00-3	67.3
9705.00-4	62.7
9705.00-5	40.5
9706.01-1	40.4
9706.01-2	41.2
9708.00-1	45.1
9708.00-2	36.9
9708.00-3	38.2
9708.00-4	35.7
9708.00-5	42.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Map 2-2. Median Age by Block Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

The age and gender composition of City residents can be a significant factor in local planning. An aging population requires a host of special services such as health care, specialized housing, and transportation. The percentage of female residents in Camden at 56.5% is higher than that of the



County and the State at 51% and 51.3%, respectively. The ratio of female-to-male residents in the City increases substantially in the 65 and over age group where only 34.3% are male. Among residents aged 85 and older, only 5.4% are male (Table 2-8). Younger mortality rates among men are the leading causes of the disparity between males and females aged 65 and older.

Table 2-8. Age and Gender of City Residents

AGE GROUPS	TOTAL PERSONS	MALE		FEMALE	
		#	%	#	%
Total Population	7,666	3,338	43.5%	4,328	56.5%
Under 18 yrs.	1,470	676	46.0%	794	54.0%
18 to 24 yrs.	460	197	42.8%	263	57.2%
25 to 44 yrs.	1,843	925	50.2%	918	49.8%
45 to 64 years	2,151	943	43.8%	1,208	56.2%
65 to 84 years	1,448	581	40.1%	867	59.9%
85+ years	294	16	5.4%	278	94.6%
Total 18+ years	6,196	2,662	43.0%	3,534	57.0%
Total 65+ years	1,742	597	34.3%	1,145	65.7%
Median Age	45.8 years	41.4 years		50.2 years	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Median age in Camden at 45.8 years is significantly higher than that of the County (41.1 years) and the State (39.8 years). While median age for males is slightly higher at 41.4 years than median ages for males countywide and statewide, the median age for Camden females at 50.2 years is 7.7 years older than Kershaw County females and 9.2 years older than females throughout the State.

Table 2-9. Median Age by Gender

GENDER	CAMDEN	KERSHAW COUNTY	SOUTH CAROLINA
All Persons	45.8	41.1	39.8
Male	41.4	40.3	38.5
Female	50.2	42.5	41.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

2.3.2. Racial and Ethnic Composition

The City of Camden population includes a mix of races and ethnicities. Nearly 64% of residents are white, 32.9% are black, and 3.3% are of other races including Pacific Islander and persons of two or more races (Table 2-10). The City’s percentage of white residents at 63.8% is slightly below that of the County at 69.5%, the State at 65.7%, and the Nation at 68.2%. Camden’s black population at 32.9% comprises a higher percentage than Kershaw County (23.4%) and South Carolina (26.2%) and is more than twice that of the Nation at only 12.6%. However, the percentage of persons of other races in Camden is comparatively low at only 3.3%.

Residents of Hispanic origin are counted within the racial categories of white, black, and other races, as well as shown separately as an ethnic subcategory (Table 2-10). An individual is considered to be of Latino or Hispanic origin if the person is of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The percentage



of Hispanic residents in the City at 4% is lower than that of the County at 4.9% and the State at 6.0% and less than one-fourth the national percentage of 18.4%.

Table 2-10. Racial Composition

RACE	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA		UNITED STATES	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	7,666	100.0%	64,989	100.0%	5,078,903	100.0%	329,725,481	100.0%
White	4,891	63.8%	45,162	69.5%	3,334,961	65.7%	224,789,109	68.2%
Black	2,525	32.9%	15,189	23.4%	1,328,691	26.2%	41,393,012	12.6%
Other Races*	250	3.3%	4,638	7.1%	415,251	8.2%	63,543,360	19.3%
Hispanic**	304	4.0%	3,204	4.9%	306,230	6.0%	60,806,969	18.4%

*Includes two or more races

**Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Change in the racial and ethnic composition of the City in the decades since 2000 has been significant. The percentage of the Camden population that is white increased by only 2.3% in the 2000s, but rose by 13.9% during the most recent decade. Conversely, the proportion of black residents decreased by 3.3% from 2000 to 2010 and by 0.4% from 2010 to 2020. The most substantial change was in persons of other races, which grew by 32.1% (185 persons) in in the 2000s and more than tripled to 599 persons by the 2020 Census. The increase in Hispanic residents was even more significant, nearly doubling to 166 persons from 2000 to 2010 (88.6% growth) and doubling again to 338 persons from 2010 to 2020 (103.6% growth).

Table 2-11. Racial Composition in Camden in Recent Decades

RACE	2000		2010		2020		% CHANGE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	2000-2010	2010-2020
Total	6,682	100.0%	6,838	100.0%	7,788	100.0%	2.3%	13.9%
White	4,057	60.7%	4,250	62.2%	4,796	61.6%	4.8%	12.8%
Black	2,485	37.2%	2,403	35.1%	2,393	30.7%	-3.3%	-0.4%
Other Races*	140	2.1%	185	2.7%	599	7.7%	32.1%	223.8%
Hispanic**	88	1.3%	166	2.4%	338	4.3%	88.6%	103.6%

*Includes two or more races

**Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Census

As provided in Table 2-12 and illustrated in Map 2-3, the areas of the City with the highest minority populations are the southwestern portions that extend to the Wateree River and Interstate 20. Two of these Census blocks have more than 92% of persons identifying as black or of other races. The area with the highest white population is the block group that includes the Hermitage Mill Pond in the eastern area of the City, with only 6% of residents identifying as black or of other races. The most diverse population is found in block group 9708.00-5, where half of the residents are black or of other races and more than one in four are Hispanic.

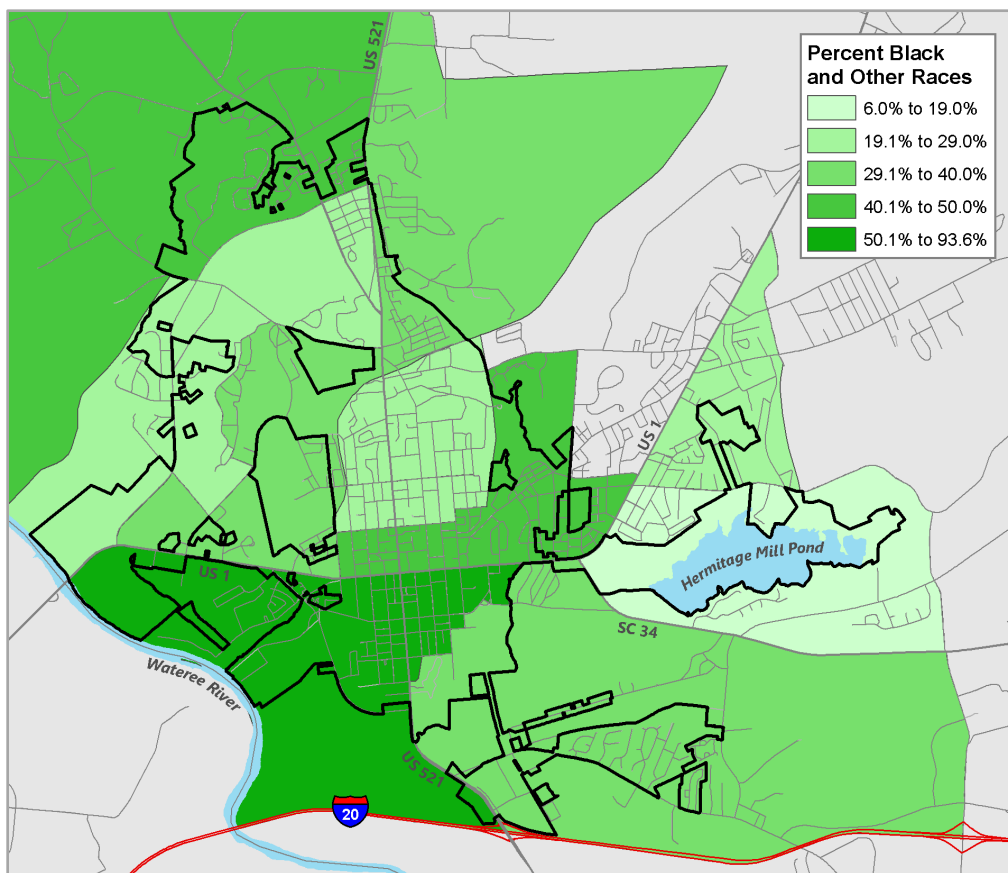


Table 2-12. Racial Composition by Census Block Group

BLOCK GROUPS	TOTAL	% BLACK AND OTHER RACES	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER RACES		HISPANIC*	
			#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
9705.00-1	663	33.2%	443	66.8%	205	30.9%	15	2.3%	100	15.1%
9705.00-2	2,059	23.1%	1,583	76.9%	476	23.1%	0	0.0%	141	6.8%
9705.00-3	849	19.2%	686	80.8%	163	19.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
9705.00-4	421	37.3%	264	62.7%	156	37.1%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%
9705.00-5	1,187	43.3%	674	56.8%	320	27.0%	193	16.3%	157	13.2%
9706.01-1	811	26.6%	595	73.4%	216	26.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
9706.01-2	957	6.0%	900	94.0%	20	2.1%	37	3.9%	0	0.0%
9708.00-1	1,132	28.7%	807	71.3%	316	27.9%	9	0.8%	0	0.0%
9708.00-2	704	92.3%	54	7.7%	541	76.8%	109	15.5%	0	0.0%
9708.00-3	1,155	37.3%	724	62.7%	419	36.3%	12	1.0%	0	0.0%
9708.00-4	720	93.6%	46	6.4%	630	87.5%	44	6.1%	0	0.0%
9708.00-5	2,782	50.0%	1,391	50.0%	703	25.3%	688	24.7%	719	25.8%

*Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Map 2-3. Racial Diversity by Census Block Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

In 2020, 223 residents (3.1%) of the City of Camden were born in another country – lower than the percentage of foreign-born residents statewide at 5.2% (Table 2-13). The number and



percentage of foreign-born City residents increased slightly from only 2.7% in 2010. Nearly two-thirds of the City's population are life-long residents of the State – higher than the almost 59% of residents statewide who were born in South Carolina. More than 35% of Camden residents native to the United States were born in a state other than South Carolina, much lower than the 40.2% statewide who are not native South Carolinians.

Table 2-13. Place of Birth

PLACE OF BIRTH	CAMDEN				SOUTH CAROLINA			
	2010		2020		2010		2020	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	6,805	100.0%	7,185	100.0%	4,511,428	100.0%	5,091,517	100.0%
United States Native	6,623	97.3%	6,962	96.9%	4,299,169	95.3%	4,828,314	94.8%
<i>South Carolina</i>	4,434	66.9%	4,404	63.3%	2,678,326	62.3%	2,831,619	58.6%
<i>Different State</i>	2,148	32.4%	2,451	35.2%	1,578,086	36.7%	1,940,413	40.2%
<i>Outside of US*</i>	41	0.6%	107	1.5%	42,757	1.0%	56,282	1.2%
Foreign Born	182	2.7%	223	3.1%	212,259	4.7%	263,203	5.2%

* Born outside of the United States but entitled to U.S. citizenship

Sources: U.S. Census, 2010 and 2020 ACS

Limited English proficiency can pose a significant barrier for residents seeking housing, education, employment, and financial and legal services. Nearly 400 Camden residents, or 5.5% of the population over the age of five, speak a language other than English at home. This is lower than the percentage for the State at 7.5% (Table 2-14). Residents speaking a language other than English includes only those who sometimes or always speak a language other than English at home. It does not include those who speak a language other than English only at school or work or those who are limited to only a few expressions of the language. Most people who speak another language at home also speak English. Ninety-six percent of City residents (380 persons) who speak another language at home speak Spanish, and of those, more than one-in-three speak English less than "very well" – an indication of possible language barriers for these City residents.

Table 2-14. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English

RACE	CAMDEN		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%
Population 5 Years and Over	7,159	100.0%	4,793,431	100.0%
Speaks English Only	6,763	94.5%	4,433,280	92.5%
Other Language Than English at Home	396	5.5%	360,151	7.5%
Speaks Spanish	380	96.0%	226,398	62.9%
<i>Speaks English Less Than "Very Well"</i>	138	36.3%	92,955	41.1%
Speaks Other Indo-European Language	16	4.0%	72,393	20.1%
<i>Speak English Less Than "Very Well"</i>	0	0.0%	16,516	22.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

2.3.3. Household and Family Characteristics

Household and family status are key indicators of social and economic conditions within the community. Households include all related and unrelated persons who occupy a housing unit.



There are 3,388 households in the City of Camden, with an average household size of 2.24 persons. This is lower than the County and State average household sizes of 2.6 and 2.51 persons, respectively. More than a quarter (28%) of all City households include a child under the age of 18 and over a third (38.6%) include at least one person aged 65 or older (Table 2-15). Nearly 40% of Camden households consist of an individual living alone, with almost half of these single-person householders aged 65 years or older. The percentage of seniors living alone in the City is much higher than that of the County and State at 39.1 and 40.1%, respectively.

More than half (56.6%) of Camden households consist of a family – defined as two or more persons living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. There are 1,919 families in the City, with an average family size of 3.06 – slightly lower than the Kershaw County average of 3.2 persons per family and the State average of 3.1. Nearly two-thirds (64.9%) of Camden family households consist of a married couple and 43.7% of these families include children younger than 18 years.

The prevalence of single-parent families in a community can be an indicator of an increased need for support services such as childcare, transportation, flexible and accessible employment opportunities, and affordable housing options. Among Camden families, 314 (16.4%) are headed by a single parent and include at least one child under the age of 18 years. At less than 17%, single parent families in Camden comprise less than half of the percentage of single-parent families countywide and statewide. One in four City families are headed by females with no husband present and more than one-third of these (38.9%) include a child under 18 years of age.

Table 2-15. Household Type and Size

HOUSEHOLDS (HH) BY TYPE	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total households	3,388	100.0%	24,901	100.0%	1,976,447	100.0%
Householder living alone	1,337	39.5%	6,873	27.6%	571,877	28.9%
<i>Householder 65 years and over*</i>	656	49.1%	2,685	39.1%	229,182	40.1%
Households with children < 18 yrs.	949	28.0%	7,130	28.6%	571,926	28.9%
Households with persons 65+ yrs.	1,309	38.6%	8,243	33.1%	634,521	32.1%
Average household size (persons)	2.24		2.6		2.51	
Family households (families)	1,919	56.6%	17,209	69.1%	1,292,857	65.4%
With own children < 18 yrs.	858	44.7%	6,192	36.0%	495,444	38.3%
Married-couple family	1,246	64.9%	12,605	73.2%	933,016	72.2%
<i>With own children < 18 yrs.*</i>	544	43.7%*	4,146	32.9%	318,512	34.1%
Single parent with children < 18 yrs.	314	16.4%	6,873	39.9%	571,877	44.2%
Female householder, no husband	493	25.7%	3,370	19.6%	272,573	21.1%
<i>With own children < 18 yrs.*</i>	192	38.9%	1,626	48.2%	139,179	51.1%
Average family size (persons)	3.06		3.2		3.1	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Only 1.6% of the City of Camden’s residents live in group quarters. The Census divides group quarters into two categories: 1) *institutional*, including correctional facilities, nursing homes, and mental hospitals; and 2) *non-institutional*, including college dormitories, military barracks, group homes, missions, and shelters. Of the 127 City residents who were counted in group quarters,



more than half (71 persons) are in institutional housing and 56 persons are in non-institutional quarters. Persons in non-institutional housing are characterized as housed in facilities other than college or military housing. All of the City’s institutionalized population are in nursing facilities.

Table 2-16. Population in Group Quarters

	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Population	7,788	100.0%	65,403	100.0%	5,118,425	100.0%
In Group Quarters	127	1.6%	374	0.6%	138,603	2.7%
<i>Institutionalized Population</i>	71	55.9%	252	67.4%	56,578	40.8%
<i>Non-institutionalized Population</i>	56	44.1%	122	32.6%	82,025	59.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

2.3.4. Educational Attainment

Educational attainment can have a significant impact on the current and future earnings potential of individuals and families. Higher educational attainment levels can also have a positive financial impact on the broader community in the form of lower criminal justice and public safety costs, decreased social support payments, lower health care costs, increased tax revenues, and stronger civic engagement. The educational attainment of Camden residents will continue to be important, as many new and existing job openings require some form of postsecondary education or training.

As shown in Table 2-17, several educational attainment indicators measurably improved in the City of between 2011 and 2021. The percentage of persons with no high school diploma dropped from 13% in 2011 to 7.4% in 2021, while the percentage of persons who hold a bachelor’s degree rose from 17.6% to 22.9%. The percentage of adults with some college, but no degree, also increased from 18.8% to 25.7% since 2011.

Table 2-17. Educational Attainment, Persons 18+ Years

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	CITY OF CAMDEN				SOUTH CAROLINA			
	2011		2021		2011		2021	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Population 18+ Years	5,162	100.0%	6,196	100.0%	3,500,728	100.0%	3,969,100	100.0%
No High School Diploma	672	13.0%	459	7.4%	584,467	16.7%	450,966	11.4%
High School Graduate*	1,345	26.1%	1,433	23.1%	1,085,052	31.0%	1,163,096	29.3%
Some College, No Degree	968	18.8%	1,591	25.7%	790,936	22.6%	888,481	22.4%
Associate degree	461	8.9%	511	8.2%	270,659	7.7%	372,162	9.4%
Bachelor's Degree	907	17.6%	1,418	22.9%	507,533	14.5%	699,167	17.6%
Graduate/Professional Degree	809	15.7%	784	12.7%	262,081	7.5%	395,228	10.0%

*Includes equivalency

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 and 2017-2021 ACS

Nearly 93% of Camden residents aged 18 and older are high school graduates (including GED recipients). This percentage of graduates is higher than the 88.6% of residents statewide who have earned a high school diploma. The City also exceeds the percentage of State residents with postsecondary degrees, with greater than one-in-three Camden residents (35.5%) holding a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to the 27.6% of South Carolinians that hold a



postsecondary degree. However, the 8.2% of Camden residents who hold an associate degree is slightly lower than the State at 9.4%.

2.3.5. Income and Poverty

Income is a measure of financial prosperity in a community. Comparisons with state data reveal how well a community’s income measures are in line with those in the County and statewide. Median family income in Camden at \$77,948 is more than \$5,000 higher than the statewide median income and \$10,375 higher than the median in Kershaw County (Table 2-18). However, Camden’s median household income of \$44,573 is significantly lower than the County at \$56,449 and State at \$58,234.

Table 2-18. Median Household and Family Income

JURISDICTION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME
Camden	\$44,573	\$77,948
Kershaw County	\$56,449	\$67,573
South Carolina	\$58,234	\$72,899

Source: US Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Per capita income for Camden residents exceeds that of Kershaw County and South Carolina (Table 2-19). The 2021 per capita income for City residents is \$34,992, considerably higher than the County (\$27,730) and slightly higher than the State (\$32,823), while below the national per capita of \$37,638. Income growth for local residents exceeded the County from 2011 to 2021 with a 32.6% increase in per capita income. However, income growth trailed State and national rates over the most recent decade.

Table 2-19. Per Capita Income

JURISDICTION	2011	2021	% CHANGE 2011-2021
Camden	\$26,385	\$34,992	32.6%
Kershaw County	\$21,865	\$27,730	26.8%
South Carolina	\$23,854	\$32,823	37.6%
United States	\$27,915	\$37,638	34.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 and 2017-2021 ACS

Table 2-20 compares per capita income for racial and ethnic groups. Per capita income for Camden’s white residents at \$43,645 is more than double that of the City’s black residents and \$17,732 higher than per capita income for Hispanic residents. Per capita income for the City’s white residents is \$12,662 higher than for residents countywide and \$5,356 higher than residents statewide. This is also true for Camden’s Hispanic residents, where per capita income at \$25,913 is \$12,333 higher than Kershaw County Hispanic residents and \$5,558 higher than South Carolina Hispanic residents. Conversely, per capita income for the City’s black residents at \$17,838 is \$3,760 lower than County residents and \$4,135 lower than residents statewide.



Table 2-20. Per Capita Income by Race and Ethnicity

JURISDICTION	ALL PERSONS	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
Camden	\$34,992	\$43,645	\$17,838	\$25,913
Kershaw County	\$27,730	\$30,983	\$21,598	\$13,580
South Carolina	\$32,823	\$38,289	\$21,973	\$20,355

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

While median household income is not available in the most current ACS for the households where the age of the householder is between 45-to-64 years for the City of Camden, an examination of data from the two previous ACS five-year estimates indicates that incomes are likely highest for households headed by adults aged 25-to-44 years at \$51,552. Incomes are lowest for Camden households headed by seniors aged 65 and older. This differs from Kershaw County and the State, where the lowest median household incomes are found among the youngest residents under 25 years of age and the highest median incomes are reported for householders between 45 and 64 years of age. Median household income for Camden’s youngest householders at \$50,536 is significantly higher than that of the County and the State, while those of all other reported age groups are lower.

Table 2-21. Median Household Income by Age of Householder

AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER	CAMDEN	KERSHAW COUNTY	SOUTH CAROLINA
All Households	\$44,573	\$56,449	\$58,234
Under 25 years	\$50,536	\$38,955	\$32,671
25 to 44 years	\$51,552	\$58,624	\$64,281
45 to 64 years	---*	\$63,824	\$67,842
65 years and over	\$43,590	\$45,430	\$46,289

* Data not available

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

An examination of income by Census block group reveals that the highest per capita income of \$49,446 is found in block group 9706.01-2 that includes the Heritage Mill Pond area. This area is followed by block groups 9705.00-3 that includes some of the northwestern area of the City at \$44,353 and 9705.00-2 in the north central area of the City at \$41,084 (Table 2-22 and Map 2-4). Block groups that include some of the central areas of the City have the lowest per capita incomes, ranging from \$16,578 to \$19,742.



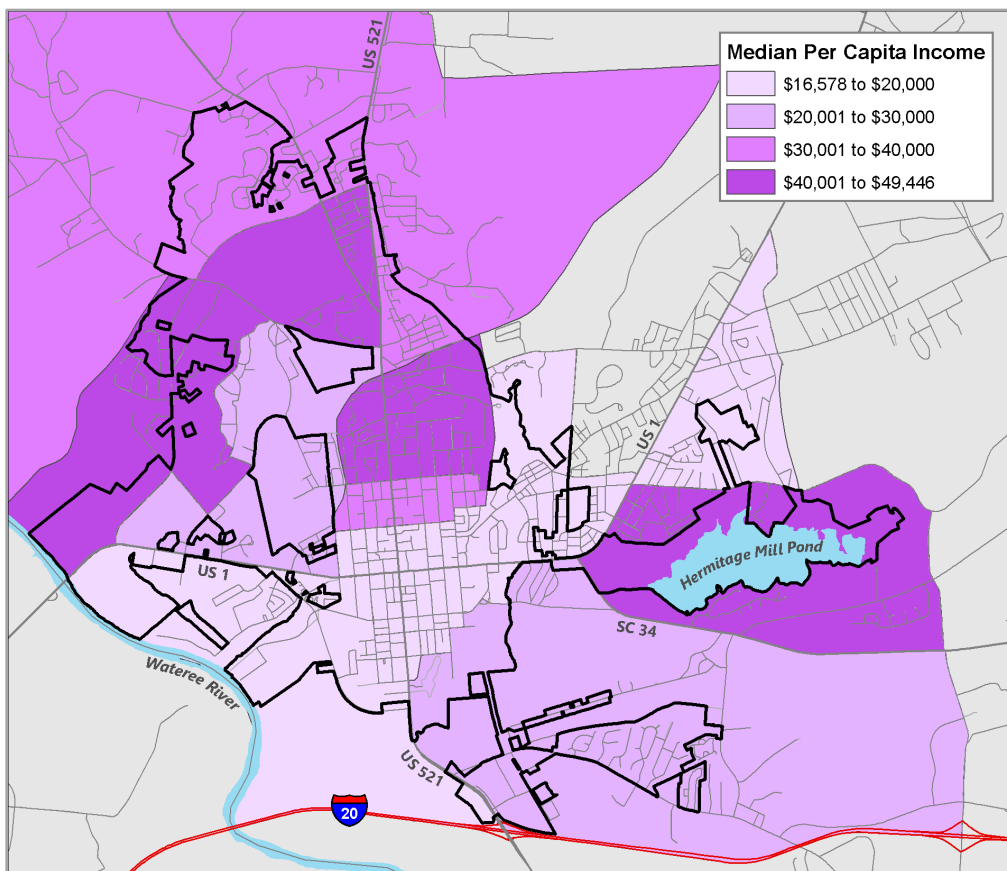
Table 2-22. Per Capita Income by Block Group

BLOCK GROUPS	PER CAPITA INCOME
9705.00-1	\$35,902
9705.00-2	\$41,084
9705.00-3	\$44,353
9705.00-4	\$27,096
9705.00-5	\$36,406
9706.01-1	\$16,578
9706.01-2	\$49,446
9708.00-1	\$39,677
9708.00-2	\$17,250
9708.00-3	\$28,774
9708.00-4	\$16,976
9708.00-5	\$19,742

* Data not available

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Map 2-4. Per Capita Income by Block Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Poverty is defined as having insufficient resources to meet basic living expenses, including the costs of food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Fifteen percent of Camden families, 12.2% of families in Kershaw County, and 10.4% of families statewide live in poverty (Table



2-23). Of family households living in poverty in the City, three in four (75.2%) include related children under 18 years of age. Nearly 83% of Camden families living in poverty are headed by a single parent. Almost 86% of these single-parent families include children under 18 years of age.

Table 2-23. Poverty Status by Family Type

FAMILY TYPE	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Families	1,919	100.0%	17,209	100.0%	1,292,857	100.0%
Family Households in Poverty	290	15.1%	2,099	12.2%	134,181	10.4%
<i>with related children < 18 years</i>	218	75.2%	1,424	67.8%	95,222	71.0%
Married Couple Family	50	17.2%	846	40.3%	43,237	32.2%
<i>with related children < 18 years</i>	12	24.0%	522	61.7%	20,002	46.3%
Single Parent Household, no spouse	240	82.8%	1,253	59.7%	90,944	67.8%
<i>with related children < 18 years</i>	206	85.8%	902	72.0%	75,220	82.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Data collected by the Kershaw County School District also indicates a significant number of low-income households in the City. The District reported that 60% of its students in the 2021-2022 school year live in poverty, based on S.C. Department of Education criteria that includes participation/enrollment in programs such as Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and if the child is fostered, homeless, or a migrant (*S.C. Department of Education, 2022 Poverty Index*). Among the schools that serve students who live in the City of Camden, 54.6% of Camden Elementary students, 63.1% of Camden Middle School students, and 58.8% of students at Camden High School meet poverty thresholds. Statewide, 60.6% of students live in poverty.

Nearly one in six City of Camden residents (16.4%) live in poverty, higher than the percentage of County and State residents in poverty at 14.7% and 14.5%, respectively (Table 2-24). Nearly 21% of Camden residents living in poverty are children under the age of 18, much lower than the percentages countywide at 32.5% and statewide at 31.5%. Seniors aged 65 and older comprise nearly one-third (402 residents) of the City’s impoverished population, more than double the percentages in Kershaw County at only 13.3% and in South Carolina at 12.4%. Income is a leading concern for elderly residents that touches almost every facet of life from housing and health care to food and medications.



Table 2-24. Poverty Status by Age

AGE	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Population*	7,591	100.0%	64,770	100.0%	4,946,116	100.0%
Individuals Living in Poverty	1,244	16.4%	9,553	14.7%	718,345	14.5%
Under 5 years	0	0.0%	759	7.9%	64,251	8.9%
5 to 17 years	259	20.8%	2,350	24.6%	162,440	22.6%
18 to 34 years	166	13.3%	1,820	19.1%	179,004	24.9%
35 to 64 years	417	33.5%	3,356	35.1%	223,746	31.1%
65+ years	402	32.3%	1,268	13.3%	88,904	12.4%

* Population for whom poverty status is determined
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Nearly half (48.6% or 604) of the 1,244 residents in the City of Camden living in poverty are white. This is slightly lower than the percentage of impoverished residents in Kershaw County at 49.8%, but higher than the 46.9% of residents statewide living in poverty who are white (Table 2-25). Nearly 51% (631) of the City’s citizens in poverty are black, a higher percentage than the 35.9% of residents living in poverty countywide and 42.4% statewide who are black. Slightly over 11% of Camden residents in poverty are Hispanic. Statewide, Hispanics comprise less than 10% of the total population living in poverty. compared to 13% in Kershaw County.

Table 2-25. Individuals with Income below Poverty by Race and Ethnicity

RACE	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Population*	7,591	100.0%	64,770	100.0%	4,946,116	100.0%
Individuals Living in Poverty	1,244	16.4%	9,553	14.7%	718,345	14.5%
White	604	48.6%	4,761	49.8%	337,048	46.9%
Black	631	50.7%	3,430	35.9%	304,656	42.4%
Other Races	9	0.7%	1,362	14.3%	76,641	10.7%
Hispanic**	141	11.3%	1,239	13.0%	68,654	9.6%

* Population for whom poverty is determined
**Hispanic is an ethnic category in the Census, therefore persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

The percentage of Camden residents living in poverty by Census block group is illustrated on Map 2-5. Block group 9706-01-1 that includes a small eastern area of the City has the higher poverty percentage, with more than half of individuals (52.2%) living in poverty. Higher poverty percentages ranging from 25.1% to 37.4% are also found in the central and southwestern areas of the City. Areas with low poverty percentages ranging from 1.9% to 9% are in the central portion of the City, in block groups that span much of the northern area of the City, and in the block group that surrounds the Hermitage Mill Pond.



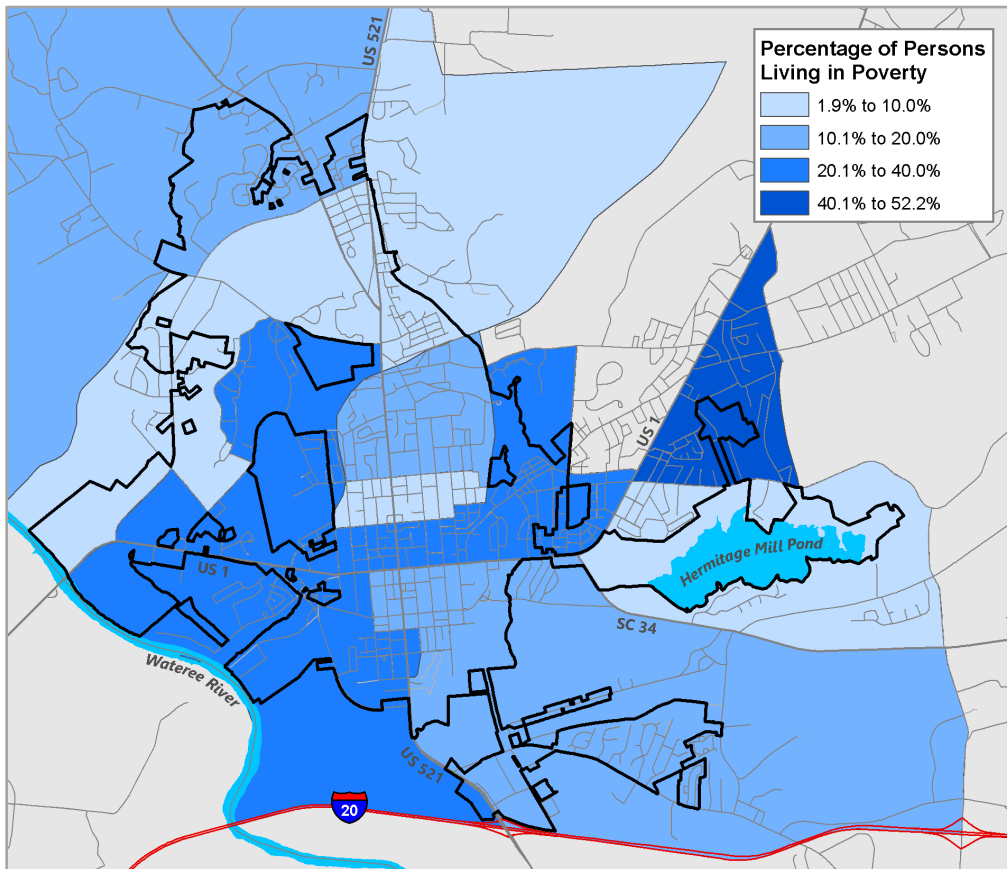
Table 2-26. Percentage of Individuals* with Income below Poverty by Block Group

BLOCK GROUPS	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS*	INDIVIDUALS WITH INCOME BELOW POVERTY	
		#	%
9705.00-1	663	32	4.8%
9705.00-2	2,059	392	19.0%
9705.00-3	849	16	1.9%
9705.00-4	301	93	30.9%
9705.00-5	1,187	151	12.7%
9706.01-1	811	423	52.2%
9706.01-2	957	86	9.0%
9708.00-1	1,132	97	8.6%
9708.00-2	704	89	12.6%
9708.00-3	1,155	129	11.2%
9708.00-4	720	181	25.1%
9708.00-5	2,707	1,012	37.4%

* Population for whom poverty status is determined

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS

Map 2-5. Percentage of Individuals with Income below Poverty by Block Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 ACS



The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low and moderate income (LMI) households as those with incomes below 80% of median family income (MFI). More than 40% of Camden residents (2,755 persons) are considered to be living in LMI households (Table 2-27). This is slightly higher than the 39.7% of persons living in LMI households countywide, but lower than the statewide percentage of 43%.

Table 2-27. Individuals with Low and Moderate Incomes

JURISDICTION	TOTAL LMI	PERCENT LMI
Camden	2,755	40.3%
Kershaw County	24,740	39.7%
South Carolina	1,949,674	43.0%

Source: U.S. HUD Exchange, FY 2021 LMI Summary Data

Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data is a special tabulation of household and income data commissioned by HUD for use by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grantees in the development of local consolidated plans. This data includes valuable information on household income for low-income residents. Table 2-28 depicts income as a percentage of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) for the City of Camden, Kershaw County, and South Carolina. Nearly half of Camden households (45.7%) are considered to be LMI. More than one in five (21.9%) are considered to have *extremely low incomes* (0% to 30% of MFI). This is higher than the percentages of households countywide at 14.2% and statewide at 13.3% in this lowest income category. Nearly 9% of City households are considered to have *low incomes* (31% to 50% of MFI), lower than the 10.5% of households in Kershaw County and the 12.3% in the State in this income group. Fifteen percent of households in Camden have *moderate incomes* (51% to 80% of MFI), lower than the 16.3% of County households and the 17.6% of South Carolina households in this income category.

Table 2-28. Low and Moderate Income Households

INCOME CATEGORIES	CAMDEN		KERSHAW COUNTY		SOUTH CAROLINA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Households	2,905	100.0%	24,980	100.0%	1,921,860	100.0%
Extremely Low Income (0-30% HAMFI)	635	21.9%	3,540	14.2%	255,640	13.3%
Low Income (31-50% HAMFI)	255	8.8%	2,615	10.5%	235,505	12.3%
Moderate Income (51-80% HAMFI)	435	15.0%	4,065	16.3%	338,720	17.6%
Other Income (> 80% HAMFI)	1,580	54.4%	14,760	59.1%	1,091,995	56.8%

Source: U.S. HUD, HUD User, CHAS Database, 2022

2.4. Special Populations

Special populations can experience a greater need for community services than the public as a whole. Data reveals that special populations in the City of Camden include residents with low incomes, the elderly, persons with disabilities and chronic health conditions, and single-parent families. Consideration of these residents and their needs should be addressed through each Comprehensive Plan element.



2.4.1. Elderly

The needs of an aging population can increase overall demand for services such as adult day care, home meal delivery, transportation services, in-home respite services, assisted living, home repair and modification, long-term care, and focused recreational and fitness programs. Nearly 23% of Camden residents (1,742 persons) are aged 65 and older (2021 ACS). More than one-in-three City households include at least one person of retirement age and 49% of residents living alone are adults aged 65 and older (656 persons). Twenty-three percent of Camden seniors (402 persons) live in poverty. More than one-third of the City's elderly population (593 persons) have a disability and of those, 7% (41 persons) experience cognitive difficulty. Among Camden's elderly residents, 12.7% (212 persons) have difficulty living independently.

2.4.2. Homeless Population

Homeless populations encompass a broad range of individuals and families with special needs. National research indicates that 30% of the homeless are in families with at least one child and the remainder are individuals (2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. HUD). More than 8% of the nation's homeless adults are veterans. One-quarter of the unsheltered population is considered chronically homeless. The chronic homeless experience repeated periods of homelessness, coupled with physical or mental disabilities, and require permanent housing and supportive services.

Homelessness is a significant risk factor for a broad range of health and social problems. Alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness are common problems among the adult homeless population. Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for females. Fifteen percent of homeless persons reported having experienced domestic violence in FY2021 – up from 12% in FY2020 (2022 State of Homelessness Report, S.C. Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2022). Among South Carolina's homeless population, one in five are chronically homeless – having experienced at least 12 months of homelessness over a one to three year period. Among the chronically homeless, more than half are identified as having a substance use disorder and 55% are diagnosed with mental illness. More than one-third of the chronically homeless are veterans and 68% are suffering from a disability. One-in-five homeless persons in South Carolina are children. Both individuals and families without adequate shelter experience greater barriers in obtaining needed support services. Addressing the unique circumstances and conditions of the homeless requires close coordination among local agencies and service providers to have a sustained impact.

The City of Camden is located within the service and planning area of the Total Care for the Homeless Coalition (TCHC) Continuum of Care (CoC). A Continuum of Care is a regional or local body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. The TCHC Consortium encompasses a 13-county region that includes Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Kershaw, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Sumter, and Williamsburg Counties. The TCHC supports a number of agencies that provide services to the homeless and near homeless such as the United Way, faith-based organizations, and housing authorities.



Most homeless persons living in the Camden area tend to either double-up with friends or family or gravitate to the more structured services available in more urban areas such as the City of Columbia. While families who are doubling up (staying) with friends or relatives because they have no other housing options are not included in the HUD definition of homeless individuals and families, they are often at risk of losing such temporary shelter and becoming homeless. Doubling-up is considered a temporary situation, one that is often prohibited by public housing laws and landlords. Both families can face eviction if the extra household residents are discovered. Moreover, doubled-up friends or families often impose space and financial burdens on the host family and guests are often asked to leave after a short time. In smaller and more rural communities with no public shelters, doubling up is often the stop-gap measure before sleeping on the streets.

The most accurate assessment of the homeless population at the county, state, and national levels is provided through bi-annual, HUD mandated *point-in-time* (PIT) counts. Point-in-time counts are one-night counts of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations. The homeless count includes those in shelters, in transitional housing, living on the street, or in other locations not meant for human habitation. The S.C. Homeless Coalition has provided the statewide organization and planning for recent point-in-time counts.

The most recent point-in-time count was conducted in January 2022 in an effort led by the Total Care for the Homeless Coalition. On that date, 58 individuals were counted as homeless in the County. Of these individuals, 21 were unsheltered and 37 were housed in shelters or temporary housing. Included in the count were 20 families with children and 28 single adults. Eight of the persons counted as homeless were aged 65 and older and 11 were between the ages of 18 and 24. Since most homeless services in Kershaw County are concentrated in the Camden area, it is expected that many of these homeless persons and families were in or near the City at the time of the count. The total number of homeless persons counted in 2022 is an increase from the County's 2016 PIT count, which reported a total of 48 homeless individuals.

Data collected by the Kershaw County School District through the *McKinney-Vento Act* also reveals the extent of homelessness among children and families. The Act provides rights and services to children and youth experiencing homelessness, which includes those who are sharing the housing of others due to housing loss, economic hardship, or related cause; staying in motels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to the lack of an adequate alternative; staying in shelters or transitional housing; or sleeping in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar settings. The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youth face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, each school district is required to have a trained, local homeless education liaison to identify and assist these families with enrolling and fully participating in school. There are 14 homeless students enrolled in the Kershaw County School District in the 2022-2023 school year.

It is estimated that many Americans are just one paycheck away from becoming homeless, with 64% of adults having no emergency savings for unexpected and costly expenses such as a major



health issue or home or auto repair (*Federal Reserve, Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2020*). These precariously housed individuals and families are most at risk for crisis poverty and very vulnerable to becoming homeless. Indicators for families at risk of becoming homeless include those with low to moderate incomes, who are cost-burdened, with children receiving free or reduced lunch at school, or living in overcrowded conditions.

Residents with low and moderate incomes can have difficulty affording adequate and safe housing in Camden. As detailed in Table 2-28, nearly half (45.7%) all Camden households are considered to be LMI with incomes below 80% of the Median Family Income (MFI). Nearly one-in-six City residents are living in poverty. More than 71% of families in poverty (206 families) are single-parent families with children.

2.4.3. Veterans

South Carolina's large veteran population often experiences a need for employment assistance, long-term care, shelter, and specialized medical care. More than half of living veterans (54%) in Camden and nearly half (48.5%) of Kershaw County veterans are aged 65 years or older. However, due to more recent conflicts in the Middle East and Asia, younger veterans aged 35-to-54 and females represent a growing percentage of the veteran population. These changing demographics generate an expanded need for a full spectrum of home and community-based support programs.

More than one-in-three veterans in Camden and 37.3% countywide are disabled. Nearly 61% of the City's disabled veterans and two-thirds (66%) of the Kershaw County's disabled veteran population are aged 65 and older. The number and percentage of disabled veterans continues to climb as aging veterans of the baby boom era develop disabilities and younger service personnel deal with disabling injuries incurred while serving in more recent conflicts such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that 6.8% of the nation's homeless adult population are veterans, with many more living in poverty and at risk of becoming homeless (*2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. HUD*). About six in ten (59%) of these homeless veterans are staying in unsheltered locations. However, homelessness among veterans has declined by more than 11% since 2020. Veterans comprised 10% of the total homeless population during the 2022 South Carolina PIT count, with more than one-in-five living without shelter.

There are 573 veterans living in Camden, of which the majority (82.4%) are male. More than 18% of the City's older residents (aged 65 and older) and 40% of older males are veterans. Veterans comprise 9.3% of the Camden population aged 18 and older and 11% of the population in Kershaw County.

While area veterans are attracted to the Midlands region by many of the same factors that most retirees seek – recreation, temperate weather, and lower housing prices – many are also drawn by the close proximity of Fort Jackson in Richland County and Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter. In addition, the Veterans Administration (VA) operates the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center in Columbia. The Dorn VA Medical Center is a 216-bed facility providing a wide range of primary care and specialty health services including mental health services, surgery, psychiatry,



physical medicine and rehabilitation, cardiology, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care.

2.4.4. Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Health Conditions

Disabilities can include a wide range of conditions from physical limitations and mental illness to serious medical conditions. An individual is considered to have a disability when he or she experiences difficulty performing functions such as seeing, hearing, talking, walking, climbing stairs, lifting and carrying; has difficulty performing activities of daily living; or has difficulty with social roles such as helping children with homework, working at a job or doing household chores. A person who is unable to perform one or more activities, who uses an assistive device to get around, or who needs assistance from another person to perform basic activities is considered to have a severe disability. Included are persons with mental retardation, autism, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and similar disabilities. Thirteen percent of Americans have some form of disability (U.S. Census, 2021 ACS). The percentage is higher in the City of Camden with 18.3% of the population (1,383 persons) having at least one type of disability (Table 2-29). More than one-in-three County residents aged 65 and older are disabled (35.5%), slightly lower than the countywide percentage of 35.9%. Nearly 43% of all disabled persons in Camden are 65 years or older. Among City residents aged 65 and older, 132 seniors have a disability that makes it difficult to care for themselves (specifically bathing and dressing) and 41 have cognitive issues that make it difficult to remember, concentrate, or make decisions. One in four seniors (406) have difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

Table 2-29. Disability Status of Civilian Non-institutionalized Population

AGE GROUPS	CAMDEN			KERSHAW COUNTY		
	TOTAL	# WITH A DISABILITY	% WITH A DISABILITY	TOTAL	# WITH A DISABILITY	% WITH A DISABILITY
Total Population	7,538	1,383	18.3%	64,288	10,579	16.5%
Population under 5 years	507	0	0.0%	3,444	12	0.3%
Population 5 to 17 years	963	24	2.5%	11,662	781	6.7%
Population 18 to 64 years	4,396	766	17.4%	37,386	5,552	14.9%
Population 65+ years	1,672	593	35.5%	11,796	4,234	35.9%

Source: U.S. Census, 2017-2021 ACS

Camden residents also suffer from potentially serious chronic health conditions such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease, and diabetes that can lead to hospitalization, disability, and even death. The leading causes of death in Kershaw County include cancer, heart disease, COVID 19, accidents, diabetes, chronic lower respiratory disease, and Alzheimer’s (SCDHEC, *Death Statistics, 2020*). The rates of death per 1,000 for accidents, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease, and COVID 19 in the County are higher than rates statewide, while the rates for heart disease and Alzheimer’s are slightly lower than the State.

2.4.5. Immigrants

Immigrants face particular challenges and barriers relative to language, education, employment, housing, transportation, and health care. According to the 2021 ACS, 13.6% of the population of



the United States and 5.2% of South Carolinians were born in another country. Of the foreign-born South Carolina residents, half were born in Latin America. These figures do not include an estimated 88,000 undocumented immigrants living in South Carolina (*Migration Policy Institute, 2022*).

In the City of Camden, Hispanic residents comprise 4.3% of the population (338 persons), an increase of 172 since 2010. In addition to being predominantly Mexican (43.1%) and Puerto Rican (38.8%), the City’s Hispanic population is largely comprised of males (85.2%), with a median age of 54.1 years. Nearly 15% of Camden’s Hispanic residents (45 persons) speak English “less than very well.” Nearly half (141 persons) live in poverty, including 49 children under 18 years of age.

The City and County’s Hispanic population presents unique community needs for local service providers, including the Kershaw County School District and MUSC Health Kershaw Medical Center. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that the leading causes of death for the Hispanic or Latino population are COVID-19, heart disease, and cancer (*CDC Fastats, 2022*). Forty-six percent of men and 35.4% of women have high blood pressure. Hispanic residents are more likely not to seek medical care due to cost than white, black, or other non-Hispanic residents. Hispanics are also more likely to lack health insurance than other racial or ethnic groups, with nearly one-in-three adults uninsured (*CDC Interactive Biannual Early Release Estimates, 2022*). The local hospital emergency room often becomes the primary source for medical treatment for immigrant residents who lack a primary care physician.

2.5. Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies

The goals, objectives, and implementation strategies (GOIS) table summarizes the actions that will be undertaken in the coming decade to achieve the vision identified in the Population element. Element goals are broad-based ideals that are intended to guide the future of the community, while an objective is a more specific elaboration of a goal that also provides direction. Together the goals and objectives outline the framework for the element and provide the basis for the more detailed and specific plan strategies. Each supporting implementation strategy includes a listing of the entities that are accountable for the implementation of the strategy, as well as a timeframe for completion.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES	ACCOUNTABLE AGENCY	TIMEFRAME
GOAL 2.1. Improve the quality of life for existing and future residents of the City.		
OBJECTIVE 2.1.1. Increase understanding of the City’s population composition and characteristics.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.1.1.</i> Monitor demographic patterns in the City and the surrounding area to understand and respond to growth and the changing needs of residents, especially special populations.	City of Camden	On-going
OBJECTIVE 2.1.2. Encourage young adults and families to remain in or relocate to Camden.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.2.1.</i> Continue to create economic opportunities for residents and potential residents through recruitment and retention of a diverse base of industrial and business employers and support of small businesses.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Kershaw County Economic Development, Central SC Alliance, Chamber of Commerce	On-going



GOALS/OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES	ACCOUNTABLE AGENCY	TIMEFRAME
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.2.2.</i> Develop and promote economic recruitment policies and workforce development programs that improve higher wage and higher skill employment opportunities for residents and potential residents.	City of Camden, Kershaw County	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.2.3.</i> Seek opportunities to provide or encourage entertainment and leisure options that are attractive to young adults and families.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Civic and Arts Organizations	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.2.4.</i> Work with the Kershaw County School District (KCSD), private schools, and Central Carolina Technical College (CCTC) to improve educational quality and promote advanced training opportunities.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, KCSD, Private Schools, CCTC	On-going
OBJECTIVE 2.1.3. Assess and seek to address the needs of the City’s special populations.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.3.1.</i> Seek partnerships to assess the unmet needs of special populations and develop strategies to address these needs.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Neighboring Jurisdictions, State and Local Agencies, Non-profits, Interfaith Ministries	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.1.3.2.</i> Explore efforts to prevent and eliminate homelessness and encourage local participation in the Total Care for the Homeless (TCHC) to determine the extent of homelessness in the City and County through the annual Point-in-Time Homeless Count.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Kershaw County United Way, Local Service Agencies, Faith-based Organizations	On-going
GOAL 2.2. Promote a livable community in which City residents are healthy, engaged, and productive.		
OBJECTIVE 2.2.1. Ensure access to adequate health care and preventative services.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.1.1.</i> Encourage the provision of a continuum of supportive services, home repair programs, and infrastructure that enable elderly residents to <i>age in place</i> to the extent possible.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Council on Aging, Faith-based Organizations, Kershaw County DSS, Health care Providers, Kershaw DSNB	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.1.2.</i> Promote the provision of and access to adequate health care facilities and services for all segments of the population to reduce the incidence and high costs associated with chronic health conditions.	Kershaw Health, County Health Department, Kershaw County DSNB, Community Medical Clinic	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.1.3.</i> Encourage health care providers in establishing the medical services, health care workforce, and expertise needed by local residents, especially geriatric care for the elderly.	Kershaw Health, County Health Department, Kershaw County DSNB, Council on Aging, CCTC	On-going
OBJECTIVE 2.2.2. Provide a range of wellness resources and programs for City residents.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.2.1.</i> Provide a range of fitness and recreational opportunities that encourage health and well-being and that also safely accommodate residents with disabilities, older adults, youth, and other special needs populations.	City of Camden, Kershaw County	On-going



GOALS/OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES	ACCOUNTABLE AGENCY	TIMEFRAME
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.2.2.</i> Explore partnerships and funding to increase opportunities for safe walking and biking through the development and expansion of trails, walkways, and sidewalks.	City of Camden, SLCOG, Developers, Community Partners	On-going
OBJECTIVE 2.2.3. Promote higher levels of educational attainment and job readiness among City residents.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.3.1.</i> Promote college and career awareness and readiness for students at all levels.	City of Camden, KCSD, Private Schools, Local Employers, CCTC	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.3.2.</i> Support workforce development programs that address the skilled labor needs of current and potential employers in the City.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Midlands WIA, KCSD, CCTC, Adult Education, Local Employers	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.2.3.3.</i> Support local efforts to raise literacy levels of City residents through afterschool programs, family literacy efforts, and community-based programs.	City of Camden, County Literacy Association, KCSD, Adult Education, Libraries, Faith-based Providers	
GOAL 2.3. Foster a high level of efficiency, coordination, and cooperation among service providers.		
OBJECTIVE 2.3.1. Coordinate and participate in planning efforts among the City, Kershaw County, and neighboring jurisdictions.		
<i>STRATEGY 2.3.1.1.</i> Review and/or update the City's Comprehensive Plan at least once every five years.	City of Camden	2022
<i>STRATEGY 2.3.1.2.</i> Prepare a new City Comprehensive Plan every ten years.	City of Camden	2027
<i>STRATEGY 2.3.1.3.</i> Coordinate service delivery planning among the City, County, and neighboring jurisdictions to eliminate duplication of effort and address long-term needs of residents and employers.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, Neighboring Jurisdictions, SLCOG/CMCOG	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.3.1.4.</i> Foster on-going coordination and communication among the City of Camden, Kershaw County, and neighboring jurisdictions on a wide range of issues including land use planning and regulation, facilities planning, transportation, and the extension and upgrade of utilities.	City of Camden, Kershaw County, SLCOG, Neighboring Jurisdictions, Public and Private Utility Providers	On-going
<i>STRATEGY 2.3.1.5.</i> Examine current land use planning, building codes, zoning and development regulations, and other City ordinances for potential impact on population growth and special populations.	City of Camden	On-going