



In 2018, the City of Camden completed the *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028*, representing a thorough and comprehensive plan rewrite undertaken and completed in compliance with the requirements of the *South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 (Title 6, Chapter 29, as amended)*. Per the provisions of the *Planning Enabling Act*, all South Carolina jurisdictions engaged in land use planning must prepare and periodically update a comprehensive plan. These plans must be re-evaluated and updated as needed by each jurisdiction's planning commission at least every five years and must be rewritten at least every ten years. This document will serve as the required five-year update for addressing significant accomplishments and changes that have occurred in the City since the adoption of the 2018 Plan.

Specifically, this Five-Year Update includes:

- ◆ Review and update of the Population and Housing Elements, focusing on the identification and incorporation of demographic updates, changes, trends and projections;
- ◆ Review, evaluation, and update of the goals, objectives and implementation strategies from the nine elements included in the *City of Camden Comprehensive Plan 2028*; and
- ◆ Development of a new Resiliency Element in compliance with the 2020 amendment to the *S.C. Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act*.



Per the guidance provided by the *Planning Enabling Act*, the purpose of the five-year review of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to evaluate the document to determine any changes that may have occurred since its adoption in January 2019, review and update the goals and strategies to reflect those that have been accomplished or may no longer be relevant, and consider any updates or changes that should be made to ensure that the Plan continues to be a relevant and viable source of information and guidance for the future growth and development of the City.

Updated information provided in both the Population and Housing Elements supports staff's firsthand knowledge of substantial growth in recent years in the City of Camden. Population growth from 2010 to 2020 was 13.9% (1,106 persons), outpacing Kershaw County and South Carolina. With a number of residential subdivisions in progress or planned, an additional 284 homes, or more than 1,500 residents, are expected to be added in the near future.

As detailed in the updated elements, continued strong growth is anticipated in the City and regionwide. 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, 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.

Due to factors such as the ability to work remotely and the desire for less densely populated communities are fueling this trend, 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*). 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.

The new Resiliency Element is intended to reduce the social, economic, and environmental risk to the City by requiring the consideration of potential impacts of flooding and other natural hazards in context with the other Comprehensive Plan elements. The Element provides the context for understanding the existing risks and vulnerabilities of both natural and public systems to multiple disasters and disruptive events. This understanding informs the planning for coordinated efforts by Camden and Kershaw County to proactively prevent and mitigate loss, damage, and disruption.