

# Highway 319

## Rural Heritage Area Plan



# **HIGHWAY 319 RURAL HERITAGE AREA PLAN**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I.	<u>Executive Summary</u>	4
II.	<u>Introduction</u>	6
	a. General introduction to Area Planning in Horry County	6
	b. Intent/Purpose of the Hwy. 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan	9
	c. The Highway 319 Study Area	9
	d. Timeline of Events	12
III.	<u>The Planning Process</u>	14
	a. Area Plan Initiation	14
	b. Community Meetings	15
	c. Community Input	17
	i. Visual Preference Surveys	17
	ii. Topical Surveys	18
	d. Committee Direction	20
IV.	<u>Planning Analysis</u>	21
	a. Background/Issues/Challenges	21
	b. Strengths	28
	c. Weaknesses	31
	d. Opportunities	38
	e. Threats	42
V.	<u>Goals, Strategies and Implementation</u>	44
	Appendices	47

**Horry County Planning Commission**

**Herbert J. Riley, Chairman**

**Rob Wilfong, Vice-Chairman \***

**Pamela B. Hobeika**

**Dennis H. Springs**

**Nick Kenworthy**

**Harold Phillips \***

**Edgar (Eddie) Dyer**

**Ashlei White**

**Dean A. Belowich**

**Mickey Howell \***

**Bonnie Causey**

**Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee**

**Rob Wilfong, Chairman\***

**Mickey Howell \***

**Marion Shaw**

**Harold Phillips \***

**Tony Cox**

**Vicky Vaught**

**Horry County Planning & Zoning Staff**

**Janet Carter, Director of Planning & Zoning**

**Roy D. Taylor, AICP, Principal Planner**

**Christopher Klement, Senior Planner**

**Adam Emrick, Senior Planner**

**Nancy Tindall, Administrative Assistant**

**Prepared by:**

**The Horry County Planning Commission**

**Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee**

**The Horry County Planning & Zoning Department**

**For**

**The Horry County Council and the Citizens of Horry County**

## **I. Executive Summary**

The Highway 319 Area Plan, developed with a primary focus on the preservation of the rural heritage that still exists throughout the study area, addresses growth that may affect the physical, cultural, and environmental character of this unique part of Horry County. The lands within the Highway 319 Area Plan comprise nearly thirty (30) square miles from the Town of Aynor southeast to the City of Conway. The corridor of Highway 319 runs a length of approximately twelve (12) miles with an undeveloped interchange with SC 22 (Veterans Highway) located about three and one-half (3 ½) miles within the study limits from the City of Conway. The area is sparsely developed with at least 997 residential homes housing a population of just over 2,700 people. Much of the Highway 319 area retains the rural and agricultural uses that have always existed there, along with occasional local businesses or home occupations that cater to the ordinary and daily needs of those residing in the area. Growth in the Highway 319 area has been relative to an increasing population from within, such as family members selling parcels to relatives for a home, a business, or both. The character and features and location that have made the Highway 319 area home to generations of families involved in farming and related industries over the years have also made this area attractive to a newer population seeking to live and work within the same rural atmosphere.

The economic climate at the time the Highway 319 area was being studied and a plan being developed gave residents, business owners, and planners the opportunity to closely examine, without the distraction of development pressures, how the rural lifestyle and existing quality of life now enjoyed may be better preserved. The dialogue between concerned residents and planners always considered that better economic conditions are anticipated, and that growth will once again resume on some scale. However, many residents were concerned that without a plan to adequately guide or direct growth, the rural fabric of the area, which is also considered the heritage of the area, may be lost over time.

The process of the development of the Highway 319 Area Plan was coordinated through the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee appointed by the Horry County Planning Commission. By the direction of the Committee, planning staff conducted several community meetings to not only make area residents aware of the actions and purpose of the Committee, but to allow residents to share their concerns and opinions. Residents were free in sharing what makes their community a very good and close-knit

community, as well as what they may perceive as threats to their community environment and rural way of living. During the latter part of the planning process, staff introduced visual preference and topical surveys designed to solicit from concerned residents two important issues to consider in this plan development. The visual preference survey gave the community participants opportunity to share their vision of how they hope to see their community grow in terms of aesthetics, or how they envision their community to look for the next generations. The topical survey addressed many of the specifics of the environment the community sees as valuable and worth consideration. The natural environment, the cultural environment, agriculture, and infrastructure were among the topics discussed, which gave planners a better insight into how the residents and business owners foresee the future of their community.

The Highway 319 Area Plan documents not only the process and timeline of its development, but examines the issues, concerns, and challenges of the community. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to this area may be considered double-edged in that the community possesses a unique attractiveness that is inviting to people that seek the same for themselves. The Envision 2025 Comprehensive Plan designation of an “Economic Activity Center” at the interchange of Highway 319 and SC 22, intended to direct and promote nonresidential growth within the Economic Activity Center, and the planned I-73 connection near this interchange has created concern within the community because of future development challenges that may threaten the rural fabric and cultural heritage in the area. There are goals and strategies, with methods to implement them, that look to conserve certain resources and lifestyles, preserve the Highway 319 corridor as a scenic viewshed and heritage corridor, limit commercial growth and mitigate the impacts often associated with it, and to also lessen the impact of more residential growth that could encourage more commercial uses to the area. While the residents of the area are aware that growth is inevitable, they would like to manage this growth in a manner that would be compatible with the rural nature of the community.

In conclusion, the residents and business owners within the Highway 319 area take pride in their community and display a unity to ensure that the future growth within their community is complementary to the existing rural environment. Community residents favor a “slow-growth” scenario that will promote, rather than detract from, the scenic landscape and pose a threat to the current quality of life. The community has expressed support of single-family homes on half (½) acre lots or greater and including

mobile homes as accessory or primary dwellings. The community has also supported the designation of Highway 319 as a “Rural Heritage Corridor” to further preserve the unspoiled pastoral views of homes, farms, and open spaces for future generations to enjoy. Residents in the area have also stated their desire to discourage large-scale residential development, multi-family dwellings, billboards, strip-commercial shopping areas, or the introduction of industrial or other non-residential uses to the area that would tend to bring more traffic and development to the area. It is important to note that participants in the plan see home-based businesses as valuable to the area. Therefore, the plan should seek to preserve and protect them as a time-honored part of the heritage and rural living.

## **II. Introduction**

### **A. General introduction to Area Planning in Horry County**

In an effort to keep pace with on-going growth and development occurring throughout Horry County, the Horry County Council or the Horry County Planning Commission authorizes the initiation of *area plans* for communities to address the issues of change. Study areas and area plans are designed to supplement current and future comprehensive plans and to respond to the needs and desires of the community and the development market that effects change.

Some plans are narrow in scope, such as *corridor plans* that attempt to bring compatibility of land uses along our thoroughfares, and, some are much broader because of area size and composition, typically areas that have experienced some burden through proposed or actual development. A frequent example of growth burden is often identified as increased traffic in or through an area that is not accustomed to it. Another is the lack of public facilities to support intensified development. Public schools, public safety, libraries, solid waste management, community parks, and in some cases, the availability of water and sewer are examples of desired or necessary facilities to consider when planning for growth.

*Area planning* gives community members the opportunity to openly discuss the direction growth should take in their area. *Area plans* are also a way citizens are able to communicate their desires directly to the Horry County Council of how they envision an

approach to development in and around their community. Some, or all, of the elements of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan may be mentioned in the formulation of an *area plan*, however, the Land Use Element is typically the primary element to which reference is made. This is the method that allows those involved in developing a plan to address issues which are very important, but may not be specifically included in any element of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan.

The Highway 319 Area Plan Committee determines the direction and scope of the development of the plan. Once this *area plan* is finalized by the committee, it will be brought before the Horry County Planning Commission and the Horry County Council for approval and adoption. Once adopted by the Horry County Council, the *area plan* is made part of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan and will be referenced whenever actions and decisions that affect the area are considered.

## **DEFINITIONS OF PLANS**

**Area Plans:** A plan that covers specific sub-areas of Horry County. These plans provide basic information on the natural features, resources, and physical constraints that affect development of the planning area. They also specify land-use designations used to review specific development proposals and to plan services and facilities.

**Specific Plans:** A detailed policy plan or regulation that implements the comprehensive plan or any of the elements of that plan. Specific plans include area or neighborhood plans, the land-use code and any similar plan.

**Rural Plans:** A sparsely developed area where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, resource attraction, very low-density residential use, open space preservation, conservation lands, and various uses typically found outside of the urban and suburban areas.

How plans are classified depends on the existing and changing character of an area, and the strength of the community voice that tends to set the course for the future growth of the community. The Highway 319 Area Plan has evolved as a mix of all three types of plans in one form or another, resulting in a *Rural Heritage Area Plan*.

**Rural Heritage Area Plans:** This type of plan serves to protect the nature and heritage of an area and to maintain the rural atmosphere currently in existence. The plan is

intended as a guide for the citizens, planners, and decision-makers such as the planning commission and governing body to manage the local resources and improve the community's quality of life.

### **ILLUSTRATION OF AN AREA PLANNING PROCESS**

- Horry County Council or Horry County Planning Commission determines the need for a community area plan;
- A committee is appointed to develop the area plan;
- The committee determines the scope of the plan and planning & zoning staff supports in the study of some or all of the following:
  - Current land use
  - Transportation network and planned improvements
  - Natural environment assessment
  - Zoning patterns and trends
  - Extra-area impacts of development
  - Community facilities and services assessment
  - Horry County Comprehensive Plan compatibility
- Planning & Zoning staff provides support in conducting a study of the area and presents its findings to the committee. The study may include the following:
  - Current land use survey
  - Current zoning
  - Zoning changes and pending requests
  - Public infrastructure
  - Public services and facilities
  - Environmental concerns
- Committee determines recommendations
  - Community goals and objectives
  - Recommended strategies
- Staff prepares draft study and plan with maps, plan and appendices for committee review
- Final draft is presented to the community for comment and discussion
- Committee and staff suggest changes based on community input
- Final plan is presented to Planning Commission for review and approval



- Area plan is forwarded to Horry County Council for adoption and made part of the Comprehensive Plan

## **B. Intent/Purpose of the Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan**

Increased development along Highway 319 between Conway and Aynor during the second half of the 2000s caused concern within that community that the rural fabric of the area was in danger of being destroyed. Repeated rezoning requests and increasingly dense residential subdivisions brought area residents out in opposition to further development. The Horry County Planning Commission, seeking to obtain some direction and stability, formed the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee and began studying the area in detail. The results of said study pointed to several clear goals for the Highway 319 corridor:

1. Conserve environmental and agricultural resources;
2. Limit commercial growth and direct it to suitable areas;
3. Limit the impact of commercial growth through design standards;
4. Limit the impact of residential growth by assuring new residential development reflects the rural character of the area; and,
5. Preserve the character of Highway 319 as a Rural/Scenic Corridor, thereby maintaining the rural fabric.

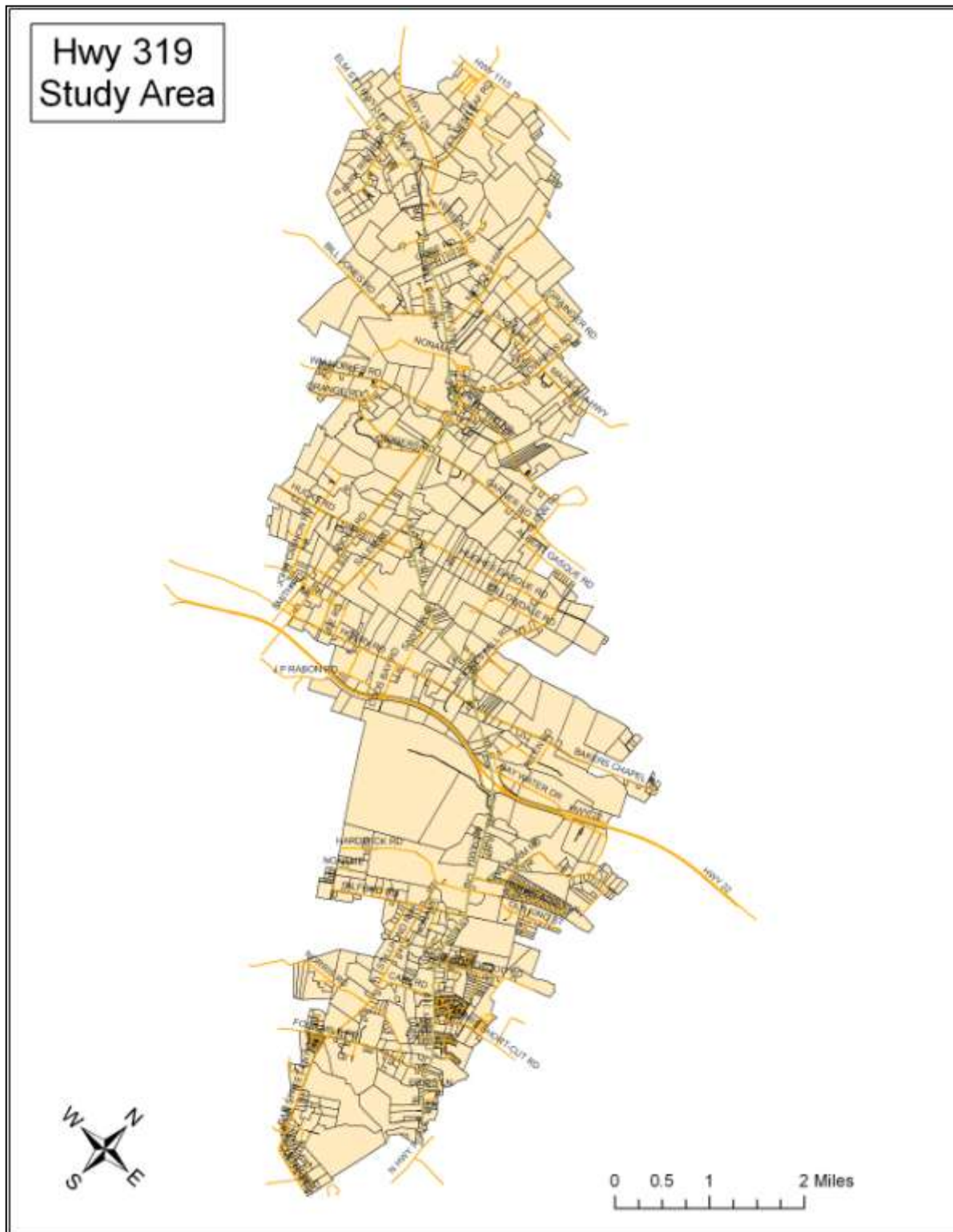
## **C. The Highway 319 Study Area**

One of the first orders of business for the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee was to determine the geographical area to be studied. Highway 319 runs between Highway 501 to the west to Highway 701 to the east and effectively joins Aynor and Conway at each municipality's city limits. The distance between the Aynor city limits and Highway 701 is nearly twelve miles. The Committee chose to study the area extending one and half miles from either side of the centerline of Highway 319, following parcel lines and eliminating several parcels that had no access from Highway 319 or any of its secondary roads, but were served by Highways 501 or 701.

The study area includes 2,057 parcels totaling 16,886 acres or more than twenty-six square miles. As of 2000, the US Census Bureau estimates the population of the study

area to be approximately 2,709, comprised of 888 households. Map 1 illustrates the entire study area.

Map 1: Highway 319 Study Area



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning Department, 2010

## **D. Timeline of Events**

**October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009** - Staff conducted initial meeting with residents of the Hwy 319 area to discuss area planning and to listen to their issues and concerns prior to the first meeting of the Horry County Planning Commission appointed committee.

**November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009** - Horry County Planning Commission Chairman Herbert Riley establishes the Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee, appointing Commissioner Rob Wilfong as Committee Chair, and Commissioners Mickey Howell and Harold Phillips. Citizen representatives and stakeholders Tony Cox, Marion Shaw, and Vicki Vaught are also appointed to the Committee.

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009** - The first meeting of the Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee is held. The Committee was introduced to area planning and the process involved in development of a plan, as well as a tentative timeline to complete the project. The Committee determined the boundaries of the planning area to be the length of Hwy 319, approximately 12 miles, from the city limits of Aynor to Highway 701 North. The Committee directed staff to include 1 ½ miles on either side of Hwy 319 making the study area 36 square miles in area.

**January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee reviewed the boundaries of the area plan and made minor adjustments to the original boundaries. The Committee also was given a review of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan—Envision 2025, and how the area is affected by the Future Land Use Plan and its components, such as the Economic Activity Center located at the Hwy 319/SC 22 interchange.

**February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - Final adjustments to the area boundaries were presented and accepted by the Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee. The Committee also reviewed various maps for more information concerning the area plan. The Committee directed staff to set up and conduct community meetings to inform the residents and business owners in the Hwy 319 area, and to gather their comments and concerns for consideration during plan development.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The first of two community meetings is conducted at the Cool Springs Southern Methodist Church. Concerned residents were informed of the area plan and the process to include community participation in the development of a plan. The community shared multiple concerns with staff and expressed how they envision their area to develop in the future.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The second of two community meetings is conducted at the Bethany Bible Chapel. Many issues and concerns from the first community meeting were voiced along with some new comments for the Committee to consider.

**May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee was provided maps as requested of single-family and other building footprints and freshwater wetlands. The Committee was also updated on the two community meetings conducted in the Hwy 319 area during the month of March. It was decided by the Committee to allow staff to pursue scenario modeling of the Hwy 319 area by way of visual preference and topical surveys.

**June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee was given an overview of the visual preference and topical surveys and directed staff to proceed in setting up three meetings throughout the Hwy 319 area to give the community an opportunity to participate in these surveys.

**July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The first of three community participation meetings was conducted at the Bethany Bible Chapel with 19 members of the community in attendance. Staff distributed the visual preference and topical surveys to the participants, which were then collected at the conclusion of the meeting.

**July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010** - The second of three community participation meetings was conducted at the Cool Springs Southern Methodist Church with 45 members of the community in attendance. Staff distributed the visual preference and topical surveys to the participants, which were then collected at the conclusion of the meeting.

**July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The third of three community participation meetings was conducted at the Aynor Senior Citizens Center with 21 members of the community in attendance. Staff distributed the visual preference and topical surveys to the participants, which were then collected at the conclusion of the meeting.

**August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010** - The Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee was presented the results of the visual preference and topical surveys and the community participation involved with these surveys. The staff, based on input from the community and the members of the Committee, presented the Committee with area plan alternatives to consider. The Committee opted for a zoning overlay tailored for the Hwy 319 area and directed staff to proceed with drafting a plan toward an overlay and to bring a draft before them on September 23, 2010.

**September 23<sup>th</sup>, 2010** – A rough draft of a possible corridor overlay was presented to the Hwy 319 Committee. Members of the community voiced both support and concern of the concept and the Committee refined many aspects of the draft. A second meeting was scheduled for the following week to review the Area Plan draft.

**September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010** – A rough draft of a possible Area Plan was presented to the Committee for their review. Staff expressed some concern that neither the Area Plan nor Overlay had been thoroughly vetted internally and asked for additional time to make

sure that both documents were complete. The Committee opted to give staff at least thirty days to work on the drafts and reconvene to finalize both.

**December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010** – A draft of an Area Plan which had been reviewed internally by Planning Department Staff was presented to the Committee. The Committee voted to remove the Weaknesses section from the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis, replacing it instead with a section titled, Character of the Area, combining the former Weaknesses section with the Strengths section. The Committee also voted to reduce the Economic Activity Center from a Staff recommended 1 ½ miles to .35 miles in diameter. Finally, the Committee voted to redefine the Hwy 319 Corridor from an Urban Corridor to a Rural Corridor, as identified in the Horry County Comprehensive Plan, Envision 2025. Staff was directed to make said changes and have a new draft ready for the next meeting for review and possible adoption.

**January 28, 2011** – The Planning Commission was updated as to the progress of the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee at its January Workshop meeting. The Planning Commission placed the Area Plan on its February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Agenda for review, effectively calling the document up from Committee. Committee Chair, Rob Wilfong, scheduled a meeting of the Committee for February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 to give a final review of the Area Plan draft prior to the Planning Commission Workshop.

**February 9, 2011** – The Hwy 319 Area Plan Committee approved a Final Version of the Area Plan, including the re-designation of Highway 319 as a Rural Corridor, reducing the size of the Economic Activity Center at the intersection of Hwy 22 and Hwy 319 to .35 miles in radius and including a full SWOT Analysis, rather than an abbreviated COT Analysis.

**April 7, 2011** – The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing and review of the Hwy 319 Area Plan and recommended its approval by Resolution to the Horry County Council.

### **III. The Planning Process**

#### **A. Area Plan Initiation**

After several contentious rezoning cases, the main issues that community members wanted planning staff to address were:

- How can residents of the Highway 319 corridor protect their property values and way of life better from land uses that do not represent the rural & agricultural character of that area?
- What planning tools exist to avoid the transformation of the Highway 319 area into a suburban landscape dotted with sprawling residential subdivisions, commercial shopping plazas and traffic congestion?
- How can the original rural Horry County lifestyle that still widely exists along Highway 319 be better preserved for future generations?
- How can historic elements and open spaces be better protected from adverse development?
- How can increased traffic congestion be avoided without having to widen Highway 319 to a multi-lane highway?

At the Committee's initial meeting, the contents of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan – Envision 2025 – and its future land use classifications for the planning area as well as planning tools and similar plans that have been previously implemented in other areas of the county were presented. During the course of the year, the contents of existing Area Plans, Corridor Plans, and other geographically specific land use plans from other jurisdictions of the United States was researched.

After presenting the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee with preferred planning options, a recommendation was made to involve the residents and property owners of the planning area in order to hear their concerns and to collect their opinions regarding the growth of their community.

## **B. Community meetings**

The series of community meetings began early within the planning process as it was important to incorporate the opinions of all residents and property owners from the very beginning. Two introductory meetings were held to inform the community on the intent, purpose, and process of the Highway 319 Area Plan.

The first community meeting was held between Aynor and Highway S.C. 22 at the Cool Springs Southern Methodist Church on March 15, 2010 with 38 citizens in attendance. The second community meeting was held between SC 22 and Conway at the Bethany Bible Chapel on March 25, 2010 with 36 citizens in attendance. Public questionnaires were distributed to allow citizens to submit their issues and concerns. The public questionnaire contained thirteen questions concerning cultural resources and historic preservation, natural resources, economic development, and housing development.

The majority of community members shared the concern of preserving the local heritage and cultural assets of the area. Most residents agreed that cemeteries, historic farm buildings, tobacco barns, churches and other artifacts needed to be saved for future generations. Most of the collected questionnaires also stated the desire to keep the area as it is and to not allow any contrary development that would destroy that character.

Within the natural resources element, all respondents were concerned about the condition of the natural environment in their area, including wetlands, forests, air & water quality, litter and wildlife. Also mentioned was the fragmentation of open land through encroaching developments, road building, water drainage, quality deterioration within wetlands, and clear-cutting of forests.

Most of the questioned community members did not support future commercial and/or industrial development within the Highway 319 area. The types of businesses that were preferable were small businesses that would better reflect the character of the area. Also, most respondents were of the opinion that the development of the Cool Springs Industrial Park was sufficient to accommodate commercial or industrial growth to this specific planning area. Most residents opposed the Comprehensive Plan's designation of an Economic Activity Center at the interchange of Highways 22 and 319 to which more urban-style commercial and residential growth could occur.

Lastly, the majority of the community members who took the questionnaires did not want to see more residential growth. Many responses indicated that several residential subdivisions that have been built along the eastern end of the Highway 319 corridor are not built-out, and therefore no further developments were needed. Additional concerns included traffic problems and the need for more basic services. Finally, the participants would like to see fewer mobile homes and would prefer single-family detached homes on large lots which would more resemble the existing pattern of the area.



## C. Community Input

While a great deal of input was received from the Highway 319 community during these initial meetings, how to incorporate these concerns remained unclear. Specifically, two questions remained: first, did the community truly envision itself as a rural, agricultural community; and second, what role did they want Horry County government to play in protecting their vision.

To obtain this information, three additional community meetings were held throughout the month of July, 2010: July 15 at Bethany Bible Chapel, July 22 at Cool Springs Southern Methodist Church, and July 27 at Aynor Senior Citizens Center. In total, nearly one hundred people attended these meetings.

### 1. THE VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

The Visual Preference Survey was created to obtain quantifiable data reflecting the true tastes of the Highway 319 Community. One hundred images depicting unspoiled nature scenes, unkempt homes, large suburban type housing, urban traffic congestion, tobacco barns, and other varying photographs representing life already existing in the Highway 319 area and potential development which could occur at some point in the future were presented. However, no images were actually from Horry County. Each image was pre-itemized into forty-eight possible categories. These categories included density, use, building type, size, cleanliness and many others. Each photograph was then randomly included into a Power Point presentation showing only the picture and its corresponding number.

**Illustration 1: Images 17 & 66 receiving overall 1.26 on Visual Preference Survey**



**Illustration 2: Image 74 receiving overall 4.7 on Visual Preference Survey**



7

The community was asked to rate each image on a scale of one to five (1-5) with five (5) being the most preferred and one (1) being the least. Each picture was displayed for only five (5) seconds, followed by a blank screen for another five (5) seconds. The very limited amount of time was allowed to prevent those taking the survey from focusing on why they liked or did not like an image. The intent was to obtain their initial reaction to the picture and then capture that reaction with quantifiable data. In total seventy-five (75) people completed the Visual Preference Survey.

Overall, those pictures depicting rural settings received the highest ratings, with photograph number 74 receiving the highest overall average rating of 4.7 out of a possible 5. Images numbered 17 and 66 each tied for the lowest overall rating, each scoring 1.26 out of a possible 5.

Those photographs showing low density (3.75) housing scored a full point higher than those of medium density (2.74). Medium density showed a preference of a full point higher than those of high density (1.61). Very similar results were obtained for rural (3.62), suburban (2.97) and urban (1.53) density depictions. Agricultural images received similarly high marks, with an overall average of 3.88. While, auto related commercial uses received a very low 1.68 overall average rating. Strip commercial fared the worst, with an overall average rating of 1.56, even lower than litter, which received a 1.97 overall average rating.

These results were pretty clear indicators that those who took the survey on average preferred rural images to urban and historic and scenic images to those of dense commercialized images.

## **2. THE TOPICAL SURVEY**

Contained within every Area Plan is a set of goals and strategies. The Topical Survey was developed to assure that this set of goals and strategies accurately reflects those of the community. Ninety (90) questions were asked of the community under the headings of: Farmland Protection; Forest Protection; the Introduction of Area-Specific Landscaping Standards; Natural Resources and Heritage Protection; Scenic, Historic and Open Spaces Protection; the Functionality of Highway 319; Preservation of the Rural Character Through Land Development Regulations; and, the Introduction of Area-Specific Design Standards that Retain the Rural Character. Each question could only

be answered with “yes” or “no”, however, an open comment section was provided at the conclusion of each section of the survey for more elaborate answers or explanations.

As with the Visual Preference Survey, the answers to the Topical Survey indicated a clear desire by the Highway 319 Community to keep the rural atmosphere that they value so highly. Ninety-four (94%) percent of those surveyed wished for the County to adopt policies to better protect valuable farmland. Ninety-three (93%) percent wished for the County to protect and enhance rural quality of life for present and future Highway 319 residents. Eighty-six (86%) percent of those surveyed would like the County to ensure that the rural and scenic character of the residential corridor is preserved. Most respondents did not want to see further commercial development. However, they understood that if commercial development were to occur, requirements should assure that development fit into the rural fabric of their community and not detract from the characteristics that drew them to live along this corridor.

Ninety-one (91%) percent of those surveyed did not want Highway 319 widened to four (4) lanes and seventy-five (75%) percent did not want it widened to three lanes. Even widening the road to include a shoulder, one area of concern mentioned at previous meetings, only gained fifty-two (52%) percent support. Improvements to pedestrian accessibility and functionality were likewise unsupported with sixty-seven (67%) percent opposed to adding bicycle lanes and eighty-seven (87%) percent opposed to adding sidewalks.

The respondents voiced their concern about future residential subdivisions and suburban-like lot sizes. A section of the Topical Survey attempted to learn what lot sizes the community would support in the Highway 319 Area. Currently, most of the parcels within the study area are zoned Forest Agriculture (FA) and allow development of residential lots of one-half (1/2) acre or larger. However, only forty-three (43%) percent of those surveyed supported limiting further subdivision to a minimum of one-half (1/2) acre. Forty-nine (49%) percent thought the County should limit lot sizes to one (1) acre or larger. Thirty-eight (38%) supported lot sizes of no less than three (3) acres, while, twenty-two (22%) percent support minimum lot sizes of five (5) acres. Of those surveyed twenty-six (26%) percent supported minimum lot sizes of ten (10) acres.

The difficulty in ascertaining the actual desires of the community on minimum lot sizes was likely the result of the method of questioning. The community was asked five separate questions regarding lot size with the option to answer yes or no to each.

Therefore it was possible for a respondent to answer yes to all or no to all. However, from the comments and from discussions with the community at each meeting, a clear desire to see no less than one-half (1/2) acre was present. Commercial development remained one of the largest concerns for the Highway 319 area. Multiple comments to the surveys expressed this concern and asked that commercial development be encouraged to move away from the Highway 319 Corridor, specifically to Highway 22's intersections with Highway 501 and Highway 701. Despite this, seventy (70%) percent of those surveyed stated that the County should direct Commercial Growth to the designated Economic Activity Centers and only fifty-four (54%) percent wished for the County to prohibit all commercial development from the Highway 319 Area. However, no definition of an Economic Activity Center was included in the survey. Residents were also asked whether they would like to see blanket prohibitions on certain commercial uses within the area. Fifty-five (55%) percent wished to see auto-related commercial uses prohibited, and sixty-seven (67%) percent supported prohibitions on mini-storage facilities. Eighty-two (82%) percent of the respondents supported prohibiting all strip commercial development within the area.

The survey also presented alternatives to prohibiting uses. The community was asked whether they would like the County to develop design standards that are compatible with and reflect the community. Seventy-three (73%) percent supported this concept. By incorporating this same idea into strip commercial development, support went from eighty-two (82%) percent of people wanting it banned outright to supporting compatible strip commercial developments by ninety-one (91%) percent.

In all, the Topical Survey proved to be a useful tool to gauge the public opinion on very specific planning concepts. Many of the topical survey items will be later implemented in the Goals and Strategies section. The full results of this survey along with all comments are attached as Appendix "A".

## **D. Committee Direction**

The mission of the Highway 319 Area Plan Committee was to better protect the residents of the Highway 319 corridor from encroaching development that would alter the rural character of that area. After tallying the results of both the Visual Preference

and Topical Surveys, it became clear the emphasis of planning efforts needed to address two main aspects.

Overwhelmingly, the citizens of the Highway 319 planning area were concerned with too much growth and development encroaching upon their rural way of life. Most wanted to preserve and protect the heritage of this area by better regulating both the land uses and the aesthetics along the Highway 319 corridor.

After reviewing the results of the community meetings and surveys, the Committee focused its efforts on protecting the heritage, rural settlement patterns and the natural resources of the Highway 319 corridor area without prohibiting new construction, development or land uses. To accomplish this goal the Committee decided to create two sets of planning documents, this Area Plan and a specific Corridor Overlay. The Area Plan should serve as a guide to future planning decisions in the entire study area, while the Overlay should serve as a regulatory function, requiring strict compliance. The Overlay should include design standards reflective of the specific character of the area. It should also address landscaping and buffering standards to preserve the unspoiled natural viewshed. Access management and signage standards should be used to protect the overall image of the corridor and prevent commercialization, clutter and traffic congestion. Finally, land use and location-related growth management recommendations were requested to prevent inconsistent land uses.

## **IV. Planning Analysis**

### **A. Background – The Highway 319 area in the context of Comprehensive Planning and Zoning**

On April 22, 2008 Horry County Council approved the Land Use Element as part of Horry County's Comprehensive Plan "*Envision 2025*".

The Land Use Element of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan "Envision 2025" incorporates Future Land Use Objectives which provide decision-makers, private property owners and the general public with information on the growth of Horry County through the year 2025. This includes direction of types, densities and locations of current and future development and economic growth.

“The Future Land Use Strategy expresses the need to establish and proliferate sensible growth patterns to promote the overall high standards of living in Horry County. Balancing economic and social forces and environmental imperatives of resource conservation and renewal for the future is the basis of sustainable development (...)” (Comprehensive Plan – Envision 2025, Land Use Element, 2008).

Future Land Use Objectives for the Highway 319 planning area are to:

- “Minimize scattered development by focusing growth where infrastructure and services are readily available or planned for the future.”
- “Achieve and sustain a balanced community where urban areas thrive, rural areas are strengthened, and natural landscapes flourish.”
- “Continue to provide a safe, healthy, livable and beautiful community that retains its unique identity and heritage”.
- “Preserve traditional land based activities such as agricultural and forest cultivation, hunting and traditional water activities such as fishing, swimming and boating, while simultaneously protecting natural areas and scenic views for the enjoyment of the general public and the conservation of indigenous fauna and flora.”
- “Adopt policies and strategies that promote and reflect the unique characteristics of urban, suburban and rural areas.”

In adopting the Comprehensive Plan in 2008, Horry County Council endorsed the concept of sustainable development, balancing environmental, economic and social interests and needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The question of locating specific future land uses has been addressed within the Future Land Use Map. Identified within this map are the following eleven (11) future land use categories: “Scenic Landscapes and Conservation Areas”; “Rural Areas”; “Rural Communities”; “Rural Corridors”; “Crossroads Communities”; “Suburban Corridors”; “Economic Activity Centers”; “Urban Corridors”; “Urban Communities”; and, “Transitional Growth Area” and “Cities”.

Of above mentioned future land use categories, the Highway 319 planning area incorporates the following designations as defined in the Comprehensive Plan “Envision 2025” (see Future Land Use Map):

- Urban Corridor: Within the Comprehensive Plan, S.C. Highway 319 has been designated an “Urban Corridor”. Per definition, “Urban Corridors are linear transportation routes that support regional focused urban land uses and densities. Corresponding transportation services, industrial, commercial, recreational and institutional uses at urban densities, meeting the regional needs of the resident, business and visitor population are suitable for these corridors.”
- Suburban Corridor: Nichols Highway (S.C. 23) between its junction with Highway 319 and almost to McQueen Crossroads has been designated as a “Suburban Corridor”. Suburban Corridors are linear transportation routes that support community focused suburban land uses and densities. Corresponding commercial, recreational and institutional development meeting the day-to-day needs of the resident population and businesses are suitable uses for these corridors.
- Rural Corridor: There are no defined Rural Corridors within the Highway 319 Area, however, several roadways could be redefined to fit this classification. Rural Corridors follow major cross-country highways that typically support low density and scattered settlement patterns. These corridors are not suitable for future growth, as they exist as a means to access the rural areas throughout the County. Further, rural corridors service areas of low growth and rural land uses in which any proposed development is compatible with surrounding densities and current settlement patterns.
- Economic Activity Center (EAC): The interchange of S.C. Highways 22 and Highway 319 has been classified as an Economic Activity Center. An EAC is a high-density growth center at the intersection of major regional limited and non-limited access highways. An EAC is defined in the Comprehensive Plan so as to include parcels within a radius of 1.0 mile for urban density commercial and 1.0 – 2.0 miles for urban density residential, intensity and density, and will represent new economically diverse gateways to the County.
- Transitional Growth Areas: For the purpose of future comprehensive planning, existing Water & Sewer Districts around both Aynor and Conway have been used to delineate “Transitional Growth Areas”. As defined within the Land Use Element, “future uses in these areas include suburban and urban residential, commercial, institutional and recreational at varying densities and intensities.” Within the Highway 319 planning area, the Transitional Growth Areas reach from Homewood to Highway 22, and from Cool Springs to Aynor.

- Rural Areas: Just a small area in between the above mentioned “Transitional Growth Areas” is considered a “Rural Area” per definition in the Comprehensive Plan. This area stretches from Highway 22 to Cool Springs. As defined, “Rural Areas are to support compatible residential and commercial development at current zoning and to promote the rural lifestyle found throughout these areas.”
- Rural Communities: Finally, there are only three identified “Rural Communities” in the Future Land Use Map within the Highway 319 planning area. These communities are Horry, Spring Hill and Cool Springs. Per definition, “Rural Communities are traditional settlements and places of congregation in which any proposed development is compatible with surrounding densities and current settlement patterns.”

## ZONING

Land Use planning and development in the United States is very much based on the zoning laws which control the type and intensity of how land is used. Zoning had been successful in promoting health, safety and a high quality of life through the separation of commercial, industrial and residential uses. Today, the principles of Euclidian Zoning have been somewhat criticized in producing too much traffic and other social discrepancies. Together with newer models, such as form-based or performance based zoning principles, this planning tool remains to be the most effective land-use planning tool.

Although zoning has been utilized in the U.S. since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is fairly new to Horry County, which introduced zoning in 1987. In 2001, the study area was blanket-zoned Forest Agriculture (FA) by Horry County Council. Thereafter, County Council actively involved property owners, allowing individual zoning requests for their properties. The resulting zoning map still shows these initial zoning efforts.

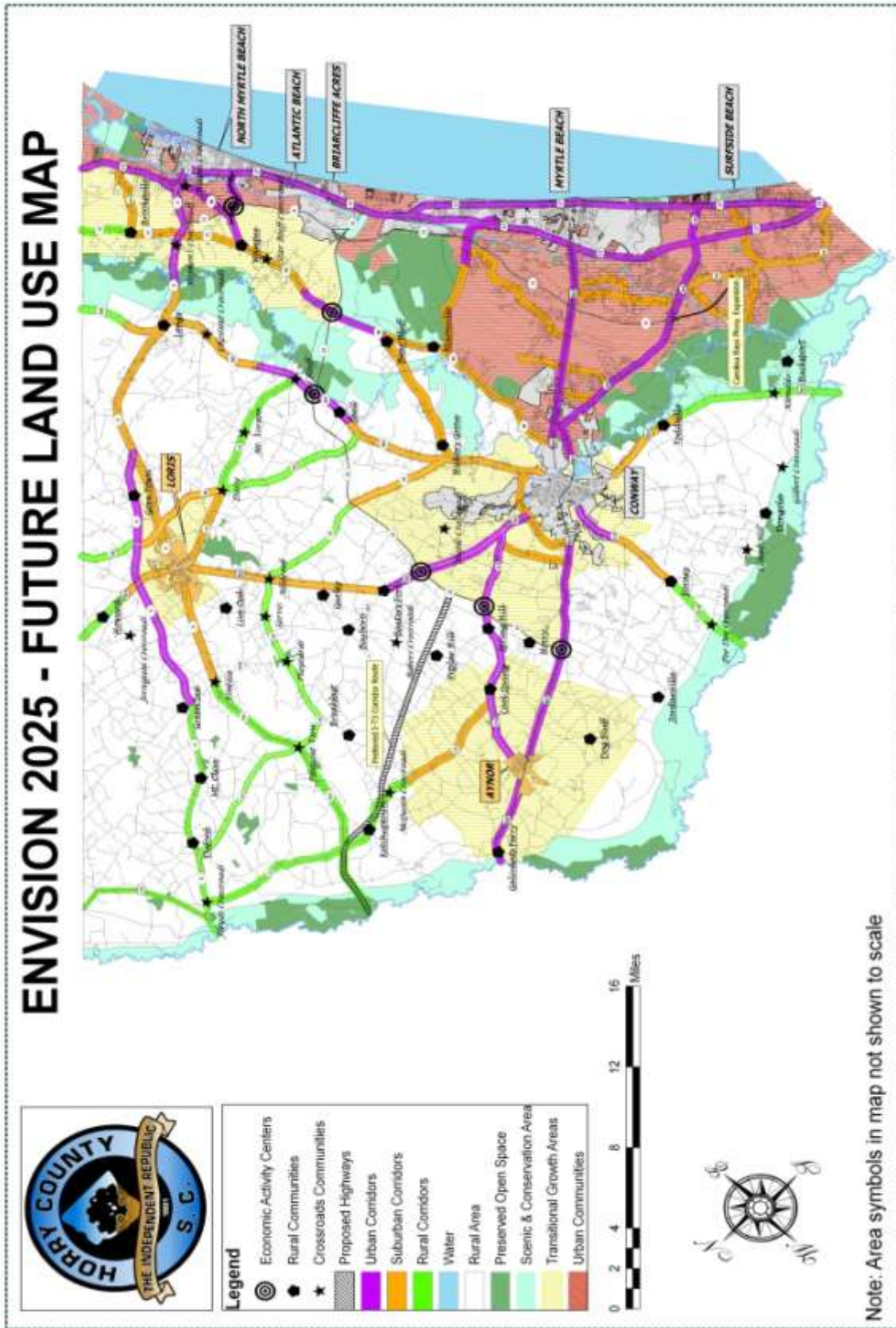
As the following Zoning Map of the Highway 319 planning area shows, the majority of parcels within the planning boundary are still predominantly designated as FA, which allows for agricultural, forestry, residential, and commercial uses. Rezoning cases have brought visible changes to the Highway 319 corridor, especially in the form of more suburban-style developments. Also, there have been additional rezoning requests that have and would create more commercial and industrial land uses along the corridor.



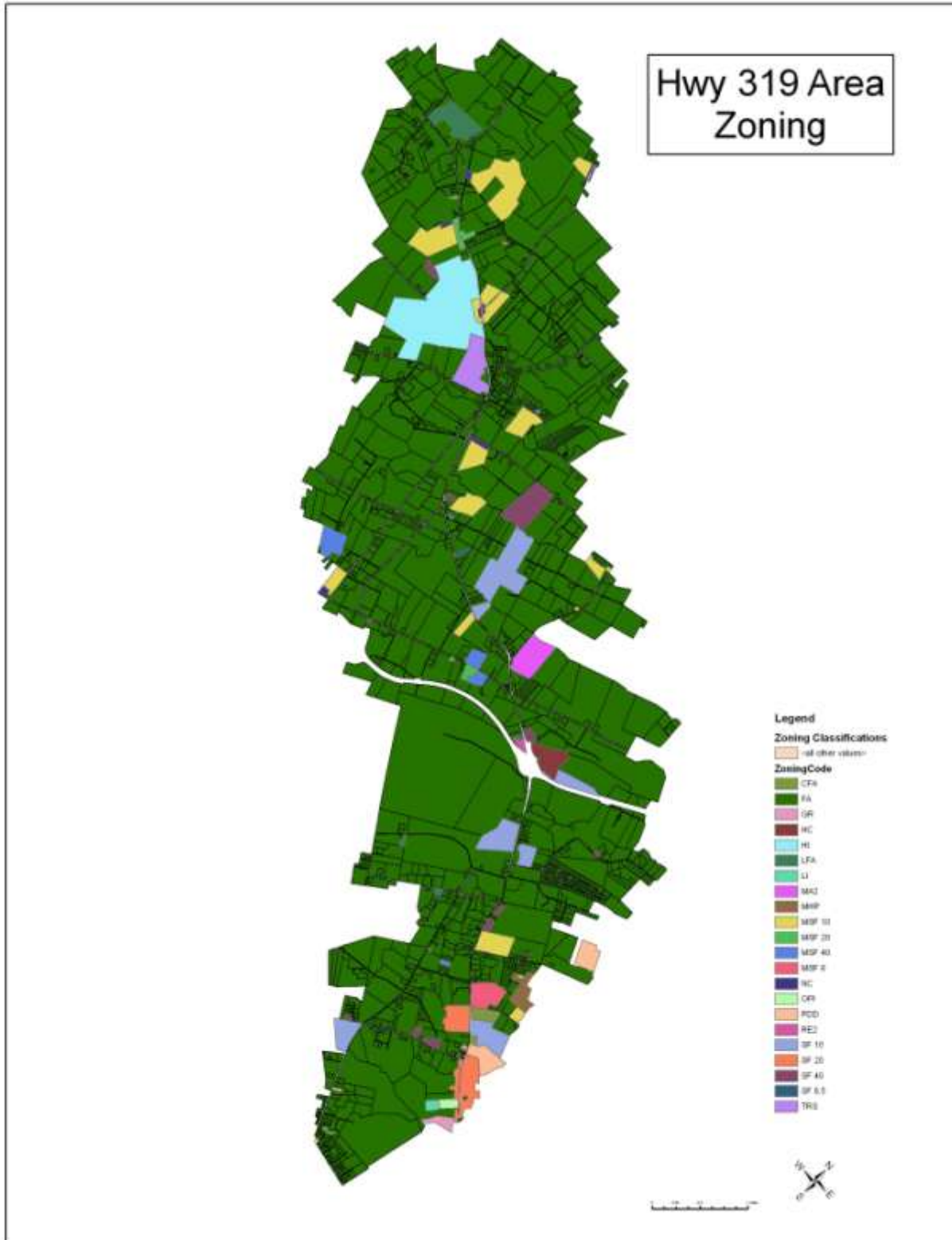
Currently, the only major non-agricultural or non-residential zoning districts are Heavy Industrial (HI) and Transportation Related Services (TRS), which define the Cool Springs Industrial Park. The Park was conceived as a joint-venture between Horry, Georgetown, and Marion Counties, the City of Aynor, Burroughs & Chapin and the South Carolina Jobs & Economic Development Authority.

Despite the emergence of development along the Highway 319 corridor, it remains predominantly rural and agricultural in its character. Local residents describe the area as one of the last remaining original, rural communities in Horry County that has been mostly spared from over-development. For this reason, the residents of the Highway 319 corridor would like to see this area and its agricultural and cultural heritage preserved.

Map 2: Envision 2025 – Future Land Use Map



Map 3: Current Zoning Map of the Highway 319 planning area



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning Department, 2010

## B. Strengths of the Highway 319 area

The Highway 319 corridor area can be characterized as a rural, mostly agricultural community, in transition. It is conveniently located between Aynor and Conway, both growing municipalities. Newcomers and long-time residents value the rural character and heritage.

Illustration 3: Livestock on pasture

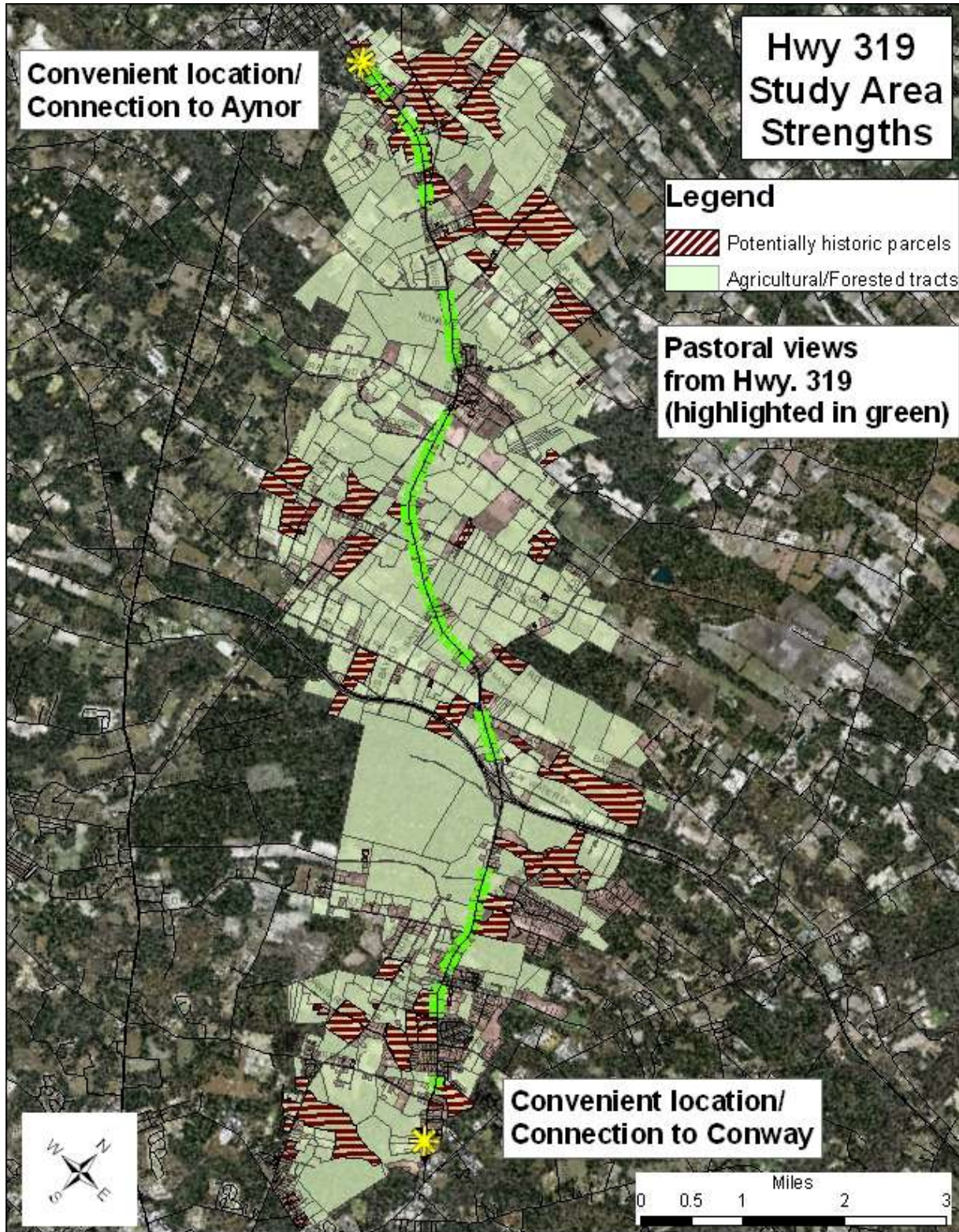


Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2009

Before construction of today's four-lane U.S. 501 highway, Highway 319 served as the original primary thoroughfare providing access to Horry County from the west. The settlement pattern within the planning area to this day resembles the linear accumulation of homesteads along that first road. Visible also is the direct relation of older residences to agricultural activities. Many local families still farm today, raising livestock (see illustration 3), growing crops, or by using their larger tracts of land for the production of hay or timber (see illustration 4).



Map 4: Strengths of the Highway 319 area



Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2010



**Illustration 4: Rural farm in Highway 319 area**



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2009

Further strengths of the Highway 319 area include safety, its lack of blighted areas, historical buildings (e.g. historical homes, tobacco barns and other agricultural out-buildings, cemeteries, churches, fire tower) and archeological sites (e.g. Cool Springs) (see illustration 5).

**Illustration 5: The “Holbert home” (historic home along Hwy. 319)**



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2009

## **C. Identified weaknesses**

Together with aforementioned strengths, there are also some addressable weaknesses in the Highway 319 area.

Based on the geographical expanse of the Highway 319 corridor and study area, the most prominent weakness is the lack of one acceptable community center. The existence of several crossroads communities within the area, such as Cool Springs, Allens Crossroads and Horry resemble the rural and spread-out settlement pattern throughout the area. However, that sense of a unified community is somewhat lost due to these settlement patterns. Further affecting the sense of community is the institutional fragmentation of the area for school districting, postal service areas, and even utility service areas. The construction and location of Highway 22 also contributed to this fragmentation, litterly cutting off farms, roads and families from each other.

Larger communities that provide basic needs and services can only be found in either neighboring Aynor or Conway, outside of the study area. This presents a weakness to the residents of the Highway 319 area, as it requires them to mostly travel to aforementioned destinations for groceries, medical & financial services, clothing, and other public and non-public services. This also applies to most service-sector related employment, resulting in the necessity to commute and travel for almost every aspect of every-day life.

Resultingly, the amount of vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) by residents along Hwy. 319 is high, adding to more commercial/industrial and tourist-related traffic that seems to be using Hwy 319 as an ever popular bypass to busy thoroughfares, most prominently US 501, with direct access to SC 22.

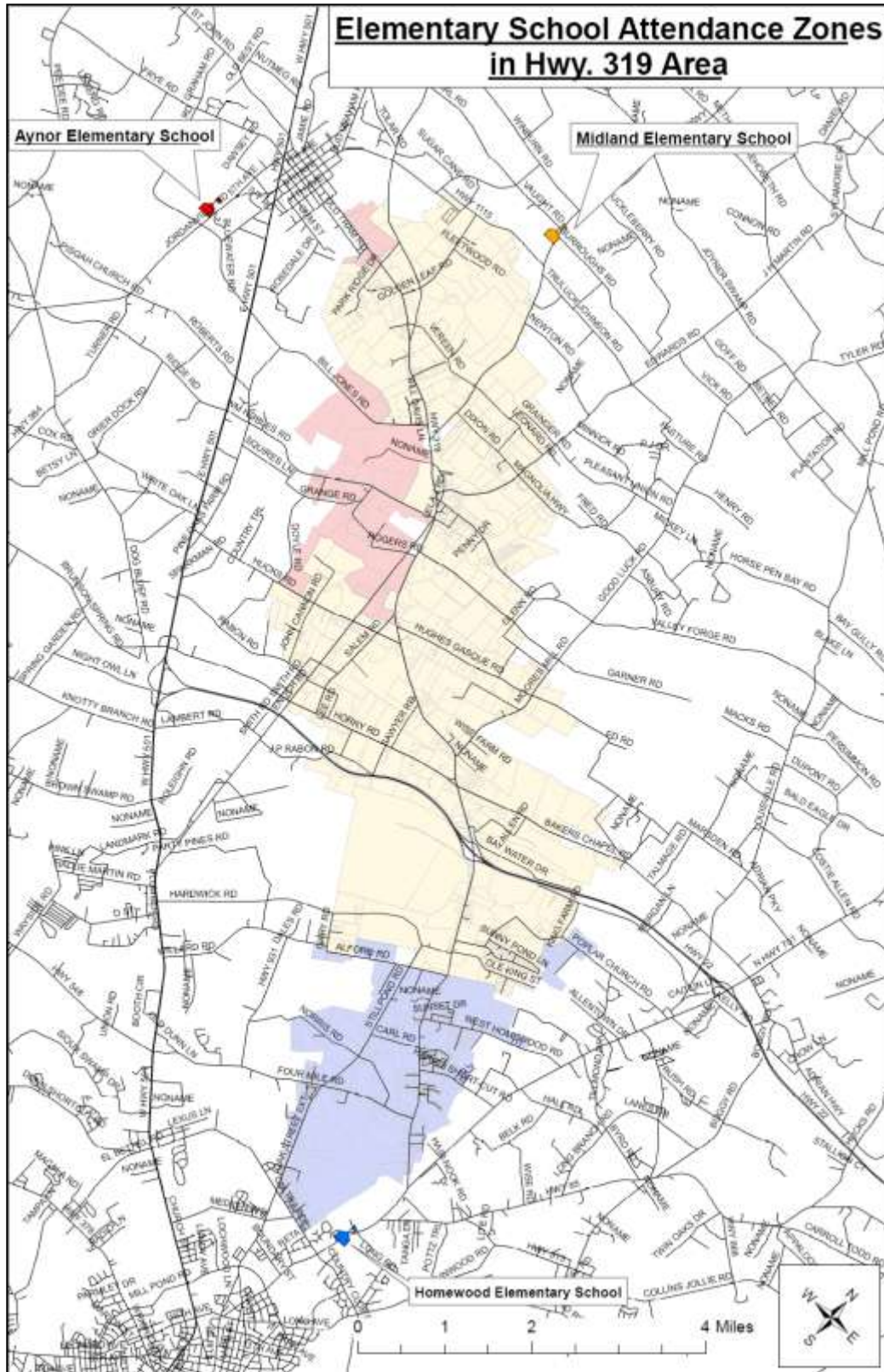
Another weakness identified within the Highway 319 planning area results from the large lot sizes of many parcels. Almost half (47%) of all parcels of land within the Hwy. 319 area are at least 2 acres in size. Furthermore, twenty-nine (29%) percent are at least 5 acres, and a tenth (10%) are at least 30 acres in size. More than hundred parcels (109) are 500 acres in size. This kind of fragmentation of land parcels into many well developable tracts, of at least 30 acres and more, can be assessed as a weakness to preserving the existing rural character of the Highway 319 area. This scenario makes it easy for developers to step in and to buyout financially distressed property owners, and to convert these kind of rural tracts into master-planned residential communities.

Should the real-estate market come back, this will result in increased sprawl of new development throughout the area.

As the following maps show, the studied Highway 319 area is large and therefore has been geographically split into several sections. This is especially true when it comes to school attendance zones (see Maps 5 – 7) and postal districts (see Map 8). Resultantly, residents closer to Aynor most likely associate themselves with that town, whereas residents east of Highway 22 towards Conway have more every-day interaction with the county seat.

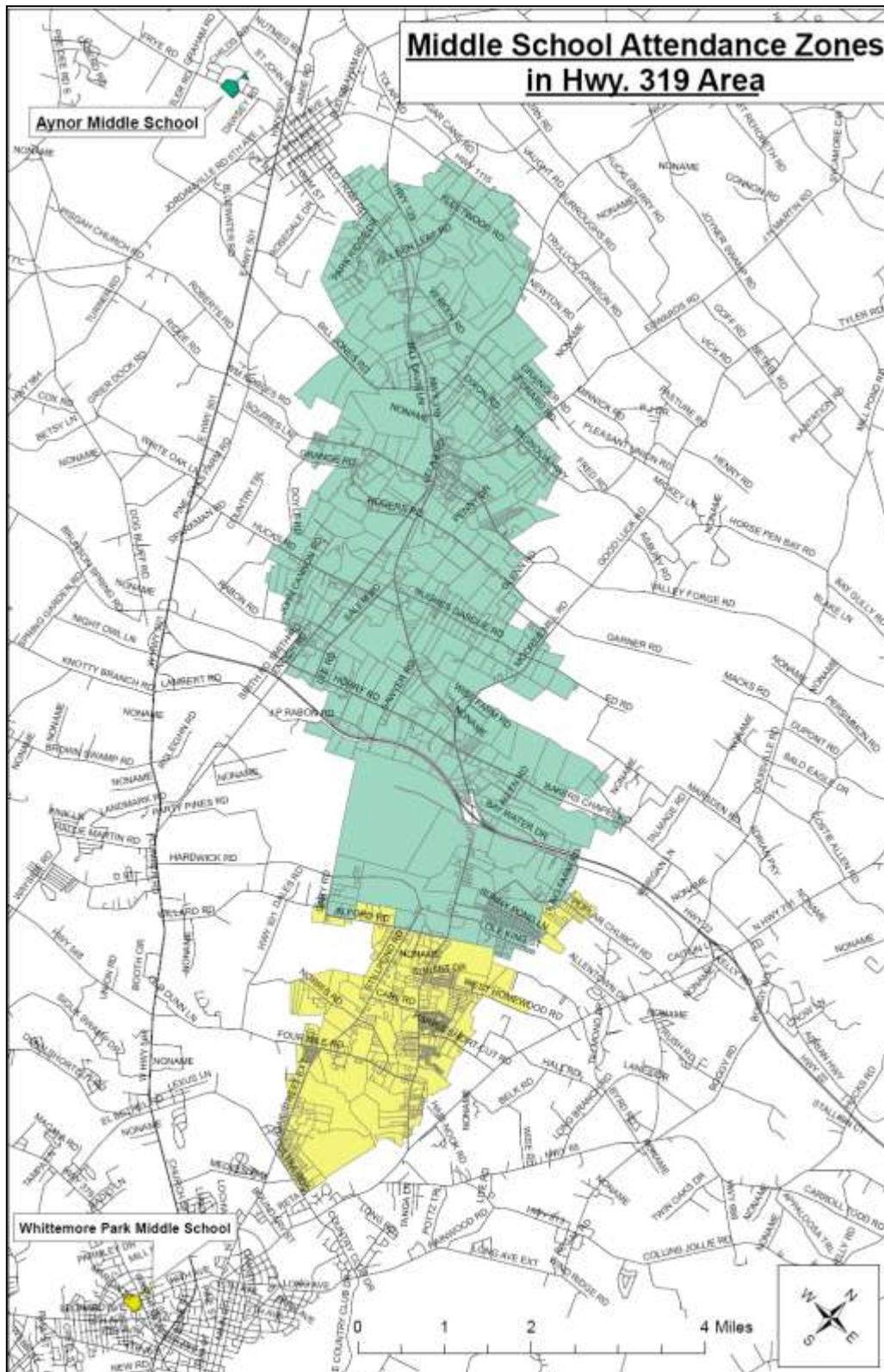


Map 5: Elementary School Attendance Zone in Hwy 319 area



Horry County  
Planning & Zoning,  
2010

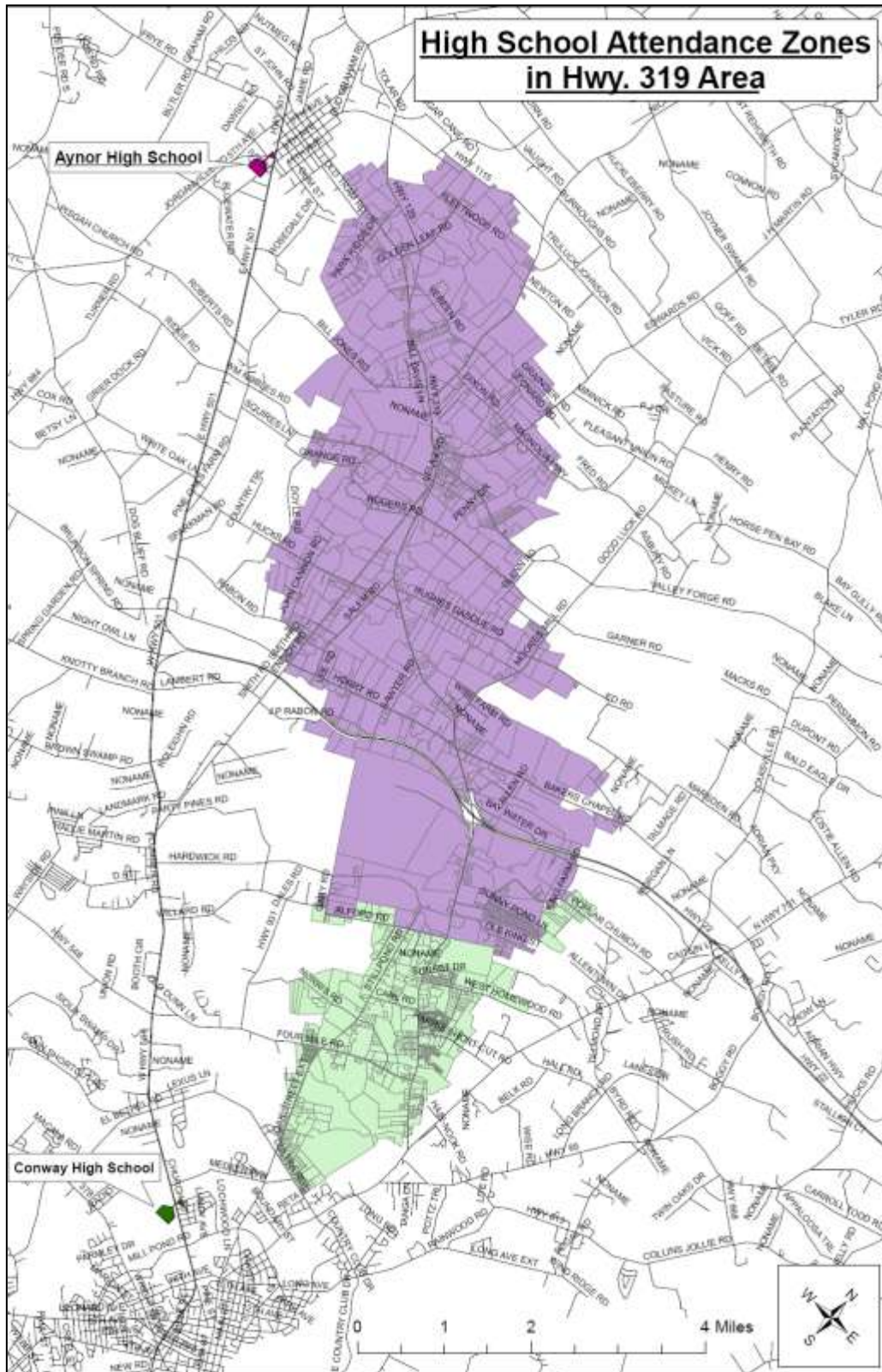
Map 6: Middle School Attendance Zones within Hwy 319 Area



Horry County  
Planning &  
Zoning, 2010

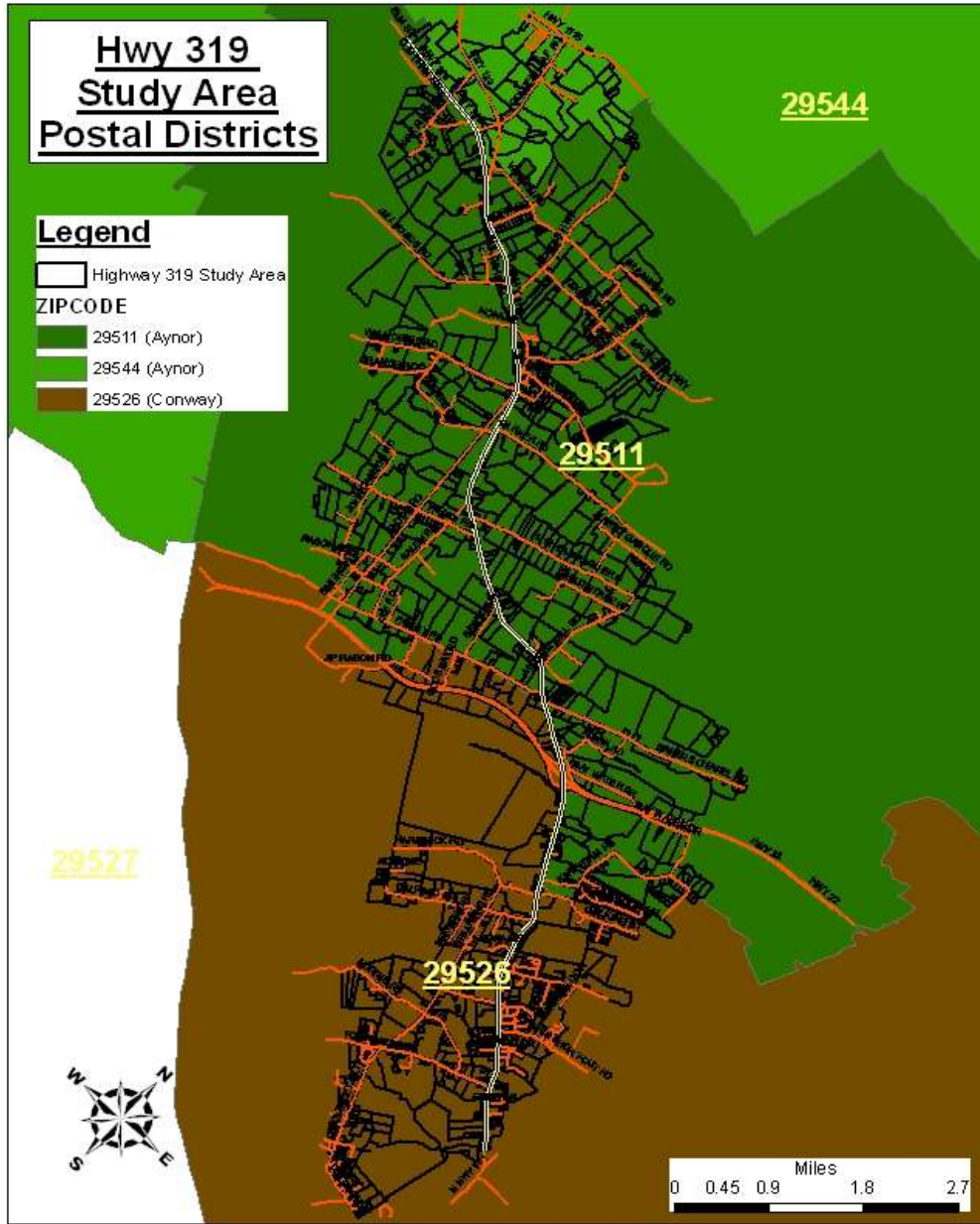


Map 7: High school attendance zones within Hwy. 319 area



Horry County  
Planning &  
Zoning, 2010

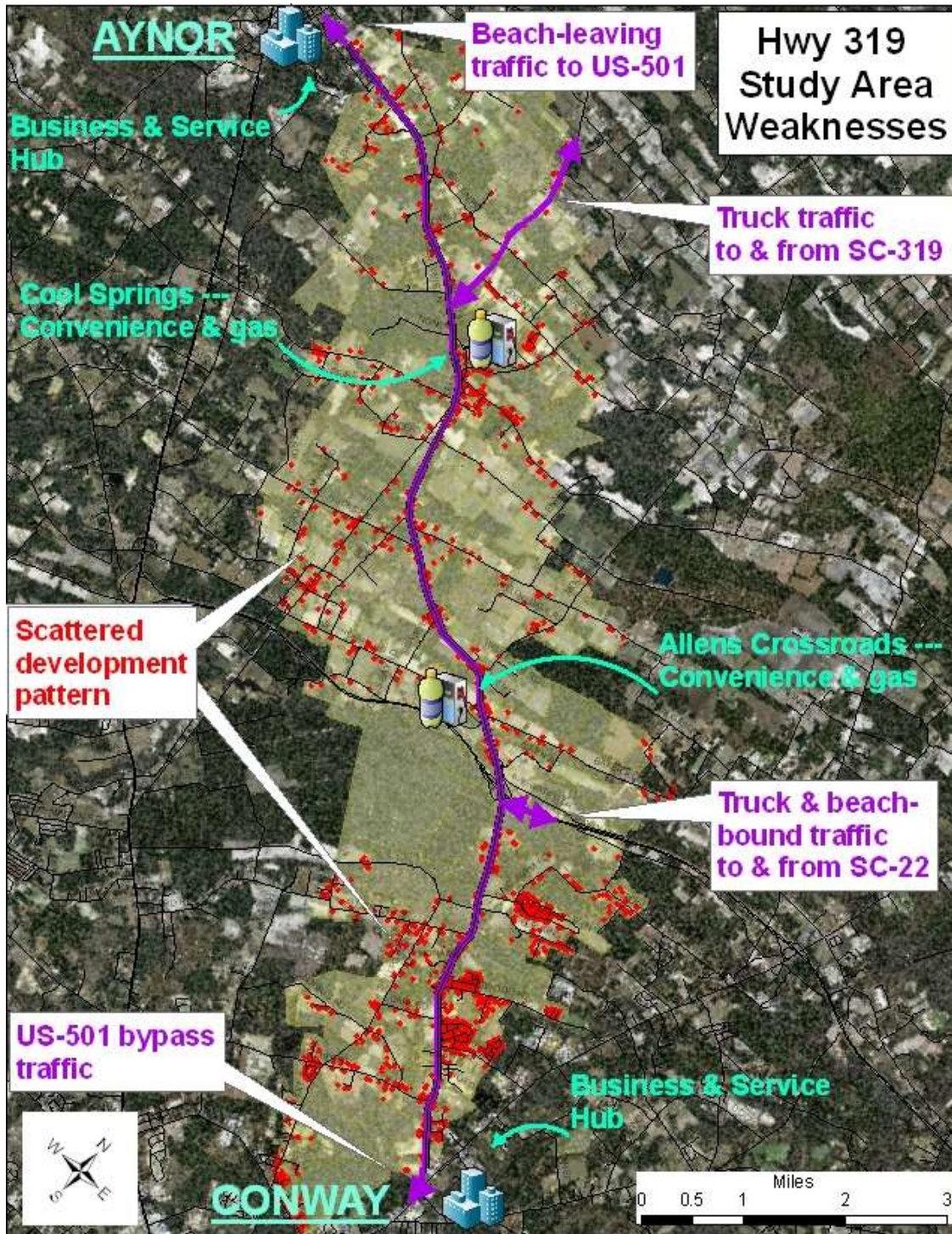
Map 8: Postal districts within Hwy. 319 area



Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2010



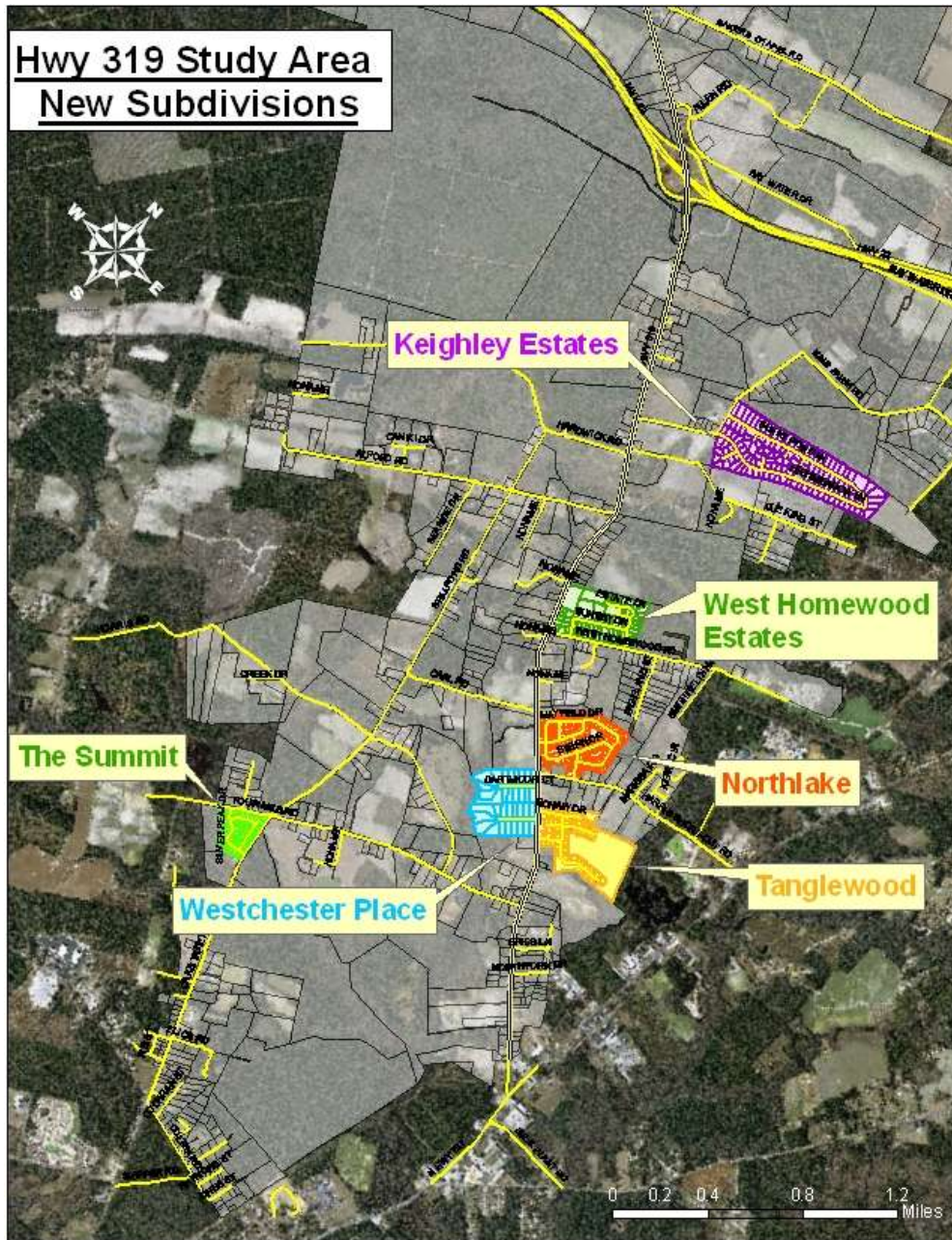
Map 9: Weaknesses of the Highway 319 area



Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2010



Map 10: New subdivisions in the Hwy. 319 area



## D. Opportunities

The Highway 319 corridor connects Aynor and Conway and offers many opportunities.

Although identified as a potential weakness, this alternative travel route to busy U.S. Highway 501 also presents an opportunity. Already used as a bypass by locals and

tourists, the highway serves as a connector road to Highway 22. Despite traffic and safety concerns, economic opportunities exist along the corridor for commercial growth.

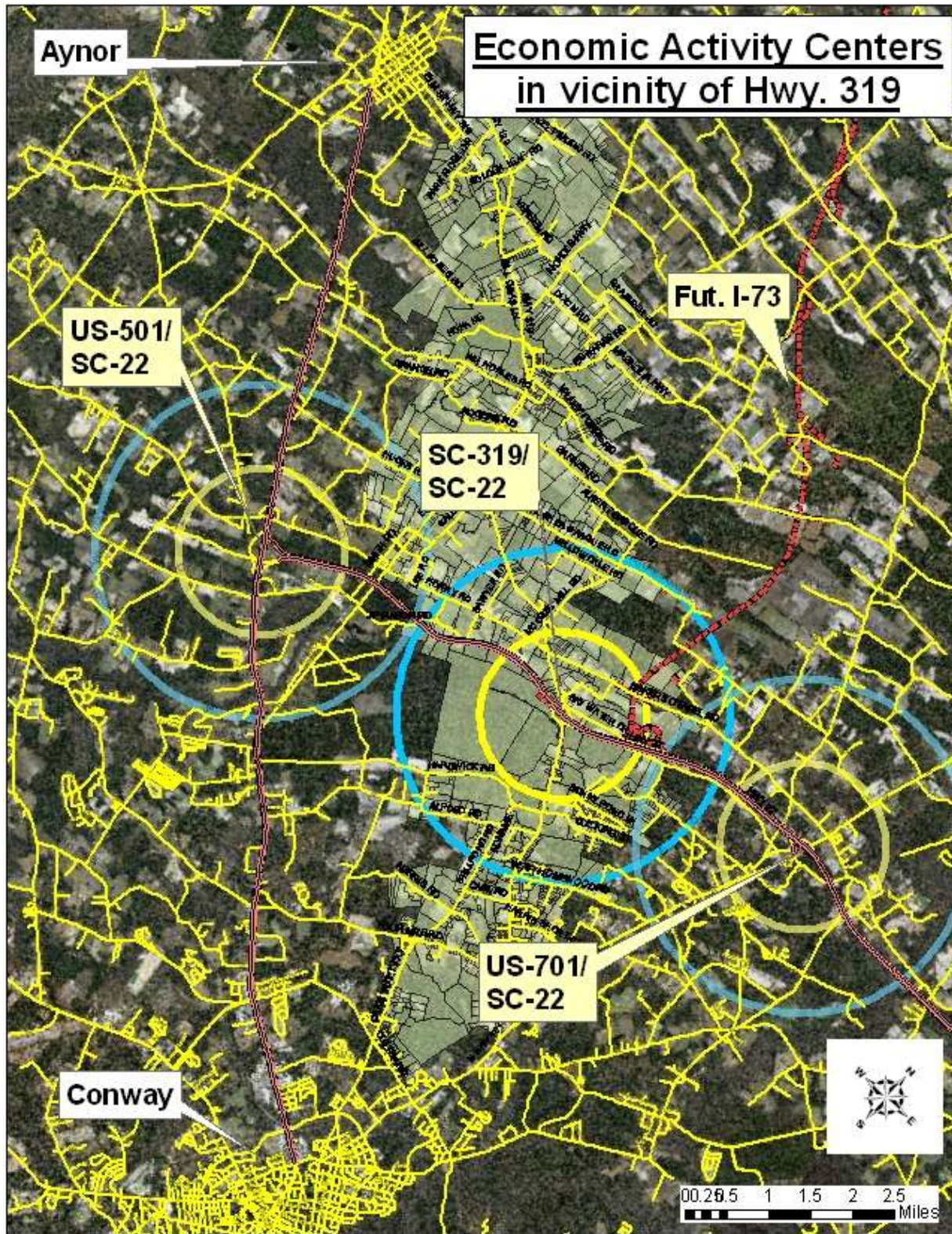
The growing popularity of the Grand Strand as a relocation destination has not only brought growth and increased development activity to the immediate coastline, but also has affected the inland locations as well. The Highway 319 Area not only provides quick and easy access to the beaches, but also boasts larger and more affordable homes. It is likely that once the current recession ends increased development in the area will resume.

The proximity to such growing places as Aynor or Conway and the existence of a limited-highway interchange to Highway 22 and proposed future Interstate Highway 73 demonstrates great potential for commercial and industrial growth. With only 7 – 8 miles distance between downtown Conway and the interchange of Highway 319 and 22, and together with the availability of large tracts of land, the economic development opportunities along the eastern portion of the Highway 319 corridor are immense. The Future Land Use Map of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan “Envision 2025” designates this interchange as an “Economic Activity Center” (see Map 11). Horry County has developed the Cool Springs Multi-County Business Park which is located at Hwy. 319 and Nichols Highway. Although no major industrial or commercial employer has opened operations thus far, the county has finished a \$1 million spec building to promote economic development interest at that site.

The residents polled have stated that they would prefer increased efforts in historic preservation and natural resource protection. As most of the Highway 319 corridor still retains its original rural character, such preservation measures could include promoting development patterns that would deliberately incorporate increased open space protection. Such developments would therefore have to better resemble the character of the area by providing residents with more recreational and natural resource preservation choices than in more urban-style developments elsewhere.



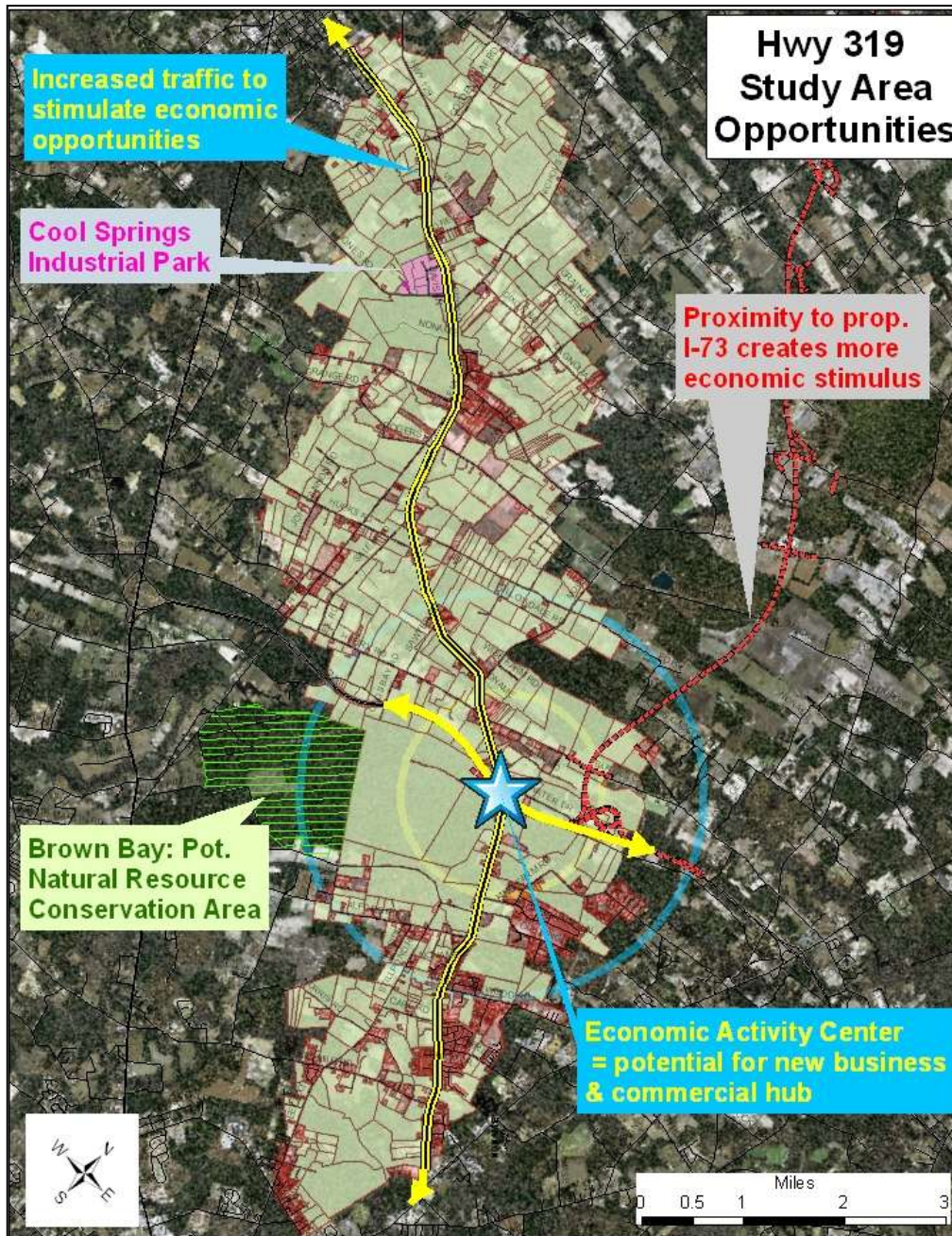
Map 11: Location of Economic Activity Center





Further development opportunities that incorporate the character of the Highway 319 area, such as subdivisions, that actively include existing components of the area, such as farming or other rural lifestyle themes, e.g. equestrian communities, historical features, and farms may serve to enhance and reinforce the already rural setting of the area.

Map 12: Opportunities of the Hwy. 319 area



Horry County  
Planning & Zoning,  
2010

## **E. Threats to the Highway 319 area**

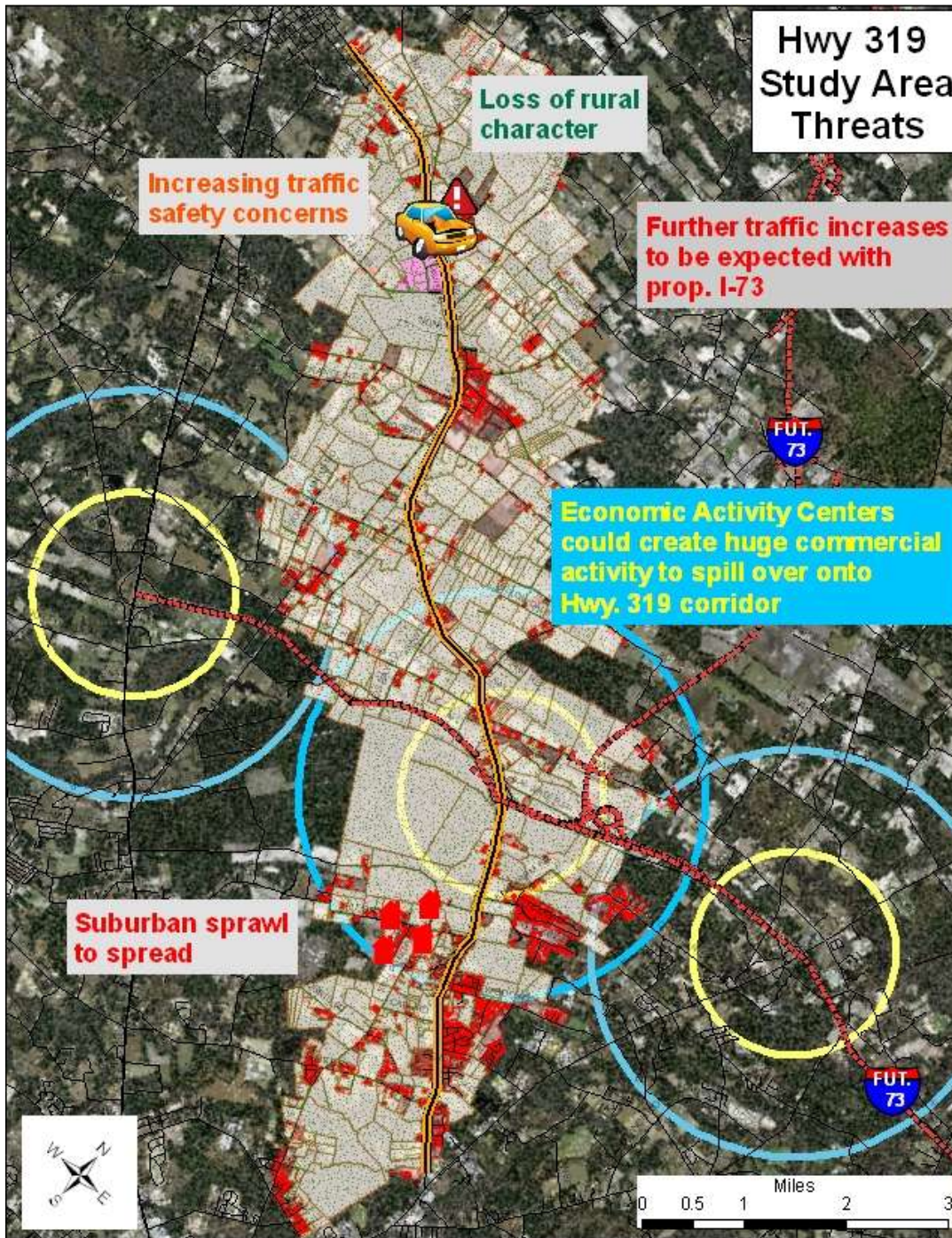
The rural character of the Highway 319 area may be threatened by encroaching development that does not represent the agricultural settlement pattern of this area. The concern is resumed growth pressures from Aynor and Conway, will become inappropriately developed.

Increased development may increase traffic on Highway 319. According to the Highway Capacity Manual by the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO), S.C. Hwy. 319 is identified as a major collector road, which is undivided and has a total number of two (2) lanes and a capacity of 8,600 Average Daily Trips (ADT). The latest traffic counts by SCDOT for 2009 identified an Average Annual Daily Trip count of 3,000, which represents a Capacity-Volume ratio of 35%. Although the data from the State Highway Department does not confirm congestion on Highway 319 as of 2009, a highway without paved shoulders, turn lanes, and other safety devices has residents along the Highway 319 corridor concerned. Tractor-trailer and truck traffic along Highway 319 is already present. However, when the Cool Spring Industrial Park begins operating in any capacity, truck traffic will increase. With the greater availability of GPS devices, more tourists use Highway 319 to avoid congestion on Highway 501. Many of these drivers are unfamiliar with the roadway adding to potential safety distress. With increased development activity in future, traffic and highway safety problems along the corridor may increase.

The designation of the Economic Activity Center at the intersection of Highway 22 and Highway 319 establishes a commercial urban growth center with a one mile radius. Extending another mile is a residential, institutional, and recreational urban growth ring. Identical designations were made for the intersections of Highway 22 and U.S. Highway 701 and U.S. Highway 501. When scaled on a map (Map 11 and 13), these EACs overlap or nearly overlap with each other along Highway 22, forming a corridor of potential highly intense urban commercial growth with Highway 319 at its center. This commercial growth corridor could drastically alter not only the distinctively rural atmosphere of the Highway 319 and Highway 22 intersection, but also the entire corridor.



Map 13: Threats of the Hwy 319 area



Horry County  
Planning &  
Zoning, 2010

## V. Goals, Strategies and Implementation

The following numbered points represent goals to which more concrete implementation strategies (bullet points) and an implementation timeline (in parentheses) are hierarchically ordered to. It is recommended that Horry County implements the following strategies within the short term (1-2 years), intermediate term (2-5) years, or long term (5 and more years) time frame in order to fulfill the identified Goals and Strategies.

### 1. Conserve environmental and agricultural resources:

- Consider the adoption of policies to better protect valuable farmland **(short term)**;
- Promote rezoning to Conservation Preservation (CO1) or Agricultural Zoning designations for farmland and forest protection **(short term)**;
- Collaborate with Clemson Extension and other agencies to help support the local agricultural economy by better connecting local producers and consumers of rural products **(short term)**;
- Investigate and develop a Conservation Trust Program designed to purchase farmland otherwise at risk for development **(long term)**;
- Better manage clear cutting of parcels in anticipation of development to prevent unnecessarily clearing if building fails to follow **(intermediate term)**;
- Consider prohibiting the clearing of land for subdivision building by limiting clearing only to areas necessary for building, maintaining the natural and mature landscaping of the parcels **(intermediate term)**;
- Identify wetlands on private property and develop mechanism by which property owners can donate the property to the county or non-profit for conservation **(long term)**;
- Link protected or conserved properties to create a Rural Greenway **(intermediate term)**;
- Encourage the usage of pervious surfaces where possible **(short term)**;
- Consider the creation of a countywide Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR) to direct growth away from sensitive rural areas **(long term)**.

2. Preserve the Character of Highway 319 as a rural/scenic corridor:

- Seek to restore or maintain traditional development patterns that create scenic rural value **(short term)**;
- Document and require protection of important historic resources **(short term)**;
- Identify, protect and improve heritage resources **(short term)**;
- Develop a mechanism to protect connected stretches of open or forested lands that are at least a quarter mile in length **(long term)**;
- Encourage uses that are compatible with rural and scenic landscapes and do not impact the features and resources of those areas **(short term)**;
- Encourage lot-layout and building design that retain scenic and other resources and fit development into the landscape with as little impact as possible **(short term)**;
- Encourage and incentivize the adapting and reuse of existing structures **(short term)**;
- Prohibit offsite commercial signage **(short term)**;
- Designate and promote Highway 319 as a Local Scenic Corridor **(short term)**;
- Designate the Highway 319 Corridor as a Rural Corridor as defined in the Envision 2025 Comprehensive Plan **(short term)**;
- Preserve the existence of home based businesses in the area to lessen the need for additional commercial building development **(short term)**.

3. Limit the impact of commercial growth and direct it to most suitable areas:

- Reduce the size of the designated Economic Activity Center at the intersection of Hwy 22 and Hwy 319 from two miles in radius to thirty-five hundredths of a (.35) mile in radius **(short term)**;
- Direct growth to designated Economic Activity Center, where services and utilities are available, and where such development will have minimum impact on rural resources and agricultural/silvicultural activities **(short term)**;
- Direct incompatible uses away from environmentally sensitive areas **(short term)**;
- Require developers to focus on aesthetic and functional impacts of commercial developments and work to resolve incompatibilities between commercial and residential uses **(short term)**;

- Redefine the Economic Activity Center as to accommodate suburban growth rather than the more intense urban growth **(short term)**;
  - Prohibit industrial development outside of the Cool Springs Industrial Park **(short term)**;
  - Develop design standards that are compatible with and reflect the community within which the development is located **(short term)**;
  - Increase the amount of open space required on any development within the Hwy. 319 area **(short term)**;
  - Require increased standards for stormwater management **(short term)**.
4. Limit the impact of residential growth by assuring new residential development reflects the rural character of the area:
- Limit further subdivision of land for residential purposes to a minimum of ½ acre in size **(short term)**;
  - Require that all new or relocated mobile homes be located on individually subdivided and recorded lots of ½ acre or greater **(short term)**;
  - Prohibit multi-family residential development within the Highway 319 area **(short term)**.
5. Involve the residents of the Highway 319 area in Community Planning:
- Encourage the formation of a Community Group to serve as a contact point and review proposed rezonings in the Area **(short term)**.

## VI. Appendices

### Appendix A – Topical Survey Results

#### ➤ Farmland protection:

- Should the County adopt policies to better protect valuable farmland:
  - Yes 94% (80) No 6% (5)
  
- Should the County initiate rezoning to Conservation-Preservation (CP) or Agricultural Districts (AG):
  - Yes 74% (61) No 26% (21)
  
- Should the County initiate collaboration with Clemson Extension that will support the local agricultural economy by better connecting local producers and consumers of rural products:
  - Yes 96% (81) No 4% (3)
  
- Should the County investigate and develop a Conservation Trust Program that would aim to purchase farmland otherwise at risk for development:
  - Yes 77% (63) No 23% (19)
  
- Should the County explore area-specific education on existing land conservation programs through the local USDA-NRCS/Soil & Water Conservation District:
  - Yes 83% (69) No 17% (14)

➤ **Forest protection:**

- Should the County rezone the most ecologically important forests to CP:
  - Yes 71% (59) No 29% (24)
  
- Should the County seek to preserve/conserv e large tracts of open, undisturbed forested areas:
  - Yes 76% (62) No 24% (20)
  
- Should the County restrict ability to clear-cut parcels in anticipation of development unless development actually follows:
  - Yes 69% (57) No 31% (26)
  
- Should the County prohibit clearing of land for subdivision building by limiting clearing only to areas necessary for building, maintaining the mature landscaping of the parcels:
  - Yes 82% (68) No 18% (15)



➤ **Introduce area-specific landscaping standards**

- Should the County require the consideration of types and patterns of landscaping in the area and use those as a template for new landscaping:
  - Yes 49% (40) No 51% (42)
  
- Should the County require new structures and other site development be designed to use vegetation already in place:
  - Yes 65% (55) No 35% (30)
  
- Should the County require the use of landscaping to visually break-up the mass or expanse of long walls or to draw the eye to compatible features:
  - Yes 60% (49) No 40% (32)
  
- Should the County require the consideration of alternative screening methods to simple landscaping, such as fences, stone walls, and similar features to preserve the rural atmosphere:
  - Yes 63% (52) No 37% (30)

➤ **Natural resources and Rural Heritage protection:**

- Should the County steer growth to designated growth areas, e.g. existing crossroad communities, subdivisions, where services and utilities are available, and where such development will have minimum impact on rural resources and agricultural/silvicultural activities:
  - Yes 70% (59) No 30% (25)
  
- Should the County actively promote cluster development by encouraging usage of the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance, to protect and promote open, natural space:
  - Yes 54% (45) No 46% (38)
  
- Should the County encourage compact development patterns that concentrate development instead of allowing it to spread along the length of road corridors:
  - Yes 49% (39) No 51% (40)
  
- Should the County protect and enhance rural quality of life for present and future Hwy. 319 residents:
  - Yes 93% (77) No 7% (6)
  
- Should the County address the needs of existing rural residents without fostering growth and further suburbanization of the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 83% (69) No 17% (14)
  
- Should the County require a natural vegetative buffer along all public roadways to preserve the rural atmosphere of the area:
  - Yes 65% (54) No 35% (29)
  
- Should the County direct incompatible uses away from environmentally sensitive areas:
  - Yes 83% (70) No 17% (14)

- Should the County restore or maintain traditional development patterns that create scenic rural value:
  - Yes 85% (71) No 15% (13)
  
- Should the County identify wetlands on private property and develop mechanism by which property owners can donate the property to the county or non-profit for conservation:
  - Yes 58% (48) No 42% (35)
  
- Should the County link protected or conserved properties to create a Rural Greenway:
  - Yes 59% (49) No 41% (34)

➤ **Scenic, Historic, and Open Spaces protection:**

- Should the County ensure that the rural and scenic character of the residential corridor is preserved:
  - Yes 86% (71) No 14% (12)
- Should the County develop Conservation Easements along the Hwy. 319 corridor to protect the scenic landscape as seen from the highway:
  - Yes 75% (61) No 25% (20)
- Should the County assist in the establishment of a local Land Conservation entity or Land Trust within the community:
  - Yes 60% (48) No 40% (32)
- Should the County document and require protection of important historic resources:
  - Yes 86% (69) No 14% (11)
- Should the County protect and improve heritage resources:
  - Yes 89% (73) No 11% (9)
- Should the County protect connected stretches of open or forested lands that are at least a quarter mile in length:
  - Yes 70% (55) No 30% (23)
- Should the County encourage uses that are compatible with rural and scenic landscapes and do not impact the features and resources of those areas:
  - Yes 77% (63) No 23% (19)
- Should the County encourage lot-layout and building design that retain scenic and other resources and fit development into the landscape with as little impact as possible:
  - Yes 77% (62) No 23% (19)

- Should the County encourage the consideration of building envelopes – areas within the lot where the structure must be located, to site structures and ways that increase open space, avoid obstructing views, and allow for coordination of parking, access and drives:
  - Yes                      60% (47)                      No      40% (31)
  
- Should the County encourage and incentivize the adapting and reuse of existing structures:
  - Yes                      78% (62)                      No      22% (18)

➤ **Maintain and enhance the functionality of Highway 319**

- Should the County widen Hwy. 319 to four (4) lanes:
  - Yes 9% (7) No 91% (74)
  
- Should the County widen Hwy. 319 to three (3) lanes with a center turn lane:
  - Yes 25% (20) No 75% (61)
  
- Should the County expand the shoulder of Hwy. 319:
  - Yes 52% (42) No 48% (38)
  
- Should the County add bicycle or multi-use lanes to Hwy. 319:
  - Yes 33% (27) No 67% (55)
  
- Should the County add sidewalks to Hwy. 319:
  - Yes 13% (11) No 87% (71)
  
- Would you support a tax increase to fund the enhancement of Highway 319 for purposes such as including bike lanes or shoulder widening:
  - Yes 26% (21) No 74% (61)

➤ **Preservation of the rural character of the area through land development regulations:**

- Should the County limit further subdivision of land to a minimum of 0.5 acres:
  - Yes 43% (34) No 57% (46)
- Should the County limit further subdivision of land to a minimum of 1 ac.:
  - Yes 49% (39) No 51% (41)
- Should the County limit further subdivision of land to a minimum of 3 acres:
  - Yes 38% (30) No 62% (49)
- Should the County limit further subdivision of land to a minimum of 5 acres:
  - Yes 22% (17) No 78% (62)
- Should the County limit further subdivision of land to a minimum of 10 acres:
  - Yes 26% (18) No 74% (50)
- Should the County require that lot sizes, frontage requirements, and setbacks be compatible with the surrounding area and/or set to establish a pattern for future development:
  - Yes 76% (64) No 24% (20)
- Should the County require that lot sizes be appropriate to accommodate the needs of the use, avoiding overly large minimum lot sizes that consume more land needlessly:
  - Yes 46% (37) No 54% (43)
- Should the County employ market-based mechanisms to guide development and resource use:
  - Yes 35% (28) No 65% (51)
- Should the County create a Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR) to direct growth away from sensitive rural areas:
  - Yes 68% (53) No 32% (25)

- Should the County reward environmentally-friendly developers with tax incentives and density bonuses:
  - Yes 40% (33) No 60% (49)
- Should the County direct commercial growth to designated Economic Activity Centers:
  - Yes 70% (58) No 30% (25)
- Should the County direct commercial growth to Economic Activity Centers and Community Crossroads:
  - Yes 42% (34) No 58% (47)
- Should the County prohibit all future commercial development from the study area:
  - Yes 54% (43) No 46% (36)
- Should the County limit maximum height of buildings in the area:
  - Yes 64% (51) No 36% (29)
- Should the County limit curb-cuts onto Hwy. 319, instead locating access to secondary roads:
  - Yes 55% (42) No 35% (35)
- Should the County restrict development of parcels without access to a secondary road:
  - Yes 54% (43) No 46% (37)
- Should the County require connectivity through interconnected network of roads and streets and block designs to provide multiple pathways for trip dispersion and reduced trip lengths:
  - Yes 49% (38) No 51% (40)
- Should the County discourage urban sprawl through innovative and compatible development practices:
  - Yes 74% (61) No 26% (21)



- Should the County increase the amount of open space required on any development within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 68% (53) No 32% (25)
- Should the County encourage suburban growth in the Hwy. 319 area to locate nearer to the City of Conway (the intersection with US 701) to preserve as much of the rural character of the remaining area as possible:
  - Yes 77% (64) No 23% (19)
- Should the County restrict all suburban growth:
  - Yes 45% (35) No 55% (43)
- Should the County prohibit mobile home parks within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 66% (55) No 34% (28)
- Should the County eliminate the use of septic systems within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 13% (11) No 87% (72)
- Should the County restrict manufactured homes within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 28% (22) No 72% (57)
- Should the County restrict multi-family development within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 63% (52) No 37% (30)
- Should the County restrict junked or unlicensed vehicles from being located in the front yards of homes within the study area:
  - Yes 86% (71) No 14% (12)
- Should the County prohibit the location of auto-repair service, such as tire, auto body and oil change businesses within the Highway 319 Area:
  - Yes 55% (45) No 45% (37)
- Should the County prohibit the location of strip-commercial developments:
  - Yes 82% (67) No 18% (15)
- Should the County prohibit the location of mini-storage facilities within the Highway 319 Area:
  - Yes 67% (54) No 33% (27)

- Should the County prohibit the location of the use of metal-façaded buildings within the study area:
  - Yes 53% (43) No 47% (38)
  
- Should the County create a new zoning designation for the Hwy. 319 area, such as RPD – Rural Preservation District to accommodate rural developments designed to preserve rural character, significant man-made features, and environmentally sensitive areas and permit open space, recreational, agricultural, residential, and limited neighborhood business and office uses that are part of a unified design:
  - Yes 69% (55) No 31% (25)
  
- Should the County limit impervious surface coverage for both structures and total lot coverage:
  - Yes 56% (41) No 44% (32)
  
- Should the County require commercial developments to use shared parking where possible to minimize asphalt expanse:
  - Yes 76% (59) No 24% (19)
  
- Should the County require the Co-locating of cell phone transmitters on one tower or facility, such as a water tower rather than have each service on a separate tower:
  - Yes 77% (61) No 23% (18)
  
- Should the County establish zones or districts where billboards may not be constructed:
  - Yes 90% (73) No 10% (8)

➤ **Introduce area-specific architectural design standards that retain the rural character**

- Should the County develop design standards that are compatible with and reflect the community within which the development is located:
  - Yes 73% (51) No 27% (19)
- Should the County require design standards for all new development within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 59% (48) No 41% (33)
- Should the County provide for quality, multi-family development through design standards:
  - Yes 54% (45) No 46% (38)
- Should the County provide for quality manufactured homes through design standards:
  - Yes 74% (60) No 26% (21)
- Should the County require design standards for all new commercial development within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 71% (59) No 29% (24)
- Should the County require design standards for all new residential subdivisions within the Hwy. 319 area:
  - Yes 76% (62) No 24% (20)
- Should the County require developers to focus on aesthetic and functional impacts of strip-commercial developments and work to resolve incompatibilities between commercial and residential uses:
  - Yes 91% (70) No 9% (7)
- Should the County require developers break parking lots into smaller units through design and landscaped islands:
  - Yes 61% (47) No 39% (30)

- Should the County require parking lots be located to the side or rear of building to lessen their visual impact:
  - Yes 67% (53) No 33% (26)
- Should the County prohibit over-illumination of a site by requiring light levels to be matched to the purpose required:
  - Yes 73% (63) No 27% (23)
- Should the County require that transformers and substations be sited in such a way so that natural features and landscaped topography make them less visible:
  - Yes 74% (61) No 26% (21)
- Should the County require that telecommunication transmitters locate on existing structures and be designed into building elements, such as water and clock towers and church steeples:
  - Yes 63% (50) No 37% (29)
- Should the County limit and consolidate the number of signs for each business:
  - Yes 83% (66) No 17% (14)
- Should the County direct larger estate-like homes to localities that already contain such structures, preserving the smaller, more traditional communities:
  - Yes 44% (34) No 56% (44)
- Should the County consider guardrail styles and materials that blend in or are compatible with the landscape, particularly along scenic stretches of the roadway:
  - Yes 50% (44) No 50% (44)
- Would you support a tax increase to fund the oversight of design standards in the Highway 319 Community:
  - Yes 29% (23) No 71% (56)

## **Appendix B – Maps**

The following maps depict further researched aspects of the Highway 319 corridor: