

Chapter 3.4 Cultural Resources Element

Element Goal

Cultural, historic and archaeological resources, unique settlement patterns of traditional Lowcountry communities (such as historically African-American communities and family settlements), and traditional activities (such as Sweetgrass Basket Making) should be preserved and protected from potential negative impacts of growth and development.

3.4.1: OVERVIEW

Charleston County encompasses an area richly endowed with a legacy of historic properties, scenic roadways, and historic rural landscapes. In recent years, citizens, as well as many historic preservation professionals, have raised concerns that these resources are threatened by the changing character of the community. Efforts by public-private partnerships such as that to preserve the Morris Island Lighthouse, are important to protect the County's cultural resources. Today, there is a recognized need for more public awareness of the importance of history and natural beauty to the quality of life in Charleston County. In this sense, recognition and appreciation of the County's historic legacy is not just an issue of historic preservation, but is a key contributor to the local economy. It is at the heart of the vision for Charleston County which calls for preservation of rural community character, cultural resources, and traditional lifestyles.

Purpose and Intent

The primary purpose of the Cultural Resources Element is to protect and preserve the significant historic and archaeological resources and cultural heritage of the County. It also aims to increase public awareness of the historic character of the County and preserve the heritage and economic benefits. It also seeks to encourage public and private partnership to advance its purpose.

3.4.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

There is a strong community composed of a number of organizations that have committed to preserving cultural and historic resources in the County. Much of the responsibility for protecting these resources lies with the agencies listed below:

- The State Historic Preservation Office;
- The Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management;
- The Edisto Island Open Land Trust;
- The Lowcountry Land Trust;
- The South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology;
- The National Trust for Historic Preservation;
- The Trust for Public Land;
- The Preservation Society of Charleston;
- The Historic Charleston Foundation; and
- The Edisto Island Historic Preservation Society.

Charleston County has incorporated regulations to protect cultural resources through the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance* and coordinates with other agencies responsible for protecting these resources. However, the County is not solely responsible for their protection. Charleston County is fortunate to not only have several preservation-minded local and state organizations, but also a number of museums that raise awareness of the area's rich history, including the new International African-American Museum, coming in 2020.

1989 and 1992 Historic and Architectural Resource Inventories in Charleston County

Between 1989 and 1992, two surveys were conducted to identify historical and cultural resources in parts of Charleston County. In 1989, a historical survey, funded by the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Charleston County, and the City of Charleston, was conducted on James Island and Johns Island. A total of 85.5 square miles was surveyed, and 330 sites were identified - 201 sites on James Island and 129 sites on Johns Island. In 1992, Charleston County organized a public-private partnership to conduct an additional survey designed to include areas not previously surveyed, and to consolidate findings of prior studies that had looked at specific sites within those areas. Concurrent with the 1992 survey, the County partnered to conduct an archaeological inventory of Charleston County. The South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) granted funding for both projects, with matching funds provided by the Charleston County, the City of Charleston, the Historic Charleston Foundation, and the municipalities of Ravenel, Seabrook Island, and Kiawah Island. In order to raise public awareness, foster public sup-

port of preservation, and reach consensus as to how best to protect historic resources, the survey sponsors incorporated broad-based community participation throughout the survey process.

The 1989 and 1992 surveys surveyed approximately 1,170 historic and architectural sites within Charleston County, exclusive of the City of North Charleston, the Town of Mount Pleasant, and the City of Charleston (except for James Island areas within the City which are included in the 1,170 total). Surveyed sites include those developed prior to 1942 whose level of significance is considered to be local, as well as those that are nationally significant. A few sites that retain little integrity or setting are included in the surveys pending assessment of their level of importance with regard to local history.

Almost two-thirds of the historic sites surveyed are residences, including houses, slave cabins and tenant or employee cottages. Cemeteries compose the second most common site type, including approximately 12 percent of the total. Approximately three-quarters of the sites surveyed contained structures built between 1878 and 1940. Few structures survive that were built before 1800.

The surveyed sites are spread throughout Charleston County. Approximately one-half of the sites are located on Edisto Island, Wadmalaw Island, James Island, and Johns Island. Approximately 15 percent are within the vicinities of Hollywood, Meggett and Ravenel. The incorporated area of McClellanville has the highest concentration of sites, with 87 sites located within the corporate limits, composing 11 percent of the county-wide total sites surveyed.

133 sites identified in the 1992 survey located within the unincorporated areas of Charleston County are either nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), considered eligible for the National Register, or classified as potential historic districts. One-half of these sites are located on Edisto Island. These 133 sites include the more significant historic properties in the County. Additional sites are likely to meet criteria for inclusion on the National Register, but were not included in the survey due to the lack of resources to compile documentation required by the State Historic Preservation Office.



2016 Charleston County Historical and Architectural Resources Survey Update

Recognizing that more than 20 years had passed since the last County-wide survey, Charleston County applied for and was awarded a Federal Historic Preservation Grant to partially fund an update to the 1989 and 1992 surveys. The survey update project began in November 2015, when New South Associates, Inc. was hired to carry out the technical survey work, and the survey was completed in September 2016. Historic resources dating between 1940 and 1975 within unincorporated Charleston County were the focus of the project, and 1,319 resources were documented.

To begin the survey update project, a public workshop was held to refine the survey project area. During this public workshop, it became evident that many of the resources that exist in the unincorporated areas of the County are significant to African-American history and the Civil Rights Movement. Several members of historic African-American settlement communities from all areas of Charleston County participated in the project. In the end, approximately ten percent of the total area surveyed was in African-American settlement communities.

Of the 1,319 resources surveyed, the vast majority (1,183 sites or 90 percent) are residential or domestic (such as out-

buildings, employee quarters, etc.) sites. Forty-nine sites are commercial; 47 sites are religious; 15 sites are funerary/cemeteries; 7 sites are entertainment/recreation; five sites are civic/social; five are agricultural; and five are education or government.

Two individual properties are identi-

fied as eligible for the NRHP: the Elliot Constantine House in Riverland Terrace (pictured at right) is an example of the International style of architecture and the Tobin-Boyd school in the Red Top community is a late example of a segregated African-American school.

In addition to these two properties, the African-American settlement communities that span the County are noted as a significant cultural group resource. Specifically, four communities, Phillips, Scanlonville, Snowden, and Sol Legare, are eligible for the NRHP for their significance in community planning and development and black ethnic heritage. Several of the other communities may be eligible as well; however, more research is necessary.

Mapping Historic Resources

In 2014, the County utilized improved mapping technology to spatially display many of the 1992 survey sites. Not all sites can be mapped as some survey cards lack accurate parcel identification numbers. Some parcels also no longer exist due to subdivisions; therefore, only 623 of the sites (81 percent of the total sites included in the 1992 survey) can be mapped. Of the 623 sites, 412 sites (66 percent) are located in unincorporated Charleston County. Upon completion of the 2016 Survey Update, the newly surveyed resources were added to the 1992 data to spatially display the historic resources surveyed in unincorporated Charleston County (see *Map 3.4.1*). *Table 3.4.1* also summarizes the types of historic resources surveyed in the three County-wide surveys.

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

Listing a property in the National Register recognizes that it is of significance to the Country, the State, and the local community. It qualifies property owners for certain federal tax benefits and federal assistance for historic preservation (when funds are available). It also mandates consideration of potential impacts on the historic properties that result from federal or federally-assisted projects. As of 2014, 183 NRHP listings (including 167 sites and 16 historic districts) exist in

Resources surveyed during 2016 Survey Update Project



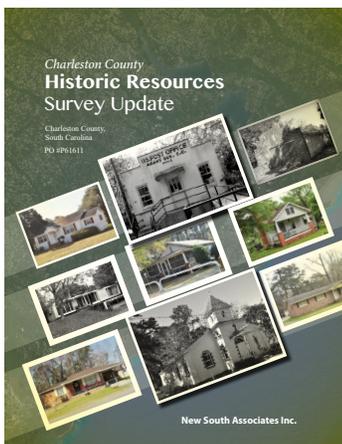
Elliot Constantine House in Riverland Terrace



Residence in Phillips Community



Backman's Seafood Shop in Sol Legare Community



Charleston County (including incorporated and unincorporated areas). In 2013, one of the unincorporated NRHP sites, Point of Pines Plantation Slave Cabin on Edisto Island, was delisted from the NRHP when it was dismantled and sent to Washington, D.C. The slave cabin has been reassembled and featured in the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the nation's capital.

Threats to Historic and Cultural Resources in Charleston County

Charleston County has experienced unprecedented growth over the past few decades. From 2000 to 2010, the County's population increased by 13 percent from 309,969 to 350,209 residents (U.S. Census Bureau). As more and more people move to Charleston County, the need for new development to house and employ these residents threatens existing historical and cultural resources. The *Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)* currently has a weak historic preservation ordinance that protects only properties listed on the NRHP. As a result, locally significant historical and cultural resources are often threatened or destroyed by new development. The lack of a mechanism to locally designate and protect properties means many significant structures are at risk of being destroyed by encroaching development and redevelopment.

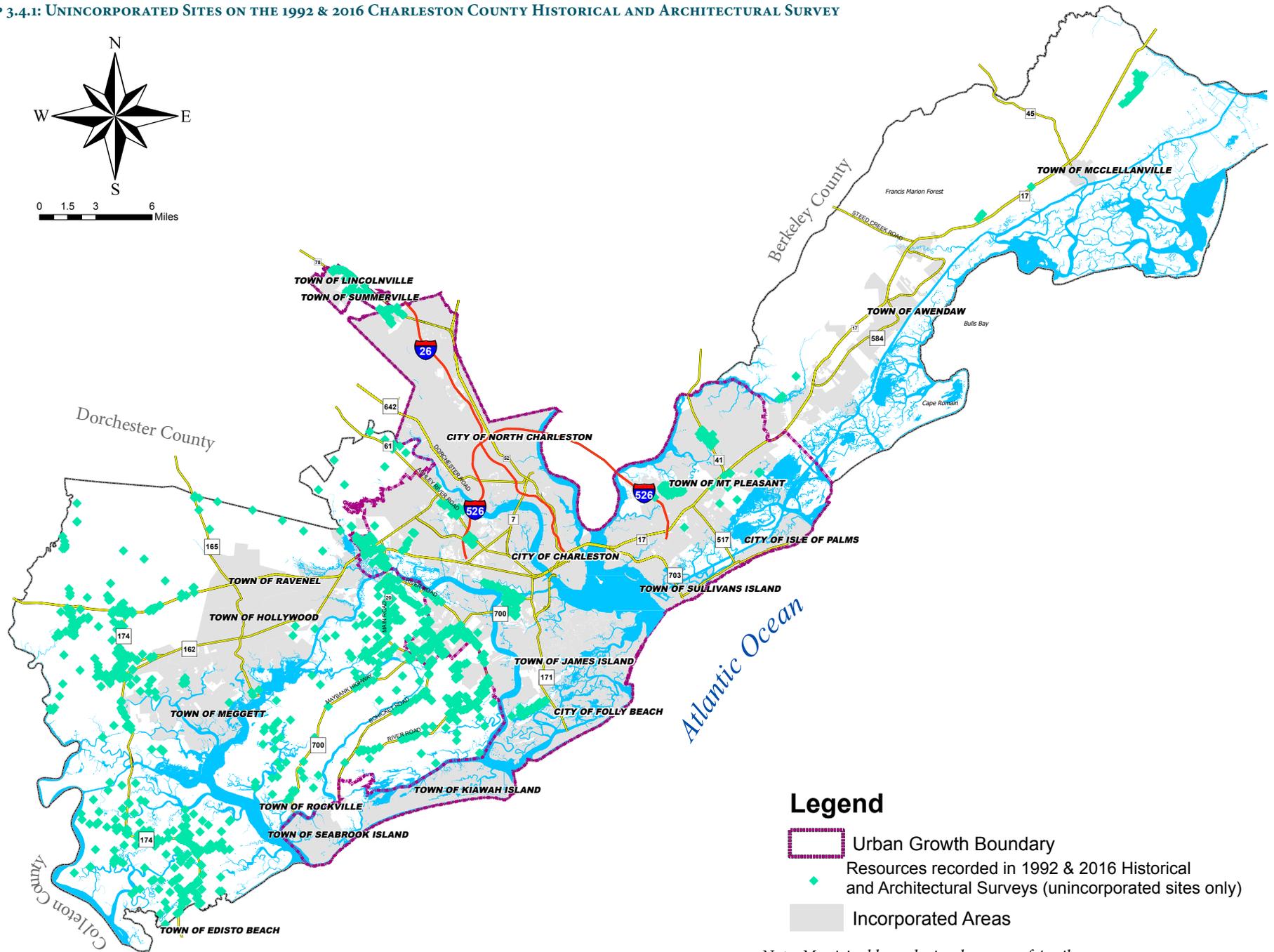
The County is taking steps to protect local historic and cultural resources. Completing the 2016 Survey Update provided insight into the resources in the unincorporated County and serves as an impetus for strengthening the County's historic preservation ordinance.

TABLE 3.4.1. TYPE DISTRIBUTION OF HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL SITES IN CHARLESTON COUNTY

Type	Number of Sites	Percent Total
Residences	1,936	77.7%
Cemeteries	150	6.0%
Roads and Landings	36	1.4%
Church Buildings	84	3.4%
Stores and Commercial Buildings	85	3.4%
Agricultural Buildings	33	1.3%
Railroad Lines and Structures	19	0.8%
Domestic Outbuildings	28	1.1%
Designed Landscapes	20	0.8%
Ruins and Building Sites	16	0.6%
Schools	18	0.7%
Bridges and Bridge Sites	11	0.4%
Canals	7	0.3%
Pecan Orchards and Groves	7	0.3%
Entertainment/Recreation	7	0.3%
Civic/Social	5	0.2%
Windmills	3	0.1%
Oyster Factories	3	0.1%
Cotton Gins	4	0.2%
Fire Towers	3	0.1%
Other	18	0.7%
Total	2,493	100.0%

Source: Charleston County Historic and Architectural Surveys, 1989, 1992, and 2016

MAP 3.4.1: UNINCORPORATED SITES ON THE 1992 & 2016 CHARLESTON COUNTY HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY



Note: Municipal boundaries shown as of April 21, 2017.

Historic Preservation Planning Efforts

Many efforts are underway to preserve the historical and cultural resources in Charleston County, keeping with the vision of this Plan set forth in 1999. In April 2014, the Charleston County Planning Commission established a Historic Preservation Committee to assist in updating the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance* (ZLDR) to better enhance and protect the County's natural resources; to carry out the strategies set forth in this Element; and to identify new ways to promote historic preservation in the unincorporated parts of Charleston County.

The Committee's first project was to apply for and accept a Federal Historic Preservation Grant to partially fund an update to the 1989 and 1992 historic surveys. The Committee worked closely with New South Associates, Inc. (the consultant hired to carry out the technical work) and County staff to successfully complete the survey update. Beginning in 2017, the Committee is working to implement recommendations contained in the survey update. First, the Committee is working with a consultant hired to update the ZLDR to clarify and strengthen the historic preservation ordinance. Once this ordinance is adopted, the Committee may pursue becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG), if the County meets all of the eligibility requirements. Becoming a CLG allows the County to work more closely with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), obtain technical assistance from SHPO and partners, and apply for grants only available to CLGs.

As the Committee begins planning efforts, community input and collaboration is vital. During the survey update project in 2016, several community members participated in the process. Specifically, many members of the historic African-American communities featured in the study attended the public meetings and met individually with New South Associates, Inc. and County staff members. Members of the Snowden, Phillips, Scanlonville, and Cainhoy Huger communities in the East Cooper area of Charleston County (and Berkeley County, where Cainhoy Huger is located) have created a non-profit organization, the African-American Settlement Communities Heritage Commission. This Commission has requested to collaborate with the Historic Preservation Committee on future preservation efforts and would like to serve as an advisory board for development and redevelopment occurring in and around their communities. The Commission's main goal is to preserve and protect the heritage and unique settlement patterns of African-American communities.



3.4.3: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT GOAL

Cultural, historic and archaeological resources, unique settlement patterns of traditional Lowcountry communities (such as historically African-American communities and family settlements), and traditional activities (such as Sweetgrass Basket Making) should be preserved and protected from potential negative impacts of growth and development.

Cultural Resources Element Needs

Cultural Resources Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Preserving the County's significant historic and archaeological resources and cultural heritage;
- Increasing public awareness of the historic character of the County; and
- Promoting public and private partnerships to preserve and protect cultural resources.

3.4.4: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

Charleston County should take the following actions to promote and protect cultural resources in the County. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

- CR 1. Continue to promote historic preservation and enhance the County's historic preservation ordinance.
- CR 2. Pursue grant opportunities such as federal historic preservation grants to promote preservation of local historic sites and structures.
- CR 3. Work with communities along the Gullah Geechee Corridor to establish ways to preserve the unique settlement patterns and community character.
- CR 4. Maintain a database of archaeological resources, heritage corridors, and historic properties, roads, and landscapes.
- CR 5. Require a historic and archaeological survey for all Planned Development and Form-Based Zoning District requests.
- CR 6. Monitor inventories and studies conducted by other agencies which identify new or recently discovered historic or cultural resources.
- CR 7. Protect rural historic landscapes by ensuring development is in character with inherent rural attributes.
- CR 8. Maintain and update development standards that preserve scenic and historic roadways and vistas.
- CR 9. Utilize planning and zoning techniques to protect historic communities and neighborhoods and other areas of cultural significance.
- CR 10. Consider tax relief initiatives to owners who rehabilitate historically significant property.
- CR 11. Encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of older buildings that complement historic development patterns.
- CR 12. Implement the recommendations identified in the 2016 *Charleston County Historic Resources Survey Update*, including applying to become a Certified Local Government.
- CR 13. Ensure protection of cultural resources by mitigating flood risks and high water impacts.

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