

City of Georgetown



Special Area Management Plan Amendment 2003

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Control



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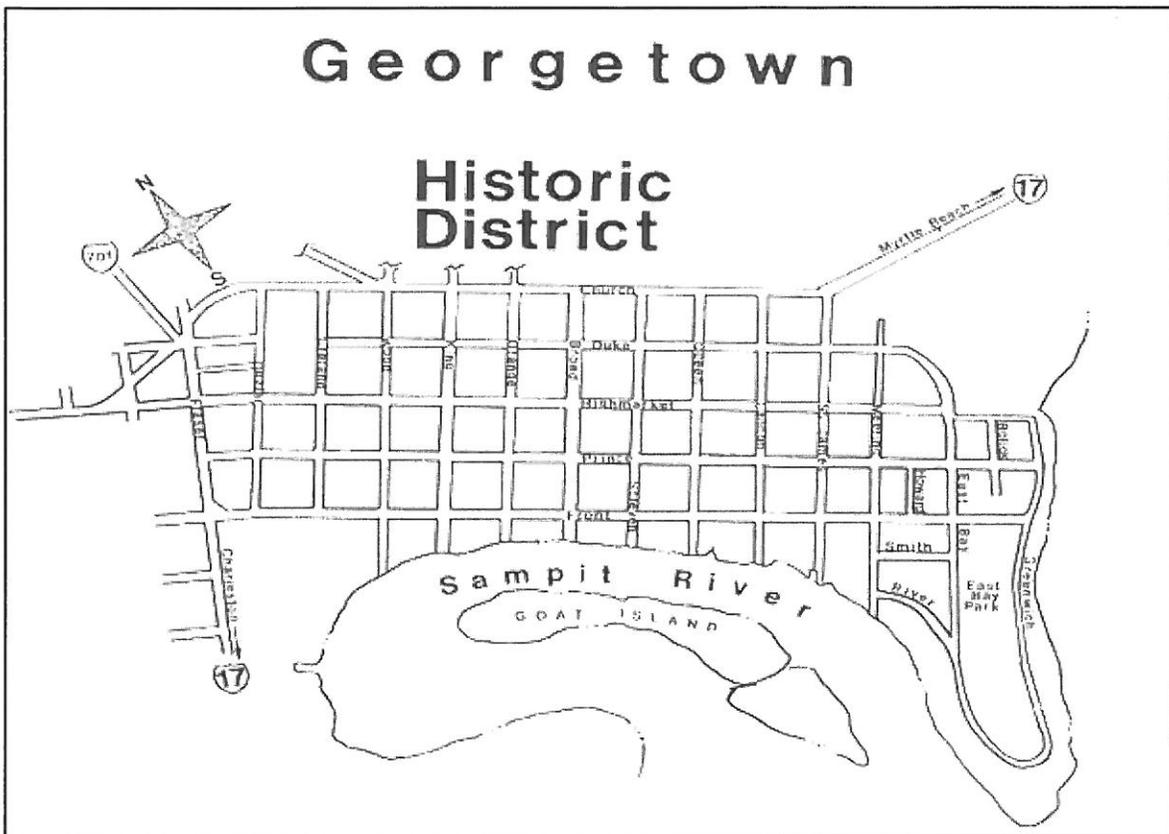
Georgetown Special Area Management Plan Amendment 2003

Introduction

In 1987 the city of Georgetown and the South Carolina Coastal Council (SCCC), which is now the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control-Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (SCDHEC-OCRM), cooperated in the development of a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the downtown waterfront area between Orange and Screven streets. The stated purpose of the SAMP was to “design(ing) land development patterns and propose(ing) construction policies which can be used in future years to guarantee that the Georgetown downtown waterfront area develops in an orderly and environmentally sensitive manner.... It will be used by both organizations (Georgetown and the SCCC) to provide an adopted plan, stating specifically the manner, nature, and appearance of future development in the area.” The 1987 SAMP was developed in conjunction with the construction of a public boardwalk and allowed for some limited construction between the boardwalk and the highground over, what is termed, the critical area.

By all accounts the Georgetown SAMP has been one of the more successful of these planning projects, and the city has requested SCDHEC-OCRM help in extending the boundaries to adjacent areas, more than doubling the water frontage within the SAMP. The new boundaries of the SAMP will be Wood Street and Queen Street. This encompasses the majority of the downtown area that is likely to benefit from the types of construction activities allowed within the SAMP boundaries. In order to expand the SAMP, SCDHEC-OCRM felt the appropriate method was to formally amend the existing SAMP, following the procedure outlined in the 1993 amendments to the state’s Coastal Management Plan document for the establishment of a new SAMP. This procedure allows for public input throughout the process.

Since the development of the 1987 SAMP, there have been many changes in and around downtown Georgetown. The basic character of the area has changed from being exclusively small-scale retail stores to including more service-oriented businesses catering to the growing tourist trade and the boom in population in the adjacent Waccamaw Neck area. The downtown has revived and is more prosperous today than in 1987. Although it is difficult to assess exactly what part the SAMP played in all of this, most officials agree that this plan was one of the primary factors in bringing about this growth. In addition to sparking economic development, the SAMP provided a much-needed renovation of the formerly dilapidated waterfront and vastly increased public access to this neglected resource. For decades, the businesses along the Sampit River had literally turned their backs on the river. The wharves were allowed to deteriorate, and no attempt was made to attract the public to the water. With the construction of the boardwalk and the development of two small parks at the terminus of Broad and Orange streets, the public once again has free and easy access to the



waterfront. Businesses have been encouraged to construct connecting walkways to the boardwalk, and most now have redesigned their waterfront access to attract the public. In addition, and as compensation for allowing the construction of the boardwalk across their water frontage, waterfront property owners have been allowed to construct finger piers connecting to the boardwalk. This has resulted in a variety of boats being moored along the waterfront as a further attraction to the public. The whole area is a far cry from the neglected, dilapidated waterfront of previous decades. Today it is a gathering place and a vibrant part of the community.

What is a SAMP?

As a short answer, a SAMP allows special consideration for localized problems or opportunities that may not be applicable coast-wide. SAMPs are a planning tool authorized by the federal Coastal Zone Management Act which was passed by Congress in 1972. This act allowed states to set up their own coastal zone management agencies within a set of guidelines that allowed much flexibility. As a result, in 1977 South Carolina passed its own coastal zone management act establishing the South Carolina Coastal Council. In 1993, as a result of restructuring of state government, the Coastal Council became SCDHEC-OCRM.

The SC Coastal Zone Management Act, the Coastal Zone Management Plan document, and the permitting regulations for activities in the critical areas (loosely defined as the salt water areas of the state) all establish criteria for projects in the critical areas of the state. No distinction is made for differing local conditions. A mechanism is contained in the program that does allow consideration for specific localized conditions. This is the special area management plan or SAMP. The 1993 amendments to the management plan state:

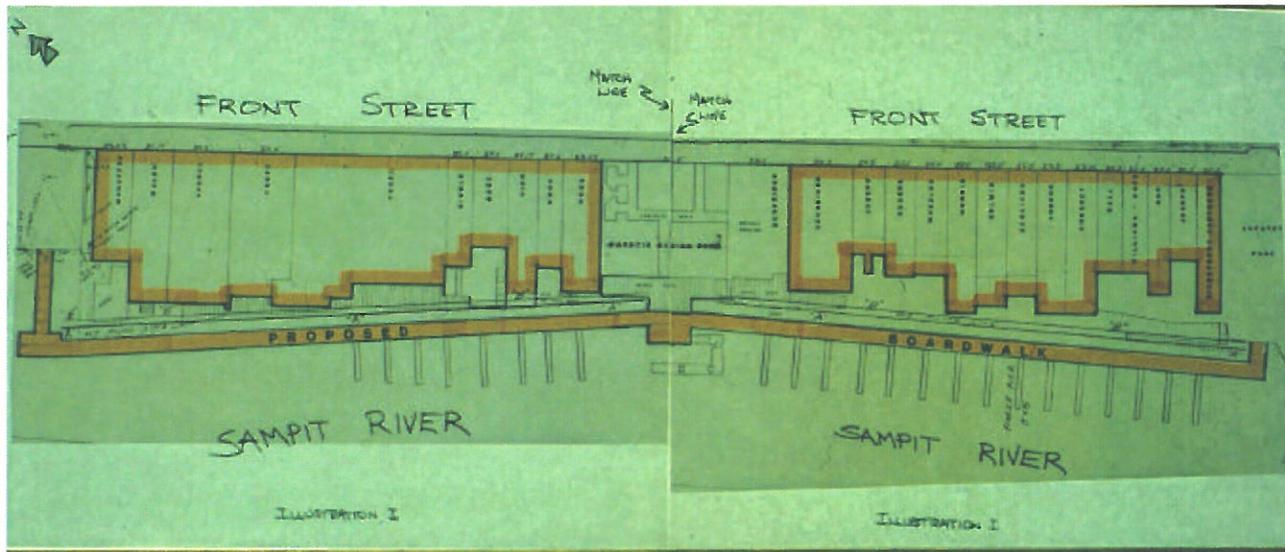
“Uses of coastal resources are not always mutually compatible and conflicts of use can occur. Where these conflicts are widespread, a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) is used to collect and examine data, identify potential development trends and enunciate anticipated conflicts between different uses. The SAMP will be used to develop strategies to protect and manage resources in order to implement coastal zone management policy. During the preparation of the SAMP, alternatives that will address and manage conflicts, and policies that will address the implementation of the plan through the existing permitting regulations and certification policies, will be identified. These alternatives include refinement of policy or application of existing policy on a specific geographical area.” (State of South Carolina Coastal Management Program and Final Environmental Impact Statement, Chapter IV (F) as amended)

SCDHEC-OCRM has developed a number of SAMPs over the years, all designed to address different conditions along the coast, and all have been unique. Regardless of their differences, the more successful SAMPs have all had one thing in common, a clearly defined purpose. The Georgetown SAMP is no exception to this rule. In addition to the purpose statement for the original plan, mentioned previously in the introduction to the current document, five objectives were also given for this SAMP. These objectives remained the same in the amended version of the SAMP and are found on page 17. Each objective is further refined by policy statements that have remained remarkably the same, with only a few minor changes over the intervening fifteen years since the adoption of the original SAMP.

SAMPs are an important planning tool for sound coastal zone management in South Carolina. They provide flexibility in dealing with unique local circumstances, while protecting the overall goals of the Coastal Zone Management Act. Without this tool, the state would be forced to employ a “one size fits all” mentality when trying to deal with the variety of conditions found on the South Carolina coast.

Changes since the 1987 SAMP was implemented

The 1987 SAMP noted that despite some strip and plaza development on the main feeder roads leading into town, the downtown area was experiencing renewed pride and investment. This trend has accelerated in the intervening years, and the downtown area has now largely regained its economic viability, which it was in danger of losing a couple of decades ago. It is difficult to separate cause from effect, but part of the reason for this renewal has to be attributed to the increase in population in the Waccamaw Neck area, the area between



Plat of Original 1987 SAMP Boundaries

the city of Georgetown and Murrells Inlet. This section of the county has seen phenomenal growth in the past two decades. By some estimates, the Neck area doubled in population during the nineties and is expected to double again in the next decade. Overall, Georgetown County has gone from 46,302 people in 1990 to 55,797 in 2000, an increase of 20.5%, making it the eighth fastest growing county in the state, but more significantly, the coastal census tracts of the county, that is the census tracts which contain the more up-scale developments in the county and are closer to downtown Georgetown than to any other urban area, accounted for 78.4% of this growth. (SC Budget and Control Board 2003, p.17)

The city of Georgetown should be commended for having the foresight to recognize these trends at their beginning and taking several actions to make the city more appealing to visitors and investors. The Downtown Georgetown Revitalization Project began in 1984 when the city adopted the National Trust for Historic Preservation criteria for a Main Street City. The National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation began working with communities in the area of downtown revitalization in 1980. The program focused on the use of a community's unique history in order to revitalize that

area's central business district. The city was in a good position to capitalize on its history since the downtown area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

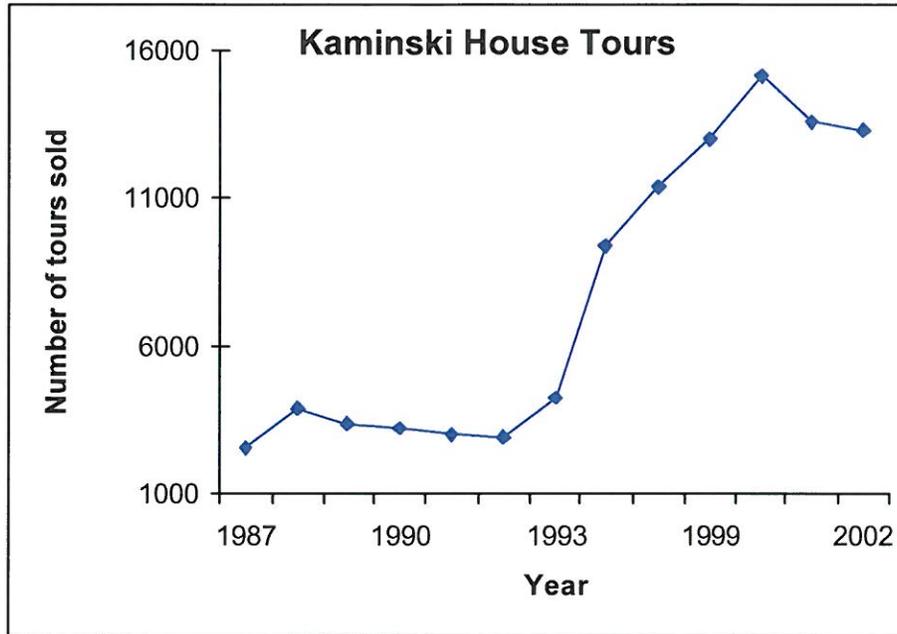
Infrastructure improvements began with the conversion of a street end adjacent to the Sampit River into an attractive park. The city also purchased a soft drink bottling plant and warehouse and converted these into a 50-space public parking lot (Orange Street parking lot). Next came the construction of the



Boardwalk and Park at the Foot of Orange Street

boardwalk, which has since been extended, along the waterfront of the Sampit River. This structure is 12 feet wide, and, in its first phase, 1100 feet long and was later extended to approximately 1500 feet. It provides access to the river and transformed the area into a true waterfront downtown. A second public parking lot was then constructed on Screven Street with several property owners and Georgetown County donating land for this project. In 1991 the Streetscape Project was begun in which Front Street and portions of side streets were stripped to bare ground and new pavement and sidewalks were installed. New sanitary sewers were installed with an upgraded stormwater system. All electrical wires were placed underground, and decorative lighting and significant landscaping were installed throughout the downtown area. Parks were added at each street end within the project area to provide useable greenspace, insure an open vista to

the riverfront and offer access to the Harborwalk. More recently, King Street (a side street) has been revitalized in the same manner as Front Street. The city intends to continue the streetscape along the other side streets in the area.



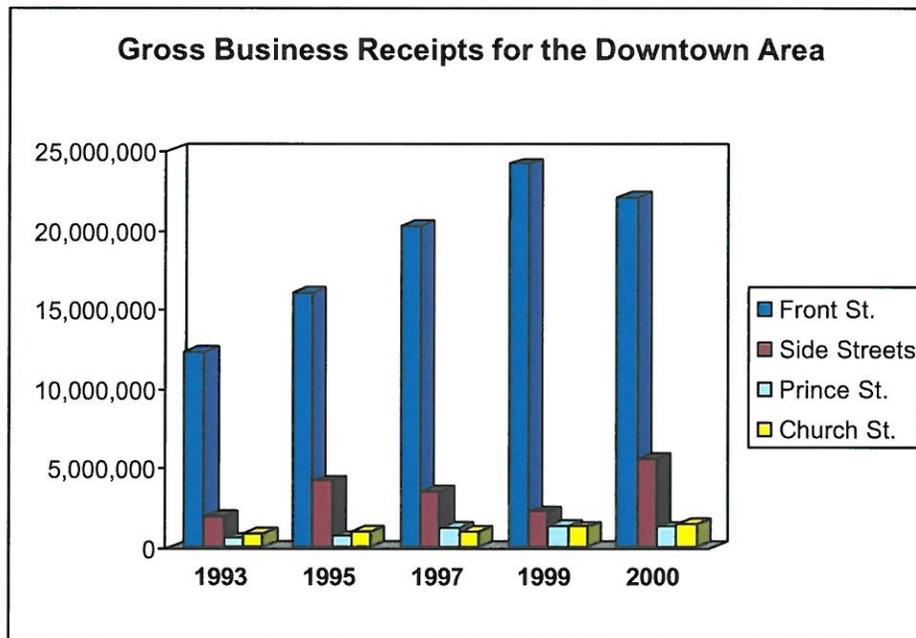
Graph 1. Kaminski House Tours: 1987 to 2002

With the growth in population and the overall popularity of South Carolina's coast, tourism has increased. Eyeing this increase the city recognized that the downtown had untapped potential to draw visitors and that, in order to lure consumers back to the downtown, it was necessary to revitalize the area. The SAMP, the boardwalk, and the Downtown Redevelopment Project were the methods selected to do this. In addition to the revitalization effort, the city has instituted a number of activities in this area, in order to attract people to the waterfront. Among these are a Wooden Boat Show in the fall, with exhibits, boat building competition, food and music and the Harborwalk Festival in June, with music, dancing, food, and arts and crafts. In addition, the streetscape project has increased the attractiveness of the downtown and has had a role in increasing investment and tourism in the area.

The growth in tourism can be seen in the increase in visitors at the Rice Museum and the Kaminski House, two of the main attractions in downtown Georgetown. "The Downtown Georgetown Revitalization Strategy," a study contracted by the city in 1985, noted "negligible" tourist sales in downtown Georgetown "as evidenced by visitor counts to the Rice Museum and the Kaminski House." (City of Georgetown and SC Coastal Council 1987). In the late 80s the Rice Museum, which houses the Brown Ferry Vessel, America's oldest wooden boat, saw anywhere from 10,000 to 12,000 visitors per year. By

2000 the number had grown to 40,000. Each year about 15,000 visitors come to the Kaminski House museum for tours, concerts and special events. (See graph 1.)

Tourists' interest in the city is also reflected in contacts to the Visitor Center on Front Street, which is operated by the Chamber of Commerce. The center averaged 2,087 visitors per month over the last 12 months (February 2002 to February 2003). This is down somewhat from past history due to a slowdown in tourist travel across the country because of the September 11 tragedy. The chamber web site has averaged 2,808 visitor sessions a month over the last 12 months. Although this is the average, the web site has shown an increase each month (Source: Harvey Shepard, Chamber of Commerce). No record is kept of how much is spent by these tourists, but the gross business receipts for the downtown area have increased by 93% over the period from 1993 to 2000, an average increase of 13.3% each year (the inflation rate was not calculated for these figures). (See graph 2.)



Graph 2: Gross Downtown Business Receipts: 1993-2000)

These numbers in graph 2 include gross business receipts for all licensed businesses within the city's downtown area. The boundaries for this graph roughly correspond to the area where capital improvements were made during the downtown revitalization project.

Another indicator of the impact of recent improvements is the assessed value of downtown waterfront Front Street properties in the 700 and 800 blocks. The 1987 SAMP contained a table which compared the assessed value of these properties for the years 1969, 1982, and 1985, as well as their predicted assessed values for 1990 and 1995. All of these values were converted to 1980 dollars.

This table showed these properties were declining in value although the SAMP noted that there had been a recent increase in sales value that it attributed to “anticipated growth and development in the area with the advent of the boardwalk.” In the present study the assessed values for these same properties were gathered for 1987 and 2000 and then converted to 1980 dollars in order to be comparable to the original table. These figures are shown in table 1 and show an impressive 116% increase in assessed value between 1987 and 2000, the period since the SAMP has been in existence. It should be noted that assessed values are a conservative measure of real value and tend to lag behind actual sales value; so it is probable that the actual increase in value was more than is shown here. In addition, computation of the 1980-dollar values was performed using an inflation rate based on the consumer price index (CPI) and property values do not usually exactly follow the CPI. Still, these computations will give a rough approximation of relative values as was done in the 1987 SAMP. (Table 1 computations were performed on the U. S. Department of Labor website at <http://stats.bls.gov>.)

Appraised Waterfront Real Estate Values: 700 and 800 Blocks of Front Street					
	1969	1982	1985	1987	2000
Property Value	\$1,418,092	\$1,191,181	\$1,005,683	\$1,429,684	\$3,084,640

Table 1: Real Estate Values (Adapted from Figure 8 of 1987 SAMP)

In order to plan for changes brought about by the increase in tourism and rising property values, a number of studies of the downtown area have been completed since the development of the 1987 SAMP. A long-range transportation study was completed in February 1997. (Day Wilburn Associates) This study recommended specific improvements for the downtown area. Some examples are: incorporating the Front Street streetscape elements into Broad Street from Front Street to the intersection with Highmarket Street, continuing streetscape elements along other selected entryways, and an evaluation of potential sites within and around the downtown area for additional parking. The study also recommended changes in signage, and the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) allotted funds for an entryway project such as those mentioned above.

A downtown parking study was completed in June 2001. (Georgetown Building and Planning Department and the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments) The study area included the boundaries of Cleland Street, Prince Street, Queen Street, and the edge of the Sampit River. An inventory was taken of existing parking spaces in the area and surveys were taken to determine parking space utilization. Businesses within the study area were surveyed by block location. A committee was appointed by the Planning Commission to

review the data and develop alternatives and recommendations for prioritization. The committee developed a list of priorities that grouped activities into short-term, mid-term and long-term suggestions for alleviating parking problems in the downtown. Their suggestions range from relocation of several government offices away from downtown to building a parking garage.



Streetscape Looking from Broad to Screven

The city adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 1999. The cultural resources element of the plan promotes the preservation and protection of positive historic features and the incorporation of aspects of the past into any future area-wide development. According to the plan, new development plans should be designed to preserve and protect positive historic features while allowing the historic elements to enhance development. The land use element of the plan also refers to the need to preserve and continually redevelop the central business district by implementing downtown revitalization.

Historic Preservation Consultants, Inc. prepared a cultural resources survey for the Georgetown County Historical Society in July 2000. The survey area included the city's National Register Historic District. Forty-nine survey sites in the district were originally commercial buildings and most of these are located along Front Street in the downtown area. A survey card was produced for each significant building in the area older than 50 years. The study recommended

new design guidelines for those historic commercial buildings constructed from the 1840s to the 1940s.

The city's Architectural Review Board currently has a set of waterfront design guidelines that they use when approving exterior changes to buildings in the downtown area. The guidelines were created in the 1980s. Since that time, many changes have taken place along the city's waterfront, and there is now more of a focus on the rear facades of downtown buildings. The city has hired a consultant who is currently working on a new set of guidelines that would specifically apply to the waterfront area. These guidelines will better assist the



Showing Waterfront and Boats Anchored in the Sampit River

Architectural Review Board in making good decisions concerning renovation and new construction along the waterfront. These guidelines are expected to be completed and approved by the summer of 2003.

Other changes have been enacted by the city that have had a positive effect on the downtown. All parking meters were removed, and in 1999, a two-hour parking ordinance for the area between King and Queen streets was instituted. In addition, the city passed a sidewalk franchise ordinance that allows businesses to place items for sale, or tables and chairs for restaurant seating, along the sidewalks in the downtown area, after purchasing an encroachment permit

from the city. This has softened the sidewalk area and helps make the downtown feel more like an outdoor room, rather than a sterile area next to a road.

Another ordinance which promotes tourism in the downtown allows tour and tram operations. Currently two tour businesses operate from the public loading zone located in front of the Chamber of Commerce on Front Street.

Other positive developments are the receipt of a number of drainage improvement grants totaling \$5,000,000 and a cultural resources survey of the downtown historic district.

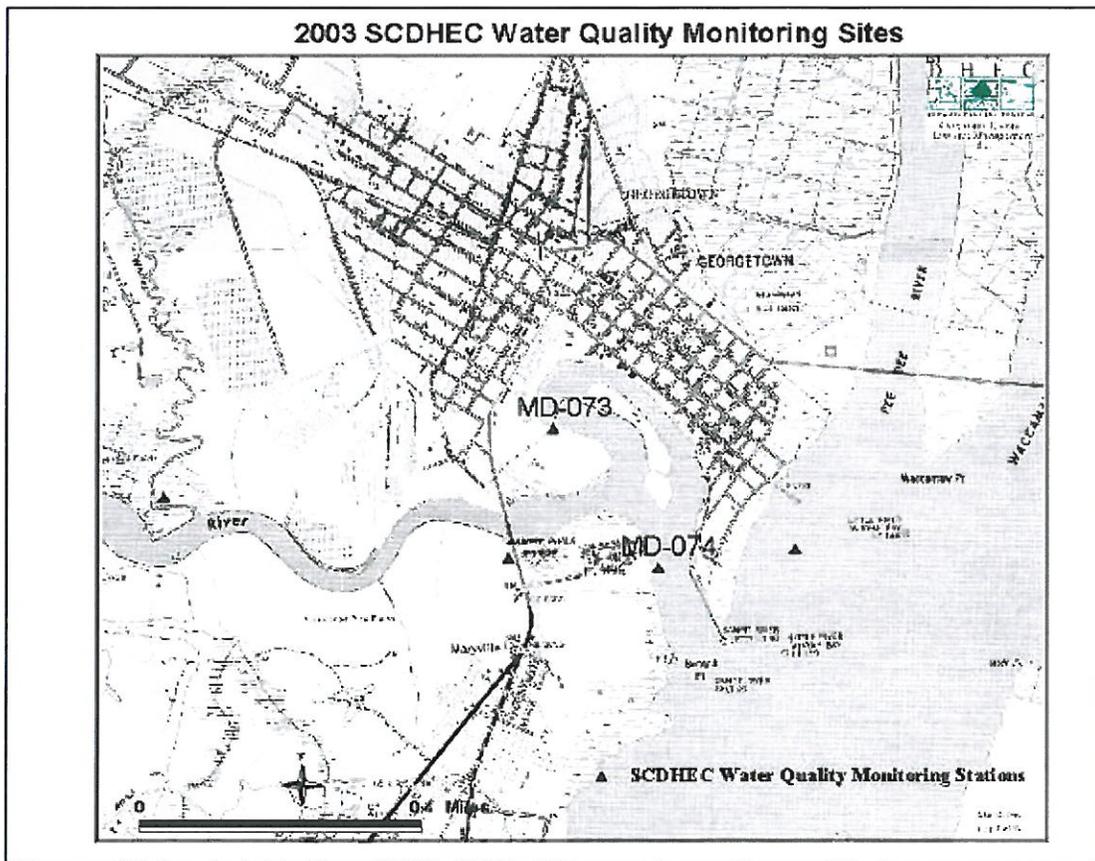
Environmental Characteristics

The 1987 SAMP detailed the environmental characteristics of the downtown and the lower Sampit River. It is not necessary to repeat most of this information as conditions have not changed significantly since that time. It is sufficient to say that the downtown area of the city is relatively low-lying and poorly drained. Steps have been and are being taken to improve the drainage system, which drains into the Sampit River.

The Sampit is a “tidally influenced, blackwater system, characterized by naturally low dissolved oxygen concentrations...” according to SCDHEC’s Watershed Water Quality Assessment of the Pee Dee River Basin published in May 2000. SCDHEC’s Bureau of Water classifies the river as SB/FW. (SC Department of Health and Environmental Control 1998) All waters of the state are classified by this classification system which is designed to “establish appropriate classified water uses to be achieved and protected, establish general rules and specific water quality criteria to protect classified and existing water uses, establish procedures for classified waters of the state, protect the public health and welfare, and maintains and enhances water quality.” The classification both describes the basic characteristic of the water body as fresh or salt, that is what the ‘S’ and ‘F’ stand for in the classification, and describes the quality of the water by a prescribed set of criteria. Oddly enough, the Sampit is classified as both fresh and salt due to the presence of the larger freshwater Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers, and the location of the mouth of the Sampit at the upper end of Winyah Bay. During wet weather the Pee Dee and Waccamaw can dilute the saltiness of the upper reaches of the bay and turn the Sampit fresh. During low flow conditions in these rivers the Sampit is saltier. In addition to denoting saltwater, the SB classification describes the river as “Suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, crabbing, and fishing, except harvesting of clams, mussels, or oysters for market purposes or human consumption. Also suitable for the survival and propagation of a balanced indigenous aquatic community of marine fauna and flora.”

The FW classification states that the river is considered to be “suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation and as a source for drinking water supply after conventional treatment in accordance with the requirements of the department. Suitable for fishing and the survival and propagation of a balanced indigenous aquatic community of fauna and flora. Suitable for industrial and

agricultural uses.” (p.17). There are four SCDHEC water quality monitoring sites along the course of the river, two of which bracket the downtown area. Monitoring station MD-073 is located upstream from the downtown area, opposite the American Cyanamid Chemical Company, which is located at the foot of the Sampit River Bridge on Hwy 17. According to the SCDHEC report at this station, “aquatic life uses are fully supported; however, there is a significant decreasing trend in dissolved oxygen concentration and a very high concentration of zinc was measured in 1994. There is a significant decreasing trend in pH. Significant decreasing trends in biochemical oxygen demand and total nitrogen



Map Showing SCDHEC Monitoring Sites

concentration suggest improving conditions for these parameters.” This analysis thus shows a lowering of dissolved oxygen, a necessary component of life for aquatic resources as well as terrestrial, and a decreasing trend for pH that can be disruptive to the body chemistry of aquatic animals. On the plus side, this analysis shows a decreasing trend for harmful biochemical oxygen demand, which is a factor in lowering dissolved oxygen, and in total nitrogen concentrations, indicators of increased contamination by nutrients which can lead to a serious water quality problem called “eutrophication.” Eutrophication can result in fish kills and harmful algae blooms. The high zinc concentration seems to be a one-time event and has not shown up in subsequent monitoring.

SCDHEC monitoring station MD-074 is located downstream of the SAMP area at channel marker #30 at the mouth of the Sampit River where it enters Winyah Bay. According to the SCDHEC report, aquatic uses are fully supported at this station.

The Sampit River is impacted by the Front Street area of downtown because this area drains into the river. Due to the relatively high level of



Boardwalk Looking Downstream from Orange Street

impervious surface coverage, drainage, or stormwater as it is called, is a contributing factor to the degradation of the water quality in the river. Every effort should be made to retrofit this drainage system to incorporate best management practices for stormwater quality control as this drainage system is improved and as property is redeveloped in this watershed. To this end, the city passed a drainage ordinance in 1992. All new stormwater drainage facilities are now to be designed for free flow at a minimum 10-year, 24-hour storm event when developments meet ordinance criteria. Tract developments from two to five acres proposing a 30% increase, or 30,000 square feet in surface impermeability, should have a post development discharge rate not to exceed the predevelopment rate of a 10-year, 24-hour storm for the same storm event. Tract developments of five acres or more proposing a 15% increase, or 40,000 square feet in surface impermeability, should have a post-development discharge rate not to exceed the

predevelopment rate of a 25-year, 24-hour storm for the same storm event. Smaller tracts are treated on a case by case basis.

The developer must make all downstream improvements if necessary to accommodate increased post development peak rate and volume of runoff from the site, or provide adequate detention so that post development rate and volume



Boardwalk Looking Downstream from King Street

of runoff does not exceed the capacity of the downstream facilities. All new developments in excess of one acre, except single-family house parcels, must submit a stormwater management plan. Over time, these new requirements should help reduce the input of pollutants from stormwater runoff.

The SAMP and the Critical Area

One of the main purposes of the state's Coastal Zone Management Act is to protect the sensitive, productive salt marshes of the state. The law and regulations are explicit in restricting actions in these areas. One of the more severe restrictions is on what is known as "non-water dependent structures." Section R.30-12(M)(2) of SCDHEC-OCRM's Permitting Regulations for the critical areas states "Nonwater-dependent structures, including buildings, houses, or offices that float shall be prohibited from being constructed, moored, or otherwise placed in or over tidelands and coastal water critical areas unless there is no significant environmental impact, an overriding public need can be



Area within the Expanded SAMP Boundary Just Upstream from Orange Street

demonstrated, and no feasible alternatives exist." (SCDHEC-OCRM 2003) This regulation, with some modification, has been in effect since the inception of the coastal management program and is considered to be a major component of the effort to protect saltwater wetlands.

The regulation is not an outright prohibition on structures over the critical area as it does provide for construction over tidal wetlands if three criteria can be met. The first of these is a finding of no significant environmental impact. The

area of the waterfront along the Sampit has a long history of disturbance. From the earliest days, warehouses were built over this area and it has been filled, bulkheaded, and altered from its original state. Little wetland vegetation grows in this area, and the shoreline is a conglomeration of non-natural materials from past construction activities. In approving the 1987 SAMP, the Coastal Council, in effect, found that there was no significant environmental impact in allowing construction over this area within certain guidelines.

The second criterion to be met before constructing nonwater dependent structures over this area is the finding of an overriding public need for the project. There is no definition of public need in the permitting regulations, but there is a definition of public interest. This definition says “public interest refers to the beneficial and adverse impacts and effects of a project upon members of the general public, especially residents of South Carolina who are not owners and/or developers of the project. To the extent that, in the opinion of the Department, the value of such public benefits is greater than the public costs embodied in adverse environmental, economic and fiscal effects, a proposed project may be credited with net public benefits.”[SCDHEC-OCRM 2003 (R.30(D)(42)]. As stated previously, there have been demonstrable public benefits from allowing construction over the critical area as a result of the 1987 SAMP. These benefits have been the increase in public waterfront access as well as an increase in tourism, business, and downtown property values.

Most deliberations in coastal zone management involve balancing competing interests. In this case, as defined by the regulation on nonwater dependent structures, the balance is between significant environmental impact and public need. In light of the minimal environmental impact and the demonstrated public benefit, the determination has been to allow construction over the critical area, within certain limits.

The final criterion of the nonwater dependent regulation is that a finding must be made that no feasible alternative exists. The regulations also give a definition of “feasible”. Section R.30(D)(20) states in part “Feasibility in each case is based on the best available information, including, but not limited to, technical input from relevant agencies with expertise in the subject area, and consideration of factors of environmental, economic, social, legal and technological suitability of the proposed activity and its alternatives. Use of this word includes, but is not limited to, the concept of reasonableness and likelihood of success in achieving the project goal or purpose.” Again in determining feasible alternatives, the department is to weigh a prescribed set of factors in determining whether feasible alternatives exist, in this case whether there are feasible alternatives to allowing construction over the critical area in downtown Georgetown while trying to revitalize the waterfront. The finding in 1987 was that there were no feasible alternatives and that allowing construction in this area met these criteria. After reviewing the information on what has happened in the downtown area in the meantime, it would be hard to justify a different conclusion today. The criteria for constructing nonwater dependent structures over the critical area are stringent. These regulations have been successful in preventing inappropriate development along the critical areas for the last twenty-five years.

They do allow for some discretion, however. Waterfront revitalization is a recognized goal of coastal zone management nationally, and the tract record of Georgetown proves that in this case it is sound coastal zone management to allow building over the critical area within the restrictions as outlined in the SAMP.

Plan Objectives and Policy Recommendations

The following plan objectives and policy recommendations were developed for the 1987 SAMP and will govern future development of the downtown Georgetown waterfront within the new SAMP boundaries as well:

- A. To encourage the redevelopment of private properties in downtown Georgetown by making the waterfront accessible to the public;
- B. To assure that property renovation is undertaken in a manner appropriate within the city's historic district;
- C. To assure that private and public undertakings are done in a manner that will favorably impact on the natural and human environment;
- D. To assure that private and public undertakings do not interfere with navigation in the Sampit River;
- E. To develop and provide for the implementation of a comprehensive scheme addressing uses, renovation and new construction within the boardwalk development area.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Toward Objective A:

POLICY: The city has constructed additions to the original boardwalk totaling approximately 370 Feet. Currently this boardwalk runs from King to Screven streets. In the future the city may extend this boardwalk from King Street to Wood Street

POLICY: Property owners along the boardwalk will be encouraged to connect to the boardwalk, thus facilitating pedestrian movement from Front Street to the waterfront and vice versa. Potential economic benefits and boardwalk design will encourage these connections.

POLICY: Expansion and future development along the waterfront will be based upon the recommendations of this plan and the city's future land use map outlined in the city's Land Use Plan.

POLICY: The city will rigorously enforce its zoning ordinance in addressing water-related uses.

POLICY: The city will encourage property renovation and access to the waterfront by making property owners aware for available grants, loans and tax credits, and by conducting promotional activities in this area.

POLICY: In the SAMP area, from Wood to Queen Street, uses allowed in the Core Commercial Zoning District will be permitted to construct on piers or pilings over the "critical area" within the following limits: Single-story open decks will be allowed to construct over wetland areas; however, these decks shall not extend beyond line A as established on the official plat maintained by the City and SCDHEC-OCRM. No structure on high ground, except for single-story open decks, shall be allowed beyond said line B as established on the official plat maintained by the City and SCDHEC-OCRM. Enclosed structures and multi-story open decks may be constructed over wetland areas provided they do not extend into the Sampit River beyond line B as established on the official plat maintained by the City and SCDHEC-OCRM. In those instances where the renovation of existing structures in single ownership would result in an "L" shaped building configuration, the owner will be allowed to square his/her structure to the furthest existing building line, provided that the limits of construction set by Lines A and B on the official plat are met. (amended 4-25-13)

Toward Objective B:

POLICY: The SAMP area is located within the city's historic district. All construction in the area must be reviewed and approved by the City of Georgetown Architectural Review Board (ARB). The ARB will utilize its design guidelines in making determinations of appropriateness.

POLICY: The City's Building and Planning Department will enforce all applicable building codes and ordinances.

POLICY: The City Building and Planning Department will continue to promote the use of South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) tax credits by having information readily available, and putting property owners in contact with the appropriate staff at SCDAH.

Toward Objective C:

POLICY: Construction along the waterfront must be permitted by the SCDHEC-OCRM and, where necessary, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the City. SCDHEC-OCRM and the Corps will review all permit applications for compliance with this plan and environmental impacts.

POLICY: The City shall inspect all buildings to assure that sewerage systems are in good working order and present no threat to the natural environment.

POLICY: All decks and/or buildings shall be constructed on piers or pilings, and the filling of wetlands shall not be undertaken without the explicit permission of SCDHEC-OCRM and the Corps.

POLICY: The city will enforce litter control measures to assure that human activity along the waterfront does not degrade the area through inadvertent or careless waste disposal.

POLICY: Through the zoning ordinance, obnoxious and incompatible uses will not be allowed to locate in the study area. To prevent environmental damage, water related uses allowed along the river and on finger piers will not be permitted to undertake major boat repairs such as engine overhauling, hull scraping and painting, servicing and refueling. Processing of any kind will not be allowed.

Toward Objective D:

POLICY: Where required by law, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers will review for permitting purposes all construction activities and their potential impact on navigation in the Sampit River.

POLICY: The waterfront development project will lead to increased boat traffic in the Sampit River. While congestion will be increased, the problem will be manageable. By law, the U. S. Coast Guard has the primary responsibility for controlling traffic circulation in the river.

POLICY: Owners of narrow lots will be encouraged to share finger piers on the outboard side of the boardwalk in order to reduce docking conflicts.

Toward Objective E:

POLICY: The city zoning for the area within the SAMP boundary is core commercial (CC). This zoning keeps incompatible uses outside the waterfront area. In addition, the city's zoning ordinance further regulates water-related uses to prohibit things such as major boat repairs and storage for large commercial boats for industrial purposes. There is also a requirement that decks be connected to the boardwalk and that all finger piers comply with local, state and federal regulations.

POLICY: As in all areas of the city, new construction and renovation along the waterfront will be required to meet requirements set forth in the zoning ordinance; International Building Code; Plumbing, Mechanical, Fire and Gas Code; National Electrical Code; and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

POLICY: All property owners seeking tax credits for major renovation must obtain certification or decertification from the SCDAAH. SCDAAH will review plans for architectural/historical appropriateness. In addition, the city's ARB will review plans for historical district appropriateness using the recently developed waterfront guidelines.

POLICY: This Special Area Management Plan will be reviewed by the city of Georgetown Planning Commission, mayor and City Council, SCDHEC, and interested property owners.

POLICY: Implementation of the SAMP by SCDHEC-OCRM will consist of using the adopted policies in making permit, certification and federal consistency decisions. The S. C. Coastal Zone Management Program will also be used in making these decisions. On matters not addressed by this SAMP, SCDHEC-OCRM will use their standard operating procedures as set forth by law.

POLICY: Any amendment of this SAMP will require joint approval of the city of Georgetown and the SCDHEC-OCRM.

Development Plan Elaboration

The effectiveness of this plan is dependent on the implementation of the outlined policy recommendations in future decision making. Some of these policies involve legal mandates the city and other agencies will impose in the SAMP boundary, while others are conceptual in nature. The following are more precise explanations of some of the policy recommendations in this plan.

As mentioned previously, the area within the SAMP boundary is zoned core commercial. The SAMP is located within the city's central business district, thus the number of permitted uses is quite broad. The city's zoning ordinance lists all uses allowed in the district. The entire use section of the zoning ordinance is as follows:

707. CC District (core commercial)

Intent. It is the intent of this district to establish an area for concentrated general business development that the general public requires. The regulations are designed to protect the essential characteristics of the district by promotion of business and public uses which serve the general public and to discourage industrial and wholesale developments which do not lend themselves to pedestrian traffic. In order to achieve the intent of the CC district as shown on the zoning map of the city of Georgetown, South Carolina

707.1 The following uses are permitted:

- 707.101 Armories;
- 707.102 Banks and other financial institutions including loan and finance establishments;
- 707.103 Barber shops and beauty shops;
- 707.104 Billiard parlors;
- 707.105 Bingo parlors;

- 707.106 Churches;
- 707.107 Clubs and lodges;
- 707.108 Courthouses;
- 707.109 Restaurants;
- 707.110 Hardware stores;
- 707.111 Hotels;
- 707.112 Laundromats;
- 707.113 Libraries;
- 707.114 Offices-business, professional and governmental;
- 707.115 Parking lots;
- 707.116 Printing establishments;
- 707.117 Repair shops, excluding automotive;
- 707.118 Stores retailing antiques, auto accessories, appliances, clothing, drugs, dry goods, newspapers, flowers, food (including bakeries when products are sold exclusively at retail on premises), beverages, furniture, gifts, hardware, hobby and craft supplies, jewelry, leather goods, notions, office equipment and supplies, paint and wallpaper, pets, seeds and feed, and groceries;
- 707.119 Taxi stands;
- 707.120 Theaters, indoor only;
- 707.121 Ice processing and storage facilities;
- 707.122 Jails;
- 707.123 Police and fire stations;
- 707.124 Museums;
- 707.125 Post offices;
- 707.126 Substations; and,
- 707.127 Uses customarily accessory to permitted uses, but not to include open-air storage.

707.2 Conditional Uses:

- 707.21 Multi-family dwelling units or group dwellings subject to the provisions listed below:
 - 707.211 Such uses shall be allowed in upper floors in combination with permitted commercial and office uses or on separate lots or parcels (Upper floor shall mean the first finished floor at least nine (9) feet above grade);
 - 707.212 Such uses shall meet the requirements for off-street parking as determined by the zoning administrator.
- 707.22 Water-related uses provided that:
 - 707.221 Such use is compatible with other core commercial uses;

- 707.222 Such use shall not generate unusual vehicular parking demands;
- 707.223 Such use shall not involve major repairs (engine overhaul, hull scraping or painting, etc.)
- 707.224 Such use shall not include the storage of commercial boats that utilize nets and/or longlines or boats used for industrial purposes such as dredges and barges;
- 707.225 Such use shall not be utilized for long-term residency unless waste disposal is provided by the boat owner;
- 707.226 Finger pier construction shall comply with standards prepared by the city of Georgetown;
- 707.23 Parks, provided that a site plan is reviewed and approved by the zoning administrator, and;
- 707.24 Water towers, provided that:
 - 707.241 A site plan is reviewed and approved by the zoning administrator
 - 707.242 The zoning administrator shall establish required setbacks;

707.3 Other requirements: Unless otherwise specified elsewhere in this ordinance, uses permitted in the CC district shall be required to conform to the following requirements:

- 707.31 Shall meet the area, yard and height requirements of Article VIII;
- 707.32 Signs permitted within the district, including the conditions under which they may be located, are set forth in Article X.

The Boardwalk

The boardwalk was identified in the 1987 SAMP as the impetus behind the economic revitalization of the downtown. It was also noted that the boardwalk was designed to provide pedestrian access to the waterfront and encourage movement through commercial establishments to and from the river and Front Street. Activities on the boardwalk were, and are, to be regulated. The following is a list of prohibited activities outlined in Section 20-100 of the City Code of Ordinances. (City of Georgetown 1988)

- (1) Biking, skateboarding or similar activity;
- (2) Swimming or diving;
- (3) Operation of vehicles, except by the city;
- (4) Fishing, crabbing, netting;
- (5) Vending, except as permitted in section 20-7 of this code;
- (6) Storage or placement of materials, unless related to a recognized community event. Any such temporary undertaking must be approved by the city

building and planning department. An appeal from a denial by the building and planning department shall be made to the city council;

- (7) Posting of handbills, signs or other notices, except by the city;
- (8) Cleaning, upgrading or repairing of personal property;
- (9) Mooring directly to boardwalk, except in areas designated by the city, and;
- (10) Any activity that may result in damage to the boardwalk or attached public facilities.

Appearance

Appearance, atmosphere and integrity are vital to the success of the revitalization project. The waterfront must be developed in a manner compatible with the historic character of Georgetown. This should not be construed as attempting to create historical structures through the use of copycat or fake elements, but as a goal to assure that new or renovated structures compliment nearby structures and the entire area.

The SAMP is located within the city's historic district that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All exterior construction activities are overseen by the city's Architectural Review Board. In addition to reviewing building plans, the ARB must approve signage along Front Street and the waterfront.

SAMP Implementation

This 2003 amended plan must be adopted by both the city of Georgetown and the SCDHEC Board. Before adoption by the city, the Planning Commission will review the plan and make a recommendation to the City Council. A public hearing then will be held by the City Council prior to their taking a vote on the adoption of the amended plan. If adopted, the city will include recommendations of this amended plan in an addendum to its long range comprehensive planning process.

SCDHEC-OCRM will review the plan to determine its consistency with the Coastal Zone Management Program for South Carolina. Upon this determination, and approval of the SCDHEC Board, the plan will become a part of SCDHEC-OCRM's Coastal Zone Management Plan.

The adoption of this amended plan by the city and SCDHEC will further the partnership created by the Special Area Management Plan in 1987 and reflected in the coordination of the two entities throughout the plan's development. SCDHEC-OCRM must be aware of federal regulations pertaining to the S. C. Coastal Zone Management Program while considering adoption of this amended plan. The requirements are: (1) that the plan be in conformance with the management program; (2) that the plan be submitted to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-Office of Coastal Zone Management (NOAA-OCRM) for a determination of whether or not plan adoption is a routine program implementation action; (3) that notice be given of the opportunity for comments on this determination; and (4) that notice be given of the NOAA-

OCRM's determination and the applicability of federal consistency with the amended plan. (See 15 CFR 923.84, Vol. 44, No. 61-Wed. March 28, 1979.) When these requirements are met, the amended plan will become a part of the federally approved South Carolina Coastal Management Program.

Since SCDHEC-OCRM issues permits for activities occurring within critical areas of the coastal zone, SCDHEC-OCRM will adopt this amended plan as part of its management program and utilize the permitting process as a means of plan implementation. All permissible activities occurring within the study area after adoption of the amended plan must be consistent with the plan. Inconsistent activities will be denied permits.

In addition to permitting activities, SCDHEC-OCRM certifies all federal and state agency permitting occurring within the coastal zone. The certification process will be used to implement the amended plan by requiring all activities to be consistent or be subject to denial of certification.

Any additional amendment to the plan's policy recommendations or official plans must be approved by both the city and SCDHEC. Either entity may initiate an amendment, but both must grant approval. Any amendment to the plan must be consistent with both the city of Georgetown land use planning program and the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Program.

References

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South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. 1998. Water Classification and Standards (R.61-68) Classified Waters (R.61-69).

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