

## Piedmont Public Meeting #4 Summary Report

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Greenville County Long Range Planning, in collaboration with Anderson County, hosted a community meeting on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Piedmont Community Center. Anderson County Councilor Jimmy Davis (District 6) and Greenville County Councilor Rick Bradley (District 26) were present, as well as Representative Thomas Beach (District 10, South Carolina House of Representatives).



### Greenville County staff present:

Rashida Jeffers-Campbell.....Planning Director  
A. Tyler Stone..... Long Range Planning Manager  
Suzanne Terry.....Planner II  
Austin Lovelace.....Planner II, Project Manager

### Anderson County staff present:

Alesia Hunter.....Planning and Development Director

85 people signed in to the meeting, with nearly 100 people in attendance. Exhibits from The Piedmont Area Plan were on display before and after the meeting. It is important to note that the elements proposed in these exhibits are hypothetical in nature at this time. [Click here](#) to view exhibits from The Piedmont Area Plan. The meeting consisted of four presentations regarding different activities and projects currently taking place in Piedmont. [Click here](#) to view the slideshow presentation.

## Progress Update on The Piedmont Area Plan and Next Steps

The meeting began with a presentation from Austin Lovelace with Greenville County Long Range Planning with updates on the development of The Piedmont Area Plan, including the plan document outline and anticipated schedule of a public draft release, public review period, and adoption processes with each county.

- **Plan Document Outline**

- Chapter One: Introduction and Background
  - Introduces the planning process, provides a brief history of the Piedmont community, and explains how to navigate and use the plan effectively.
- Chapter Two: Existing Conditions
  - Lays out Piedmont's recent past—how and where it has grown, in terms of people and infrastructure—and describes where it might be headed based on an analysis of population and development trends.
- Chapter Three: Community Engagement
  - The community engagement process during summer 2023 yielded consistent themes from stakeholders. This chapter discusses the outcomes and results, which guided the development of this plan.
- Chapter Four: Recommendations
  - Serves as a roadmap for the future of the community, providing land use recommendations and outlining specific key opportunities and priority investments.
- Chapter Five: Strategies
  - Provides a strategic framework to implement the recommendations made in the previous chapter, setting clear goals and objectives.

- **Anticipated Public Draft Release and Plan Adoption**

- Note: The dates listed below are contingent upon a public draft release date of March 18, 2024. If the release is delayed, the process order will remain the same for each county—only the meeting dates will change. In this case, a revised schedule of meeting dates will be provided.
- A public draft of the plan is anticipated to be released on March 18 and open for review by the community through April 1. From here, the adoption process will be split between each county:
  - Anderson County:
    - April 9: Planning Commission
    - April 16: County Council First Reading
    - May 7: County Council Public Hearing and Second Reading
    - May 21: County Council Third Reading
    - May 22: Adoption
  - Greenville County:
    - April 1: Planning and Development Committee (Initiation)
    - April 15: County Council Public Hearing
    - April 16: County Council First Reading
    - April 24: Planning Commission
    - May 6: Planning and Development Committee
    - May 24: County Council Second Reading
    - June 4: County Council Third Reading
    - June 5: Adoption

## Announcements from New Community Organization

Next, Joseph Barnes with the Piedmont Community Alliance introduced the nonprofit organization to the community with a few announcements.

- **Founding and Mission of the Nonprofit Organization**

- The Piedmont Community Alliance initially formed immediately following the conclusion of [another community meeting](#) in Piedmont in July 2023. This meeting discussed bottom-up actions the Piedmont community can take right now, on their own, without involving the government—one of which was forming a community organization focused planning-related issues.
- The group is “a community organization committed to advocating for the conservation of [Piedmont’s] natural resources, preserving street trees, promoting bike lanes, and enhancing walkability.” Their vision is “to create a vibrant, livable community where every member can enjoy the benefits of progress without compromising [Piedmont’s] cherished natural assets,” and are “dedicated to using available resources to advocate for responsible land use.”
- The group became a state-certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in December 2023. They are currently working to achieve federal status.
- The group launched a website, [www.piedmontcommunityalliance.org](http://www.piedmontcommunityalliance.org), which features lists of locally-owned businesses, clubs and organizations, and churches. The website also includes a calendar of local meetings, planning resources, and ways to support their efforts.

- **Piedmont Farmers Market**

- The group announced a farmers market, called Piedmont Farmers Market, is coming to Downtown Piedmont on Main Street in May 2024. According to the group, the market will feature local businesses and farms offering fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, and meat. It is expected to occur on a bi-weekly basis.

## NeighborWoods Tree Planting Program in Piedmont

Next, Evangeline Costa with TreesUpstate gave a presentation providing more information about the NeighborWoods Tree Planting Program taking place in March 2024 in the mill village.

- **Mission of Organization**

- TreesUpstate, formerly known as TreesGreenville, is a nonprofit organization founded in 2005. Their mission is “to plant, promote, and protect trees in the Upstate.” The group “plants trees in parks, schools, and neighborhoods; promotes the benefits of trees; and provides education and technical support to help inform policies and systems change.” Since their founding, the group has planted or given away over 37,000 trees with the help of donors and volunteers.
- The group launched a partnership with the Piedmont Community Alliance, along with Piedmont residents Sarah Lyons and Alicia Carr, to “bring more trees to your neighborhood” through their NeighborWoods program.

- **NeighborWoods Program**

- NeighborWoods is the organization’s “community tree planting initiative.” The program targets “low to moderate income neighborhoods with low tree canopy cover through the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority,” and is available for private and public property.
- To qualify for the tree planting program in Piedmont, you must live within the mill village—including both Anderson and Greenville counties. In other words, “If you live in a mill house in Piedmont, or on the same street as mill houses in Anderson or Greenville counties, you qualify.” So far, the group has registered households on the following streets: Archie Street, Haynes Street, Piedmont Avenue, Piedmont Avenue Extension, Prospect Street, River Street, and Orr Street. Participation is based on at least seventeen households.

- For more information about the NeighborWoods program, and to register for up to two free trees, visit the program's website, [www.treesupstate.org/piedmont](http://www.treesupstate.org/piedmont). For information about other programs offered by TreesUpstate, or to inquire about a tree planting event in your neighborhood, visit the organization's website, [www.treesupstate.org](http://www.treesupstate.org), or contact Evangeline Costa by e-mail at [ecosta@treesupstate.org](mailto:ecosta@treesupstate.org) or by phone at 864-399-0331.

## **Piedmont Footbridge Special Project**

Next, Blake Sanders with Studio Main introduced an exciting new project in Piedmont: The Piedmont Dam and Footbridge Small Area Master Plan.

- **Background**

- The project was initiated by Greenville County to study the feasibility of a new footbridge across the Saluda River in Downtown Piedmont, connecting both old mill sites with greenspace and pathways on each side.
- The project was funded through discretionary funds approved by Greenville County Councilors Rick Bradley (District 26) [\$5,000]; Butch Kirven (District 27) [\$1,000]; Alan Mitchell (District 23) [\$1,000]; and Benton Blount (District 19) [\$1,000] from their respective Community Project Funds, with an \$8,000 match from Anderson County.

- **Planning Process**

- The process will involve three main phases:
  1. Information Gathering and Background
    - This phase includes data collection, including an analysis of existing conditions, as well as base mapping, site reconnaissance, and the formation of a steering committee. The steering committee will consist of affected property owners, staff from Anderson and Greenville counties, and consultants from Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC).
  2. Master Planning
    - This phase involves a public design workshop—the outcomes of which will guide the production of conceptual diagrams, illustrative plans, photo renderings, and other supporting imagery.
  3. Implementation Guidance
    - This task involves the refinement of a conceptual design based upon the implementation phase that documents budgets costs, anticipated permits, key agency contacts, and a phasing plan.
- The process is anticipated to be completed by April 2024.

Following the presentations, an opportunity for questions was opened. During this time, Councilor Jimmy Davis answered questions related to development, planning processes, and public safety in Anderson County. In closing, Austin thanked everyone for participating and encouraged them to get home safe.

## **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

At this time, Greenville County does not have any meetings scheduled in the Piedmont community. The public draft release will be available for review online, or by request for a physical copy. The aforementioned meetings related to the adoption of the plan document will take place at each county's respective facility. The specific date, time, and location of each meeting will be provided with the release of the public draft.

Greenville County Long Range Planning encourages you to participate in **Picture Piedmont**, a collection of photos taken in Piedmont by you, the Piedmont community, to be featured in The Piedmont Area Plan. [Click here](#) for submission guidelines, or to submit your photo(s). [Click here](#) to view photos previously submitted. The deadline to submit is Friday, February 16.