About MRB Group and SmarterLocalGov

MRB Group has been serving local governments for nearly a century as engineers, architects, and planners.

SmarterLocalGov was established in 2011 as the firm’s local government management services division.

Today, we support local governments across the country in their management, finance, grants, community development, and economic development needs.
Background and Purpose
New Demand

- Scout Motors
- Work From Home
- Columbia/Charlotte Metro Area Expansion
- I-77 Industrial Park
Existing Housing

- Vacancies
- Dilapidation
- Overcrowding
Challenges

- Maintaining rural character
- Managing sewer capacity
- Gentrification and displacement
To improve quality of life in the County, housing issues are critical to solve and require a detailed analysis.
Project Scope
Study Tasks

- Analyze Demographic changes and projections
- Income and employment trends and projections
- Existing Housing Inventory and Market Analysis
- Interviews with Stakeholders
- Community Engagement
- Establishing Housing Goals
- Land Use and Regulation Review
- Strategies and Recommendations
Your Input is Critical
YOU are the experts

• Help us calibrate data analysis
• Goals must derive from the people impacted
• Your input matters
Why Housing Matters
The Next Generation

• Investing in our youth and keeping them here
• Housing the workforce of the future
• Providing opportunities for diverse desires
Aging in Place

• Maintaining quality of life as we age
• Keeping communities together
Housing Market Basics
• Balanced Housing Market
  • 3 to 6 Months of Inventory Listed
• Diverse Options
  • Workforce Housing
  • Family Housing
  • Assisted Living
• New housing does not raise prices
• Amenities increase demand
• Housing is a regional issue
• What density does and does not do
• Regulations add costs to housing
The Spectrum of Housing Types

Manufactured Homes
Accessory Dwellings
Townhomes
Duplex
Multi-Family
Single-Family
What We’ve Found
Quick Background

• “The Region”
• Data from the Census Bureau and other private sources
Socio-Demography

• Population has shrunk ~15% since 2010
• Higher median age than the region
• Lower median household income than the region but projected to rapidly increase
• Higher poverty than the region and state
Economy

• Total jobs base shrank over last decade but is now projected to grow
• Bedroom community
• Manufacturing-heavy community
• Higher unemployment (4.7%) than SC (3.5%) and USA (3.8%)
Existing Housing Conditions

- Except for Winnsboro, very high levels of owner-occupied housing
- Housing is older in Fairfield County than the region and state
- Less 1-bedroom units and less diverse house types
- More Mobile Homes and Single Family Detached
Housing Attainability

- Low vacancy rates for multifamily units
- Single Family Home market is extremely tight with low turnover
- Renters have significantly lower incomes and are more likely to be “cost burdened by housing”
- Over half of households with income below $35,000 pay more than 30% for housing costs
  - ~2,000 households
Local Interviews

• Challenge to maintain rural character with development pressure
• Foresee huge demand for new housing
• Waitlist for Housing Authority is very long
• Heirs property limits reinvestment and financial assistance
• Speculators holding and not investing in vacant property
• Needs for:
  • Transitional housing for homeless and at-risk populations
  • Older Adult and Senior Housing
  • Complimentary commercial amenities
  • Subsidized and market rate apartments