



Joel T. Duke, AICP  
Chief Development Officer

**AGENDA**

**AIKEN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
3:00 P.M., MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2026  
SPECIAL MEETING NO. 26-03-SP01**

VIA Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83991748647>,  
Meeting ID: 839 9174 8647

**A) CALL TO ORDER**

**B) RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

**C) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**D) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**E) PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Aiken County Comprehensive Plan 2024-2034 – Public Hearing**

Amendment to Draft Plan Released on February 19, 2026

Change to Strategy 11.1, Draft Plan, Pages 23-25

Aiken County Planning Commission

**F) OLD BUSINESS:**

**G) NEW BUSINESS:**

**H) NEXT REGULAR MEETING: April 16, 2026**

**I) EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)**

**J) ADJOURNMENT:**

**Proposed Amendment to Strategy 11.1, Draft Plan, Pages 23 -25, including Growth Priorities Map (deletions indicated by ~~strikethrough~~, additions are underlined.)**

11. **Balancing Development and Preservation** - Aiken County is a place of both towns and countryside. Communities around and between Aiken and North Augusta are more developed, shaped by their proximity to Augusta, historic mill villages along Horse Creek and the railroad, and access to roads and utilities. East of the South Edisto River, the county remains largely rural, with farms, timberlands, and equestrian uses that are an important part of its identity and economy. The county's ongoing challenge is to guide growth in ways that support vibrant communities while preserving the rural landscapes and natural resources that make Aiken County unique. (*ED, LU, NR*)

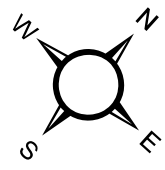
S11.1: Aiken County development policies and practices will adhere to the "Growth Priorities Map," which identifies the following regions and overlays:

- **Priority Development Territory Zone** – Areas of the county with adequate services (roads, utilities, public safety, and recreation) to accommodate additional development, or areas where services are readily extended by public or private means.
- **Redevelopment Focus** – Neighborhoods or communities that were previously developed, but have experienced economic or social changes. These areas have some of the services and utilities present found in priority development zones, but also include significant numbers of vacant or deteriorated properties.
- **Neighborhood Conservation Focus** – Existing stable neighborhoods where property values are constant or increasing, including recently

developed and older housing and commercial properties. Policies and practices in these areas should focus on preservation and protection.

- **Economic Development Hub** – Existing concentrations of commercial and industrial uses and areas where such activity is desired or needed.
- **Core Towns & Communities** – The county’s existing incorporated and unincorporated villages and communities. May include a mill village, the core of an unincorporated community, or the extraterritorial area around a small municipality. Boundaries should be limited to the existing core and the immediately adjacent area that aligns with the town or community.
- **Transition Areas** – Buffer region between the priority development corridor/areas and the Rural Preservation Region. Area suited for ~~higher-density~~ development due to planned or anticipated service expansions. Approvals for higher-density development in the Transition Area is are contingent on adequate services being extended or expanded
- **Rural Preservation Region** – This designation covers the rural and sparsely populated areas of the county. The area includes groundwater recharge zones, wetlands, and prime farmlands listed for protection and preservation. The development of the area should generally be limited to agriculture, low-density residential, agriculture-related commercial uses, or forest lands. Specific amendments to existing regulatory tools may be needed to manage land uses along the region's borders with the Transition Area or the Priority Development Zone.

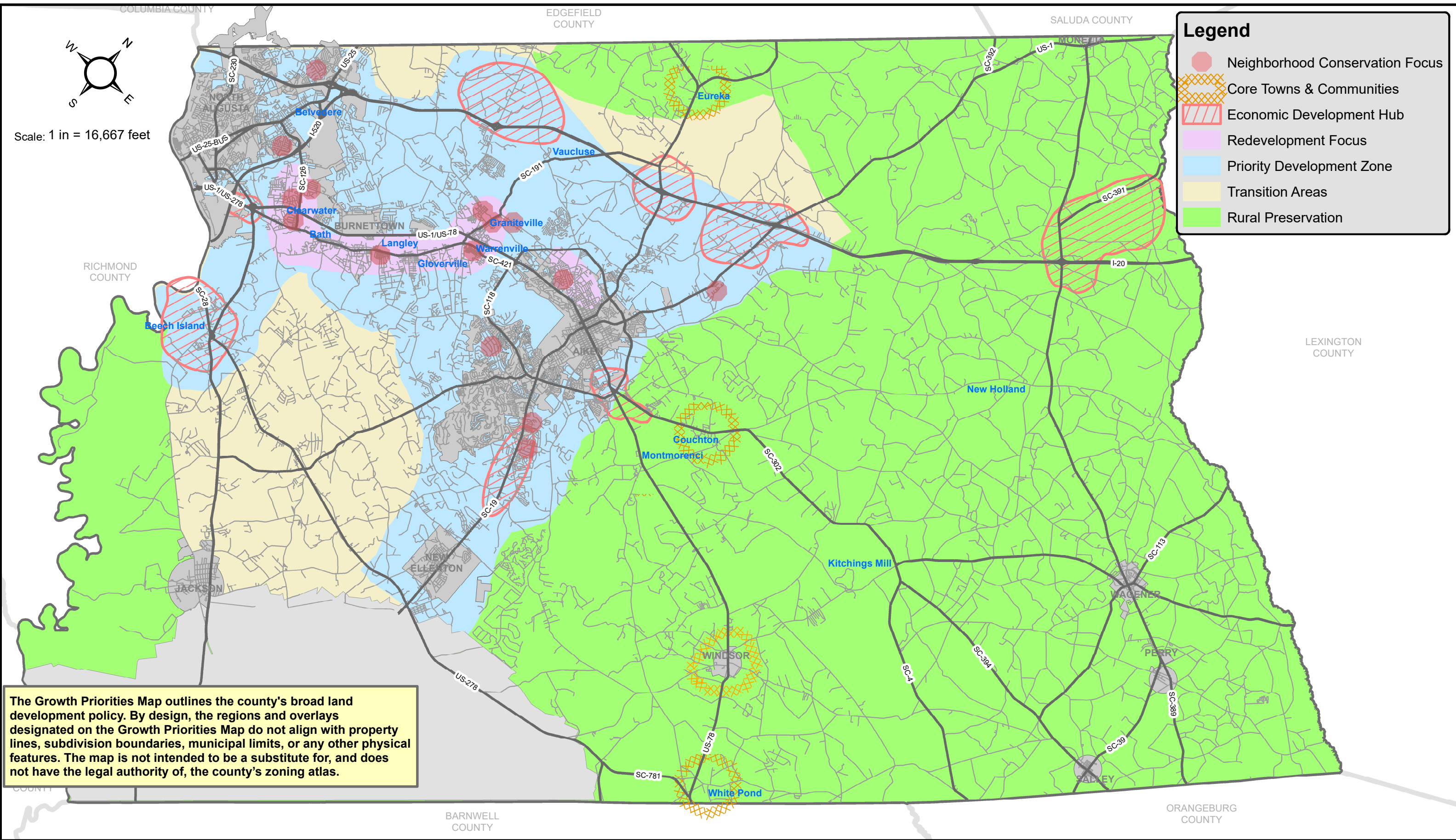
The Growth Priorities Map outlines the county's broad land development policy. By design, the regions and overlays designated on the Growth Priorities Map do not align with property lines, subdivision boundaries, municipal limits, or any other physical features. The map is not intended to be a substitute for, and does not have the legal authority of, the county’s zoning atlas.



Scale: 1 in = 16,667 feet

**Legend**

- Neighborhood Conservation Focus
- Core Towns & Communities
- Economic Development Hub
- Redevelopment Focus
- Priority Development Zone
- Transition Areas
- Rural Preservation



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**Comprehensive Plan  
2024-2034**

# 2024 - 2034 Growth Priorities - Draft V.3 (3-11-26) Aiken County

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**PRESENTATION #1**  
**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

# **AIKEN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024-2034**

## **PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION**

**March 11, 2026**



# PUBLIC COMMENT SURVEY (3-10-26) – WHAT WE HEARD

## ○ Seven (7) Major Themes

- Opposition to the Proposed Eastern Transitional Area
- Preservation of Agricultural and Equestrian Land
- Infrastructure Capacity Concerns
- Preference for Growth in Existing Development Areas
- Protection of Community Character and Quality of Life
- Environmental and Conservation Priorities
- Transportation and Traffic Management



# PUBLIC COMMENT SURVEY (3-10-26) – WHAT WE HEARD

## ○ Key Takeaways

- Strong support for preserving rural and agricultural areas
- Significant opposition to eastern transitional zone
- Support for development that is carefully planned, infrastructure-supported, and concentrated in already developed areas



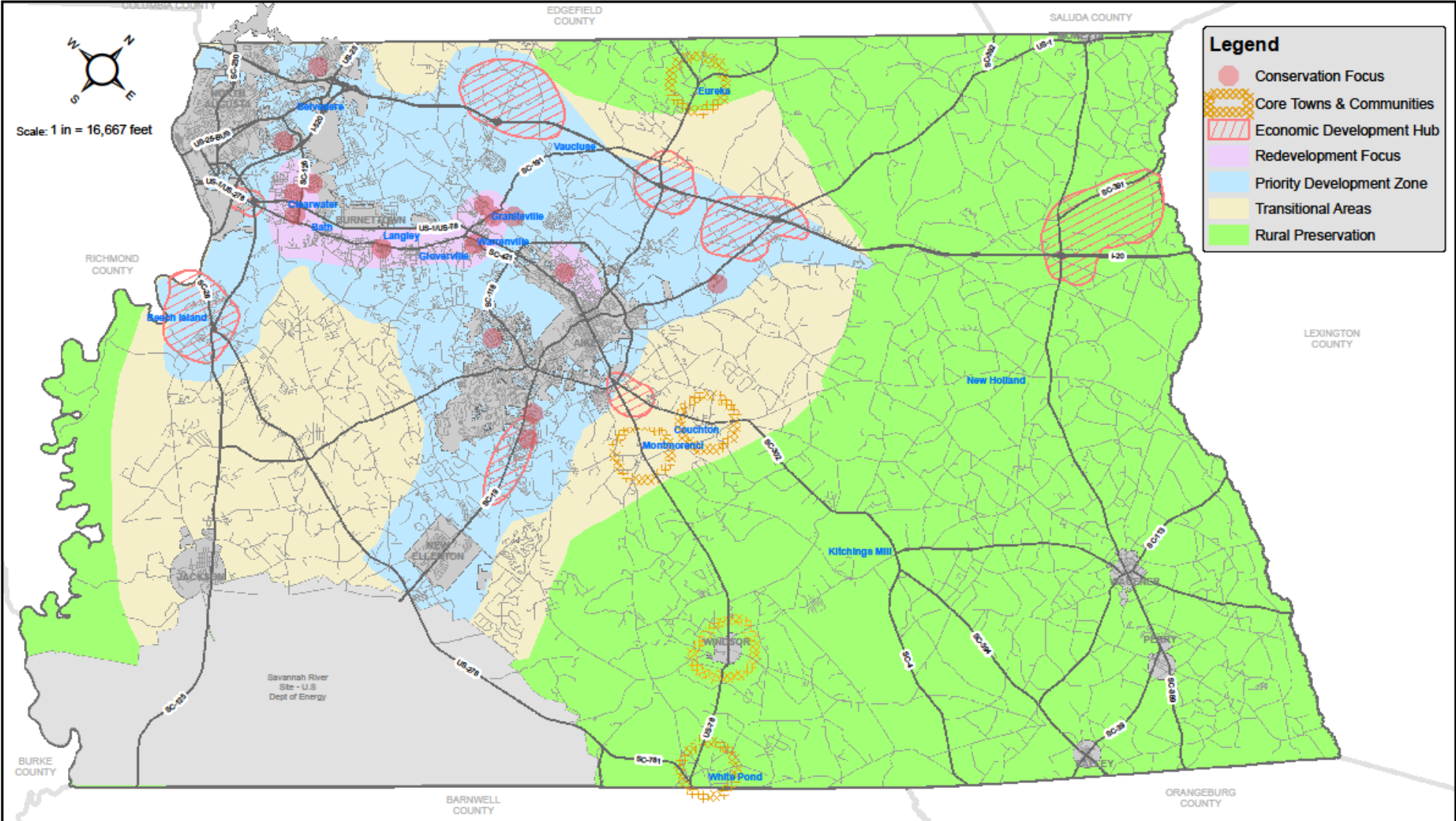
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# Growth Priorities Map V.2, Feb. 2026

## Strategy 11.1



**Comprehensive Plan  
2024-2034**

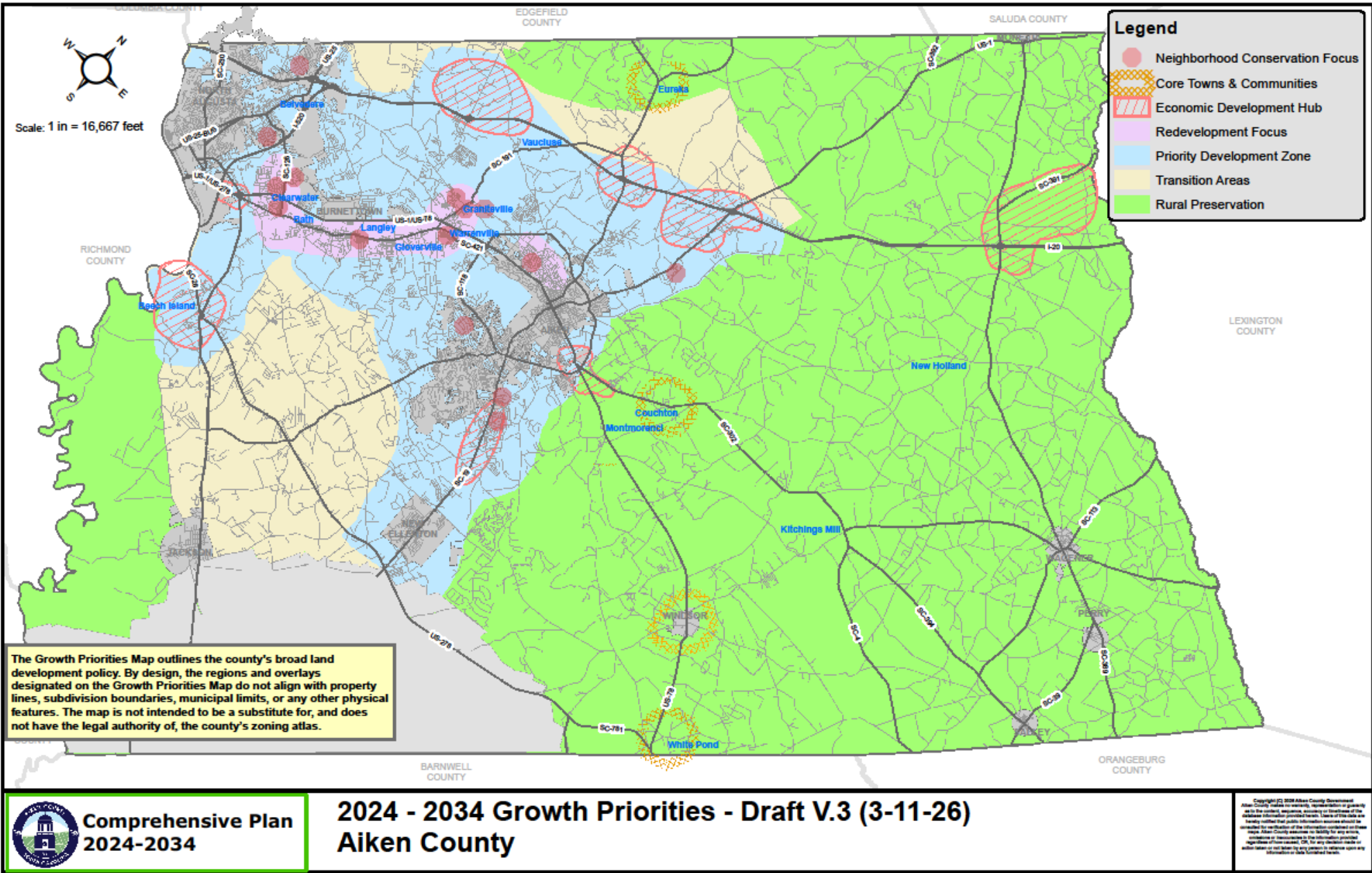
### 2024 - 2034 Growth Priorities - Draft V.2 (2-12-26) Aiken County

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# Growth Priorities Map V.3, March 2026

## Strategy 11.1

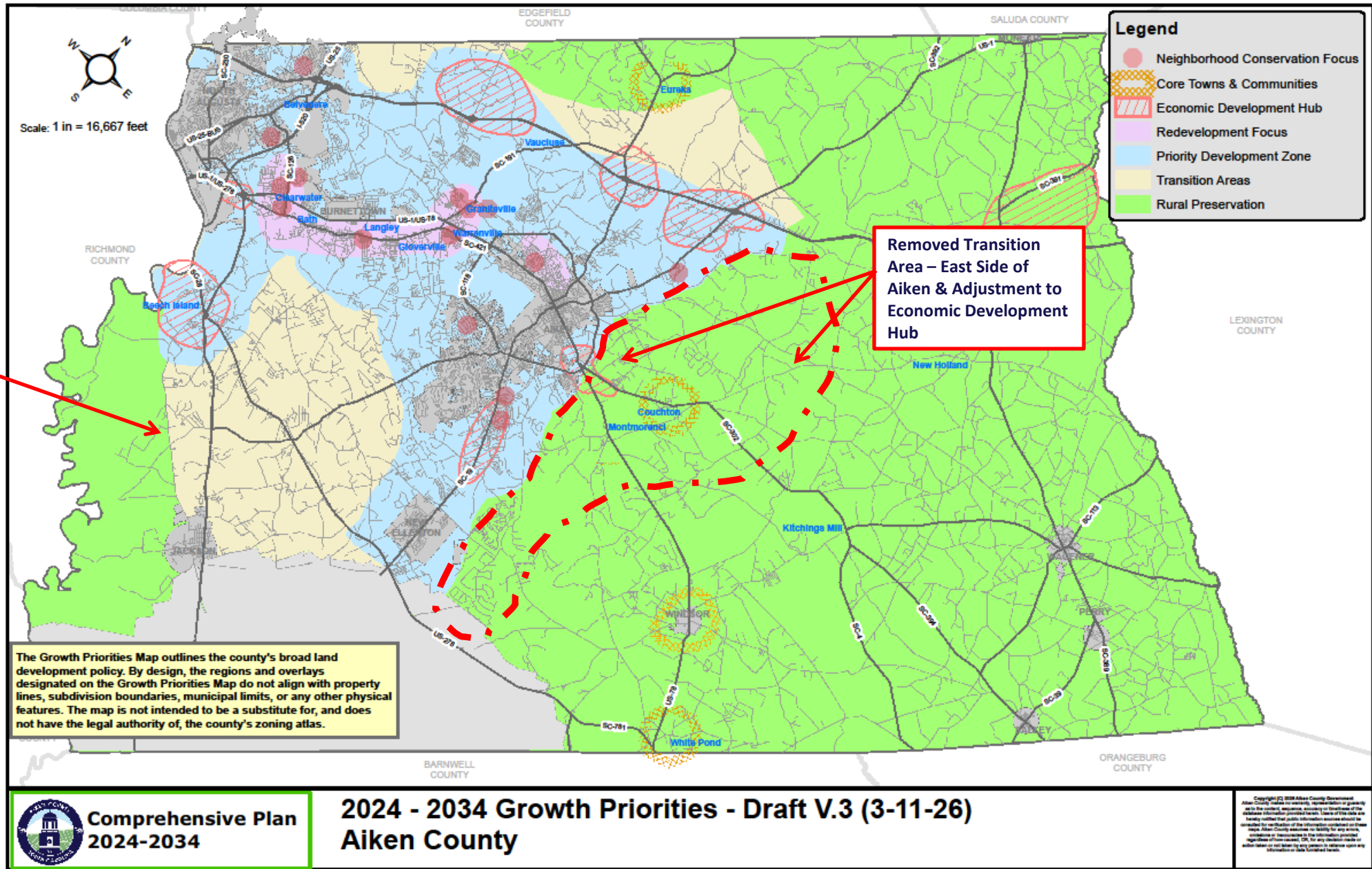


**Comprehensive Plan  
2024-2034**

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# Growth Priorities Map V.3, March 2026

## Strategy 11.1



**Comprehensive Plan  
2024-2034**

**2024 - 2034 Growth Priorities - Draft V.3 (3-11-26)  
Aiken County**

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## NEXT STEPS

- **March 16, 2026 - Called Planning Commission Meeting – Virtual**
  - Amendment to Draft Plan – Strategy 11.1
- **March 19, 2026 - Regular Monthly Planning Commission Meeting**
  - Aiken County Government Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 6:00 pm
  - Public hearing
  - Possible recommendation to the County Council
  - Requires approval by the majority of the total membership (5 of 9), SC Code, Sec. 6-29-520
- **Consideration by Aiken County Council – schedule to be determined by Council**
  - Requires a public hearing with a minimum 30-day notice, SC Code, Sec. 6-29-530
  - Requires approval at three (3) separate council meetings

