

# Upstate Update

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Upstate Forever's Monthly Bulletin on  
Important Issues and Events in the Upstate

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## Upstate Together: Grow by Choice or Chance?

"Regions are the cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century," announced urban planner Gianni Longo during the keynote address of *Upstate Together: Grow by Choice or Chance?* on October 20. Working together, he said, we can enhance and amplify what is unique about our region, and determine how we develop in the future. Nearly 300 attendees from 10 Upstate counties packed the meeting hall at the Airport Marriott as Longo and his partner Jamie Greene described how community visioning and strategic planning can connect the issues of "people, places, and prosperity."

The speakers also emphasized the importance of regional cooperation. You might live in Pickens County, work in Anderson County, shop in Greenville County, and dine in the City of Greenville, giving little thought to all the jurisdictional boundaries you are constantly crossing. However, those boundaries matter a great deal when we are trying to match growth to infrastructure needs, provide adequate parks, recreation, and school facilities, and attract new employment opportunities.

Such cooperation is essential due to the immense growth projected for our region. Dr. Barry Nocks of Clemson University began the evening by presenting the findings of a "Growth Impact Study," which predicts that, based on current trends, the population of the Upstate (ten counties) will increase by 340,000 people by 2025. Dr. Nocks then detailed the implications of that growth: 132,000 new housing units, 7,000 new hotel rooms, 13 million square feet of new retail space, 6.1 million square feet of new office space, and 27 million square feet of new industrial space.

The sobering statistics also reveal that over the past decade, while our population has grown by 15 percent, the amount of developed land has doubled! Continuing to devour land at a rate six times that of population growth will mean that in less than 50 years nearly half of the Upstate's entire 4 million acres will be developed. Certainly this loss of green space will have dire implications for our air and water quality, not to mention drastically increasing infrastructure needs and time spent in traffic.

During a panel discussion, Upstate economic development leaders and a regional planner shared positive news about regional cooperation already taking place, such as with water quality and industrial recruitment. Panelist Brad Wyche, *Upstate Forever* Executive Director, agreed that our region is cooperating well in the area of economic development, but sorely lacking in land use planning.

The evening closed with an interactive survey. Participants in the forum believe that the greatest strengths of our region include the I-85 corridor, our "can-do" attitude, and our successful public-private partnerships. The biggest barriers to regional cooperation were thought to be "turfism" and parochialism, fragmented public and private sectors, and the emphasis on individual property rights. In a strong show of support for the mission of *Upstate Forever*, "land use and growth" was by far participants' first priority for regional planning, and 85 percent were moderately or very concerned "that the Upstate region may

**Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate**

become ‘the next Atlanta.’” The survey found overwhelming support for public-private partnerships and the creation of an umbrella organization to facilitate regional coordination.

So what’s next? *Upstate Forever* will continue to advocate for the establishment of an umbrella organization to develop, with extensive public input and through a voluntary, education-based approach, a regional plan for the Upstate. Hopefully this conference will be the catalyst that makes that happen.

*Upstate Together: Grow By Choice or Chance?* was co-sponsored by the University of South Carolina Upstate, *Upstate Forever*, BellSouth, The Greenville News, Copia Design, and Gallivan, White and Boyd. A summary of the conference is being prepared by USC Upstate. If you would like a copy, please contact Dr. Doris Paez at [dpaez@uscupstate.edu](mailto:dpaez@uscupstate.edu) or 864-503-5903.

For more information about the impacts of future growth and implementing a regional visioning process, see the following articles from the September, 2004 *Upstate Advocate*:

- [Envisioning the Upstate’s Future: Lessons from Salt Lake](#)
- [Bringing the Envision Utah Message to the Upstate](#)

### Greenville County Forms Tree Policy Advisory Committee

After months of political wrangling, on October 18, the Greenville County Council unanimously voted to establish a committee to study tree protection. A standing-room-only crowd (including many *Upstate Forever* members) packed Council chambers, as expectations for the committee and its makeup were debated. Draft recommendations are due back to the Council in nine months.

*Upstate Forever* special consultant Diane Eldridge has already been appointed by Council Chair Butch Kirven as one of the committee’s twelve members. Meetings will be open to the public, and we will inform you of the schedule once it is determined. Your calls, letters, and presence at County Council meetings ensured that this issue did not go away. We will keep you updated on the progress of the committee; please attend the meetings whenever possible. Please also continue to talk to your Council members and let them know you are concerned about tree protection and want to keep the “green” in Greenville!

For more information, read [Diane Eldridge’s op-ed piece](#) about tree protection in the Greenville News from May 28, 2005 as well as a [news report](#) from October 19, 2005 detailing the County Council meeting.

### Upstate Forever News

#### Spartanburg Office News

On October 14, more than 150 people came to hear developer Vince Graham speak about “Place Making: Creating Livable Communities in South Carolina,” co-sponsored by *Upstate Forever’s Spartanburg office*. This was the largest ever “Breakfast Briefing” in a series organized by the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce.

This month, *Upstate Forever* kicked off a project with The Conservation Foundation (TCF) to do a Rapid Needs Assessment of Parks and Greenspace in Spartanburg County. The goal of the assessment is to generate public interest, support, and funding for more parks in Spartanburg County. Due for completion by January 1, the assessment will include: identification of high-priority locations for expanding Spartanburg County’s greenspace and park system, the development of a parcel-level prioritization system for acquiring new parkland and greenspace, and the development of a land acquisition implementation plan.

## Upcoming Events

### Upstate Forever Events

**Nov. 2, Weathering the Storm: Are We Ready for the Next Big Flood?** Younts Conference Center, Furman University, Greenville, SC, 12:30 - 5:00 p.m. This seminar will give participants a practical understanding of how floods work in the Upstate, how to make communities safer when a flood hits, and how to use smart development to reduce the magnitude of floods in the first place. This is the first in a quarterly series of seminars on water resource management issues called the Watershed Leaders Forum, and is free and open to the Upstate community. It is sponsored by the Appalachian and Upper Savannah Councils of Government and the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium, with support from the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation. For more information, visit [www.saludareedy.org/outreach/workshops.html#forums](http://www.saludareedy.org/outreach/workshops.html#forums); to register, call 250-0500 ext. 22 or email [jasonvand@upstateforever.org](mailto:jasonvand@upstateforever.org).

**Nov. 2, Day Trip to Southern Village and North Hills, 7:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.** Travel from Spartanburg via charter bus to a successful Traditional Neighborhood Development, then to a mixed-use project on a redeveloped mall site. For more information, contact [smonroe@upstateforever.org](mailto:smonroe@upstateforever.org) or call 327-0900.

**November 5, Upstate Forever's Annual Meeting, Asbury Hills Camp and Retreat Center, Cleveland, SC, 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** Plan to join us at this beautiful mountain retreat for the annual membership meeting, followed by lunch, hikes, canoeing, and relaxation. R.S.V.P by November 1 to the *Upstate Forever* office at 250-0500 or [gwilson@upstateforever.org](mailto:gwilson@upstateforever.org).

### Upstate Forever Field Trip

**November 12, Rock Gorge Roadless Area.** Butch Clay, photographer and naturalist, will lead a strenuous trip in the Rock Gorge Roadless Area in the Chattooga Watershed. This area of the Andrew Pickens District of the Sumter National Forest is a favorite of hikers and trout fishermen because of its wild backcountry. The trip will last from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.; the cost is \$20. To register, call *Upstate Forever* at 250-0500 or email [gwilson@upstateforever.org](mailto:gwilson@upstateforever.org).

### Other Events

**Third Saturday of Each Month, Garner's Natural Market and Café, Greenville, SC.** Shop at Garner's and help raise money for *Upstate Forever*! On the third Saturday of every month, Garner's will donate ten percent of what you spend to *Upstate Forever*. Simply mention that you are making the purchase in our name and Garner's will handle the rest! For more information about Garner's, visit [www.garnersnatural.com](http://www.garnersnatural.com).

**November 2, Global Warming: the Signs and the Science, documentary broadcast on PBS, 8:00 p.m.** A one-hour documentary about people living with the grave consequences of a changing climate and the individuals, communities, and scientists inventing new approaches to safeguard our children's future. Co-produced by South Carolina ETV, this program was filmed across the U.S., Asia, and South America.

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**November 4, Designing and Defending Conservation Easements for Permanence, Innovate Building, Greenville, SC, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.** South Carolina land trusts along with land trusts from Georgia and North Carolina will discuss current practices in conservation, designing conservation easements for permanent defense, and improving the monitoring and defense of easements. Burnet Maybank, Director of the S.C. Department of Revenue, will be the keynote speaker; he recently presented testimony and recommendations to the U.S. Senate on curbing abuses of conservation tax incentives, and his agency is currently investigating abuses of the state's conservation tax credit. For more information or to register, contact the Land Trust Alliance Southeast program office at [southeast@lta.org](mailto:southeast@lta.org) or S.C. Land Trust Network chair Brad Wyche at [bwyche@upstateforever.org](mailto:bwyche@upstateforever.org).

**November 9-11, Greenbuild International Conference and Expo 2005, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA.** Sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council, Greenbuild is the annual meeting place for green building industry professionals to learn about the latest advancements in green building design, construction, project financing and building management. [www.greenbuildexpo.org](http://www.greenbuildexpo.org)

**November 15, Plants and Animals of the Enchanted Isles, Wofford College, Spartanburg, SC, 7:00 p.m.** The South Carolina Native Plant Society is sponsoring a presentation by Dr. Doug Rayner on the Galapagos Islands, famous as a laboratory for evolution and biogeography. Surprisingly, many plants of the Galapagos are closely related to, or even the very same as, species that we find in South Carolina. [www.scnps.org](http://www.scnps.org)

**November 17-18, American Forests National Conference on Urban Ecosystems: Nature at Your Service, Westin Hotel, Charlotte, NC.** The urban forest is an untapped resource--one that can help cities meet regulatory requirements for clean air and water, revitalize neighborhoods, and reduce the costs of building and maintaining infrastructure. *Upstate Forever* Special Consultant Diane Eldridge will present "Advocating for Conservation: Grass Roots and Public Policy." <http://www.americanforests.org/conference/>

## Lots o' Links

**[Urban Planners, Architects Unveil Plans for Rebuilding Mississippi.](#)** New Urbanists met in Biloxi October 11-18 to envision Gulf Coast reconstruction, developing detailed plans for 11 cities and towns along 80 miles of coastline. Their designs present a bold alternative to the urban sprawl of the past 30 years.

**[Provide Mobility, Not Just Mobile Homes.](#)** Families left homeless by Katrina would be better off with portable housing vouchers than massive trailer parks, according to two scholars from the Brookings Institution.

**[After Katrina: New Solutions for Safe Communities and a Secure Energy Future.](#)** This new report from the Natural Resources Defense Council, prepared by experts on health, toxic waste, urban design, coastal protection and energy, proposes solutions for a healthier, more sustainable future.

**[So Why Was Trent Lott's Home Built on the Beach in the First Place?](#)** Taxpayers subsidize development in vulnerable coastal areas.

**[U.K. Scientist Slams U.S. Climate "Loonies."](#)**

**[House Passes Bill Spurring Refinery-Building.](#)** In a close and controversial vote, the U.S. House streamlined the requirements for building new refineries and expanding existing ones, making it more difficult for states to enforce clean air standards.

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[Building Green.](#) Can China move 400 million people to its cities without wreaking environmental havoc? Eco-urban designer William McDonough says yes—and Beijing is listening.

[Cool Cities.](#) Communities around the country, including in the Upstate, are striving to attract young, artistic, and ethnically and socially diverse populations as the key to long-term economic health. This site from Michigan delves into what constitutes “cool” and why it matters.

[Or, Uncool Cities.](#) Cities once boasted of their thriving middle-class neighborhoods, churches, warehouses, factories and high-rise office towers. Today they set their value by their inventory of jazz clubs, art museums, and luxury hotels. Urban affairs expert Joel Kotkin questions the wisdom of this focus on “coolness.”

[Myths and Facts about Affordable and High Density Housing.](#) These are not one and the same. A report with photos and case studies from the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

[Report: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Taking Aim at Wetlands.](#) New rulings have removed from protection at least 11,000 acres in 15 states since 2004.

[When Can Johnny Walk to School Again?](#) This month, we celebrated International Walk to School Day. In more and more communities, however, the simple act of walking to school has become nearly impossible.

[Designing Heart-Healthy Communities.](#) From *Newsweek*, the connection between community design and health.

[The End of McMansions?](#) The size of the average American house ballooned from 1500 square feet in 1970 to more than 2300 square feet in 2001. But that trend has leveled off over the last few years.

[New York Skyscrapers Dim Lights to Save Birds.](#)

[Retailers Reshape Big Box Stores to Fit Urban Settings.](#)

[Pressure from Environmental Activists Moves Ford Motor Company.](#) The automaker pledges to increase hybrid production tenfold and take other steps to reduce carbon emissions.

[Atlanta's Leaders Embrace a New Vision for Growth.](#) Changing demographics may lead to more development toward the urban center.

[Car Reviewer Disgusted by Sprawl.](#) A road test of the 2006 Pontiac Torrent morphed into an unusual critique of auto-centric development.

[16,000 Free Books Online.](#)

And Now, for Something Completely Different.....

[Python Explodes After Eating Alligator.](#) Clash of native and non-native species in the Everglades does not end well for either one.

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## Quote of the Month

“Chance is somebody else’s choice. I don’t think you want this region to be developed by somebody else’s choice. It’s *your* choice.” -Gianni Longo, expert in community visioning and strategic planning, speaking at *Upstate Together: Grow by Choice or Chance?*, 10/20/2005

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