

The Status of Civic Health in Spartanburg County



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StrategicSpartanburg.org

spartanburg
community indicators
project

Inspiring dialogue, strategy and change.



EDUCATION

Our children will excel academically, and our citizens will demonstrate high levels of baccalaureate degree attainment, rendering Spartanburg the best educated county in the state.



ECONOMY

Our citizens will have access to living wage jobs and our communities will be economically viable.



PUBLIC HEALTH

Our citizens will be increasingly healthy, demonstrating decreasing incidence and prevalence of health risk factors and poor health outcomes.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Our citizens will manage our natural resources in a way that will support current and future generations.



SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Our community will be characterized by stable families, low crime, affordable housing, and access to opportunity.



CIVIC HEALTH

Our citizens will have access to opportunities for civic engagement that promote community well-being and an enriched quality of life.

- Service (Volunteering)
- Participating in a Group
- Connecting to Information and Events
- Political Action
- Social Connectedness
- Philanthropy

INTRODUCTION

“Across the South, we have to make it possible for the next generation of leaders to emerge. This is not simply a task of “training,” but rather of creating the conditions that nurture leadership – that bring people together to forge alliances, to discuss issues, and to instill a set of values.”

– *The State of the South 2011*

Civic health (often characterized as “civic engagement”) can be defined multiple ways and can take many forms. In essence, however, it is the common thread of participation in and building of one’s community. Engaging in one’s community is the catalyst for social transformation by fostering the ability of people in a community to define common goals, solve their own problems, and achieve the community’s potential.

Why Measure Civic Health?

Communities with the greatest and most diverse citizen participation are typically the most successful and resilient communities. Thus, it makes sense to seek reliable local data, both qualitative and quantitative, that establish baselines and measure and track progress on the strongest indicators of civic health.

Because it can take many different forms, civic health is difficult to quantify. However, the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC), founded in 1946 and federally chartered in 1953 by the U.S. Congress to track, measure and promote civic health, has produced *America’s Civic Health Index* – the nationally recognized measure of citizen action and attitudes relative to civic health since 2006. Since its 2009 inclusion in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, NCoC has partnered with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the U.S. Census Bureau to expand the reach and impact of engagement metrics through an annual civic health assessment known as the *Civic Life in America* report. Much of the data included herein are from this source.

“The health of a community increases as connections between individuals, families, and neighborhoods grow and deepen. Increasing civic engagement is not just the avenue to a healthier community, but also the pathway to opportunity for the citizens who live, work, play and learn there.”

– **Norman B. Rice,**
President & Chief Executive Officer,
The Seattle Foundation,
In Greater Seattle Civic Health Index, 2010

Conflicting Points of View

In the past decade, civic health has been a topic of extensive study, rendering conflicting findings. In 2000, Robert Putnam, a political scientist and Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, published *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, a highly regarded study that measured the decline of “social capital.” By presenting a comprehensive array of data, he concluded that many traditional civic, social and fraternal organizations - typified by bowling leagues - had undergone massive declines in membership, while the number of people bowling (but not members of bowling leagues) had increased dramatically. He concluded that people in communities are more isolated than ever before.

However, according to the *2011 Civic Life in America: Key Findings on the Civic Health of the Nation*, released in September 2011 by the NCoC and the CNCS, between 2008 and 2010, the majority of Americans were civically active in a variety of ways, working with others to improve their communities. In fact, the data suggest that civic engagement is a “reinforcing cycle” in that citizens who participate in one area of civic health, such as volunteering, are more likely to get involved in groups, contact public officials, or work with neighbors. Furthermore, civic involvement tends to increase when individuals feel a deep connection to their communities through personal networks.

This report has been organized into the six broad categories of civic health articulated by the NCoC and the CNCS: service, social connectedness, participation in groups, connection to information and events, philanthropy, and political action. This marks a departure from the typical organization of the Spartanburg Community Indicators Project’s reports wherein four or fewer leading indicators are identified, along with a number of secondary indicators and a few crosscutting indicators. The current format was chosen for the purpose of promoting dialogue around the topic of community engagement and in consideration of the dearth of relative local quantitative data. After all, community based dialogue itself is a reflection of civic health.

“Civic engagement is a reinforcing cycle – people who are involved in one area are more likely to be involved in others.”
– *Civic Life in America, 2011*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In many ways Spartanburg is a vibrant community, marked by a number of unique assets. The City of Spartanburg, as well as the many other municipalities countywide, is engaged in formal and informal processes to forge paths forward to prosperity and a high quality of life. Community leaders have articulated bright hopes for entrepreneurial innovation, new and more efficient philanthropy, cultural enrichment, significantly increased educational attainment, environmental sustainability, and increased health equity. However, none of this can be achieved by hope alone, or even by leadership alone. Rather, the wider community must define common dreams and must be committed to the hard work necessary to achieve its dreams. In short, the community must be engaged.

Those of us who live and work here know that community engagement is alive and well in Spartanburg. Although we might not be able to measure it in empirical terms, we feel it. We value it. We nurture it. However, the real question remains: is our civic health all it can be? Is it being sustained and is it being engendered in succeeding generations?

Although much of the data presented in the following pages is limited to the national and state level, we can infer much about ourselves from it. More importantly, we can use the data to inventory our own civic health, even if only at the qualitative level. Many other communities have done so using the same data and have become inspired to increase civic health specific to their own aspirations.

“The wider community must define its common dreams and must be committed to the hard work necessary to achieve its dreams.”

Critical Considerations

Two variables strongly tied to civic health bear addressing from the outset of this document – economic resilience, an outcome of civic health, and education, a very strong predictor of civic health. In traditional Community Indicators format, these two variables would be considered “crosscutting indicators” of civic health.

Economic Resilience

Like most other parts of the country, Spartanburg has not been immune to the national economic downturn in the last few years. Although the latest economic indicators are positive, demonstrating that recovery has begun, it should be kept in mind while reading this document that there is a strong relationship between civic health and economic resilience. The data show that the measures of civic health cited here appear to help protect against unemployment and contribute to overall economic resilience. States and localities with higher levels of civic health in 2006 (volunteering, attending public meetings, helping neighbors, voting, and registering to vote) saw less growth in unemployment between 2006 and 2010. This was true even after adjusting for the other economic factors used to predict unemployment rates over this period.

Although the evidence in favor of the idea that civic health actually boosts economic resilience is correlative and therefore not demonstratively causal, it should promote discussion of the potential economic impact of civic health. It may be simply that stronger civic health helps communities weather recessions better. The National Conference on Citizenship provides evidence of the plausibility of this hypothesis:

- Being engaged in the community can develop skills, confidence, and habits that make individuals employable and strengthen the networks that help them to find jobs.
- People get jobs through social networks.
- Participation in the community spreads information about local issues and opportunities.
- Community involvement is strongly correlated with trust in other people.
- Communities and political jurisdictions with stronger civic health are more likely to have good governments.
- Engagement in their communities can encourage people to feel attached to their communities, and the proportion of people attached to their communities predicts economic growth.

“Inadequate investment in public education and tolerance for disparities in educational access, quality, and success are a certain recipe for civic decay.”
— Greater Seattle Civic Index 2010

Education

Data provided in the *2010 Civic Health Assessment* show that Americans with more education dominate community engagement. The extent of engagement increases as educational attainment increases – a clear dose-response relationship. High school graduates are twice as likely to vote or belong to a group and three times as likely to volunteer or work with neighbors to solve problems as non-graduates. Furthermore, individuals with bachelor’s degrees are approximately five times more likely to volunteer than are high school dropouts. Additional data

provided by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (Circle) clearly demonstrate that educational achievement is the strongest predictor of whether or not young people, the next generation that defines our community, will be civically engaged.

Given these findings, Spartanburg’s low mean educational attainment is of great concern. The fact that Spartanburg County residents with bachelor’s degrees or above account for less than 20 percent of the adult population actually undermines the civic fabric of the community. For some time, community leaders and residents throughout Spartanburg County have been addressing this issue via well-known initiatives such as “The 40 / 30 Challenge,” the College Hub, and others; however, until there is significant upward movement in educational attainment, it is unlikely that civic health will increase in kind.

THE INDICATORS

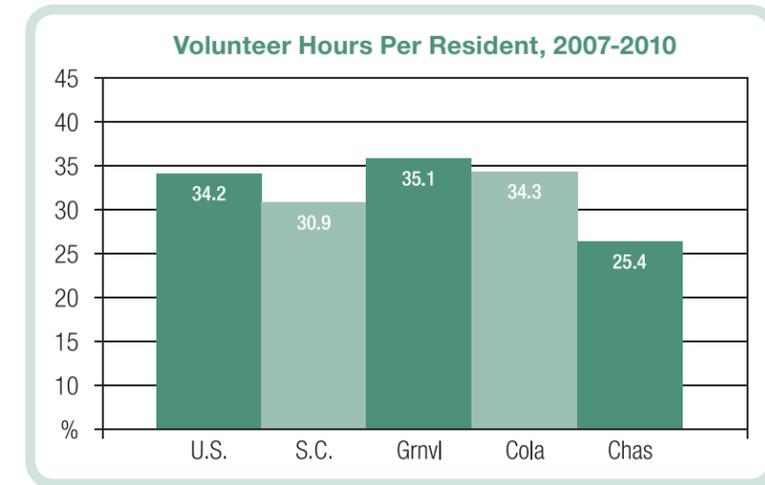
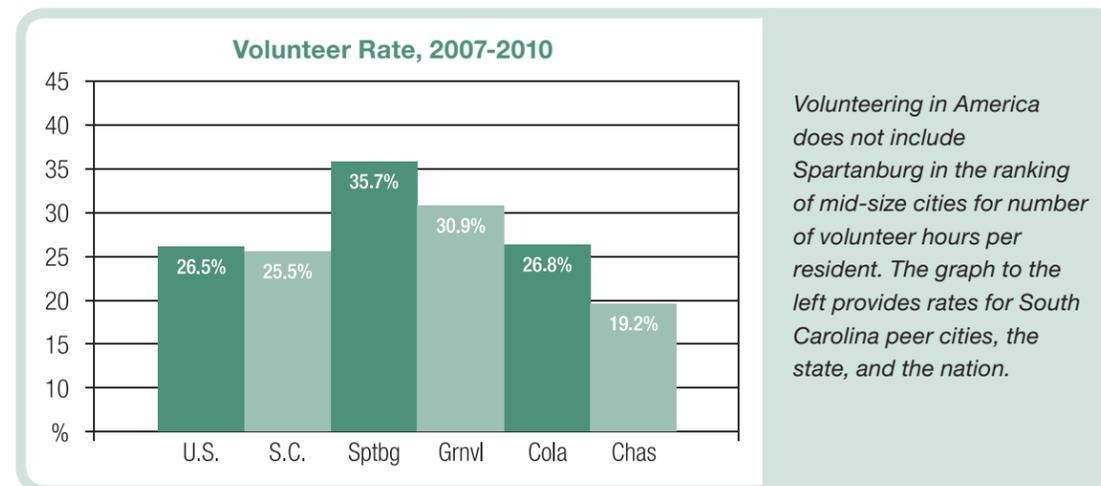
Service (Volunteering)

According to Volunteering In America, 62.7 million adults across the U.S. volunteered in 2010 (26.5 percent), providing almost 8.1 billion hours to local and national organizations. Among states, South Carolina ranks 34th for volunteer rate, with 25.5 percent of residents volunteering (2008-2010 three-year average). During the same time period, the national volunteer rate was 26.5 percent. The state with the highest volunteer rate was Utah (44.5 percent), while the state with the lowest volunteer rate was New York (20.0 percent). Of large cities ranked, Minneapolis-St. Paul had the highest volunteer rate (37.1 percent), and Miami had the lowest (15.2 percent).

In Spartanburg County, 80,200 residents volunteer (based on 2006-2010 averages). This constitutes 35.7 percent of all residents, a higher rate than Greenville, Columbia, Charleston, the state average, and the national average. This high rate of volunteering is surprising in light of the county's low educational attainment.

“Mankind was created to live in community with each other. Volunteering and providing services within the larger community provide both the giver and the receiver an opportunity to grow in love and to experience the healing power of shared agony and joy. Spartanburg has individuals who reach across racial, socioeconomic, and other barriers to build a bridge that connects all of our talents and creates a better society for us all.”

– **Clarence Batts**, *Community Volunteer*



“In American society today, we need to have volunteerism. I truly believe that it is the glue that will hold us together and it will be the energy that will take us into the 21st century.”

– **U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski**

The data show that the following factors influence volunteer rates in a given community:

- High foreclosures; high foreclosure rates are correlated with lower volunteer rates.
- The number of nonprofits per capita; communities with more nonprofits per capita have higher volunteer rates.
- Attachment to the community; communities with higher homeownership rates (vs. multi-unit housing) have higher volunteer rates.
- Mean educational level; as the level of education in the community rises, so does the volunteer rate.
- Poverty; volunteering is less common in high poverty areas.
- Unemployment; as the unemployment rate rises, the volunteer rate decreases.

Participating In A Group

In *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam demonstrated that there have been declines over the last three decades in membership and activity in various local clubs and civic and religious organizations, and the rate of decline has been accelerating. In the mid-1970s, the average American attended some club meeting every month, but by 1998, that rate of attendance had decreased by nearly 60 percent.

Group Participation, South Carolina (2008-2010)	
Sports or Recreation Association	7.30%
Service or Civic Association	7.50%
School Group	17.70%
Church Group / Religious Association	21.60%
Other	4.10%
Officer or Committee Member	9.10%

Combined data from 2008-2010, reported in *Civic Life in America 2011*, show that, on average, 34.5 percent of Americans age 18 and over belonged to a group, such as a religious institution or neighborhood association. Rates of participation for states ranged from 24.8 percent in Nevada to 44.8 percent in Alaska. South Carolina ranked 30th with 36 percent of residents participating in a group. This source does not provide information for Spartanburg or any other city in South Carolina, only for larger cities across the nation. No other data source exists that provides this information comprehensively on a local level.

It should be noted that we might be experiencing a shift from formal to informal group participation. Connectedness today may be evidenced best in coffee shops, community centers and through online networks rather than through membership in bowling leagues and the like.

Bonding Social Capital Organizations, 2011			
	Spartanburg County	Greenville County	Charleston County
Number of Organizations	119	279	243
Number Per 10,000 Persons	4.69	7.35	7.84
Total Revenue	25,313,270	57,371,549	23,757,633
Total Revenue Per Capita	99.74	151.13	76.65
Total Assets	38,775,589	95,544,642	41,510,883
Total Assets Per Capita	152.79	251.69	133.92

Connecting To Information & Events

According to a September 2011 report produced by the Pew Research Center, Americans obtain local news and information from many different sources, including: television, radio, newspaper and Internet. Primary sources vary considerably by age and subject matter. Nearly half of adults use mobile devices to get local news and information, and social media is growing in popularity, but word of mouth is still a significant factor in sharing local news and information.

As technology becomes a larger part of our daily lives, questions have been raised about its impact on our civic health. While detractors hold that, as reliance on computers and mobile devices results in social isolation, proponents hold that it more effectively disseminates information and provides convenient outlets for civic action.

According to *Civic Life in America 2011*, the Internet continues to grow as an integral part of everyday civic life, especially among Millennials (born after 1982), but also among Generation X and Baby Boomers. Social media is experiencing a meteoric rise in popularity, changing the way people around the world interact with each other. Social networking sites promote rapid transfer of ideas and information and allow participants to pursue ideas that they believe are valuable. For example, engagement in political activity is facilitated when individuals post and react to opinions and information. Most members of congress have thoroughly integrated social media into their communications and are using social media tools to gauge public opinion and communicate with constituents.

“Of particular interest in this year’s findings is that the online world is becoming equally important to people as the offline world—and it’s going to continue to impact the way Americans get involved in civic life. We’ve seen that people who stay in touch regularly with friends and family, even online, and with their neighbors are also more likely to be involved in a variety of community activities. That gives civic leaders an opportunity to engage people through technology to meet community needs.”

– **Robert Velasco, CEO,**
Corporation for National
& Community Service

“I believe it is imperative for every resident of a community to join his/her neighborhood association. We each have a part to play in making our neighborhoods a safe and productive place to live and raise children. By coming together, we can create a greater vision for improvements in our neighborhoods.”

– **J. Ruth Littlejohn, President, South Converse Neighborhood Association**

In 2010, 32.5 percent of Americans talked with friends and family via the Internet every day, compared with 32.1 percent in 2009 and 28.8 percent in 2008. In South Carolina, 46.2 percent of residents talked to family or friends via the Internet a few times a week or more often (37.4 percent did not use the Internet to communicate with family or friends at all). There are no data available that disaggregate this at the county or city level.

The Digital Divide

There is a movement, perhaps most strongly articulated by the National Civic League (NCL) and ZeroDivide, to overcome the barriers that divide the “haves” from “have-nots” in communities across the U.S. through innovative uses of technology. Data collected by the two organizations show that when underserved communities and disadvantaged individuals have access to broadband technology and training, they become more civically engaged and participate in the health, economic development and education issues that affect them. According to data provided by ZeroDivide, the technology access gap is narrowing, but the gap may be widening when it comes to technological literacy and application.

“Technology has allowed us to connect and mobilize ourselves to encourage positive change. People are as dependent today on social media as people were to radios during the 1930s. Our struggle will continue to be our human connection with one another and how we choose to use the information that is so readily available to make a difference in our communities.”

– R. Todd Stephens, County Librarian, Spartanburg County Public Libraries

Political Action

Political activities form the foundation of many democratic principles of civic health. Political involvement includes voting, registering to vote, non-electoral participation (such as contacting a representative or attending a public meeting), and actively deliberating politics. In *Bowling Alone*, sociologist Robert Putnam demonstrated that, over the last three decades of the twentieth century, there had been a fundamental shift in political involvement. Voting, political knowledge, political trust, and grassroots political activism decreased over that time frame. Specifically, his data showed that Americans sign 30 percent fewer petitions and are 40 percent less likely to join a consumer boycott.

Voting

Data reported in *Civic Life in America 2011* shows that 58.2 percent of U.S. adults voted in the 2008 presidential election, and 41.8 percent voted in the 2010 election (59.8 percent were registered to vote). Voting rates for states ranged from 31.4 percent in Texas to 58.4 percent in Maine. South Carolina ranked 11th at 49.2 percent. This source does not provide information for Spartanburg or any other city in South Carolina, only for larger cities; however, the Spartanburg County Office of Registrations provides some voting data as indicated in the tables.

“Political involvement is personal because the result of political action affects everyone personally. Expressing one’s personal opinions through voting and being involved in local decision making allows individuals to be active participants in the community.”

– Elaine Harris, Mayor of Pacolet

Other Political Action

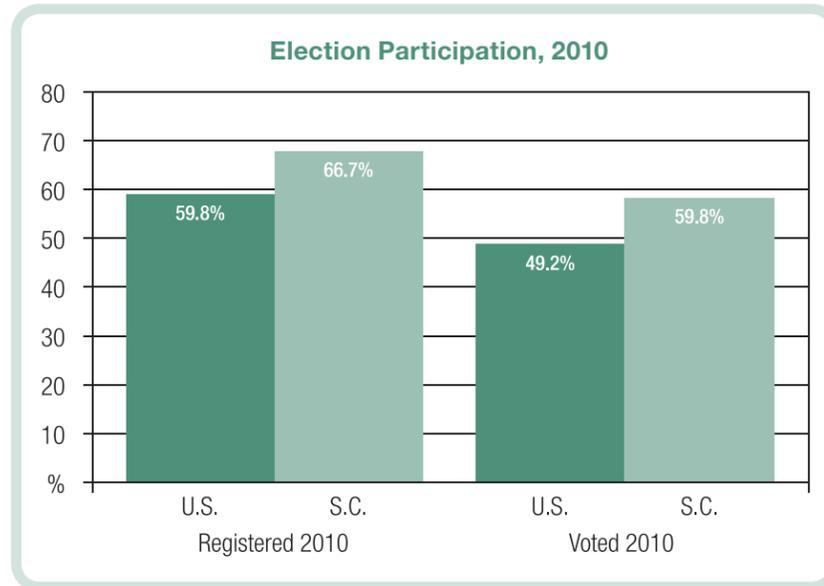
There are no recognized sources that track and measure such informal political activity as displaying buttons, signs and stickers or for measuring volunteer activities on behalf of candidates or political organizations. In fact, there is no measure recognized as valid and reliable for membership in political organizations. However, the measures of political action that are available show that for an annual average 2008-2010:

- 11.3 percent of South Carolinians contacted a public official, versus 9.9 percent nationally.
- 12.0 percent boycotted companies or bought goods based on values, versus 10.0 percent nationally.
- 40.1 percent talk about politics frequently (26.0 percent nationally), 34.7 percent talk about politics infrequently (37.5 percent nationally), 25.2 percent do not talk about politics (36.6 percent nationally).

This data suggests that South Carolinians are more engaged politically than U.S. residents on average.

“We must work to engage each segment that is missing from the civic vitality of the region. Using a one-size-fits-all approach will not improve current disparities in voting and registration.”

– Greater Seattle Civic Health Index, 2010



In Spartanburg County, there are 155,053 registered active voters (as of May 15, 2012) distributed as shown in the following graph:

Spartanburg County Voter Demographics, May 2012			
	Total	Female	Male
Black / African American	33,044	19,576	13,468
White	117,354	63,074	54,280
Asian	1,731	893	838
Hispanic	1,968	1,063	905
Native American	152	79	73
Multiethnic	28	14	14
Other	775	436	339
Unknown	1	1	--
Total		85,136	69,917

In the 2008 presidential election, there were 100,265 votes cast in Spartanburg County, constituting approximately 72 percent of the registered voters at that time.

Social Connectedness

Social networks have collective value, sometimes termed “social capital,” that is engendered by the trust, reciprocity, information-sharing, and cooperation associated with connectedness. Demographically homogenous communities demonstrate a higher degree of social connectedness than do diverse communities. Furthermore, in communities where transience is high, social connectedness is lower. Typically, urban areas are more transient than suburban or rural communities. These factors are a consideration for the City of Spartanburg and throughout the county where one area might experience little social connection to the next area. In these cases, trust building and activities that promote connectedness from area to area are beneficial to the welfare of the whole community.

“Social capital is not a substitute for effective public policy, but rather a prerequisite for it and, in part, a consequence of it.”

– Robert Putnam

The specific metrics used by *Civic Life in America 2011* to assess social connectedness are: frequency of talking with neighbors, exchanging favors with neighbors, eating dinner with household members, and communicating with family and friends via the Internet.

Neighborliness

Between 2008 and 2010, on average, 8.4 percent of U.S. adults (approximately 20 million individuals) worked with their neighbors to fix a community problem. Over 80 percent of Americans talked to neighbors at least once a month, and almost 45 percent talked to neighbors frequently.

During the same timeframe, the percentage of adults working with neighbors to fix a community problem ranged from 5.4 percent in New Jersey to 18.0 percent in Utah. South Carolina ranked 16th at 10.5 percent. At 85.5 percent, South Carolina residents ranked higher than the national average for talking frequently with neighbors. In addition, 62.7 percent of South Carolina residents exchange favors frequently with neighbors, while only 56.8 percent of residents nationwide do. There are no data provided for any cities in South Carolina for this measure.

Eating Dinner Together

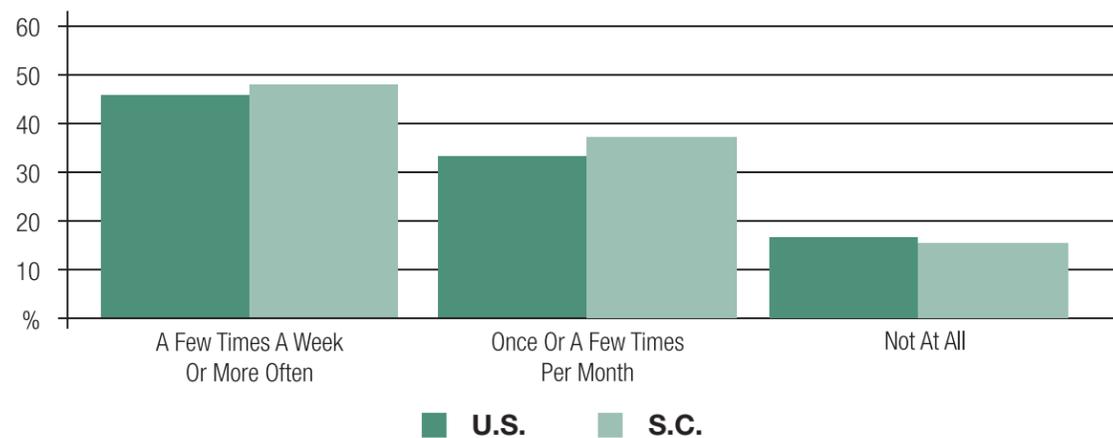
According to *Civic Life in America 2011*, between 2008 and 2010, more than two-thirds of American households had dinner together nearly every day, and almost nine out of ten had dinner together frequently. By age group, Generation X (born 1965-1981) ranked first in this category, with 91 percent frequently eating dinner with household members. Almost 96 percent of South Carolinians eat dinner with other household members frequently.

However, activities that demonstrate social ties shift over time. According to Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone*, the average American entertained friends at home 15 times per year in 1975. By 1998, the equivalent figure was barely half of that. It is unclear what the current figure is.

“Strong collaboration is essential for the Spartanburg community to thrive, whether the connections are between neighbors, community groups, or established institutions. One way to increase connectivity between people is by improving places to play, walk, and bicycle. These activities bring people together within community spaces and can foster additional improvement and engagement.”

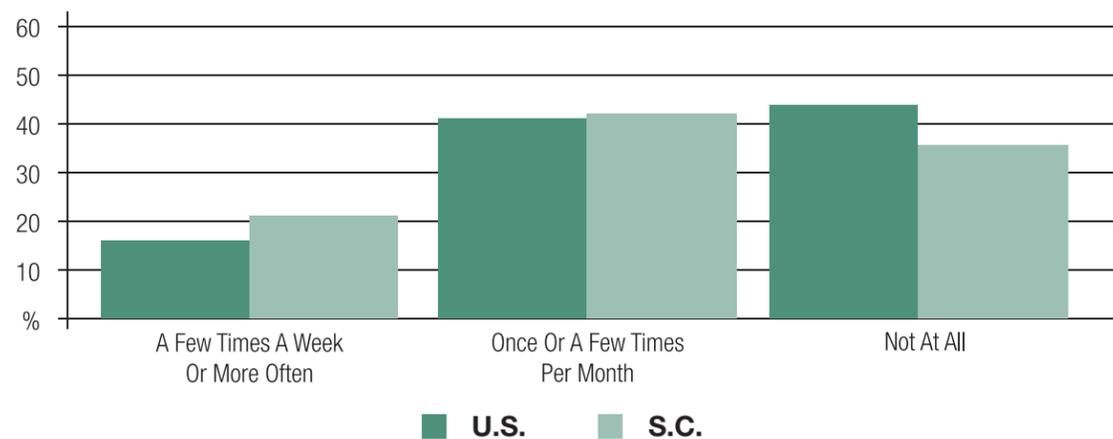
– Laura Ringo, Executive Director, Partners for Active Living

Frequency Of Talking With Neighbors, 2008-2010 Average



On average, U.S. residents talk to their neighbors less frequently than South Carolina residents.

Frequency Of Exchanging Favors With Neighbors, 2008-2010 Average



South Carolina residents also exchange favors with neighbors more frequently than U.S. residents.

Philanthropy

Individual Giving

In 2010, total private giving to charities in the U.S. was \$290.89, up 2 percent from the revised estimate for 2009, after adjusting for inflation. In 2008-2010 (annual average), 50.6 percent of South Carolina residents donated money, assets, or property with a combined value of more than \$25 to religious or charitable organizations. The national rate for the same period of time was 49.6 percent. There are no reliable data for this measure at the local level.

Corporate Giving

The National Conference on Citizenship postulates that the business sector plays a critical role in helping create a more engaged citizenry, as it recognizes the role civic responsibility plays in recruiting and retaining a talented workforce. According to Giving in Numbers: 2011 Edition, one-quarter of 184 companies profiled (including 63 of the top 100 companies in the Fortune 500) increased giving by more than 25 percent over 2007 contributions. However, 21 percent of these companies reduced giving by more than 25 percent. Some other trends in 2010 corporate giving, as compared to 2007 giving, are:

- Cash giving has not fully rebounded from pre-economic downturn levels. Early in the downturn, companies decreased cash grants and increased non-cash donations to nonprofits. Although cash grant giving is increasing, it has not totally rebounded.
- Medical donations have increased and account for approximately three-quarters of the total non-cash contributions in the corporate sample. Most of these donations are by pharmaceutical companies that provide medications through patient assistance programs to individuals with no (or inadequate) insurance.
- Companies are giving larger grants that target one or two issues, rather than spreading donations across multiple program areas. The median number of grants per full time employee declined by 27 percent, but the median grant size increased by 12 percent.
- Companies increased support to basic health and social service programs to address increased hardships in their communities. Education, community, and economic development also received considerable targeted funding.
- Funding for disaster relief increased. The earthquake in Haiti and other large-scale international disasters prompted increased giving and the addition of specific disaster-relief employee matching programs.
- Companies are offering meaningful and innovative employee volunteer programs, including pro bono service programs, flexible scheduling, paid release time, and employee recognition for volunteer efforts. Of the sample, 89 percent of companies have a formal domestic employee volunteer program, while 52 percent have at least one formal international volunteer program.

“Philanthropy is involved with basic innovations that transform society, not simply maintaining the status quo or filling basic social needs...”

– David Rockefeller

Nonprofits

The National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) is the national clearinghouse of data on the nonprofit sector in the United States. Data from the NCCS show that more than 1.4 million nonprofit organizations were registered with the IRS and active in 2009, exclusive of nonprofits not required to register, such as nonprofits with less than \$5,000 annual revenue or religious congregations. This reflects a 19 percent growth in number of organizations between 1999 and 2009. Nonprofits that collect more than \$25,000 in gross receipts and file a form 990 financial return with the IRS are considered to be “reporting.” According to Roeger, et. al., the number of reporting nonprofits grew 48 percent between 1999 and 2009. These organizations reported \$1.87 trillion in revenue and \$4.30 trillion in assets in 2009. After adjusting for inflation, revenues of reporting nonprofits grew 34 percent, expenses grew 51 percent, and assets grew 39 percent over that decade.

Nationally, the largest group of registered nonprofits is public charities such as arts, education, health care, human services and other organizations. These accounted for 70 percent of registered nonprofits in 2009 and 58 percent of reporting nonprofits.

According to the Foundation Center (2010), there were more than 75,000 grant-making foundations in the U.S. in 2009, a 52 percent increase from 1999. In 2009, foundations awarded \$42.9 billion in grants. However, this was a decrease of 8.4 percent, or \$3.9 billion, from 2008, the largest decline in foundation giving ever tracked by the Foundation Center. Foundation giving in 2010 was down about 2 percent from 2009. Foundation assets totaled \$622 billion in 2010, a 6 percent increase from \$587 billion in 1999, after adjusting for inflation.

“Certainly, there is a sense of reward when we give to a worthy cause... personally, or corporately. But when we view that gift as an investment in the quality and future of our community, there is a sense of significance, as we fulfill one of our opportunities... to make a difference!”

— Ken Couch, R.Ph., President,
Smith Drug Company

The table below provides data relative to Spartanburg County nonprofits with Greenville, Richland and Charleston County nonprofits for comparison.

Registered Nonprofits By County, 2011							
	County	# Registered Organizations	S.C. %	# Organizations Filing Form 990 (Reporting)	S.C. %	Total Revenue (\$)	S.C. %
Total	Spartanburg	1,027	4.6%	710	5.4%	\$398,528,399	2.7%
	Greenville	1,952	8.8%	1,455	11.1%	\$1,449,649,781	9.8%
	Richland	2,557	11.5%	1,869	14.2%	\$4,614,725,212	31.3%
	Charleston	2,003	9.0%	1,489	11.3%	\$1,614,686,662	10.9%
Public Charity	Spartanburg	644	4.1%	384	5.0%	\$338,617,361	3.2%
	Greenville	1,325	8.4%	917	12.0%	\$1,339,443,359	12.6%
	Richland	1,676	10.7%	1,121	14.7%	\$2,960,573,198	27.9%
	Charleston	1,277	8.1%	851	11.2%	\$1,516,487,263	14.3%
Private Foundation	Spartanburg	39	5.6%	37	5.8%	\$2,268,161	4.1%
	Greenville	103	14.9%	99	15.6%	\$9,151,826	16.7%
	Richland	100	14.5%	87	13.7%	\$30,003,576	54.6%
	Charleston	115	16.6%	105	16.5%	(\$226,962)	-0.4%
Other Nonprofit	Spartanburg	344	5.9%	289	6.0%	\$57,642,877	1.4%
	Greenville	524	9.0%	439	9.1%	\$101,054,596	2.5%
	Richland	779	13.4%	660	13.6%	\$1,624,148,438	39.6%
	Charleston	611	10.5%	533	11.0%	\$98,426,361	2.4%

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

“Across the South, we have to make it possible for the next generation of leaders to emerge. This is not simply a task of “training”, but rather of creating the conditions that nurture leadership – that bring people together to forge alliances, to discuss issues, and to instill a set of values.”

– *The State of the South 2011*

The data demonstrates that strong, economically resilient communities enjoy high levels of community engagement. Both formal and informal acts of community engagement strengthen our community and are evident throughout Spartanburg County, although many are difficult to measure and quantify. The more empowered citizens feel, the more likely they are to contribute to the welfare of the community. Because educational attainment is the strongest predictor of civic health, and because educational attainment is low here, Spartanburg has even more reason to advance educational success from early childhood through college and beyond.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Conditions in Spartanburg County are ripe for creating a culture of dynamic civic health. If our actions are informed by the data cited in this document, we must:

- Ensure that forums exist to both provide information and to give voice to all residents in community matters.
- Define and pursue conditions that promote civic health across the lifespan, creating opportunities for service, political action, philanthropy, and networking to all community residents.
- Recognize that civic health is critical to our community’s economic success and quality of life.
- Examine the extent and quality of social connections throughout the Spartanburg County and support opportunities to enhance them.
- Increase the community’s investment in high quality education and educational opportunities at the post-secondary level.
- Reframe our definitions of community engagement to encompass new technologies, especially as they apply to the next generation.

With these aims in mind, we hope this document will be used to guide conversations across socioeconomic, political, geographic, and educational divide to enhance the civic health of all citizens in Spartanburg County.

SOURCES & REFERENCES

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MISSION

Spartanburg Community Indicators Project is a collaboration of The Spartanburg County Foundation, United Way of the Piedmont, Spartanburg County Government, and The University of South Carolina Upstate. It reports on progress of key issues that are the clearest indicators of quality of life in the County of Spartanburg, South Carolina. Its goal is to report on data and community initiatives to inspire dialogue and strategy that lead to changes within the community.

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- View all of the Indicator reports.
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