



Chapter 9: Cultural Resources

Mauldin has a short history compared with most cities. The city's physical and cultural development has occurred mostly since the mid-1940s and only a handful of buildings within the city limit pre-date World War II and the "automobile age."

This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the historic resources and cultural life of the Mauldin community. While few in number, significant historic buildings and sites do exist in Mauldin. One, the historic Mauldin High School building, is being transformed into the Mauldin Cultural Center and will be the centerpiece of the City's efforts to build a stronger arts and cultural community, with leadership from the Mauldin Cultural Center Foundation.

Spiritual life in Mauldin is a strong and important part of the community. The city is home to a large and active group of churches, with most Christian denominations represented as well as several non-denominational worship centers. The Vedic Center on Bethel Road is an active Hindu worship center, playing an important role in the region's international culture, and hosts and promotes several Indian cultural events annually.



Old Mauldin High School, built by the WPA in the 1930s, is home to the city's Cultural Center.

Historic Resources

Map 9-1 identifies the historic resources, churches and cemeteries within the Mauldin planning area. Table 9-1 lists the historic sites and provides additional information. Several sites may be threatened by development, notably the Burdette Farmhouse on East Butler Road, which soon will be surrounded by commercial development.

Perhaps the most significant historic building in Mauldin is the old high school, built by the Works Progress Administration between 1935 and 1937. The high school operated until 1957, when Mauldin, Simpsonville, and Fountain Inn high schools were consolidated as Hillcrest High School. Mauldin Elementary School occupied the building from 1957 until 2002, when the new elementary school opened on Holland Road.

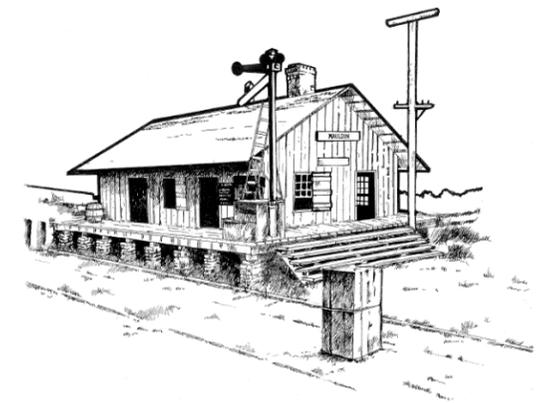
Acquired by the City of Mauldin from the School District of Greenville County in 2005, the front portion of the historic school building has been restored and is in active use for civic and cultural activities as the Mauldin Cultural Center. Plans for continued development of the Mauldin Cultural Center are discussed below.

Several historic houses and buildings have been demolished over the years. The Whatley House, which stood at the intersection of Main Street and Butler Road, was a community landmark and served as the site of a community Christmas gathering and tree lighting for a number of years. The Mauldin railroad depot, built in 1886 in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Miller Road and the railroad, was demolished in 1953 by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, which had acquired the Charleston and Western Carolina Railroad that built the branch line between Laurens and Greenville.

Mauldin United Methodist Church may have the only historical marker in the city limits. Originally Poplar Springs Methodist Episcopal Church South, this was the first church in the community and operated the first school. A beautiful description of the natural springs originally located on the site is found in the locally-published book "Mauldin's Legacy." The spring was filled in at some point during the



Mauldin United Methodist Church is the city's oldest church



Mauldin's 1886 railroad depot was torn down in the 1950s.

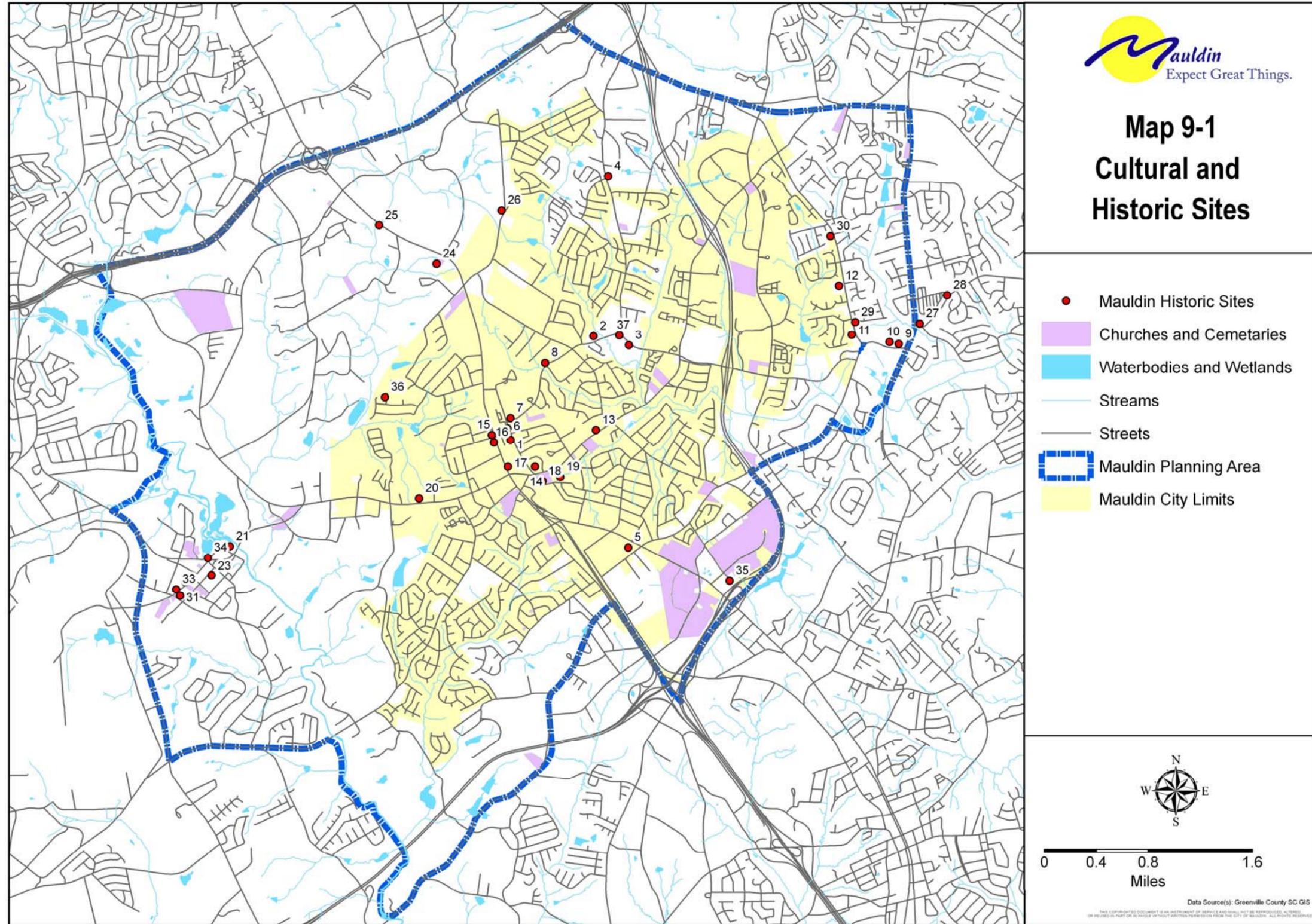


Table 9-1
Historic Sites in Mauldin Area

Map #	Name	Type
1	Cotton Gin Site	Historic Site
2	Smith Farmhouse and Grist Mill Site	Residence
3	Corn Farm and House	Residence
4	Leslie House	Vacant Residence
5	Greer House and Farm	Residence
6	C&WC Railroad Depot Site	Historic Site
7	Unknown House	Business
8	Fowler House	Vacant Residence
9	Gilder House	Residence
10	Unknown House (relocated from Hwy 14)	Vacant Residence
11	Tanner Road House	Residence
12	Tanner Road House	Residence
13	Burdette House	Vacant Residence
14	Mauldin High School	Public Facility
15	Massey's Store	Business
16	Old Post Office	Business
17	Hill's Store	Business
18	Mauldin Methodist Church	Church
19	Poplar Springs School Site	Historic Site
20	Schwiers Property and Barns	Residence
21	Conestee Mill	Business
22	McBee Chapel Methodist Church	Church
23	Conestee Mill Village	District
24	Laurel Creek United Methodist	Church
25	Laurens Road Highway Bridge	Bridge
26	Forrester House	Residence
27	Historic Farmhouse at SC 14 and SC 296	Residence
28	Old schoolhouse	School
29	Colonial Revival House, 1930s era	Residence
30	Tanner Road Historic Farmhouse	Residence
31	Reedy River Presbyterian Church	Church
32	Conestee Presbyterian Church	Church
33	Rector's House	Vacant Residence
34	Conestee Mill Boarding House	Residence
35	Old Schoolhouse (Richardson Real Estate)	Office
36	McDaniel Cemetery	Cemetery
37	Yeargin Cemetery	Cemetery

development of the area, but was located immediately east of the current church sanctuary according to several older local residents.

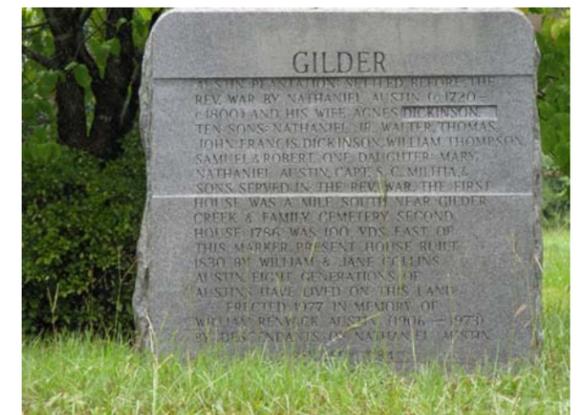
Other historical markers exist at Laurel Creek Church (granite marker), Gilder (granite marker), and McBee Chapel (official state historical marker).



McBee Chapel, an unusual octagonal chapel, was built in 1842 by Vardry McBee in the mill village near his Conestee Mill. The building is among Greenville County's oldest.



The Massey's General Store building on North Main Street has been adapted and reused as a specialty retail shop.



A private marker at Gilder Plantation notes that this site, at Bethel Road and SC 14, is among the earliest settlements in Greenville County.

Cultural Resources

The Mauldin Cultural Center Foundation Board was created in 2005 to direct the development of the Mauldin Cultural Center and the rehabilitation of the historic Mauldin High School.

A Concept Master Plan for the Cultural Center was created in 2005, and included gardens, an amphitheater, veterans memorial, and space for future expansion. In 2008, the flat-roofed wing of the building that was constructed in 1967 was demolished due to problems related to years of water damage. Figure 9-1 is the 2005 concept master plan for the Cultural Center.



Figure 9-1: The 2005 Concept Master Plan for Mauldin Cultural Center

An updated Master Plan was begun in January 2009 by a Clemson University undergraduate landscape architecture class, to reflect changes to the site. The Clemson class produced four different concept master plans, all of which emphasized preservation of existing trees on the site and proposed to introduce new landscape elements. The four plans were synthesized into a final recommended master plan by a Clemson graduate studio class with input from the Mauldin Cultural Center Foundation Board, city officials, and citizens.

Figure 9-2 includes several of the design concepts developed by the Clemson landscape architecture students for the site. Figure 9-3 is the final recommended master plan.

Proposed future additions to the site are an amphitheater, botanical gardens, and veteran's memorial. Each of the Clemson student plans addressed the veterans memorial in different ways and on different sites, and community input is essential to select a memorial site. All four plans proposed a similar site for the amphitheater, but used different design approaches. Botanical garden development will be dependent upon the Mauldin Garden Club, which has been active in several beautification projects on the grounds.

The Mauldin Cultural Center Foundation Board is in the early phases of developing the cultural arts programs for the center. An early and extremely successful arts program project was a Mauldin High School art show hosted at the Mauldin Cultural Center in May 2009.

A key element of the Mauldin Cultural Center will be a renovated auditorium, which will open up the opportunity for community theater, live music performances, and other community events. The plan for the first two phases of the auditorium renovation project is shown in Exhibit 6 below.

Figure 9-4 presents the design proposed for the renovation of the auditorium and development of a new entrance and lobby area.

Development of the outdoor amphitheater and veteran's memorial will also spur community involvement in the cultural center, help establish a stronger sense of place for Mauldin, and help bring visitors from around the region to the city.



The plaza will be a large open space that will have benches and tables that will provide seating for visitors. It will contrast to the intimate feeling of the adjacent memorial.

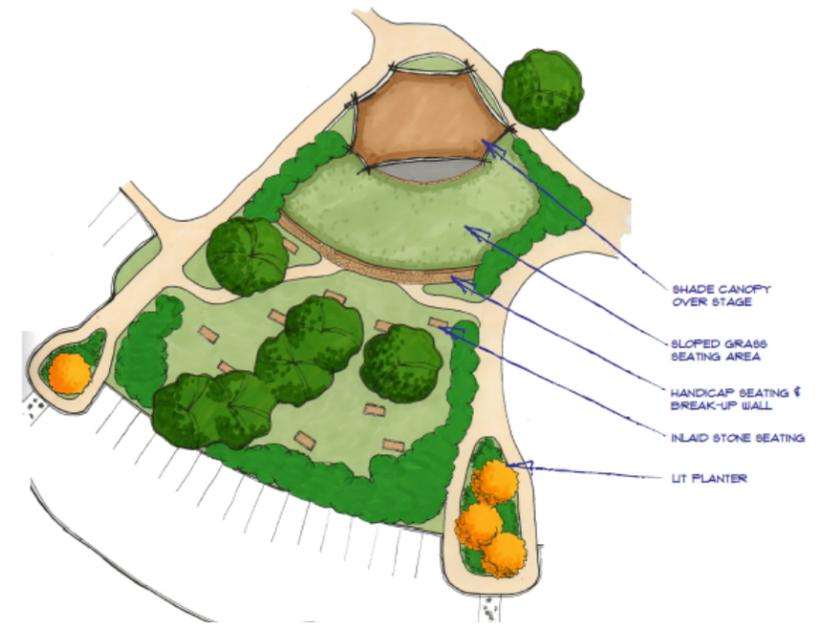
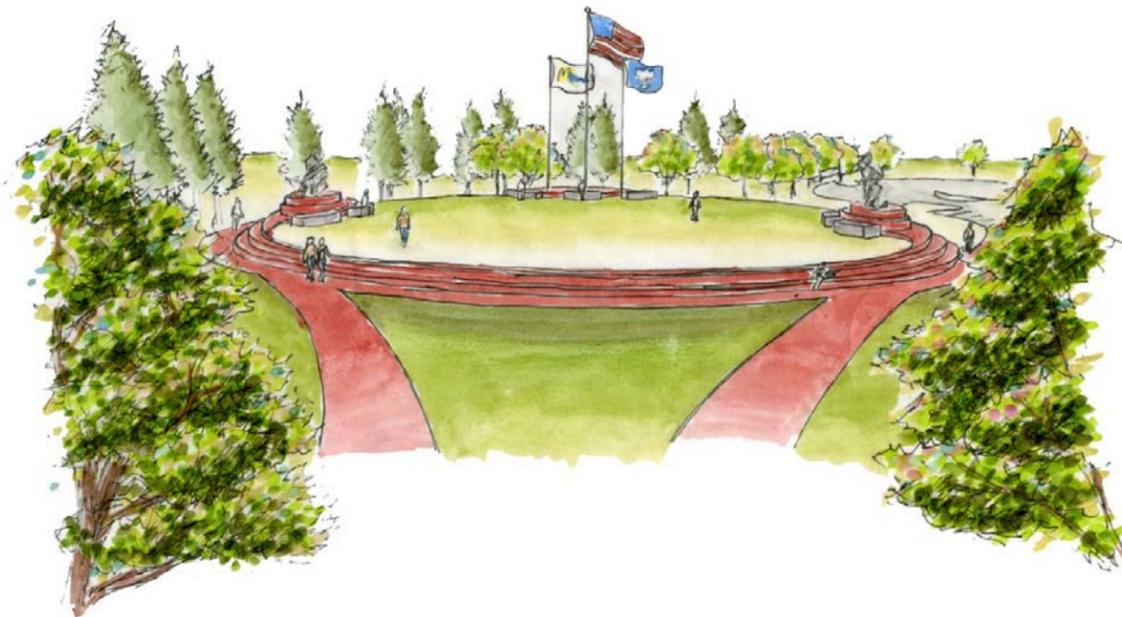
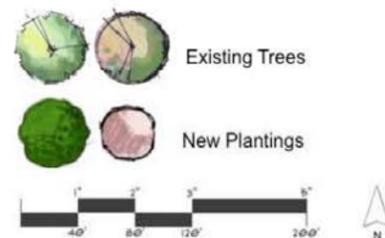


Figure 9-2: Cultural Center Site Concepts
 Clockwise from above left: plaza near auditorium entry; plaza at main entrance; a natural-setting amphitheater; another concept design for an amphitheater; and a raised lawn and veteran's memorial.





Mauldin Cultural Center Masterplan

Mauldin, South Carolina
 Second Year Site Design Studio Spring 2009
 Professor Arthi Rao



Director: Mary Beth McCubbin
 Student team: Kevin Shealey, Felix Figuerora





Chapter 9: Cultural Resources

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Develop and Improve Cultural Programs that help Define the City of Mauldin

Objective 1.1: Develop a “signature” festival for Mauldin City Center.

Implementation Strategy:

Collaborate with the Mauldin Cultural Center, Mauldin Chamber of Commerce, and Mauldin Garden Club.

Objective 1.2: Develop a recurring outdoor music series at the Cultural Center

Implementation Strategy:

Develop the outdoor amphitheater called for in the Cultural Center Master Plan and collaborate with Mauldin Cultural Center Foundation Board (MCCFB) to develop and schedule events.

Objective 1.3: Complete the development and renovation of the Mauldin Cultural Center, giving top priority to renovation and improvement of the auditorium.

Implementation Strategies:

- a. Adopt the updated Mauldin Cultural Center Master Plan.
- b. Collaborate with MCCFB on fundraising and implementation of the master plan.

Objective 1.4: Support the creation of a Mauldin Community Theater group.

Implementation Strategies:

- a. Encourage use of the renovated auditorium for “satellite” productions by area theater groups, such as Greenville Children’s Theater and Warehouse Theater.
- b. Offer auditorium space to summer theater camps and other theater classes.
- c. Offer auditorium space to churches and schools for musical and theatrical events.

Goal 2: Develop an historic preservation strategy for the city.

Objective 2.1: Support preservation and restoration of historic sites and buildings in and around Mauldin.

Implementation Strategies:

- a. Pursue eligibility for historic preservation tax credits for historic houses in Mauldin, to encourage preservation and reuse of these historic resources.
- b. Provide zoning and/or city property tax incentives to preserve the remaining historic homes and buildings (mostly circa-1900 farmhouses) in Mauldin
- c. Seek funding to construct a replica of the C&WC Railroad depot at or near the site of the original depot; Federal Transit Administration funds may be available if public transportation service is operated in Mauldin.

Objective 2.2: Increase Community Awareness of Mauldin’s History

Implementation Strategies:

- a. Pursue National Register of Historic Places designation for Mauldin High School (1937 building)
- b. Erect historical markers at historic sites in Mauldin
- c. Develop a Mauldin Historical Collection room at the Cultural Center or in another preserved historic building
- d. Document Mauldin’s past through an oral history project involving the City’s older residents
- e. Encourage formation of a Mauldin Historical Society or similar community group to provide education, advocacy and fund raising for historic preservation
- f. Complete the update of the City’s history in a new “Mauldin’s Legacy” publication.