

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

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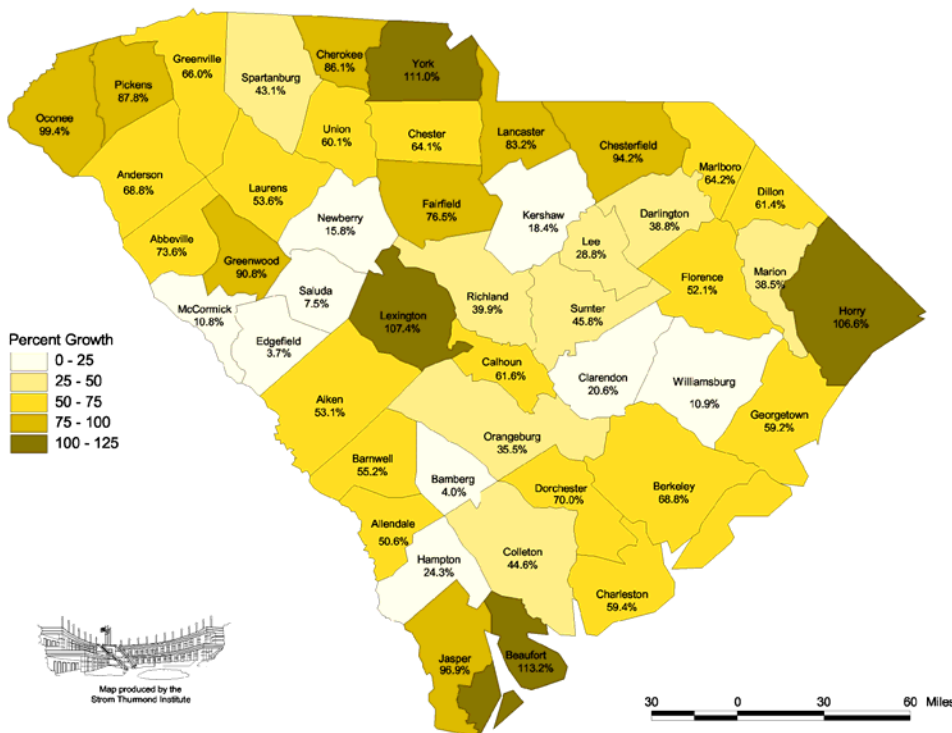
SPECIAL REPORT

State Patterns of Economic Activity

April 12, 2002

There are significant differences in recent economic activity observed in South Carolina's 46 counties. To illustrate these patterns, we have prepared two county outline maps that report economic activity for the period 1996-2001. The first map shows growth in Gross Retail Sales. These are all sales reported by retailers to the Department of Revenue, whether they are taxed or not.

Growth in Gross Retail Sales 1996-2001

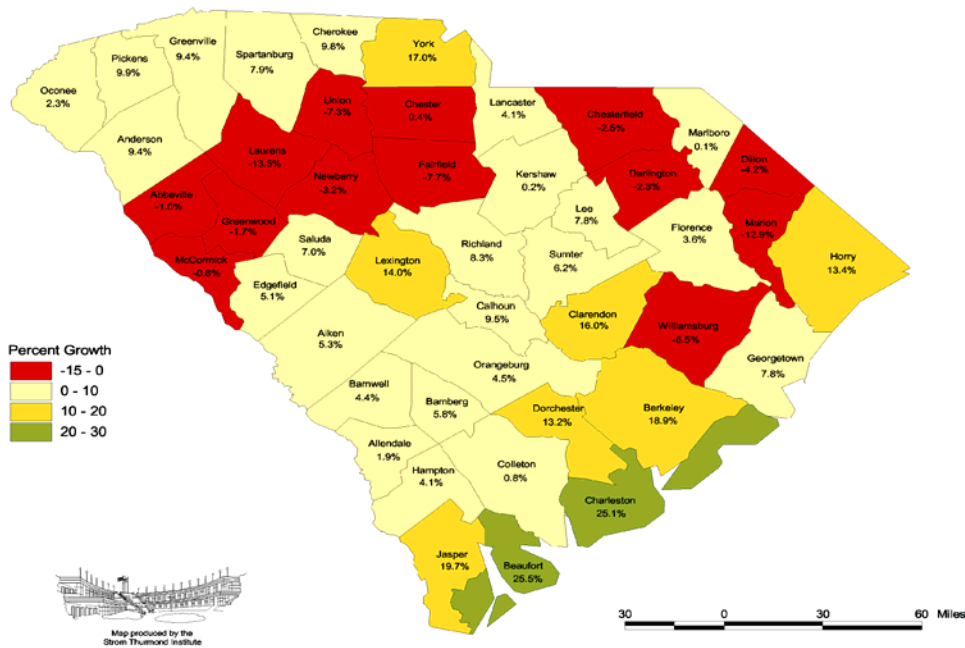


The map clearly shows the high sales growth associated with tourism in Beaufort and Horry counties as well as the metropolitan spillover effects registered in Jasper, Lexington, Pickens, and York counties.

When county employment growth is examined, a very different pattern emerges. Here, we see the stronger low country region leading the state's employment engine. The old textile belt counties—Abbeville, Greenwood, Laurens, Newberry, and Union—show significant weakness, as does the Pee Dee region.

It is also useful to recall that retail activity is strong in the upstate, even though employment growth is relatively mild. Here, we see the effects of wealth and economic maturity.

Employment Growth 1996-2001



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