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INITIAL HOUSING ELEMENT

EDGEFIELD COUNTY



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PREPARED FOR THE
EDGEFIELD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
BY THE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SECTION, OFFICE OF PLANNING,
SOUTH CAROLINA ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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ABSTRACT: The Initial Housing Element presents the Housing
situation in Edgefield County and identifies
problems, obstacles and solutions to improve
housing. It also sets forth housing objectives
and five year program for implementation.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

The Edgefield County Initial Housing Element 1971-1972 presents an appraisal of current housing problems and obstacles to the solution of these problems.

The study shall attempt to deal with the County's housing problem as factually as possible, and to make specific recommendations on how to rectify these problems. The Housing Element shall establish goals and objectives for improving the housing conditions, together with a program of planning activities designed to accomplish these goals.

Full funding of federal programs aimed at improving housing conditions is vital to a full scale study into such problems.

Thus, planning for housing at the County and Regional level are interdependent and will require significant cooperation in order to place all the problems related to housing in their proper perspective.

PROBLEMS

Principal problems related to poor housing in Edgefield County may be summarized as follows:

- a. A general lack of available standard housing at low to moderate prices;
- b. The large number of substandard housing units located in both the urban areas and in isolated rural areas of the County;
- c. The absence or inadequacy of certain community facilities in both urban and rural areas;
- d. The absence of minimum construction and maintenance codes in all areas of the County.
- e. The absence of an established plan for the provision of standard housing units for all income classes; and
- f. The failure to successfully provide accurate data regarding various low cost housing programs.

Housing Characteristics and Trends

A fundamental problem related to Edgefield County's housing supply is the general lack of standard housing in the low to moderate price range. The quantity of housing valued at less than \$14,000 has either decreased, or at best grown at a moderate rate. New housing is not being constructed rapidly enough in the below \$14,999 price range to allow for replacement of substandard units. This is generally attributable to the increased cost of construction.

Table 1

HOUSING VALUE FOR OWNER OCCUPIED DWELLING UNITS Edgefield County

<u>VALUE</u>	<u>1960 CENSUS OF HOUSING</u>	<u>1970 CENSUS OF HOUSING</u>	<u>PERCENT CHANGE</u>
Less than \$5,000	437	249	-43.0
5,000 to 9,999	738	489	-33.7
10,000 to 14,999	202	396	96.0
15,000 to 19,999	89	244	174.2
20,000 to 24,999	37	127	243.2
25,000 to 34,999	4	82	195.0
35,000 or more	4	56	130.0
Median	\$6,700	\$11,100	65.0

SOURCE: 1960 Census of Housing, and 1970 Census of Housing, Advance Report.

Thus, as illustrated in Table 1, the housing market has operated largely for the benefit of the middle and upper income families in the County, without any appreciable method of passing some of these benefits on to lower income families.

In addition, Edgefield County also faces a general shortage of saleable and rental housing units. Table 2 illustrates that the number of vacant housing units

in Edgefield County declined by approximately 54 percent between 1960 and 1970. The number of vacant rental units declined sharply, but the number for sale increased. However, on the basis of the evidence presented in Table 1, it is likely that very few of the saleable units are within the price range of low-income families. Moreover, the large number of units listed under "Other Vacant" suggested that most of the older, vacant housing units are left to deteriorate rather than being rehabilitated for reuse.

Table 2

VACANT HOUSING
Edgefield County

<u>Vacancy Status</u>	<u>1960 Number of Units</u>	<u>1970 Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Total Vacant Units	679	314	-53.8
Rental	140	24	-82.8
Sale	13	98	654.4
Other Vacant ⁽¹⁾	526	193	-635.8

(1) Includes Units classified as substandard second units held for occasional use.
SOURCE: 1960 Census of Housing, and 1970 Census of Housing, Advance Report.

The rental pattern illustrated in Table 3 further indicates the general lack of low cost housing units. Moreover, despite a substantial decline in low cost rental units between 1960 and 1970, there has not been an appreciable increase in the amount of higher priced rental units. Table 3 also indicates a very large decrease in the number of rental units registering no cash rent. This is probably attributable to the large decline in the number of tenant farmers who are becoming less important as a source of labor, either because of mechanization of farm production or cultivation of new crops requiring less labor. Historically most landowners have allowed tenant farmers to remain in their homes without rent.

Table 3

MONTHLY CONTRACT RENT
Edgefield County

<u>Rent</u>	<u>1960 Number of Units</u>	<u>1970 Number of Units</u>	<u>Absolute Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Less than \$40	737	591	-146	-19.8
\$40 - \$59	126	140	14	11.1
\$60 - \$79	133	69	-64	-48.1
\$80 - \$99	58	12	-46	-79.3
\$100-\$119	11	2	-9	-81.3
\$120-\$149	16	-	-	-
\$150-\$199	-	2	2	-
\$200 or more	-	1	1	-
No cash rent	452	203	-249	-55.0
Median	\$27	\$40	\$13	-48.1

SOURCE: 1960 Census of Housing, 1970 Census of Housing Advance Report.

One of the major indicators of the demand for low and moderate low cost housing units in Edgefield is the rapid growth of mobile homes. During the period between 1960 and 1970 the County has had an phenomenal increase in mobile homes (from 16 units to 339 units). This indicates that the housing need is not being supplied by the conventional housing industry since mobile homes are usually considered as a substitute for the more expensive custom-build homes.

The vast majority of the mobile homes in Edgefield County are concentrated in the area of the County contiguous to North Augusta. However, throughout the County mobile homes and mobile home parks exist in a variety of residential environments often to the detriment of the surrounding areas.

Housing Conditions

For many Edgefield County residents housing quality, as defined by plumbing facilities, is substandard. Moreover, in comparison with other counties in the Upper Savannah District, the proportion of total housing that is substandard is

greater than in 3 of the counties and less than in the other 2. In other words, the quality of housing in Edgefield County is generally slightly below that of the district as a whole.

Table 4

HOUSING CONDITION 1960-1970
Upper Savannah District of South Carolina

	<u>Edgefield County</u>	<u>Abbeville County</u>	<u>Greenwood County</u>	<u>Laurens County</u>	<u>McCormick County</u>	<u>Saluda County</u>
<u>Total Housing</u>						
Units, 1960	4,618	6,262	13,980	14,082	2,255	4,162
Standard (%)	43.7	54.1	66.5	54.8	34.5	39.8
Substandard (%)	56.3	45.9	33.5	45.2	65.5	60.2
<u>Total Housing</u>						
Units, 1970	4,528	7,099	16,412	15,789	2,363	4,654
Standard (%)	70.3	74.7	86.9	80.5	60.2	68.7
Substandard (%)	29.7	25.3	13.1	19.5	39.8	31.3
Percent change in number of Units 1960 - 1970	1.4	13.4	18.2	12.3	4.9	11.9
Percent change in Substandard Units 1960 - 1970	-48.2	-41.7	-54.1	-51.6	-36.3	-41.7

Calculated on the basis of 1960-1970 Relationship that standard represents those units with all plumbing facilities and substandard are those units lacking some or all plumbing facilities.

Source: U.S. Census of Housing, 1960, and Advance Report, 1970.

Recently a windshield survey of housing conditions was completed for the most heavily populated areas of Edgefield County. Table 5 illustrates the results of this survey for Johnston, Edgefield, and Trenton. Unfortunately, because the entire County was not included in the survey, it is not possible to compare housing quality

in the incorporated areas with that in the rural areas. However, this table does provide a comparison of the 3 municipalities and illustrates that substandard housing is not confined solely to rural areas.

Table 5

HOUSING CONDITION
Trenton - Edgefield - Johnston

TOWN	STANDARD				SUBSTANDARD			
	Sound		Minor Repair		Major Repair		Dilapidated	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Trenton	33	31.1	40	38.6	12	11.3	21	19.8
Edgefield	244	28.5	363	42.5	161	18.8	87	10.2
Johnston	318	43.8	256	35.3	100	13.7	52	7.0

SOURCE: Land Use Survey, Fall, 1971

NOTE: Excluding Mobile Homes

Approximately 30 percent of the housing units in both Trenton and Edgefield are substandard, as compared with approximately 21 percent in Johnston. Moreover, in all three a substantial proportion of the standard housing, ranging from 35.3 percent in Johnston to 42.9 percent in Edgefield, are in need of relatively minor repairs which could become major if not attended to.

Over all, Johnston has the highest quality housing of Edgefield County's municipalities, but all three have far too many families living in very poor substandard units.

To date, most new housing construction is out of the economic reach of low-income families. The County needs to become more actively involved in the housing problems of its low-income citizens, and to assist them in their efforts to secure decent housing.

Community Facilities

The lack or inadequacy of some community facilities, frequently in areas of substandard housing, is clearly evident. While the rural areas suffer more acutely from

the lack of the community facilities, the urban areas are by no means immune to similar type problems.

Most, but not all, of the homes within the municipal boundaries of Trenton, Johnston, and Edgefield are served with municipal water. Trenton seems to have sufficient water for the foreseeable future, but both Johnston and Edgefield need to increase their capacity. All three also should expand their facilities to serve all the homes within their respective municipal boundaries, as well as densely populated areas on the developed fringe.

Johnston and Edgefield have sewage collection and treatment facilities, and Trenton has facilities under construction. In both Johnston and Edgefield there are residents who are not served by these systems and some residents of Trenton will not be served by their new system. Johnston and Edgefield should increase their treatment capability and, along with Trenton, should expand their collection systems to include all City residents and those in densely developed areas contiguous to their boundaries.

To summarize the conclusions of the Edgefield County Comprehensive Plan for Water and Sewer Development completed in 1968, the municipalities and immediate built-up areas should be served by both water and sewer facilities. Except for the heavily built-up areas around the three municipalities, it was not anticipated that sewage collection and treatment facilities would be practical or economically feasible. It now, however, appears that such a system will be necessary to serve the rapidly growing area adjacent to North Augusta.

As for water, it was recommended that the three municipalities expand their systems to serve all their residents and the immediate adjacent areas. It was further recommended that numerous districts be established to serve other built-up areas of the County.

Lack of Regulating Codes and Ordinances

Currently, none of the municipalities in Edgefield County are enforcing land regulations and building and housing codes. In fact, at the present time the county cannot legally enforce various housing and building codes, but chances are that the legislature will change this in the near future. The County's municipalities should adopt housing and building codes as a first step toward improving the quality of housing within their borders and the County should follow suit as soon as it becomes legally possible to do so.

In addition, the three municipalities and the County of Edgefield should consider the possibility of establishing a Joint Building Inspection Department which would enforce all land control ordinances and Housing and Building Codes for all of the county. Not only would this be the most economical, but it would also facilitate uniform administration and enforcement.

OBSTACLES

The following section will provide brief statements concerning the nature of the obstacles to solving the housing problems noted earlier. The obstacles to better housing are somewhat difficult to deal with due to constraints created by social attitudes and financial and administrative procedures of private and public bodies responsible for the improvement of the housing market.

Low Income

The lack of sufficient income results from inadequate education, lack of job training and employment opportunities, or low motivation to improve the family status. Cost of rental units and saleable housing is rising more rapidly than family income in many cases, thereby preventing improvements in living conditions.

Social Characteristics and Personal Problems

Among the poor, lack of education, advanced age, large families to support, poor general health, low job skill, lack of satisfactory credit rating and similar characteristics work against entry into the private housing market.

Relocation of Rural Families

Reluctance to move, for fear of losing control of land held in family ownership for generations, is a major concern of poor rural and low-income families. They sometimes choose not to move from a familiar area to better housing because of a desire to be near family, churches, friends, and neighbors. Therefore, low cost housing in Edgefield County not only must be provided with adequate community facilities and services, but also must be accessible to the rural population most likely to use it.

Insufficient or Outdated Housing Information

Lack of current information on family characteristics, family size and income, housing conditions and housing preferences make analysis of the problems incomplete and tentative.

Lack of Regulatory Controls in the County

The enforcement of building codes in the county will require special enabling legislation from the state to insure the quality and the maintenance of building construction.

OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives for Edgefield County with respect to housing problems is to provide the broadest range of opportunities in the selection and location of sound housing for all elements of the population. The objectives of the county are to (1) Proceed with a program of housing code enforcement at the municipal and county level. (2) Develop methods of providing standard housing in the proper price range, placing heavy emphasis on those families with lowest income. (3) Develop a plan for meeting future housing needs that will result from the region's growth, and therefore resulting in the addition of new families. (4) Assist both public and private sectors of the economy in producing needed housing.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Previous

Edgefield County has a rather limited history of planning. In June of 1967, the County was established as an Economic Development District. The Edgefield County Development Committee had published a basic preliminary overall economic development program in January of 1967. On February 6, 1969, the Edgefield County Planning Commission was established under the provisions of the 1962 Act, Volume 3, Chapter 8, Article 2 to provide for county planning commissions. Under the regional system currently in operation, Edgefield County is a member of the Upper Savannah Development District established by Act 487 of the 1967 Acts of South Carolina.

The Upper Savannah District has prepared, for the past two years, progress reports on the overall economic development program in accordance with Economic Development Administration requirements. Previous to the establishment of the Upper Savannah Development District, several other studies were conducted in the County. These projects were undertaken independently and with no apparent coordination. The Farmers Home Administration assisted in the financing of a water and sewer plan in 1968, the State Board of Health completed a Solid Waste Study in 1968 and an educational survey was also conducted in 1968. A soil survey is scheduled for the County in 1973.

Recently the County, for a variety of purposes, became interested in expanding its planning program. The program recommended herein by the State Planning and Grants Division of the Office of the Governor is designed to give immediate attention to the existing problem areas and the long range planning goals of the County.

Future

The Edgefield County Planning Commission is expected to receive a 701 Department of Housing and Urban Development grant in July, 1972, to undertake a number of

planning elements--most of which are either directly or indirectly concerned with housing. The elements are as follows: (1) Housing Study; (2) Future Land Use Plan; (3) Preliminary Thoroughfare Plan; and (4) Zoning Ordinance.

Housing Plan

A Housing Plan--in reality an action housing plan--will be undertaken in Edgefield County. This plan will take form of a number of discrete elements to (a) provide detail data concerning Edgefield County housing supply, (b) analyze the effective demand for housing within various price ranges, (c) provide Edgefield County citizens with information relative to housing, construction, rehabilitation, and proper finance.

a. Collection of Housing Data

Data related to housing--its supply, structural condition, occupancy, relationship to other land uses, location of substandard units--is being collected during Fiscal Year 1971-72 by the Edgefield Planning Commission as part of the land use survey and analysis. Total coverage of housing patterns in the developed areas of Edgefield County will be included with the base-mapping and land use survey and analysis program for the entire county.

b. Prepare Housing Market Analysis

The Edgefield County Planning Commission will cooperate with agents of the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the preparation of a market analysis directed toward low income housing, pursuant to an application for public housing assistance. At the same time, either individually or in cooperation with financial and construction interests, the Municipal and County Governments through the Planning Commission should enter into negotiations with private firms for the conduct of a market analysis directed toward moderate income housing. It is anticipated that a study would stimulate construction in needed price ranges by providing the private sector with detailed information regarding areas of demand.

c. Study of Residential Sale Procedures

The Family Housing Sub-Committee of the Edgefield County Total Resource Development Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of studying residential sale procedures and cost. This committee, serving without cost to the city or county government, will serve to make known to occupants of substandard units the procedures and requirements associated with obtaining financial assistance for improved housing. It also will function to make known to lending institutions the needs and individual capabilities of residents of substandard housing who seek financial assistance to obtain better homes.

d. Updating Housing Element

As part of the continuing process to keep housing data current and to gauge the relative progress in the solution of the problems presented above, the Edgefield County Planning Commission, with technical assistance provided by the Upper Savannah Planning and Development District, will update the County Housing Element.

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

Occupancy Potential

According to the South Carolina Advisory Housing Committee there are approximately 260 families presently needing subsidized housing in Edgefield County (see Table 6). Low income non-elderly comprise a major portion of the families needing assistance in securing adequate housing. There are 190 such families accounting for approximately 73 percent of the total.

Table 6

1970-1971 OCCUPANCY POTENTIAL FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING
Upper Savannah Planning and Development District

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>LOW-INCOME</u>		<u>MODERATE INCOME</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	<u>Non-Elderly</u>	<u>Elderly</u>		
Edgefield	190	40	30	260
Percent of Total	73.1	15.4	11.5	100

SOURCE: South Carolina Advisory Housing

Public

The South Carolina Regional Housing Authority Number One, which includes the District's six counties, operates low-rent housing projects in Edgefield, Johnston, and Trenton. The County's total low-rent housing presently in use in 87 units. There are no additional units committed for development by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at this time, (see Table 7). Region 1 desires to see 170 units constructed in fy-72 within the Upper Savannah Planning and Development District. Emphasis would be to provide housing for the elderly. At this time it is not possible to estimate how many of these are to be located in Edgefield County.

Table 7

LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENTS
South Carolina Regional Authority Number One

<u>REGION ONE</u>	<u>HOUSING AUTHORITY</u>		
	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Low-Rent Units Reserved</u>	<u>Total</u>
Edgefield	41	-	41
Johnston	36	-	36
Trenton	<u>10</u>	-	<u>10</u>
Total	87	-	87

SOURCE: Upper Savannah Planning and Development District.

Private

There are a number of government subsidized housing programs for low and moderate income families in which the actual development is done by private developers and sponsors. The ones most frequently used are the 502 Program of the Farmers Home Administration and the 235 Program of the Federal Housing Administration. Both programs are designed to bring the monthly payments on a home under the market rate mortgage to a level which low and moderate income families can afford.

According to the information published in the Operation Breakthrough Plan for the Upper Savannah Planning and Development District, it is estimated that 258 single-family detached units would be started in Edgefield County during fiscal years 1971 and 1972. Because builders expected to use both 502 and 235 Programs in their developments, it was difficult to determine a precise number of units planned under each program. Current sale prices range from \$11,000 to \$15,000 for 2 and 3 bedroom units and from \$12,000 to \$17,000 for 4 bedroom units.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following specific steps will be undertaken in order to implement the Housing Plan and to overcome the problems and obstacles noted earlier.

A. Housing Authority

In the past, the South Carolina Regional Housing Authority Number One has effectively worked with Edgefield County and has done a good job. Edgefield County should continue to work closely with the Housing Authority in order to facilitate its efforts and insure its success in providing decent, safe, and sanitary housing to those citizens who cannot afford private housing.

In this connection, Edgefield County will:

- (a) Employ, by itself or in combination with other jurisdictions, a building inspector with an adequate staff and budgetary resources to carry out enforcement of all codes;
- (b) Encourage private developments of low and moderate income sale and rental units through favorable policies on utilities extensions, taxation, etc.;
- (c) Cause a survey and study to be made, determining the feasibility of rehabilitation existing residences for public housing use pursuant to the provisions of the 1965 Housing Act; and
- (d) Establish a procedure for the periodic review of all codes to insure that they remain responsive to innovations in building materials and techniques, etc.

B. Credit Policies and Citizen Education

The Family Housing Sub-committee of the Edgefield County Total Resources Development Committee will, in cooperation with the County, advise individual citizens regarding the availability of financial assistance and generally carry on such educational activities as it may deem necessary. This committee should serve as a channel of communications between individuals and lending institutions communicating the needs and requirements of each to the other.

C. Citizen Education Program

The Edgefield County Planning Commission should, over the course of the five-year period, utilize all mechanisms at its disposal--including newspapers, radio, television, the Family Housing Sub-committee of the Edgefield County Total Resources Development Committee, the various civic organizations, public hearings, etc.--in order to effectively communicate the nature, progress, and recommendations of the plan to the public.

Specifically, the Family Housing Sub-committee of the Edgefield County Total Resource Development Committee shall provide the following:

1. Counseling on the type of home for maximum feasibility benefits to the housing recipient;
2. Counseling and/or education on home—ownership responsibilities;
3. Pre and post new home financing and maintenance programs;
4. Organized programs for the protection of home buyers and motivation for improved living conditions; and
5. Counseling of the best method for securing needed housing from the standpoint of Federal housing programs available.

No doubt the above mentioned service will need to be expanded to more effectively address the current and future housing problems within the county.

A continuous revaluation will need to be implemented to meet changing conditions.

SCHEDULE OF PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>FIRST YEAR</u>	<u>SECOND YEAR</u>	<u>THIRD YEAR</u>	<u>FOURTH YEAR</u>	<u>FIFTH YEAR</u>
Collection of Housing Data	2,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	-
Preparation of Market Analysis	To be negotiated but expected to cost between \$3,000 to \$5,000	NONE			
Study of Sales Procedure	Housing Sub-Committee of the Edgefield County Total Resource Development Committee				
Establishment of building Inspection Department	Depended on results of City and County negotiation, likely will cost between \$12,000 and \$22,000	12,000	12,000-22,000	12,000-22,000	12,000-22,000
Study Feasibility of Rehabilitation of Existing Units	Housing Sub-Committee of the Edgefield County Total Resource Development Committee				
Review Credit Policies and Citizen Education	NONE	Absorbed by building Inspection Department			
Updating Housing Element	NONE				2,000
Comprehensive Planning Program	Mapping, Land Use Survey and Analysis, Land Use Plan, Thoroughfare Plan, \$12,554	Housing Studies, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations	Public Administration Study, Housing Study	Community Facilities, Public Improvements, Capital Improvements Program, Housing Studies	Planning Review and Revision, Housing Studies