

The Economic Impact of

PATRIOTS POINT

NAVAL & MARITIME

MUSEUM





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October 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Patriots Point is a major historical site of significance for both South Carolina and the United States. It is the home of the historic warships USS Yorktown and USS Laffey, the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum, a Cold War Memorial, and the only Vietnam Support Base Camp in the United States. Patriots Point also serves as the headquarters for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the agency's official Medal of Honor Museum. In order to support the significant costs of maintenance, especially those associated with ship upkeep and repair, Patriots Point has leased 61 acres of its property – known as the Patriots Annex project – for a new mixed-use development that will include a variety of office, retail, vacation, and residential spaces.

Patriots Annex has the potential to not only generate the required revenue to ensure proper ship preservation, but also to create a sizable volume of new economic activity for the Charleston area and the surrounding communities. This would include a large number of new jobs and incomes for local residents. Moreover, Charleston's strong population growth is expected to continue into the coming decades, which will generate high levels of demand and thus maximize the likelihood of success of this new development.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis examining both the current economic impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston tri-county region (Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties) as well as the long-run increase in this economic impact over time that will likely result from the development of Patriots Annex.

The key findings of this analysis are as follows:

- *The total current economic impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston tri-county region is approximately \$204.8 million annually. This dollar value reflects all final goods and services produced in the region that can be attributed (directly or indirectly) to Patriots Point. This level of economic activity is associated with 1,756 jobs and \$71.4 million in labor income for Charleston area residents.*
- *Patriots Point maintains an economic multiplier effect of 1.8. This means that for every \$100 in economic activity generated at Patriots Point, an additional \$80 in economic activity is created in the broader Charleston economy for a total of \$180. This multiplier effect is the result of the increase in demand at other local businesses that comes about when Patriots Point purchases materials from local vendors and when employees and non-local visitors at Patriots Point spend their incomes in the local economy.*
- *Over the past several decades, the population of the United States has been increasingly migrating towards the Southeast. This has been driven by many factors, including a milder climate, a lower cost of living, job opportunities in growing industries, and various quality-of-life amenities including outdoor recreation and cultural attractions. The Charleston economy has benefitted from these trends, with total demand steadily rising alongside the population due to increased consumer spending. Population growth has specifically increased by 27 percent in the Charleston tri-county region since 2010. This can be compared to 16 percent for South Carolina and just 8 percent for the U.S. overall.*



Executive Summary (Continued)

- These population trends are expected to continue. The Southeastern United States is currently projected to experience more population growth over the next two decades than any other U.S. region. Berkeley County in particular will likely grow nearly three times faster than the state average (54.3% vs. 19.7% through the year 2042) and is expected to be among the five fastest growing counties in the state. This growth, combined with Charleston's standing as a top tourist destination, implies that there will be a steadily growing demand for the types of office, retail, vacation, and residential spaces that will be available at Patriots Annex.*
- The development of Patriots Annex has already begun and will take place in three phases that will include more than 331,000 square feet of commercial and residential space with projected operations to begin in 2025 (Phase I), 2027 (Phase II), and 2030 (Phase III). Following the relatively smaller development of Phase I (at roughly 59,000 square feet), Patriots Annex will expand significantly with Phases II and III (218,000 square feet and 54,500 square feet, respectively).*
- In sum, this study estimates that the total economic impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston tri-county region will increase to \$393.0 million upon completion of Patriots Annex, which will support approximately 2,997 permanent jobs and \$128.8 million in labor income. This represents a 92 percent increase in the local economic footprint of Patriots Point.*
- The annual economic impact of Patriots Point is estimated to increase to \$250.2 million following the completion of Phase I of Patriots Annex, which will further increase to \$359.5 million and \$393.0 million upon the completion of Phases II and III. This implies that the cumulative impact of Patriots Point between 2024 and 2030 will exceed \$2.1 billion in total economic activity for the Charleston tri-county region.*
- Patriots Point currently generates approximately \$5.1 million annually in tax revenue for the state of South Carolina through all of its aforementioned activities and operations. Upon the completion of Patriots Annex, it is estimated that this annual tax revenue contribution will increase to over \$9.9 million.*

Section I

Introduction

Patriots Point is a major historical site of significance for both South Carolina and the United States. It is the home of the historic warships USS Yorktown and USS Laffey, the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum, a Cold War Memorial, and the only Vietnam Support Base Camps in the U.S. Patriots Point also serves as the headquarters for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the agency’s official Medal of Honor Museum.

Although the historical ships are owned by the state of South Carolina, Patriots Point currently receives no state or federal funding for the maintenance, repair, restoration, and other costs associated with upkeep. In order to support these activities, Patriots Point has leased 61 acres of its property—known as the Patriots Annex project—for a mixed-use development that will help to offset these costs. Not only will this help to ensure that these ships will be properly preserved, it will also generate new economic activity for the Charleston area and the surrounding communities, including a sizable volume of new jobs and incomes for local residents. In addition, Charleston’s strong population growth is expected to continue into the coming decades, which will generate high levels of demand and thus maximize the likelihood of success of this new development. Patriots Annex will be developed in three phases, the first of which is already underway and consists of 31 acres.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis examining both the current economic impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston tri-county region (Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties) as well as the long-run increase in this economic impact over time that will likely result from the development of Patriots Annex.



Section II

Charleston as a Longstanding Hot Spot for Economic Growth

Charleston, South Carolina has long benefitted from high rates of economic growth. Driven in large part by tourism, Charleston is routinely ranked by various media outlets as one of the best cities to visit in the United States. For example, recently Charleston was ranked as *Travel + Leisure* magazine's top U.S. destination for 2023. Each year, more than 7.6 million people visit the Charleston region, which supports an employment base of more than 50,000.¹

Tourism has helped fuel population and employment growth in the Charleston tri-county area by attracting new residents who are drawn to the region's many amenities and economic opportunities. This population growth then helps to further boost the tourism sector by increasing local consumer demand and supporting a vibrant community infrastructure that appeals to visitors. Such trends have directly benefitted Patriots Point, which is located in Charleston County and near many of the area's amenities.

Yet while tourism plays a key role in Charleston's long-run economic success, it also benefits from a large, diversified economy comprised of multiple high-demand and growing sectors. In addition to tourism, these industry sectors include advanced manufacturing and logistics. Advanced manufacturing includes the aerospace, automotive, and tire industries, while logistics incorporates all aspects of transportation, distribution, and warehousing services. **Figure 1** provides a breakdown of the Charleston tri-county region's employment base by industry. Note that even with Charleston's status as a top tourist destination, Leisure & Hospitality (tourism) still only ranks 4th as a share of the region's employment base.

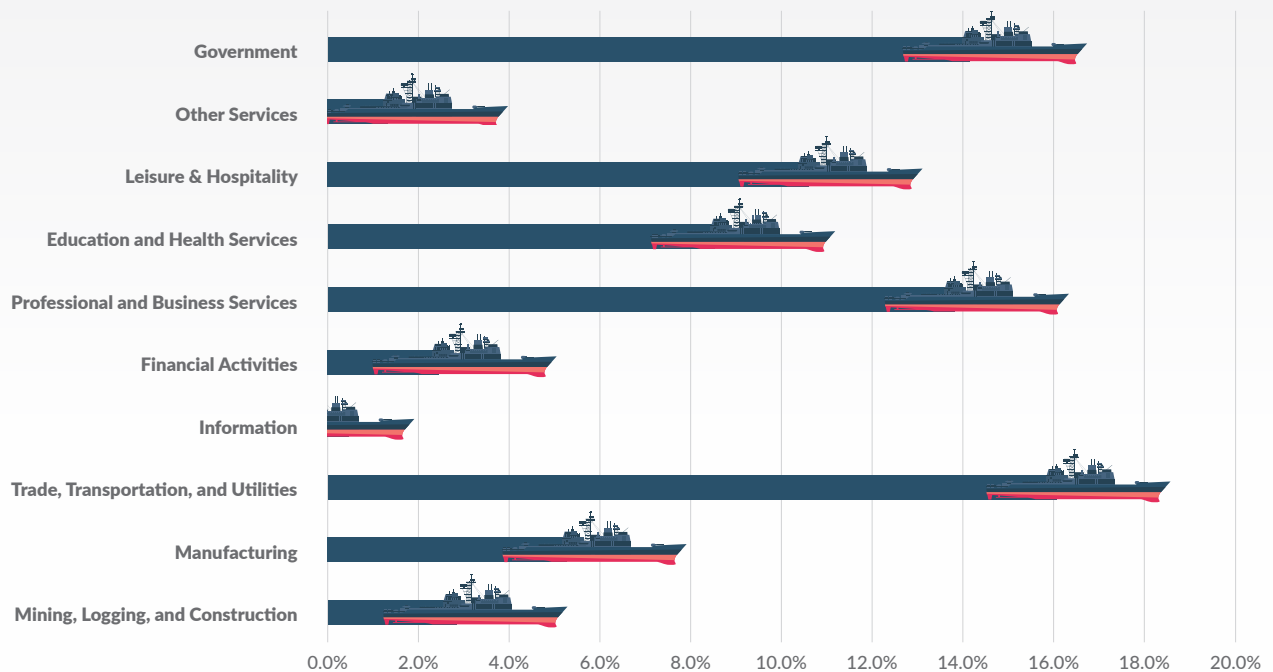


¹ Source: Office of Tourism Analysis, College of Charleston



Figure 1: Pct. Contribution to Total Employment in the Charleston Tri-County Region

Source: Current Employment Statistics, NSA, 2023

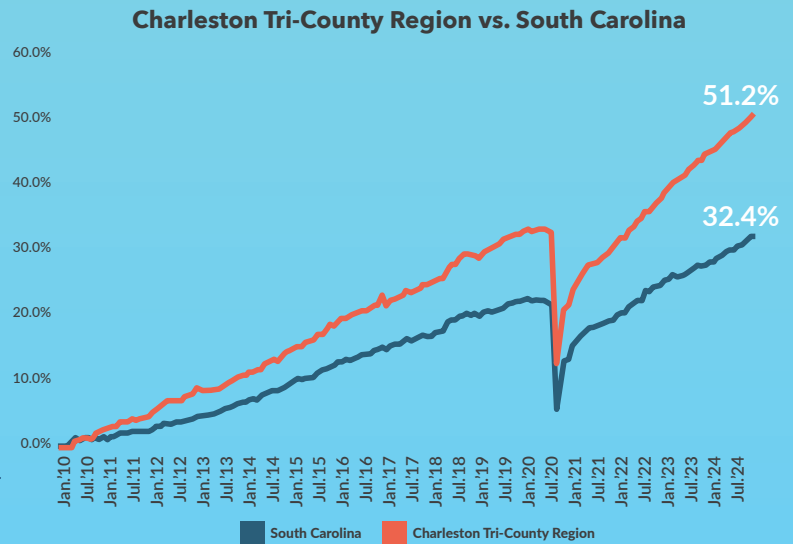


It is this broad, diversified employment base that has made it possible for Charleston to consistently outpace South Carolina's rate of total economic growth in recent years. For example, while total employment in South Carolina rose 32.4 percent between 2010 and 2024, Charleston employment increased by 51.2 percent. This was the result of growth in tourism, the arrival and subsequent expansion of several marquee manufacturing firms, and the steady expansion of the South Carolina Ports Authority as the backbone of the region's logistics cluster.

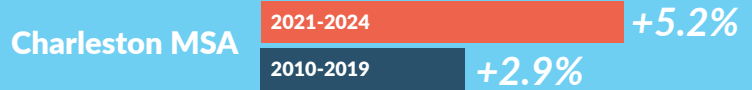
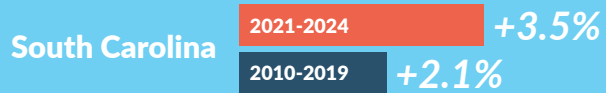
Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of economic growth in the Charleston region has increased even further due to migration patterns that have generated higher population gains leading to increases in employment. These employment trends can be seen in **Figure 2**. Not only has Charleston grown faster than South Carolina since 2010, but the difference in the two growth rates more than doubled following the onset of the pandemic. More specifically, the annual employment growth rate in the Charleston tri-county region was approximately 0.8 percentage points higher than that of South Carolina between 2010 and 2019, but has increased to 1.7 percentage points since 2021.

Figure 2: Total Employment Growth

Source: Current Employment Statistics, SA




Annualized Employment Growth



0.0% 1.0% 2.0% 3.0% 4.0% 5.0% 6.0%



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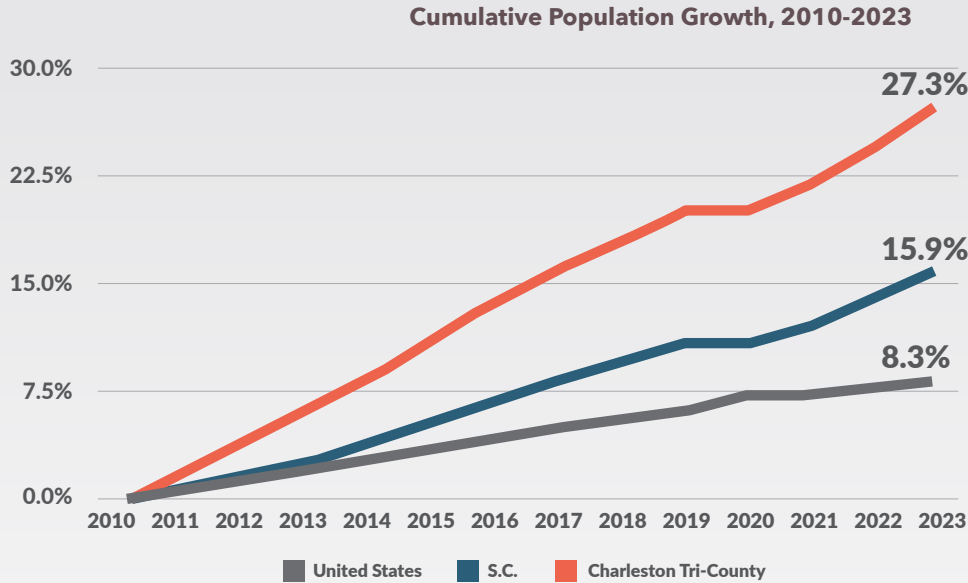


The aforementioned population gains have come about as a result of a more general migration of the U.S. population towards the Southeastern United States. This has been driven by many factors, including a milder climate, a lower cost of living, job opportunities in growing industries, and various quality-of-life amenities including outdoor recreation and cultural attractions. The Charleston economy has benefitted from these trends, with total demand steadily rising alongside the population due to increased consumer spending. This increase in consumer spending, in turn, helped drive the employment gains illustrated in **Figure 2**. Population growth has specifically increased by 27 percent in the Charleston tri-county region since 2010. This can be compared to 16 percent for South Carolina and just 8 percent for the U.S. overall.

These population trends are expected to continue. The Southeastern United States is currently projected to experience more population growth over the next two decades than any other U.S. region, which can be observed in **Figure 3**. Within South Carolina itself, Berkeley County will likely grow nearly three times faster than the state as a whole (54.3% vs. 19.7% through the year 2042) and is expected to be among the five fastest growing counties in the Palmetto State. This growth, combined with Charleston's standing as a top tourist destination and its broad industry base, implies that there will be a steadily growing demand for the types of office, retail, vacation, and residential spaces that will be available at Patriots Annex.

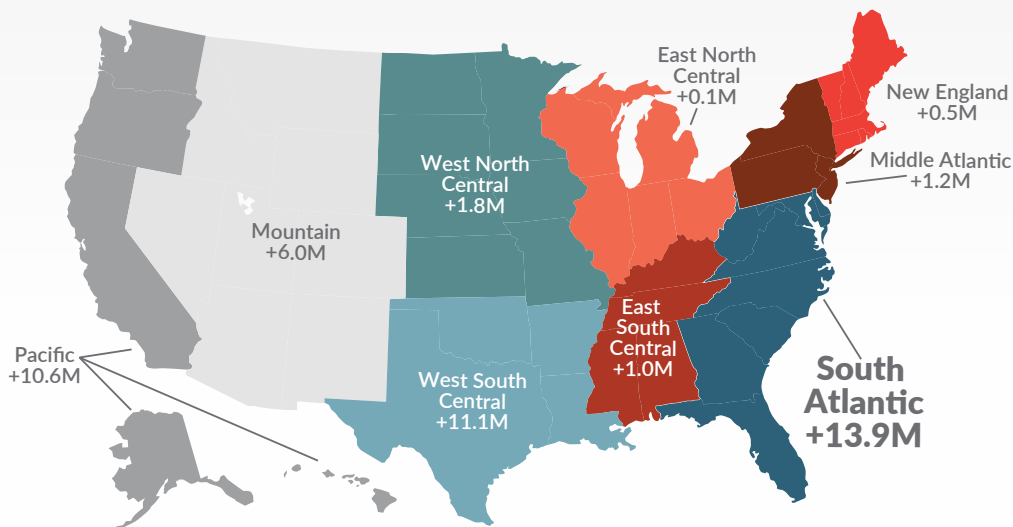
Figure 3: Selected Population Growth Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Population growth has increased by 27 percent in the Charleston tri-county region since 2010. This can be compared to 16 percent for South Carolina and just 8 percent for the U.S. overall.

Projected Population Growth by U.S. Region, 2022-2040



The Southeastern United States is projected to experience more population gains than any other U.S. region through the year 2040.



Section III

Economic Impact Methodology

The current economic impact of Patriots Point is primarily driven by three factors: the ongoing operations of Patriots Point, the ongoing operations of all current business tenants, and the spending generated by visitors to Patriots Point (and its tenants). As part of its ongoing operations, Patriots Point and its tenants engage in a significant volume of labor and non-labor purchasing activity within the Charleston region to hire and retain employees and to purchase raw materials from local vendors. Additionally, many of the visitors to Patriots Point coming in from outside of the area introduce new spending within the Charleston region during their visit through purchases made at various local businesses. All of this new spending – whether from Patriots Point, the tenants, or the visitors, represents the direct economic impact of Patriots Point.

Nevertheless, this spending activity does not provide a complete picture of the impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston economy. These direct expenditures also lead to additional job creation and economic activity throughout the local region by way of the economic multiplier effect (or economic ripple effect).

Economic multiplier effects can be divided into direct, indirect, and induced impacts. As previously outlined, the direct effect represents any initial change in economic activity. This includes, for example, the initial dollars that are injected into the economy of Charleston directly through the procurement of raw materials by Patriots Point. This spending increases the demand for goods and services and leads to the creation of new jobs and more income for employees and suppliers of these materials.

The indirect effect reflects all of the additional economic impacts resulting from inter-industry linkages between other local businesses in Charleston. For example, consider a purchase made by Patriots Point with a local construction firm for building maintenance. In this situation, the construction firm, as a result of this purchase by Patriots Point, would experience an increase in demand. This would require this construction firm to purchase additional raw materials to accommodate the new increase in demand and to potentially hire additional employees if the increase in demand were high enough. The vendors of the construction firm would then experience an increase in demand and have to purchase additional inputs as well, and so on. These indirect effects ripple through the economy of the Charleston tri-county region.

The induced effect reflects additional economic activity that results from increases in the spending of household income. For example, when the aforementioned construction firm hires new workers to satisfy an increase in demand, these workers will earn incomes. They will then spend part of this new income locally on, for example, food, entertainment, or housing. These industries will then see an increase in demand for their goods and services, which will lead to higher incomes for some of their employees, part of which will also be spent locally.



These successive rounds of indirect and induced spending do not go on forever, which is why a specific value can be calculated for each of them. In each round, money is “leaked out” for a variety of reasons. For example, firms may purchase some of their supplies from vendors located outside of the local area. In addition, employees will save part of their income or spend part of it with firms located outside of the Charleston region. In order to determine the total economic impact that will result from an initial direct impact, economic multipliers are used. An economic multiplier can be used to determine the total impact (direct, indirect, and induced) that results from an initial change in economic activity (the direct impact). Multipliers are different in each sector of the economy and are largely determined by the size of the local supplier network as well as the particular region being examined. In addition, economic multipliers are available to calculate not just the total impact, but also the total employment and income levels associated with the total impact.

To estimate the economic impacts in this study, a detailed structural model (known as an input-output model) of the Charleston economy that contains specific information on economic linkages between all industries was used. In order to ensure that the uniqueness of local economic dynamics is considered, the input-output modeling software IMPLAN is combined with other customized regional forecasting models that were developed. This allows for the inclusion of additional local data, industry knowledge, and ongoing economic growth trends.

Section IV

Primary Results

The Current Economic Impact of Patriots Point

Patriots Point operates on a year-round basis and generates a series of economic impacts that arise from (1) the operations of Patriots Point itself, (2) the operations of all current business tenants, and (3) spending activity from visitors that increases the demand at many local businesses. Patriots Point currently generates more than \$13 million in annual revenue and admits more than 318,000 visitors each year who are drawn from within and outside of the Charleston region. Additionally, all currently operating tenants of Patriots Point generate approximately \$50 million in revenue each year.

All direct impacts also generate significant multiplier effects that make the total economic impact of Patriots Point in the Charleston tri-county region far larger. The structural input-output models used in this analysis estimate impacts in terms of three specific measures: economic output, employment, and labor income. Economic output reflects the dollar value of all final goods and services that can be attributed (directly or indirectly) to Patriots Point. It can also be thought of as an aggregate measure of total spending activity that results from all direct expenditures within the local economy facilitated by Patriots Point. Because it includes all spending by consumers and businesses on both goods and services, it is an all-inclusive measure of the impact on total economic activity. Employment measures the total number of jobs associated with total economic output. Labor income reflects all employee compensation associated with total employment estimates, including wages, salaries, and benefits. **Table 1** below highlights these estimates.

Table 1: Economic Impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston Tri-County Region
Current Annual Impact

	Employment	Labor Income	Economic Output
Direct Effect	1,267	\$43,876,609	\$112,106,899
Multiplier Effect	489	\$27,535,879	\$92,650,859
Total Impact	1,756	\$71,412,488	\$204,757,758

The direct economic output generated within the Charleston tri-county region that arises from all activities facilitated by Patriots Point is estimated to total \$112.1 million annually along with 1,267 jobs. This level of direct economic activity then subsequently leads to additional rounds of local spending activity – known as the multiplier effect – which totals approximately \$92.7 million in additional economic output for the Charleston tri-county region along with 489 additional jobs. These multiplier effects reflect the increased demand for goods and services of local suppliers resulting from local expenditures on the part of the Patriots Point and its tenants as well as the additional local economic activity generated across all industries (e.g., retail, housing/lodging, etc.) that results from employees and local visitors spending their wages in the local economy. The combination of all direct effects and their subsequent multiplier effects leads to a total annual economic impact of approximately \$204.8 million, which supports a total of 1,756 jobs in the Charleston tri-county region each year.

These results can be summarized by noting that the economic multiplier associated with Patriots Point is 1.8 – meaning that for every \$100 in economic activity facilitated by Patriots Point, an additional \$80 in economic activity is created in the broader Charleston economy for a total of \$180. This multiplier effect is the result of the increase in demand at other local businesses that comes about when Patriots Point purchases materials from local vendors and when employees and non-local visitors at Patriots Point spend their incomes in the local economy.



For every \$100 in economic activity facilitated by Patriots Point, an additional \$80 in economic activity is created in the broader Charleston economy for a total of \$180.

The Economic Impact of Patriots Point

Phase I Completion of Patriots Annex

The development of Phase I of Patriots Annex is already underway with projected operations to begin by 2025. Upon completion, Phase I will add approximately 59,000 new square feet of commercial and residential space as well as a 110-room hotel and 12 cottages that, once occupied, will significantly expand the current impact of Patriots Point.

Table 2 summarizes these projected increases.

Table 2: Economic Impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston Tri-County Region

Projected Annual Impact Following Phase I Completion

	Employment	Labor Income	Economic Output
Direct Effect	1,467	\$51,706,265	\$138,031,878
Multiplier Effect	591	\$33,334,706	\$112,153,590
Total Impact	2,058	\$85,040,971	\$250,185,468



The direct economic output projected to be generated within the Charleston tri-county region following the completion of Phase I of Patriots Annex is estimated to total \$138.0 million. This level of direct economic activity then subsequently leads to additional rounds of local spending activity – known as the multiplier effect – which totals approximately \$112.2 million in additional economic output for the Charleston tri-county region along with 591 additional jobs. These multiplier effects reflect the increased demand for goods and services of local suppliers resulting from local expenditures on the part of the Patriots Point and its tenants as well as the additional local economic activity generated across all industries (e.g., retail, housing/lodging, etc.) that results from employees and visitors spending their wages in the local economy. The combination of all direct effects and their subsequent multiplier effects leads to a total annual economic impact of approximately \$250.2 million, which supports a total of 2,058 jobs in the Charleston tri-county region each year. This represents an increase of approximately 22 percent over the current economic impact of Patriots Point.

The Economic Impact of Patriots Point

Phase II Completion of Patriots Annex

The development of Phase II of Patriots Annex is scheduled to begin in 2025, with operations to begin by 2027. Upon completion, Phase II will add another 218,000 new square feet of new commercial and residential space and a 300-room hotel that, once occupied, will represent the single largest increase in the economic impact of Patriots Point associated with Patriots Annex. **Table 3** summarizes these projected increases.

Table 3: Economic Impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston Tri-County Region
Projected Annual Impact Following Phase II Completion

	Employment	Labor Income	Economic Output
Direct Effect	1,922	\$70,638,754	\$198,551,294
Multiplier Effect	852	\$48,170,111	\$160,968,248
Total Impact	2,774	\$118,808,865	\$359,519,542



The direct economic output projected to be generated within the Charleston tri-county region following the completion of Phase II of Patriots Annex is estimated to total \$198.6 million. This level of direct economic activity then subsequently leads to additional rounds of local spending activity – known as the multiplier effect – which totals approximately \$161.0 million in additional economic output for the Charleston tri-county region along with 852 additional jobs. These multiplier effects reflect the increased demand for goods and services of local suppliers resulting from local expenditures on the part of the Patriots Point and its tenants as well as the additional local economic activity generated across all industries (e.g., retail, housing/lodging, etc.) that results from employees and visitors spending their wages in the local economy. The combination of all direct effects and their subsequent multiplier effects leads to a total annual economic impact of approximately \$359.5 million, which supports a total of 2,774 total jobs in the Charleston tri-county region each year. This represents an increase of more than 75 percent over the current economic impact of Patriots Point.

The Economic Impact of Patriots Point

Phase III Completion of Patriots Annex

The development of Phase III of Patriots Annex is scheduled to begin in 2027, with operations to begin by 2030. Upon completion, Phase III will add 54,500 new square feet of commercial and residential space and a 150-room hotel that, once occupied, will represent the full completion of the Patriots Annex project. **Table 4** summarizes these projected increases.

Table 4: Economic Impact of Patriots Point on the Charleston Tri-County Region

Projected Annual Impact Following Phase III Completion

	Employment	Labor Income	Economic Output
Direct Effect	2,077	\$76,666,674	\$219,310,324
Multiplier Effect	920	\$52,104,634	\$173,736,884
Total Impact	2,997	\$128,771,308	\$393,047,208

Upon the completion of Patriots Annex, the total economic impact of Patriots Point will increase by 92 percent over its current level.

The direct economic output projected to be generated within the Charleston tri-county region following the completion of Phase III of Patriots Annex is estimated to total \$219.3 million. This level of direct economic activity then subsequently leads to additional rounds of local spending activity – known as the multiplier effect – which totals approximately \$173.7 million in additional economic output for the Charleston tri-county region along with 920 additional jobs. These multiplier effects reflect the increased demand for goods and services of local suppliers resulting from local expenditures on the part of the Patriots Point and its tenants as well as the additional local economic activity generated across all industries (e.g., retail, housing/lodging, etc.) that results from employees and visitors spending their wages in the local economy. The combination of all direct effects and their subsequent multiplier effects leads to a total annual economic impact of approximately \$393.0 million, which supports a total of 2,997 total jobs in the Charleston tri-county region each year. This implies that, upon the completion of Patriots Annex, the total economic impact of Patriots Point will increase by 92 percent over its current level.



The Economic Impact of Patriots Point

Contributions to State Tax Revenue

Another major impact of Patriots Point comes from the increase in state tax revenue that results from the economic activity it generates. As previously summarized, the economic impact of Patriots Point currently totals approximately \$204.8 million annually, which is projected to increase to \$393.0 million following the completion of Patriots Annex. Historically, every additional dollar that is generated in economic activity (i.e., nominal gross state product) within South Carolina also generates 4.4 cents in new state tax revenue.² By applying this figure to the economic activity generated by Patriots Point, the tax revenue from this total volume of activity can be estimated.³ **Table 5** displays these results, which show that the annual total estimated tax revenue that arises from Patriots Point is approximately \$5.1 million and is projected to rise to more than \$9.9 million upon the completion of Patriots Annex.

Table 5 - Annual State Tax Revenue Derived from Patriots Point

	Category	Dollar Value
	Current Annual Economic Impact	\$204,757,758
	Estimated Annual Tax Revenue Generated for South Carolina	\$5,124,750

	Projected Annual Impact Following the Completion of Patriots Annex (Phases I-III)	\$393,047,208
	Projected Annual Tax Revenue Generated for South Carolina Following the Completion of Patriots Annex (Phases I-III)	\$9,950,846

² The historical relationship between South Carolina nominal gross state product and the South Carolina general funds revenue (as measured and tracked by the South Carolina Board of Economic Advisors) was estimated by the Division of Research using industry-standard time-series regression techniques.

³ Economic output represents the value of industry production and is therefore not synonymous with gross state product. As such, the dollar value of all intermediate inputs was subtracted from economic output before the 4.4-cent estimate was applied to estimate total tax revenue.



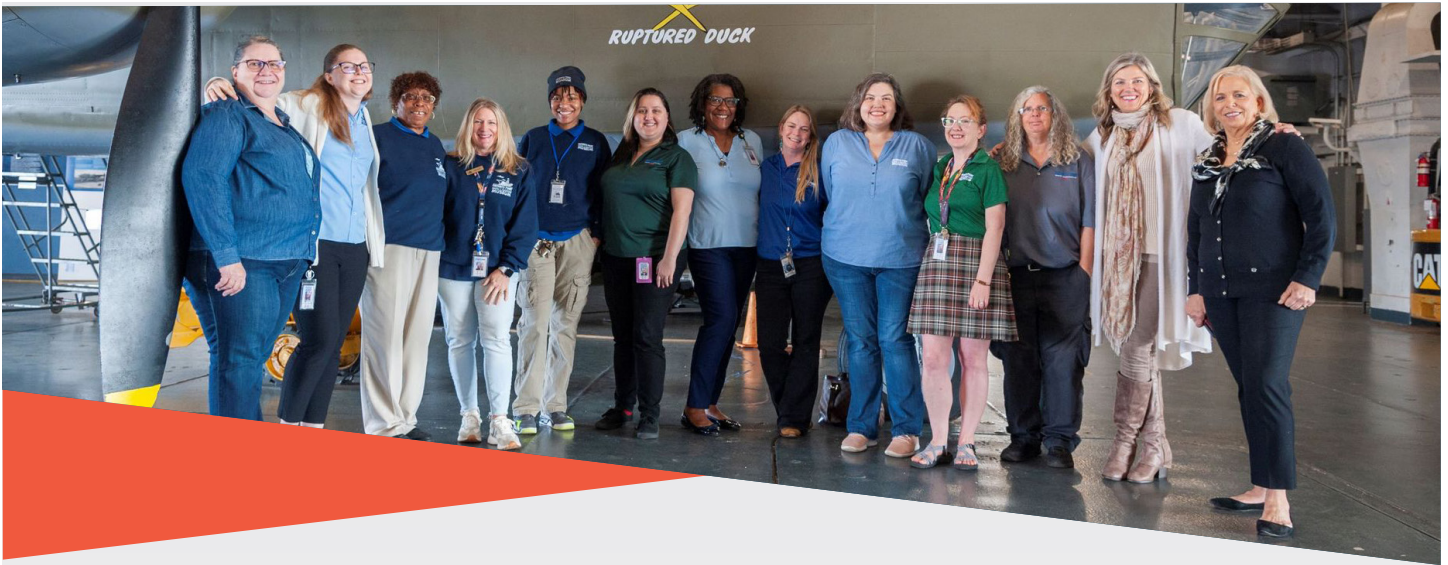
Section V

Conclusion

Patriots Point has long been a unique historical and cultural site in Charleston, South Carolina that attracts over 300,000 visitors every year and generates a sizable economic impact for the Charleston tri-county region. As of 2024, the current annual economic impact of Patriots Point totals approximately \$204.8 million. This level of economic activity is associated with 1,756 jobs and \$71.4 million in labor income for Charleston area residents.

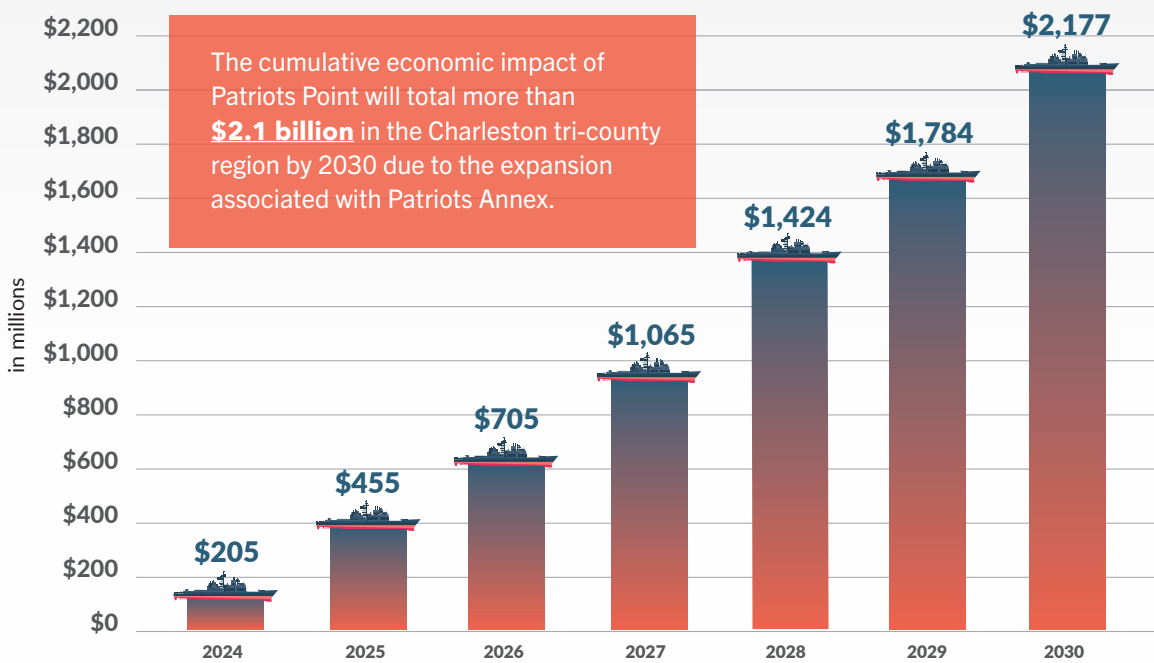
In order to support the significant costs of maintenance at Patriots Point, especially those associated with major ship upkeep and repair, Patriots Point has leased 61 acres of its property – known as the Patriots Annex project – for a new mixed-use development that will include a variety of office, retail, vacation, and residential spaces. In addition to generating new lease revenue for Patriots Point, Patriots Annex will also significantly increase the economic impact of Patriots Point over time. Charleston’s strong population growth is expected to continue into the coming decades, which will generate high levels of demand and thus maximize the likelihood of success of this new development. For example, population growth has specifically increased by 27 percent in the Charleston tri-county region since 2010. This can be compared to 16 percent for South Carolina and just 8 percent for the U.S. overall. And looking ahead, the Southeastern United States is currently projected to experience more population growth over the next two decades than any other U.S. region.





Patriots Annex will be developed in three phases, the first of which has already begun. This will steadily increase the economic impact of Patriots Point from its current impact of \$204.8 million to \$250.2 (by 2025), \$359.5 million (by 2027), and \$393.0 million (by 2030) upon the completion of Phases I, II, and III, respectively. This means that the total economic impact of Patriots Point is expected to increase by 92 percent by 2030. Moreover, this implies that the cumulative impact of Patriots Point between 2024 and 2030 will be more than \$2.1 billion in total economic activity for the Charleston tri-county region. These projected estimates are illustrated in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4: Cumulative Economic Impact of Patriots Point, 2024-2030
Charleston Tri-County Region





I PLEDGE
ALLEGIANCE

IN (CV-10)
ARRIER

WHEN COMMISSIONED IN 1943 --
THE CARRIER YORKTOWN (CV-10)
TAKE FORCE 98 HELP SINK THE
SUBMARINE SEEN NEAR THE BOAT AND
DURING WORLD WAR II TWO TOWN
BOTH SIDES OF THE ISLAND

THE COMMAND OF MISSILES, BUT
THE BOAT TO PROTECT THE
SUBMARINE



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