Greenville, South Carolina, is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The land that makes up the city and surrounding county originally belonged to the Cherokee Indians and was used briefly by an Indian trader. After the Revolutionary War, South Carolina gave this land to patriot soldiers. Many of Greenville’s museums are located in Heritage Green. The Sigal Music Museum is home to the Carolina Clavier collection of more than 40 English, European, and American pianos and harpsichords dating from 1570 to 1845. The Upcountry History Museum is operated by Furman University and explores the culture, history, and heritage of the South Carolina Upcountry region. Works by Andrew Wyeth and Jasper Johns are featured at the Greenville County Museum of Art, which also has a Southern Collection. The Children’s Discovery Museum of the Upstate has 18 exhibit galleries, a traveling exhibit hall, two outdoor interactive exhibit spaces, and an outdoor programming space. The Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum and Baseball Library chronicles the life of one of America’s greatest baseball legends. Roper Mountain Science Center provides a planetarium, amphitheater, butterfly garden, waterfowl pond, vegetable garden, and walking trails. Other museums include the Greenville Cultural Exchange Center, which is an African American history museum; American Legion Post 3 Military History Museum; Military History Center of the Carolinas; and the BMW Zentrum Museum, which showcases rare and important vehicles from BMW’s past.

Greenville has many performing arts venues. With a 2,100-seat concert hall, a 400-seat theater, and an amphitheater, the Peace Center for the Performing Arts is home to six resident companies: Greenville Symphony Orchestra, Greenville Chorale, Carolina Ballet Theatre, South Carolina Children’s Theatre, Greenville County Youth Orchestras, Carolina Youth Symphony, and International Ballet Theatre. Centre Stage and Warehouse Theatre produces professional and theatrical productions. Greenville Concert Band performs 10 to 12 public concerts at various venues throughout the county. Bon Secours Wellness Arena is a 17,000-seat sports and entertainment venue. The Greenville Chautauqua Society performs educational interactive historic theater throughout the year. The annual June Chautauqua Festival consists of a 10-day program of primarily free performances by historical interpreters, many of which are held outdoors under a tent.

Neighborhoods

Downtown Greenville has many residential options that include historic neighborhoods; newly constructed townhouses, condominiums, and apartments; and condominiums in renovated commercial and historic buildings. Downtown, the Pettet Historic District consists of a mix of restored homes and apartments that were primarily built between 1910 and 1930 in Victorian, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Bungalow styles.

The city has many additional historic districts. Hampton–Pinckney Historic District features large houses from the Victorian era predominantly in Queen Anne and Craftsman styles, although Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, Italianate, and Prairie styles are also present. Built in the early 1900s, East Park Avenue Historic District contains mostly single-family houses in Craftsman, American Foursquare, Tudor, and Neoclassical styles, as well as McPherson Park. Overbrook Historic District began with the expansion of the Greenville trolley line in 1910; the developer of one section featured Craftsman homes for professionals, whereas another developer built larger homes on larger lots for wealthier clients. Large houses on large lots also make up the Colonel Elias Earle Historic District, which was planned as an early automobile neighborhood and features early 20th-century historical revival styles, including Neoclassical, Dutch Colonial, Georgian, English Cottage, and Tudor.

Augusta Road real estate dates from the 1960s and contains a mix of houses that include simple, polished cottages and luxury estates.

Roper Mountain Estates, developed in the mid-1990s, is a custom-designed community that features a mixture of traditional brick single-family home designs in single and multilevel floor plans. One newer community is Claremont, an upscale, gated community characterized by custom homes of over 3,000 square feet situated on large, wooded estate properties. Another newer community is Carolton, which consists of four districts with distinct design characteristics and 35 acres of dedicated open space for parks and gardens.

Parks and Recreation

The city maintains 39 parks and operates five community centers. The 20-acre Falls Park is located in the downtown area and features Liberty Bridge, a pedestrian-only suspension bridge that spans the Reedy River and provides scenic overlooks of the river’s falls. Other park features include nature trails, a pond with a footbridge, excavated mill ruins, and six landscaped garden areas. The 6.8-acre Cancer Survivors Park stretches from the edge of Falls Park to the edge of Cleveland Park and features a central pavilion, specialty gardens, a small amphitheater, and sculptural and educational elements.

At 122 acres, Cleveland Park is the city’s largest park and features the Greenville Zoo, tennis courts, a volleyball court, softball fields, playground areas, and a fitness trail. In addition, Cleveland Park is the site of the Rock Quarry Garden, the Fernwood Nature Trail, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The 21-acre Gower Park is an all-purpose recreational facility with lighted softball fields, basketball courts, tennis and pickleball courts, playgrounds, picnic shelters, a horseshoe pit, a nine-hole disc golf course, and a 1-mile paved walking trail.

Known for its 18-hole disc golf course and mountain bike trail, the 26.6-acre Timmons Park is home to a lighted baseball field, lighted pickleball courts, and a playground. Professional sports teams include the Greenville Drive (a minor league baseball team) and the Greenville Swamp Rabbits (an ice hockey team).

Education

Greenville County Schools serve 72,000 students from Greenville and surrounding areas in 81 elementary schools, 20 middle schools, and 15 high schools. In addition, the district operates special-focus schools that include magnet academies, International Baccalaureate schools, career centers, a fine arts center, a gifted center, and a science center. Nontraditional schools include a virtual school and an early college program.

Many opportunities for higher education are available in Greenville. Bob Jones University is a private Christian liberal arts university and seminary that has undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Furman University is a private liberal arts university that grants bachelor’s degrees in liberal arts and master’s degrees in education. Greenville Technical College, a community college, offers associate’s degree programs.

Geneva Reformed Seminary is the theological seminary of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America. Tabernacle Baptist College is an independent, fundamental Baptist college offering undergraduate degrees in Bible and elementary education, among other courses.

Health Care

Greenville is served by the following health care facilities:

- Prisma Health Greenville Memorial Hospital: 864 licensed beds
- Prisma Health Pawedow Hospital: 72 licensed beds
- St. Francis—Downtown: 245 licensed beds
- St. Francis—Eastside: 93 licensed beds
- Regency Hospital of Greenville: 32 licensed beds
- Shriners Hospital for Children: 50 licensed beds

City Stats 2018

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Photograph courtesy of Chris Leyland Photography.