

**ORDINANCE NO.: 2006-040**

*Establishing the City Center Business Improvement District*

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council this 19th day of July, 2006, that the City Center Business Improvement District is hereby established as follows:

ORIGINAL  
STAMPED IN RED

**Section 1.** Pursuant to the authority granted by the South Carolina General Assembly in South Carolina Code §5-37-10, there is hereby established a municipal improvement district to be known as the City Center Business Improvement District (hereinafter "BID").

**Section 2.** Findings of Fact

Columbia City Council finds that (i) improvements would be beneficial within the BID; (ii) the improvements would preserve and increase property values within the district; (iii) in the absence of improvements, property values within the area will be likely to depreciate and that the proposed improvements will be likely to encourage development in the BID; (iv) the general welfare and tax base of the City will be maintained or improved by creation of the BID; and (v) it is fair and equitable to finance the improvements by an assessment upon the real property within the district.

**Section 3.** District Boundaries

The BID shall include all properties within a boundary of:

The Western boundary is: the western property line of property on the West side of Assembly Street from Elmwood Avenue to Gervais Street.

The Northern boundary is: the northern property line of property on the South side of Elmwood Avenue from Assembly Street to Marion Street.

The Eastern boundary is: the eastern property line of property on the East side of Marion Street from Elmwood Avenue to Gervais Street.

The Southern boundary is: the southern property line of property on the North side of Gervais Street from Assembly Street to Marion Street.

The District is more fully depicted on the attached map, Exhibit "A".

**Section 4.** Adoption of Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan for the City Center Improvement District dated May 10, 2006, (the "IMPROVEMENT PLAN"), a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference as Exhibit "B", is hereby adopted.

**Section 5.** Assessments Imposed

An initial annual assessment equal to .1844% of the fair market value (as established by the Richland County Assessor) of each parcel is hereby imposed for the purpose of funding the services and improvements contemplated by the Improvement Plan. In addition, all properties subject to assessment which abut Main Street shall be subject to an additional assessment of Four and 01/100 (\$4.01) Dollars per front footage on Main Street.

ORIGINAL  
STAMPED IN RED

**Section 6. Baseline of Services**

No services provided by the City within the District shall be terminated as a result of the enactment of this ordinance. There shall be no reduction in the level of any service provided by the City within the District as a result of the enactment hereof.

**Section 7. Termination of Assessments**

The district hereby created and the assessments hereby imposed shall terminate on December 31, 2011, or upon the adoption of an ordinance otherwise terminating the district, whichever shall first occur.

**Section 8. Modification of Assessments**

The rates of assessment may be adjusted annually, as set forth in Section 7 of the Improvement Plan.

**Section 9. Contracts for Management**

Contracts for the management and oversight for the delivery of services to the BID are hereby authorized. The City Manager is authorized to execute such contract upon approval by City Council.

This ordinance is effective as of the eighth (8th) day after publication in The State newspaper.

Requested by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Approved by:



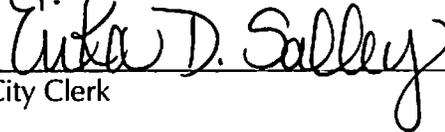
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

Approved as to form:



\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Introduced: 6/21/2006  
Final Reading: 7/19/2006

**Improvement Plan  
For The  
City Center  
Business Improvement District  
Columbia, SC**

*Prepared pursuant to the State of South Carolina  
Municipal Improvement Act  
To reauthorize an improvement district in  
Downtown Columbia*

May 10, 2006

Improvement Plan  
For The  
City Center Improvement District  
Columbia, South Carolina

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Exhibits

**Exhibit One**

**Detailed Year 2007 Budget/  
Proposed 2008-2011 Budgets**

## Section 1

### **Why Reauthorize a Business Improvement District for Downtown Columbia?**

In order to continue to attract new investment and to protect and maintain the existing investment Downtown, property owners are proposing to reauthorize and continue assessing themselves to maintain a private sector, self-help improvement district established under the South Carolina Municipal Improvements Act. These districts are commonly called Business Improvement Districts (BIDS). There are several reasons why downtown property owners are taking this action.

#### **1. To Provide Consistent Funding to Improve Both the Reality and Perception of Downtown**

Downtown Columbia is not always perceived by potential customers, investors, and visitors as a premier place to invest either their time or money. Compared to other parts of the city many consider the area to be less clean and safe. Downtown is seeing modest interest from residential developers and new businesses. As this interests leads to new developments and new businesses, new users will be attracted to Downtown. It is important that these new users experience a Downtown that is clean, safe and well managed. Downtown must compete for investors, customers and visitors with clean, safe and attractive controlled areas such as shopping malls, lifestyle centers and office parks. Enhanced security and maintenance programs in Downtown will further address both the reality and perception of Downtown as a place to live, work, play and worship.

#### **2. An opportunity to Strengthen Private Sector management and Accountability in Downtown**

The district will continue to be managed by a non-profit, private sector corporation known as the City Center Partnership. District work plans and budgets, based upon this five-year plan, will be refined annually by a board of directors representative of the property owners who are paying the assessment with direct accountability to those who are paying into the district. Services provided by the district will be subject to private sector performance standards and controls.

### **3. The Need to be Proactive In Determining the Future of Downtown**

In order to protect their investment, property owners must be a partner in the process that determines how new development projects are implemented. Property owners in cities such as Atlanta, Nashville, Raleigh, Roanoke, Birmingham and Charlotte have been successful at leading and shaping future downtown developments through their strong Business Improvement Districts. A district in Columbia provides the financial resources, professional staff and private sector management to insure that the challenges faced by Downtown will be proactively addressed.

### **4. The Need to Attract New Business and Investment**

Downtown Columbia competes with suburban shopping centers and office parks in the region. Downtown Columbia also competes against managed downtown areas in other states for tenants, visitors and investors. If Downtown is to remain competitive and viable as an alternative location it must pursue its own well financed, proactive strategy to retain business and tenants as well as attract new business and investment. A district provides the financial resources to develop and implement a Downtown focused strategy to reduce building vacancies and attract new business to Downtown.

## Section 2

### What Is a Business Improvement District?

The International Downtown Association estimates that more than 1,500 property based business improvement districts (BID) currently operate throughout the United States and Canada. A Business Improvement District provides enhanced improvements and activities such as security, maintenance and marketing, in addition to those provided by local government.

A Property Based Business Improvement District (BID) is based upon the “benefit assessment district” concept, which provides for an assessment on real property and improvements upon real property to be raised within a specific geographic district with the proceeds directed back to the district to provide enhanced services that benefit the district and properties located within the district boundaries.

Some of the advantages of a BID are:

- A BID allows a wide range of service options, including security, maintenance, marketing, economic and housing development, special events etc.
- It is designed and created by those who will pay the assessment
- It is governed by those who pay through a property and business board that supervises operations and submits a yearly implementation plan.
- It is implemented by those who pay ...through a non-profit, private sector, management organization.
- It is established through petition support from property owners who will pay the proposed property assessments.
- It provides for a 5 year life with a sunset clause that requires new approval process by those who pay to renew the BID

# **Section 3 City Center Improvement Plan Summary**

## **Improvement Plan Summary**

Developed by property owners in Downtown Columbia, the City Center Improvement District Plan improves and conveys special benefits to properties located within the boundaries of the BID. The City Center Improvement District provides new and enhanced improvements and activities including: maintenance, security, marketing, retail recruitment, promotion and economic development services above and beyond those currently provided by the City.

## **Location**

Approximately 36 blocks, an area defined in Section 4 of this plan. (See map on Exhibit 1).

## **Value of District**

The total estimated fair market value of the private properties within the proposed district as appraised by the Richland County Assessor as of December 31, 2005 is \$373,556,000.

## **Improvements, Activities, Services**

### **Public Space Management**

#### **Enhanced Security Programs:**

- Downtown Ambassadors
- Evening Security Patrol
- Shuttle Service

#### **Enhanced Maintenance programs:**

- Graffiti Removal, Poster and Handbill Removal
- Sidewalk/Gutter Cleaning
- Sidewalk Pressure Washing
- Trash Removal
- Cleaning of Newspaper Racks

#### **Enhanced Landscape Programs**

- Tree Grate & Bench Maintenance
- Landscape Maintenance
- Plant Street Trees, Flower Baskets, Flower Planters
- Sidewalk Weeding

#### **Special Projects**

- Additional Trash Cans
- Public Art Installation

**Economic Development**

**Communication/Marketing**

- Distribution of Visitor Guides
- Clean and Safe Promotions
- Public Relations Services
- City Center Marketing Campaigns
- Street Banners
- Improved Signage
- Special events

**Business Development**

- Business & Retail Recruitment & Retention
- Developer & Investor Recruitment
- Market Research & Data Collection
- Residential Recruitment & Demographics

**Planning**

- Grant Writing
- Public/Private Planning Activities

**Method of Financing:**

A levy of assessments upon real property and buildings on the real property, which benefit from the improvements and activities.

**Budget:**

Anticipated district budget contribution from private property assessment for the year 2007 of operation is \$780,524.

In addition to private property assessment it is anticipated that public property owners (City, County, State and Federal) will contribute at least \$185,374 to the year 2007 operations budget.

It is also anticipated that non-profit property owners (Churches, Hospitals) will contribute at least \$85,092 to the year 2007 Operations budget.

**Total Operations Budget year 2007: \$1,031,730**

**Cost:**

Annual assessments are based upon an allocation of specific program costs. Two property assessment variables, appraised value and street frontage on Main Street, are used in the calculation.

The annual yearly assessments will not exceed the rates listed below during the first year of the reauthorized BID.

**Assessment Rate**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Per Dollar of Fair Market Value              | \$ .001844 |
| Per Foot of Property Frontage on Main Street | \$4.01     |

**\*\*Both assessments apply to properties fronting on Main Street\*\***

**City Services:**

The City has agreed that existing City services will continue to be provided within the BID District at the same level as before the BID was created consistent with City services provided in other areas. BID services are in addition to existing City services.

**District Formation:**

A District may be formed by either of two processes.

1. Submission of signed petitions from property owners who represent a majority per capita of all owners of real property within the district, which is not exempt from ad valorem taxation.
2. The City may create an improvement district through an ordinance adopted by a majority of council after a public hearing at which the plan is presented, including the proposed basis and amount of assessment.

**Duration:**

The Business Improvement District will have a 5 year life (January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2011). After four years, a new implementation plan must be developed and the approval process must be repeated in order to continue beyond the fifth year.

**Governance:**

The City of Columbia as the governing body must approve the five year implementation plan. City Center Improvement District budgets may be refined annually within the limitations set forth in the district implementation plan, by the board of the private sector management /implementation organization. Any

changes to the implementation plan during the term of the district that are not within the limitations set forth for changes in the plan, must be approved by the City Council acting as the governing body.

Through a contract with the governing body (i.e. City of Columbia), a property owner-led, private sector, non-profit district management /implementation organization will implement the improvements and activities defined in the Plan and will manage the day to day operations of the District.

On a yearly basis a report summarizing the accomplishments of the District as well as a report of the financial activities of the District will be submitted to the governing body and to each assessment-paying property owner.

## **Section 4**

### **City Center Improvement District Boundaries**

An approximate 36-block area has been identified for the City Center Improvement District. The map on Exhibit 1 of this report identifies district boundaries.

#### **District Boundaries**

The District includes all properties within a boundary of:

The Western boundary is:

The western property line of property on the West side of Assembly Street from Elmwood Avenue to Gervais Street

The Northern boundary is:

The northern property line of property on the South side of Elmwood Avenue from Assembly Street to Marion Street

The Eastern boundary is:

The eastern property line of property on the East side of Marion Street from Elmwood Avenue to Gervais Street.

The Southern boundary is:

The southern property line of property on the North side Gervais Street from Assembly Street to Marion Street.

For specific boundaries of the City Center Improvement District see the map labeled "Exhibit 1."

## **Section 5**

### **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

#### **Process to Establish the Improvement District Plan**

Through a series of meetings, focus group meetings and BID-Advisory Committee meetings of the City Center Partnership Long Range Planning Committee and ongoing discussion with the Board of Directors, Downtown Columbia stakeholders collectively determined the priority for improvements and activities to be delivered by the City Center Improvement District. The primary needs as determined by the stakeholders were safety/security, maintenance, marketing/communications, economic development and retail recruitment.

All properties receive a core level of all the districts services. In addition Main Street receives a higher level of maintenance. The additional frontage assessment on Main Street reflects the different level of services provided.

#### **What We Will Do!**

### **PUBLIC SPACE MANAGEMENT**

#### **Public Safety Program**

##### **City Center Public Safety Program**

The 36 block City Center security program mission is to support the police department, property owners and tenants in overall crime prevention efforts and reduction in street disorder, while offering a customer service orientation to pedestrians. They provide highly visible security and are intended to supplement-not supplant-individual building security and the Columbia Police Department.

##### **Integration with the Columbia Police Department**

The Downtown Columbia security program will work closely with The Columbia Police Department and integrate the Downtown Columbia program with that of the Department.

##### **Bicycle/Foot Patrol**

The Bike Patrol deters aggressive panhandling and other unsuitable street behavior. Their presence is a deterrent to theft and burglary from motor vehicles, although the service does not completely prevent these crimes. They also deter and report illegal street vending, illegal dumping and street code violations. They handle a myriad of quality of life problems including: drinking in public, urinating in public, indecent exposure, trespassing, aggressive panhandling, prostitution observances, scavenging and shopping

cart confiscation.

They perform goodwill gestures such as escorting employees, helping lost persons, changing flat tires, and conducting tours. Bike Patrols also assist with traffic control in the event of accidents, fires or unusual occurrences.

They patrol assigned routes, covering all in the district. They are professional, assertive, friendly, courteous, people-oriented individuals in excellent physical condition. The bike patrol officers complete customized classroom district training and additional hours of field training.

#### **Evening Safety patrol**

The Evening Patrol has increased the sense of safety for the nighttime users of the restaurants, churches, hospital, hotels and all businesses that cater to a nighttime clientele. The Evening Patrol has the same mission and receives the same training as the Bike Patrol.

### **Maintenance Program**

**City Center Clean Team:** In order to deal effectively and consistently with maintenance issues a City Center Maintenance has been established. A multi-dimensional approach has been developed consisting of the following elements:

**Sidewalk Maintenance:** Uniformed, radio-equipped personnel sweep litter, debris and refuse from sidewalks and gutters of the district. Collector truck personnel collect trash and debris as necessary.

**Graffiti Removal:** Painters remove graffiti by painting, using solvent and pressure washing. The District will maintain a zero tolerance graffiti policy. All tags will be removed within 24 hours once notified of the presence of graffiti.

**Sidewalk Pressure Washing:** The district standard is to have all sidewalks cleaned at least every other month with high use areas cleaned more frequently.

**Paper Sign and Handbill Removal:** Paper signs and handbills taped or glued on public property, utility boxes, poles and telephones are removed by hand or when necessary by high-pressure hose.

**Special Collections:** A district truck will be available to collect items illegally dumped in the district.

**Maintenance Problems Requiring Third Party Intervention:** Problems are monitored that create blighted or unsafe conditions in the district, but are outside of the jurisdiction of the District to repair. Requests are made to the responsible party for repair. types of problems include blocked or damaged sewers or drains, damaged sidewalks/streets/alleys, non-operating streetlights, damaged or missing street signs, etc.

### **Landscape Maintenance Program**

**Litter/Weed Removal:** Public landscape areas, tree wells and Planters are maintained and kept free of litter and weeds.

**Seasonal Planting:** A program of seasonal plantings of colorful flowers has been developed-167 planters and baskets.

### **Special Projects Program**

**Public Art:** A program has been developed to facilitate the installation of public art within the district.

**Street Furniture:** Additional street furniture such as trashcans and benches have been added.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Communications/Marketing**

Programs will continue to be developed that will tell the story of change and improvement in Downtown Columbia. the program that is developed by the property owners include:

- Street Banner Program
- Visitor Guide distribution
- Business directory on website
- Tours
- Public and Media Relations
- Development of Downtown Columbia Image Pieces
- Special Events
- Improved Signage
- Participation in Regional Marketing Campaigns

### **Business Development**

Several tools will be developed to support the efforts of individuals property owners and brokers to attract and retain tenants. Some of these tools are:

- Market Research & Data Collection
- Defined Business and Retail Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- Investor, Tenant and Broker Recruitment Support Packets
- Residential Recruitment and Demographics Development
- One Stop Resource Center

### **Planning**

- Public/Private Planning Activities
- Parking Study
- Resource Sourcing...Grant Writing

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Management Personnel**

A professional staff that requires centralized administrative support manages the City Center improvements and activities.

Additionally, this staff serves as a liaison between property owners, businesses and public agencies. District services are delivered a minimum of 16 hours a day, seven days a week and require management staff 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Section 6 Operating Budget

### 2007 Operating Budget Summary

The summary of the 2007 operating budget for the City Center Improvement District is provided. The total improvement and activity plan budget for 2007 is projected at \$1,031,730 made up of the following components: For a detailed year 2007 budget see "Exhibit 2."

|                                |                     |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>PUBLIC SPACE MANAGEMENT</b> | <b>Budget Total</b> | <b>\$ 432,000</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|

- **Enhanced Security Programs**

The public safety programs are designed to improve both the reality and the perceptions of safety in the City Center. Individual public safety programs are detailed in Section 5.

The budget for the public safety program is \$234,640 or 23 % of the total District budget.

- **Enhanced Maintenance**

In order to establish and maintain cleanliness throughout the District the Maintenance program will remove graffiti, remove trash and debris, provide sidewalk maintenance, sidewalk pressure washing and other maintenance services as detailed in Section 5.

The budget for the maintenance program is \$180,080 or 17% of the total District budget.

- **Enhanced Landscape Services**

To provide a more positive perception of the City Center an enhanced landscape program will be provided as detailed in Section 5.

The budget for the landscape program is \$8,640 or 1% of the total District budget.

- **Special Projects**  
Special projects are projects that are important to increasing the quality of life in the public environment, but do not fit within one of the other categories. Special project details are found in Section 5.

The budget for special projects is \$8,640 or 1% of the total budget.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

In order to tell the story of Downtown Columbia and continue to build upon the positive changes in both perception and reality that have been developed, an image, communications, marketing and economic development program, as detailed in Section 5, has been developed.

The budget for economic development programs is \$394,730 or 38% of the total District budget.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

In order to manage the day-to-day activities of the BID a professional administrative staff and office is necessary to insure the delivery of quality services. The budget for administration is \$205,000 or 20% of the total District budget.

## Section 7

### Assessment Methodology

#### Assessment Methodology

Downtown Columbia property owners and business owners have emphasized that the assessment formula for the District must be fair, balanced and have a direct relationship between benefits received and costs.

#### Calculation of Assessments

The preceding methodology is applied to a database that has been constructed by the Downtown Columbia property owners and its consultant team. The process for compiling the property database includes the following steps:

1. Property data was first obtained from the County Assessor's Office
2. County Assessor property data was crosschecked with reliable private sector data sources
3. A site survey was undertaken to verify selective data.

Based upon the methodology as set forth above, property data compiled by the Downtown Columbia property owners and the District budget will yield the following assessments for each benefit zone.

The annual yearly assessments will not exceed the rates listed below during the first year of the BID.

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Assessment Rate                 |            |
| Per Dollar of Fair Market Value | \$ .001844 |

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Assessment Rate                  |        |
| Per Foot Frontage on Main Street | \$4.01 |

In future years, assessments may change, up or down, if appraised value information changes. We do not anticipate any increases in the assessment rates unless unforeseen circumstances occur.

### **Budget Adjustments**

Any annual budget surplus will be rolled into the following year's District budget. Yearly expenditures and budgets shall be set so that at the end of each year there will not be a deficit at the end of any year.

Line item budgets within each of the four major program areas may be adjusted yearly to meet the changing needs of the District. Budget changes between the four major program areas may not exceed 15% in any given year. The governing body must approve changes to program area budgets that exceed 15%. See five year budget on Exhibit 2.

### **Time and Manner for Collecting Assessments**

As provided by state law, the City Center BID assessment will appear as a separate line item on annual property tax bills.

### **Government Assessments**

The City Center Improvement District plan assumes that the City, County and Federal Government will pay fair-share assessments for property owned within the boundaries of the District.

It is the intent of the improvement district law to provide services only to those properties that pay assessments. District services will not be provided to government properties that do not pay District assessments. All reasonable efforts will be made to include government properties on a voluntary basis in the District assessment.

### **Residential Assessments**

Owner occupied residential property which is taxed under Section 12-43-220 (c) will not be assessed unless the owner gives the governing body written permission to include the property within the improvement district. Multi-unit residential property will be assessed.

### **Non-profit Assessments**

Property held in a non-profit status that does not currently pay ad valorem taxes are not required to pay District assessments by the City Center Partnership Board of Directors. All reasonable efforts will be made include non-profit properties on a voluntary basis in the District assessment. The District budget assumes participation from some non-profit property owners.

## Section 8 Governing the Business Improvement District

### **Private Sector, Management/Implementation Organization**

Through a contract with the governing body (i.e. City of Columbia), a property owner-led, private sector, non-profit district management /implementation organization will implement the improvements and activities defined in the Plan and will manage the day-to-day operations of the District. This group's professional management staff will handle Advocacy and Administration for the District.

The City of Columbia as the governing body must approve the five year implementation plan. City Center Improvement District budgets and policies may be refined annually within the limitations set forth in the district implementation plan, by the board of the private sector management/implementation organization. During the term of the District, any changes to the implementation plan that are not within the limitations set forth for changes in the Plan must be approved by the City Council, acting as the governing body.

On a yearly basis the management/implementation organization will issue a report summarizing the accomplishments of the district as well as a report of the financial activities of the district. The report will be submitted to the City Council as the governing body and to each assessment-paying property owner.

**Section 9**  
**Continuation of City Services**

Throughout the process to establish the City Center Improvement District, business and property owners have voiced concerns that the City of Columbia maintain existing services at verifiable "baseline" service levels. A formal baseline level of service policy ensures that existing City services are enhanced and not replaced by new BID improvements and activities.

**City Center Partnership, Inc.  
Business Improvement District Grid**

