

City Manager's Spotlight



TERESA WILSON
CITY MANAGER

The City Manager's Spotlight provides details about what is happening in the City in an effort to stay connected with the community. The City Manager's Spotlight on August 2014 reflects information about the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Burton Heights' Ribbon Cutting, National Night Out, The Gallery at City Hall, "Main Street Capital" Loan Program and more.

CITY OF COLUMBIA RECEIVES CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING



The City of Columbia has received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR).

"This is the first time that the City has been awarded the certificate since 2005," said Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer. "The return of the City to receiving this award is the culmination of the work and effort of many individuals over the past five years."

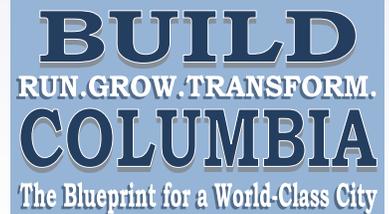
The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

"The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting is the result of a collaborative effort between city leaders, management and staff working together on a common goal of fiscal responsibility. A stable financial structure is one of the main principles of the Build Columbia management concept and it is an integral part of achieving our goals as we continue to work to effectively run, grow and transform our city. I commend our staff in the Finance Department and other supporting areas on a job well done."

~ City Manager Teresa Wilson

The CAFR has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR.

The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals with offices in Chicago, IL and Washington, D.C.



We Are Columbia

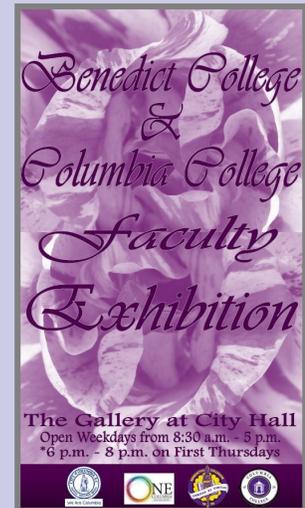
**AUGUST
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CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING	1
THE GALLERY AT CITY HALL	2
PALMETTO PILLAR AWARD RECIPIENT	2
ECDC RIBBON CUTTING	3
"MAIN STREET CAPITAL" LOAN PROGRAM	4
NATIONAL NIGHT OUT	4

THE GALLERY AT CITY HALL PRESENTS A BENEDICT COLLEGE AND COLUMBIA COLLEGE FACULTY EXHIBITION

The Gallery at City Hall presents the new exhibit, a *Benedict College and Columbia College Faculty Exhibition*. Benedict College and Columbia College are small, private colleges that share a passion for the liberal arts tradition in education. This means that the teaching faculties at both institutions approach the education of the art student within that liberal arts tradition. This broad vision is reflected in the range of work that the faculty members pursue in their personal art practices. From painting to clay, from printmaking to fibers, these artists share the common goal of creating meaningful visual expression in their work.

The Gallery at City Hall is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Main Street in downtown Columbia

City of Columbia Office of Economic Development and Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce Announced Joint Business Retention and Expansion Initiative

The City of Columbia and the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce kicked off a new business retention and expansion initiative. This collaboration exhibits a well-known fact that the foundation of a strong economic development program is built on the cornerstone of a successful and prosperous existing business community.

PALMETTO PILLAR AWARD RECIPIENT



The Columbia Chamber's IT Council held its 2014 Palmetto Pillar Awards banquet on August 21 at the Columbia Marriott. The winners and finalists were recognized during the ceremony.

The City of Columbia's Creative Journey Program was the Pillar of Public Service and the Arts award recipient. The Creative Journey is an art resource program that is provided to the military and veterans. The Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Specialist, Brenda Oliver, leads this program with assistance from volunteers to help maintain this on-going outreach to the military.

The Public Relations Department was also named a finalist in the Pillar of Public Service and the Arts category for their #LoveColumbia Photo Challenge. This photo contest invited the citizens of Columbia to submit photos of what they love about the City via social media.



Brenda Oliver, Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Specialist, accepts Pillar of Public Service and the Arts award

The Palmetto Pillar Awards program, started in 1998, praises the area's top leaders in technology innovation. The annual awards banquet and reception continue the collaboration of the Columbia Chamber, IT Council and IT-oLogy as they increase IT presence throughout the Columbia Region.

EAU CLAIRE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION HELD RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEW HOMES IN BURTON HEIGHTS

On August 12, at a ribbon cutting, the Eau Claire Development Corporation (ECDC) previewed three new homes in the Burton Heights neighborhood.

Currently, ECDC is developing Burton Heights III, located off of Farrow Road on Burton Heights Circle. The subdivision will accommodate 26 single family residential homes. There have been 20 newly constructed homes sold and 6 more are being developed this year. The homes will range from 1,300-1,600 sq. ft., 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, with all major appliances and a one car garage.

The new homes feature smart home smart touch technology, Kenmore appliances, tankless water heaters, cherry-colored cabinets and hardwood floors and an irrigation system.



New Home in Burton Heights



Michael Strange, Director of ECDC Corporation

“By the end of 2014, Eau Claire Development Corporation will have injected \$650,000 through Federal HOME Funds to create 6 residential affordable housing units for households at or below 80% of Area Median Income. ECDC continues to strive to make North Columbia a great place to live, work, play and raise a family. In all, there are a total of 26 units of residential homes in Burton Heights Phase 2. There has been a total of more than \$2.5 million in funding for the project since 2007 in an effort to create affordable housing,” Michael Strange, Eau Claire Development Corporation executive director said.

Since ECDC's inception, which derived from the 1998 Eau Claire Task Force Report and the 1993 Eau Claire Redevelopment Plan, ECDC's overarching goal continues to focus on revitalization efforts in Eau Claire/North Columbia that support and uplift cultural diversity, urban renewal, residential vibrancy, sound economic investments and financial prosperity. The past, current and future development projects and initiatives are the vehicles that have and will continue to steer both commercial and residential growth and renewal.

The City of Columbia's Community Development Department offers many home loan options for those looking to purchase. The GAP Purchase program offers up to \$10,000 in down payment assistance for qualified applicants.



CITY OF COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOODS CELEBRATE NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



Residents from Seminary Ridge celebrate National Night Out

National Night Out celebrations were held on Tuesday, August 5 in many Columbia neighborhoods. National Night Out, a yearlong community building campaign, is designed to: (1) heighten crime prevention awareness, (2) generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs, (3) strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and (4) send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

OFFICE OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

City of Columbia Office of Business Opportunities Reveals “Main Street Capital” Loan Program

At a press conference, held on Tuesday, August 26 at Bourbon Columbia, the City of Columbia Office of Business Opportunities revealed their new business loan program called “Main Street Capital...Creating More Feet on Main Street”.

“With nearly \$1 billion in new investment in less than three years and landmark successes like the Hub and Agape, there’s no doubt that something special is happening in Downtown Columbia,” says Mayor Benjamin. “This new initiative will help us take that momentum and create a critical mass of activity that raises Main Street to the next level.”

The Main Street Capital program will offer loans up to \$50,000 for new businesses locating to Main Street or existing businesses expanding on Main Street. To be eligible, businesses must be located on Main Street between Gervais Street and Elmwood Avenue. There will be special consideration given to businesses locating in the 1300-1600 blocks of Main Street.

“This program will help us continue to grow Main Street beyond the 9 to 5 crowd, and create a good atmosphere for weekends and evenings,” says Tina Herbert, executive director of the Office of Business Opportunities.

Funds may be used for exterior building improvements, interior space improvements, purchase of equipment and/or inventory and working capital. The interest rate for the loans will be the prime rate quoted in the Wall street Journal plus one. All loans will have a 10-year term. After five years, if all requirements of the program have been met, the remaining loan balance will be forgiven.

Based on the Downtown Market Analysis, The City of Columbia is seeking a particular retail mix for Main Street. Priority will be given to the following types of businesses:

- Eateries
- Apparel and accessories
- Home décor and furnishings
- Arts and culture

Applications will be accepted between September 1, 2014 and December 1, 2014 and funds will be awarded in January 2015.

Business owners interested in applying for the Main Street Capital program should contact Paul Featheringill, Business Loan Officer, at 803-545-3259 or pfeatheringill@columbiasc.net.



Main Street Capital Loan Program Unveil Press Conference

Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!

All my best,



We Are Columbia

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