

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE REPORT
February 28, 2012 – 2:00 P.M.
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM – 2ND FLOOR**



The Columbia City Council conducted an Economic and Community Development Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 2012 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Sam Davis (Chair) called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Leona Plough were present.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Richland County Economic Development Strategic Plan

Mr. Milton Pope, County Administrator and Mr. Nelson Lindsay, Executive Director of Economic Development reviewed the highlights of the 2009 Richland County Economic Development Strategic Plan. The plan compares Richland County to surrounding counties, larger counties in South Carolina, and similar counties in North Carolina and Georgia. The strengths and weaknesses identified in Richland County are:

Strengths:

1. Transportation
2. Water and Sewer Infrastructure
3. University of South Carolina/State Capitol
4. Central SC Alliance
5. Fort Jackson
6. Workforce
7. Health Care Services
8. Numerous Recreational Opportunities

Weaknesses:

1. Property tax rates are higher
2. Unknown as a manufacturing community
3. Lack of certified sites
4. Loss of prime industrial property to residential or commercial

The focus of Richland County's Economic Development office will be on manufacturing, distribution facilities, call centers, and regional headquarters.

The five strategies are:

- I. Establish an Economic Development Office and hire an Executive Director. (Mr. Nelson Lindsay, the new Executive Director is located in the Richland County Administration Building. He wants to be closer to the South Carolina Department of Commerce in order to take advantage of their resources. Staff will be added over time.);
- II. Create an existing program for the sectors identified above;
- III. Create a business recruitment program;
- IV. Develop a product development program; and
- V. Develop an economic development marketing plan.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, Assistant City Manager said she would like for the City of Columbia to develop a similar plan to complement Richland County's plan. She invited Mr. Lindsay to travel to Rock Hill with Mr. Gambrell to view their Economic Development Self-Assessment Plan in order to determine if this is something worth doing in Columbia and Richland County.

The consensus of the Economic and Community Development Committee is to:

- Open the lines of communication with Richland County
 - Share financial resources on projects
 - Complete an assessment of strengths and weaknesses and possibly share the cost with Richland County.
2. Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool – *Please refer to Item 1.*

The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Submitted by:

Brenda Jones
Economic Development Office