

## Recommendations for Implementation

As a practical matter, the primary purpose of the Redevelopment Plan is to provide a unifying methodology of addressing the blighting conditions present in the East Central project area.

Throughout the process of creating the East Central Redevelopment Plan, it has been expressed that the various supporters, partners, and neighborhood leaders of the East Central Project Area did not want to develop a plan that would simply **sit on a shelf**. The plan must be pragmatic, practical, and implementable. To that end, specific recommendations have been prepared as a baseline for implementing the plan. The specific recommendations for the implementation of the East Central City Consortium Redevelopment Plan have been organized and presented into five (5) groupings. The recommendations are as follows:

### 1) Master Land Use Plan Recommendations

- ◆ **Adoption of this Redevelopment Plan:** The East Central City Consortium Board of Directors has adopted the Plan. The Columbia City Council should adopt the redevelopment plan, specifically the Master Land Use Plan and the Master Implementation Plan. This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of S.C. Code 1976 § 31-10-10 et. seq. Once Columbia City Council has adopted this Redevelopment Plan, it is recommended that the City pass a series of ordinances to implement this Redevelopment Plan.
- ◆ **An ordinance should be passed by Columbia City Council creating the new classification of “Neighborhood Conservation District” as an Overlay District and Implementing the herein Design Guidelines:** The Master Land Use Plan, herein, contains design guidelines creating an overlay-zoning district. These guidelines shall operate in conjunction with any underlying zoning district in the project area. The regulations of the underlying zoning district, and all other applicable regulations, remain in effect. If the provisions of the East Central Design guidelines conflict with the underlying zoning, The East Central Design guidelines shall prevail. The boundaries of the Neighborhood Conservation District provided for in the ordinance should mirror the boundaries of the East Central Project area as described herein.
- ◆ **The Ordinance passed by Columbia City Council should provide for Land Uses allowed out right and by special exception based upon the Land Uses created during the East Central Planning process.**
- ◆ **Columbia City Council Declaration of A Redevelopment Area:** As set forth herein and further detailed in the Real Estate Market Analysis, the conditions under which State Redevelopment Law will allow an area to be deemed “**blighted**”, and therefore eligible for designation as a Redevelopment Area, are present within the East Central project area. A confluence of economic and political events and trends has resulted in a consensus among varied interest groups that it is the right time and momentum to form a redevelopment area.
- ◆ **Establish/Re-Establish A Redevelopment Commission Pursuant to S.C. Code 1976 § 31-10-10 et. seq.:** As a part of the Master Implementation Plan, certain sites called “catalyst sites” have been designated for specific use, principally affordable housing, market rate housing, or mixed-use space. The East Central Development Team due to blighting influences has identified twenty-one (21) sites. In order to assure continuity and accountability over the redevelopment area, a Redevelopment Commission should be utilized as the mechanism to implement the plan. The City of Columbia has formed the Columbia Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission as the agency with the powers set forth in the redevelopment law. **It is recommended that the Columbia Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission be charged with oversight and accountability for the redevelopment area.** As provided in the statute, the Commission should be governed by the members of the governing body of its parent municipality (i.e. by Columbia City Council)

## 2) Master Implementation (Catalyst Site) Plan Recommendations

- ◆ Preserve the traditional single-family “core” neighborhoods
- ◆ Create centralized neighborhood activity nodes
- ◆ Redefine the traditional commercial corridors within the community
- ◆ Preserve, enhance and create public open space
- ◆ Encourage home ownership and rehabilitation
- ◆ Create a pedestrian oriented environment
- ◆ Create gateways to downtown Columbia and to each neighborhood
- ◆ Enhance community identification
- ◆ Encourage continued community involvement
- ◆ **Predevelopment Program:** Implement a Year Two Predevelopment Program to develop a **detailed financing package including Sources and Uses statement and a preliminary engineering report for the catalyst Tier One catalyst projects.**
- ◆ **Apply For Designation as a Community Housing Development Organization (“CHDO”):** The East Central City Consortium, Inc. should apply to the State Housing and Finance Authority for recognition as a CHDO. This designation would avail the organization to any State of south Carolina matching HOME resources for any HOME Dollars allocated by the City of Columbia, as well as, administrative financial resources.
- ◆ **Capital Improvement Program (“CIP”): Evaluate the future years** allocation of CIP resources for the neighborhoods impacted by the East Central Redevelopment Plan. **The alignment and expenditure of CIP Water and Sewer Fund, as well as, the Storm Water Utility Fund should be consistent with the prioritized catalyst project recommendations.**
- ◆ **Land Assembly:** The City can also facilitate infill development through *land assembly* - by assembling small, individual parcels into large blocks under common ownership. The jurisdiction then undertakes property improvements and packages the properties for resale. For example, the City of Columbia could operate a successful land assembly program and land bank, whereby the City receives delinquent properties and transfers most of the developable parcels to the Columbia Housing Development Corporation, TN Development, Benedict - Allen CDC, or another agency or non-profit affordable housing developer.
- ◆ **Cluster One Recommendations (Lyons St, Waverly, and Lower Waverly Neighborhoods)**
  - Existing residential “cores” to remain single-family
  - Encourage rehabilitation and redevelopment of single-family homes within these core areas
  - Redefine the existing commercial traffic corridors/intersections as medium to high density residential areas and/or mixed-use
  - Encourage Allen University’s growth along the Taylor St Corridor
  - Redevelop Gonzales Gardens into a mixed-use development with residential, retail and medical related uses
  - Street enhancements of Gervais St and Millwood Rd into **a gateway for Downtown Columbia**
  - Historic Protection Area designation for the Waverly Neighborhood
  - **Build on Existing Assets:** Currently the Columbia Housing Development Corporation (“CHDC”) has assembled parcels in the Manning/ Corridor. CHDC has acquired eight (8) parcels for single-family development in this catalyst project area. The CHDC has lines of credit with the City of Columbia of approximately \$350,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funds for additional land acquisition in the Cluster One Catalyst 1-6 boundary. These resources should be targeted for acquisition of properties identified in this catalyst site.
  - Leverage City of Columbia HOME Dollars by applying for matching State Housing HOME by requesting approximately \$4,000 per unit for Cluster One Catalyst 1-6 project.

- Request the maximum (\$100,000) in Trust Fund Dollars to assist in assembling the Cluster One Catalyst 1-6 project.
- Identify future year CIP Dollars, which may be re-prioritized based upon Catalyst Site implementation. The City of Columbia has requested \$435,000 for storm drainage improvements for fiscal year 2007-2008 within Cluster One.
- ◆ **Cluster Two Recommendations** (Midlands Terrace and Pinehurst Neighborhoods)
  - Existing residential “cores” to remain predominately single-family
  - Encourage rehabilitation and redevelopment of single-family homes within these core areas
  - The redevelopment of the Laurel St and Westminster Rd corridors for Providence Hospital/Medical related uses
  - Redevelopment of Schoolhouse Rd corridor from multi-family rental to medium density owner occupied single-family residential
  - Reinventing the Two Notch Rd corridor from commercial strip into defined destination points
  - Provide medium to high density housing along Two Notch Rd while buffering existing single-family residential “cores”
- ◆ **Cluster Three Recommendations** (Barhamville Estates, Booker Washington Heights, and Jones McDonald Neighborhoods)
  - Existing residential “cores” to remain single-family
  - Encourage rehabilitation and redevelopment of single-family homes within these cores
  - Redevelopment of the Two Notch Rd corridor from commercial to a mixed-use destination nodes and high density residential
  - Development of existing City owned drainage area into a greenway
  - Pedestrian connections along the railroad between proposed greenway, neighborhood schools and the Booker Washington neighborhood
  - Expansion and rehabilitation of EB Sessions Park
  - **Build on Existing Assets:** Currently the Columbia Housing Authority (“CHA”) is attempting to assembled parcels in the Corridor. CHA is utilizing HOPE VI Dollars for this acquisition program. As a partner approximately \$300,000 in HOPE VI resources should be requested from the CHA to assist in the acquisition of Cluster 3 Catalyst Sites 3-4 and 3-5. These resources should be targeted for acquisition of properties identified in this catalyst site.
  - Leverage State Housing HOME and Trust Fund Dollars to assemble the Cluster Three Catalyst Sites 3-4 and 3-5 projects.
  - Identify future year CIP Dollars, which may be re-prioritized based upon Catalyst Site implementation. The City of Columbia has requested \$178,000 in Water Improvements and \$70,000 in storm drainage improvements for fiscal year 2004-2005 within the Cluster Three.
- ◆ **Cluster Four Recommendations** (Edgewood and Eva P. Trezevant Neighborhoods)
  - Encourage the expansion of Benedict College along Taylor St to the east and Two Notch Rd to the north
  - Redevelopment of the Benedict-Allen housing project into a mixed use, mixed income development
  - The creation of a central park for the neighborhoods at the intersection of Elmwood Rd and Barhamville Rd

- ◆ **Cluster Five Recommendations** (South Edisto Court Community)
  - Redevelopment of existing industrial uses into low to medium density homes
  - New homes to be consistent with the characteristics of the new Hendley Homes
  - Redevelopment of existing industrial parking lot into a public park
  - Identify future year CIP Dollars, which may be re-prioritized based upon Catalyst Site implementation. The City of Columbia has requested \$3,600,000 in water improvements and \$2,420,000 in storm sewer improvements for fiscal year 2004 – 2005 within or adjacent to Cluster Five.

### 3) Programmatic Recommendations

- ◆ **Code Enforcement Educational Outreach Campaign:** In terms of public perception, a targeted code enforcement educational campaign is one of the most important steps the City of Columbia can take in affecting the public's perception of its service delivery. A common theme found during all of the public workshops was a perception that the City is not adequately pursuing code enforcement activity. City staff must devise and implement an educational outreach methodology to inform the citizens of the process, the department's efforts, and its willingness to work with the neighborhoods. This can be accomplished through presentations to the East Central City Consortium Board of Directors, The Columbia Council of Neighborhoods, and individual neighborhood meetings.
- ◆ **Code Enforcement "Sweep" Activities:** The Code Enforcement staff has worked with the East Central Technical Team during the design process to review some of the representative blighting influences in the neighborhood. The Complete Land/Parcel Inventory should be provided to staff to review the structures identified as substandard or targeted for demolition. The Catalyst sites ranked in Tier One and Tier Two should be targeted for a comprehensive code enforcement "sweep" with periodic follow-up activities.

### 4) Infrastructure-Related Recommendations

- ◆ **Upgrading Infrastructure And Amenities.** A key strategy for encouraging infill development, particularly housing, is a focused public investment strategy to improve antiquated infrastructure and add public amenities such as parks, libraries and streetscapes. These upgrades can make a target area more attractive. Such infrastructure upgrades are generally implemented by the jurisdiction's public works or parks department in response to priorities set by the City Council or redevelopment agency. When infrastructure improvements are utilized as the incentives, improvements to water systems, sewers, sidewalks, parks, and roads are generally financed directly from a jurisdiction's capital budget. Such up-front investment is anticipated to pay for itself in the form of increased tax revenues from the redeveloped properties.
- ◆ **Lowering of Impact Fees.** Jurisdictions charge impact fees to offset the costs of public facilities and services necessary to serve the new development. Most localities charge a uniform fee that may not account for the higher costs to serve more distant suburban locations. Offering lower impact fees for infill projects can more accurately reflect the true costs for providing services through existing infrastructure. This more calibrated approach makes infill parcels more attractive, and builds greater equity into metropolitan growth patterns. The City can also waive infrastructure hookup fees for infill projects to lower costs to developers. Impact fees are included in the jurisdiction's development regulations; the lowering or waiving of such fees is implemented by the planning and building department in response to priorities enacted by the city council or redevelopment agency.

## 5) Recommendations Related To The Zoning And Development Process

- ◆ **Fast Track and Streamlined Permitting.** Fast track permitting, applied within targeted infill development areas, allows developers of infill parcels to get their application processed ahead of non-infill applications. Some localities consolidate or streamline permit processing to allow concurrent review and processing of related development permits. Since developers face holding costs during the development review process, long delays jeopardize the financial viability of a project. Affordable housing projects with slim profit margins can benefit substantially from speedy development review and approval. Related strategies include “one stop” centers for processing applications, and assignment of one city staff as point person to help navigate a project through the various departments and processes that constitute the development review process.
- ◆ **Reduce lot sizes, setbacks, and parking requirements.** Many localities are updating their zoning code to address the challenges of developing smaller parcels. Key incentives modify regulations to allow for reduced residential lot sizes, reduced setback requirements, and reduced street and parking standards. Older standards often make development of infill parcels impractical because they tie up a large percentage of a site’s total land area. Some requirements, in particular for on-site parking, may be inappropriate or unnecessary for infill areas where transit service and other alternatives to auto use exist.
- ◆ **Zone for mixed-use development.** Traditional zoning has emphasized the separation of land uses. Smart growth principles emphasize the creation of integrated, multi-use districts that blend housing, services, recreation and jobs. City government may put in place a residential/mixed-use zoning designation to specifically encourage infill practices such as allowing housing development above stores. This enables residents to be closer to the services they use on a daily basis. To ensure availability of affordable housing, the jurisdiction can amend the zoning regulations to establish an overlay zone for the residential/mixed-use district that permits the development of affordable housing “by right” on the areas covered in the overlay. A “by right” zoning designation makes affordable housing development easier by eliminating the need to obtain a special use permit or undergo a zoning change approval process.
- ◆ **Increase density allowances.** Increasing the maximum allowed density for infill areas in the city’s zoning regulations is an important incentive. Higher densities permit more intensive development of a parcel and allow the developer the opportunity to spread development costs over more units. City government can also provide “density bonuses” to developers of infill sites that designate a certain percentage of housing units as affordable. In this way, localities can both encourage efficient use of the land and promote the inclusion of affordable housing units within a project.

## Incentives For Redevelopment

In deciding how to implement redevelopment in the East Central City Consortium Project Area, The City of Columbia must seriously consider the substantial opportunities that a Redevelopment Area provides. These broad municipal powers include the ability to: acquire private property through eminent domain and convey it to a redeveloper; convey publicly owned land to a designated redevelopment authority; compel the relocation of utilities; and participate in the financing of redevelopment projects. Successful redevelopment efforts require a significant amount of time and municipal resources. Thus, it may be prudent to explore additional options to supplement the designation and/or creation of a Redevelopment Area and **the creation of Neighborhood Conservation Districts**. The narrative, which follows, provides a more descriptive look at the recommendations and incentives for redevelopment.

- ◆ **Enhanced Zoning Controls.** Administrative or regulatory obstacles may be preventing the private real estate market from investing in the East Central project area. For example, existing zoning may be incompatible with land uses in the area, requiring applicants to go through the time and expense of acquiring use variances to undertake property improvements or expansion. Changing the permitted uses in an area or establishing conditional use requirements may solve the problem. If the problem is haphazard development with less than desirable buildings and improvements, the solution may be to adopt more stringent zoning controls or design standards to produce more aesthetically pleasing projects. The recommended Design Guidelines and proposed Land Use Maps are designed to address the need for comprehensive enhancement of zoning controls.
- ◆ **Design Guideline Standards.** Since some portions of the project area may have a poor visual appearance or aesthetic image, the City should consider the use of the recommended new design standards for development projects that require site plan or subdivision approval. The City also may offer incentives to those developers who incorporate higher quality aesthetic improvements in their projects or property owners who upgrade and improve the appearance of their properties.
- ◆ **Overlay Districts.** Overlay zoning may be used in concert with redevelopment efforts. An overlay zone or ordinance does not change the underlying zoning for a property. The overlay option can be designed to provide density bonuses or other incentives to the developer in exchange for meeting performance standards, such as infrastructure improvements, the incorporation of specific design features into the development, or the provision of affordable housing. If the Neighborhood Conservation District is not approved as an overlay district, there will be no guarantee that the project area will be developed in accordance with the provisions of the redevelopment plan.

## Overlay Districts

### What is an “overlay district”?

An “overlay district” is a special zone that is drawn on a map outlining a significant resource or area of emphasis. The area of emphasis or particular resource could be a natural resource such as a hillside development or additional design review for a central business district or highway corridors. An example of this might be the Two Notch Rd or Gervais St corridor. An overlay district could also include a social element focusing on affordable housing or preservation of a historic area, such as the Lower Waverly Neighborhood of East Central City. This district is “overlaid” on the existing land use regulations such as subdivision requirements, site plan review or zoning districts of the City. The overlay district then supplements these existing regulations. This approach allows the City to maintain or update current codes while addressing the special needs of particularly sensitive areas.

A good example of overlay districts is floodplains, where any housing or construction must meet certain extra standards in order to be approved. This is done to protect lives and property and ensure the natural functioning of the floodplain.

Overlay districts are currently used in many localities across the country for a variety of purposes, including protecting agricultural resources, historic properties, aquifers, road corridors and gateways, and scenic views.

Other common examples of overlay districts include:

- Historic or Architectural Review Districts for special neighborhoods or downtown
- Road Corridor Standards along major gateway routes.
- Agricultural protection and Right to Farm standards in prime farmland areas.
- Watershed Protection around reservoirs, aquifers, and shorelines.
- Scenic Views to and from ridgelines, shorelines, and special features.

### Advantages of Overlay Districts in the East Central City Consortium Project Area

There are many advantages to utilizing an overlay district. For example an overlay district:

- can be written and mapped to incorporate whatever features are most important to the City. Neighborhood boundaries can be easily defined using tax lot lines, roads, and existing slope or soils maps.
- can address all of the City’s concerns regarding any proposed land use change inside the district. Anything that might impact the quality of the proposed mapped feature can be addressed, including road requirements, frontage, lot size, lot coverage, setbacks, tree cutting, vegetation buffers, siting of houses, lighting and open-space natural areas.
- can easily be implemented by passing a City law appending it to the existing land use regulations. Substantial rewriting of underlying zoning, site plan review or subdivision regulations is not required.
- can be modified in the future should the City discover it wished to add or modify items. Using an overlay district, the City continues to protect its own resources without the imposition of authority from outside agencies. The decision-making process, therefore, is kept at the local level where stewardship can remain a point of community pride. Officials and involved citizens retain the opportunity to exercise self-determination and self-responsibility for their City’s future.

**Adoption of the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District** by adjoining neighborhoods can also permit more consistent Citywide planning for redevelopment, rather than a piecemeal approach.

## Benefits

The real power and effectiveness of overlay districts lies in the fact that all the parties involved in the land development review process can benefit. This includes the City, the property owner or developer and the community. While the standards and requirements to the developer are different than they are in other, non-overlaid zoning districts, the public hearing procedure to obtain approvals is the same.

Since the guidelines and expectations for the overlay district are clearly defined in advance, battles over issues at public review meetings among the City, a developer and the community may also be minimized or eliminated.

When building in an overlay district, a developer will have a clear understanding of the City's expectations and realistic development possibilities at the beginning of the approval process, before major commitments or expenditures are made. Since measures to protect the environment are built into the overlay district site plan from the beginning, the environmental review process can be effectively focused. This can lead to quicker, less costly approval process.

## The Neighborhood Conservation District

**The recommended overlay district for the East Central City Consortium project area is the Neighborhood Conservation District. It should be created to better protect areas. However, instead of being utilized in areas and neighborhoods deemed to have historical value, it will be utilized in blighted areas and those in need of rehabilitation.**

### What is the Intent and Purpose of a Neighborhood Conservation District?

The intent and purpose of the Neighborhood Conservation District designation is to stimulate the restoration and rehabilitation of structures, and all other elements contributing to the character and fabric of established residential neighborhoods and commercial or industrial areas. New construction will be invited and encouraged and further provide for the design of such new space as will enhance and contribute to the aesthetic character and function of the property and the surrounding neighborhood or area. Contemporary design will be encouraged, provided it is in keeping with the above-stated criteria, as an acknowledged fact of the continuing developmental pattern of a dynamic, changing community. The neighboring community shall be provided notice and opportunity to comment upon the proposed property improvements and further, aggrieved persons shall have the right to appeal any design review decision made.

The Neighborhood Conservation District defines and sets forth standards (i.e. the Design Guidelines), which will apply in the district. All new construction, alterations to existing structures, movement of structures into or out of the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, hereinafter referred to as conservation district, or demolition of structures by any means or process will be subject to design review. The recommendations of the Design Development Review Commission ("DDRC") be given careful consideration in the final approvals issued for development within the conservation district boundaries.

## Goals and Objectives

In general, the goals and objectives in establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District is to protect and enhance neighborhoods for the educational, cultural, economic benefit or enjoyment of The City's citizens. In short, the goals and objectives of the recommendations regarding the establishment of a Neighborhood Conservation District are to:

- ◆ Protect, preserve, enhance, regulate structures, and areas that are reminders of past eras, events or persons important in local, state or national history; or marks in history of land planning and architecture; or which are unique or irreplaceable assets to the city and its neighborhoods;
- ◆ Enhance property values through the stabilization of neighborhoods and areas of the city, increase economic and financial benefits to the city and its inhabitants;

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- ◆ Develop and maintain the appropriate environment for buildings, structures, sites, and areas, that reflect varied planning and architectural styles and distinguished phases of The City's history;
- ◆ Seek to maintain and enhance the many private and public elements that are unique to the fabric, theme and character of each neighborhood and area, including but not limited to: lighting, pathways, street trees, natural areas and other features that may, from time to time, be identified by the citizens and property owners of neighborhoods, areas, and subsections, thereof; and
- ◆ Provide the neighboring community with notice and opportunity to comment upon the proposed property improvements and to further provide aggrieved persons with the right to appeal review decisions made.

## Design Development Review Commission Powers and Duties Within The Neighborhood Conservation District

It is intended that the Design Development Review Commission ("DDRC") will review development within Neighborhood Conservation Districts in order to maintain the desirable characteristics of structures and areas, within such districts, while recognizing the need for innovation and individual expression in the development of these districts. In carrying out this mission, the DDRC shall have the following powers and duties within Neighborhood Conservation Districts.

- ◆ After adoption by the City Council, apply specific design guidelines, related to such concerns as architectural appearance, landscape design and signage for the alteration of structures, sites or areas.
- ◆ Review applicable development proposals, applications for zoning amendments, applications for moving, demolition or any other kind of permit that may affect properties within conservation districts.
- ◆ Call upon city staff or persons having technical expertise for advice.

A certificate of appropriateness received from either the planning director or the City Council after recommendation by the DDRC, shall be required before any and all alteration(s) other than repair as defined herein, are undertaken upon any structure in the conservation district. For alterations not requiring City Council approval, compliance with the DDRC's decisions will be mandatory subject to appeal to the City Council.

## Design Guideline Standards to be Applied

The Master Land Use Plan provides recommended Design Guidelines to be used in the Neighborhood Conservation District. In drafting the final ordinance for City Council approval, staff should focus upon the following:

- ◆ Height
- ◆ Proportions of doors and windows
- ◆ Relationship of building masses and spaces
- ◆ Roof shape
- ◆ Scale
- ◆ Directional expression, with regard to the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of surrounding structures
- ◆ Architectural details
- ◆ Concealment of non-period appurtenances, such as mechanical equipment
- ◆ Materials and color schemes (any requirements or conditions, imposed regarding color schemes shall be limited to the prevention of nuisances upon abutting properties and prevention of degradation of features on the property in question. Color schemes may be considered as primary design elements if a deviation from the underlying zoning is requested).

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Contemporary, non-period and innovative design of new structures and additions to existing structures shall be encouraged when such new construction or additions do not destroy significant historical, cultural or architectural structures or their components and when such design is compatible with the foregoing elements of the structure and surrounding structures.

Specific design guidelines are presented based upon the type of use for a particular property. The Master Land Use Plan contains Design Guidelines for single-family residential, multi-family residential, as well as for streetscape and miscellaneous uses presented in the discussion of Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts.

## Demolition of Structures within the Neighborhood Conservation District

The demolition of any structure or site within the conservation district shall be subject to the provisions of Neighborhood Conservation District and consequently the DDRC. The review procedures and criteria for the demolition or movement of any structure of site within the conservation district will be set forth in the ordinance.