

# BEAUFORT

BEAUFORT HISTORICAL  
CAMP BEAUFORT



## A Public Input Process and Design Charette for the City of Beaufort, South Carolina

*Prepared for:*

The City of Beaufort, South Carolina

In Conjunction with Main Street Beaufort, USA

*Prepared by:*

The South Carolina Downtown Development Association

Columbia, South Carolina

January 19-22, 2000

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# Table of Contents

## **I. Introduction**

- A. Introduction
- B. What is a Charette?
- C. Charette Team

## **II. Charette Scope & Issues**

- A. The Study Area
- B. Market Dynamics
- C. Boundary Street
- D. Current Conditions

## **III. Design Issues & Recommendation Concepts**

- A. Conceptual Master Plan
- B. Highway 21 to Ribaut Road
- C. Ribaut Road to Hammar Road
- D. Cemetery Area
- E. Cemetery Area to West Street
- F. West Street to Bellamy Curve/Carteret

## **IV. Implementation Recommendations**

- A. Regulatory Recommendations
- B. Organizational Recommendations
- C. Funding Recommendations

## **V. Conclusion**

- Appendix A:** Charette Agenda
  - Appendix B:** Input Responses
  - Appendix C:** Charette Participants
  - Appendix D:** Digital Design Charette Primer
  - Appendix E:** Sample Design Guidelines
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# I. Introduction

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## A. INTRODUCTION

In 1985 Main Street Beaufort was formed to carry out the Main Street revitalization program in downtown Beaufort. For fifteen years it has made steady incremental progress in transforming downtown Beaufort into an active, thriving, viable downtown. Technically, Main Street Beaufort is charged with the entire Beaufort CBD, but it has focussed its efforts on the waterfront commercial core. Because of its success, and understanding that it should begin to look at an expanded geographic area, it asked the South Carolina Downtown Development Association to conduct a design charette focussed on the entry into downtown formed by U.S. Highway 21 as it approaches Boundary Street and Boundary Street itself.

The charette was conducted on January 19 – 22, 2000. A team of design, planning, transportation and community professionals was assembled to take public input on the design area and provide design and implementation recommendations to improve the entry corridor. The team's findings were presented at a public meeting on January 22, 2000. This report is the written summation of those findings. The raw data from the public input sessions and the charette agenda can be found in the appendices.

The report contains several elements. First is a big picture overview of the entry corridor and its position and importance to Beaufort today given Beaufort's marketplace position. This is followed by a description, both visual and written, of the current conditions of the corridor. A conceptual master plan with specific recommendations begins to identify what is possible. Finally, recommendations are presented on moving from concept to implementation.

The following groups participated in Charette sessions:

City of Beaufort  
Business & Property Owners  
Merchants  
Beaufort Residents  
Parks & Trees Commission  
Recreation Commission  
Board of Architectural Review  
City of Beaufort Planning Staff  
SCE&G / SCANA

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Falcon Cable  
Chamber of Commerce  
Main Street Beaufort, USA

## **B. WHAT IS A CHARETTE?**

Architects know the concept of a design charette all too well: long days and late nights in the studio, trying to complete a design project within a short, intense period of time. Dating back to the glory days of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, the charette became synonymous with students working feverishly to complete a project on a 'cart' (French; "*charette*"), pulled by a friend, on the way to the professor's home. When it comes to community design and planning, a charette is an effective, positive, and comprehensive tool for engaging a town in determining its future. A charette is a chameleon process, for it takes on the spirit and purpose of the community. It is also a highly adaptive process. A community can design the charette to meet its unique needs.

## **C. CHARETTE TEAM**

From the South Carolina Downtown Development Association:  
Ben Boozer, Executive Director  
Bill Steiner, Program Services Manager  
Randy Wilson, Design Services Manager  
Beppie LeGrand, Program Associate

Bob Bainbridge, Director  
Design Arts Partnership, Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Perry Wood, Landscape Architect/Urban Planner  
Wood+Partners, Inc., Hilton Head Island, SC

David Ames, Urban Planner/Developer  
Amesco, Inc., Hilton Head Island, SC

Samuel Kaye, AIA, Historic Preservation Architect  
Mississippi Main Street Program

Howard Chapman, Traffic Consultant  
City of Charleston, SC

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The team would like to thank the following for their support and assistance during the charette:

- Marsha Spivey and Main Street Beaufort for keeping us well fed and supplied and meeting our ever changing needs.
- Libby Anderson and all the City of Beaufort planning staff for the meeting space, answering countless questions and being on call.
- LRTA for providing buses and drivers to take the public on nearly a dozen driving tours of the study area.
- Dan Morgan and the Beaufort County Planning/GIS department for their help in generating maps of the study area in a timely fashion.
- The over 125 people who gave freely of their time and opinions on the corridor.

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## II. Charette Scope & Issues

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## **A. THE STUDY AREA**

The team was charged with looking at U.S. Highway 21 from the K-Mart shopping center all the way through Boundary Street to Bellamy Curve. This corridor forms the primary entrance into downtown Beaufort. It is a diverse area with varying characteristics. As a consequence, the treatment of the corridor varies from place to place. Taken into consideration were the commercial mix and the potential for future commercial uses, the traffic and its impact on the corridor at its various points, and the actual physical character of the corridor and the image it portrays.

## **B. MARKET DYNAMICS**

It is important to take stock of the conditions which will influence the future of the corridor. Making decisions absent an understanding of these conditions would be a mistake.

Beaufort is in the midst of a population boom, which, given trends, is not likely to abate. It is also blessed with increasing per capita income. These facts will continue to drive escalating demand for retail and services. Growing tourism locally also influences the demand and types of retail and services that will be required. This will affect demand and potential for uses along the study corridor.

Another factor that is affecting the corridor is the success of Bay Street and the rest of the traditional downtown commercial area. Because of the success of downtown there is limited space available. In addition, rents downtown will be high relative to surrounding areas. These conditions will make other areas more attractive and viable.

Carteret Street is continuing to develop as a cultural/commercial corridor reaching up to Boundary. Charles Street, too, is seeing mixed uses, again reaching up to Boundary. The development of both these streets represents real potential for Boundary Street.

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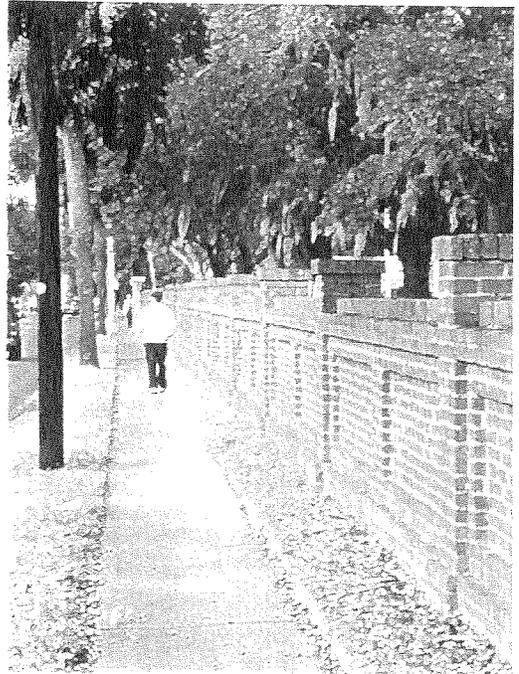
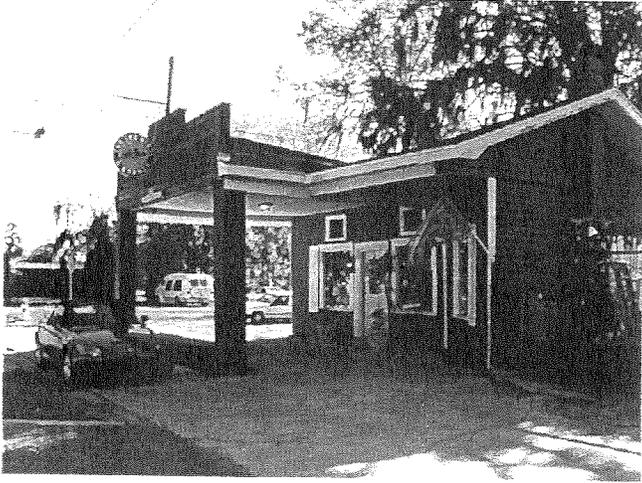
## C. BOUNDARY STREET

The study area begins on Highway 21 which is the spot that begins a transition from highway commercial into your more traditional downtown. In many ways Boundary Street is the connecting link between two very different areas. To date, Boundary Street has been a bit of a red headed stepchild within the city, and it shows.

The time has come to recognize the importance of Boundary as the connector and transition area between the generic highway commercial on Highway 21 and the uniqueness of Beaufort represented by your historic downtown. The role this piece of transition geography plays in your city's identity, functionality, and appeal is huge. A vision for its future is imperative. The team is putting a preliminary vision on the table for you to consider. However, this vision is one that needs to be established by those of you who live here.

In our view Boundary Street has three parts. The first area from Ribaut Road to the cemeteries makes a serious transition from highway commercial to a more traditional commercial. This transition should be recognized and reinforced. The second piece is formed by the cemeteries and tennis courts. This area offers the opportunity to announce arrival into something very different and quite unique for very little money. Part three --from the National Cemetery to Bellamy Curve-- should be characterized by a combination of neighborhood and specialty retail, providing a complementary use to downtown. This use will be low impact on the surrounding neighborhoods - important because of the need to maintain the strength and character of the neighborhoods. The kinds of businesses we envision are evidenced by the art supply store, the bird store and the Keyserling building currently being built on Boundary.

The benefits of working to support what we describe for Boundary Street are several. It provides an outlet for additional business activity in an area where the rents will be reasonable. The businesses will increase property values, if done as described, for Boundary Street and surrounding neighborhoods. Business license revenue will increase for the city. It will add to the critical mass in attracting tourists. It will strengthen surrounding neighborhoods by stabilizing what is now an area whose future is in doubt, and providing services to close-by residents.



Positive Aspects of  
the Boundary St.  
Corridor

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The challenge to transforming Boundary is one of commitment. It is clear from successes on Bay Street, Carteret, Port Republic and the rest of downtown that you can accomplish great things. When committed, it happens in Beaufort. We hope you see the importance of Boundary to this community and commit to make it the place it needs to be.

#### **D. CURRENT CONDITIONS**

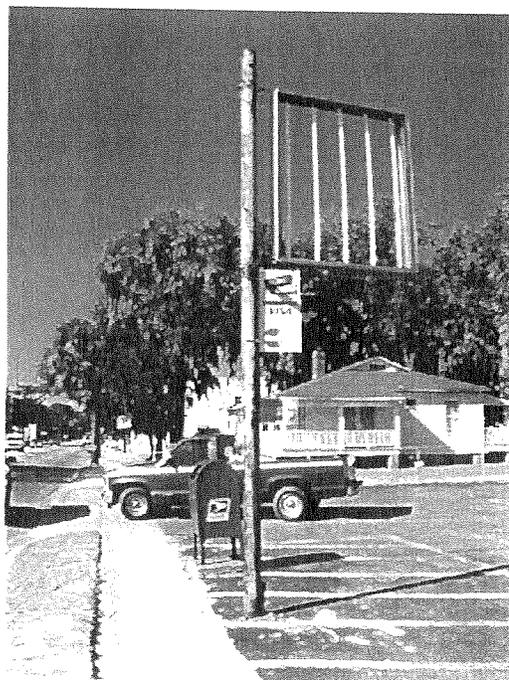
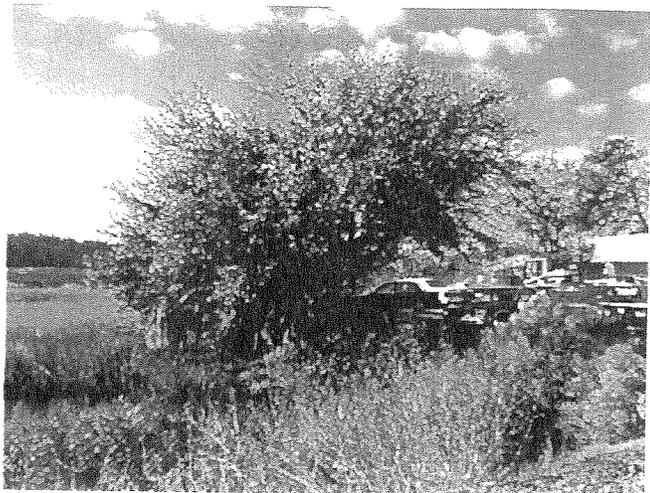
One benefit of having outside eyes visit your community is that they see things you have stopped seeing because you see it every day. What follows are the visual images and accompanying narrative description of what we saw in the study area. The first set of images are some of the positive aspects of the area while the second depict some of the less-desirable physical attributes of the study area.

You are blessed with natural features that are truly special. Much of this character is visible from Highway 21 at the beginning of the study corridor. It is particularly strong beginning at the Sixteen Gates Cemetery. This natural visual character is carried on to Boundary and its intersecting side streets with canopied streets.

The area also has manmade features that are strong including the cemeteries, specialty retail, some attractive sidewalk and building setback details contributing to a good pedestrian experience.

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There exist, however, a variety of visual negatives that detract from the study area and mask some of its visual strengths. Marsh views, the great natural gateway asset, are obstructed in a number of places. Signage in the form of bad, unintended, abandoned and obstructive exists. Heavy use of asphalt and seas of asphalt create visual blight. Haphazard public improvements over time have created pedestrian unfriendly spaces, visual nightmares, inappropriate details, inconsistent setbacks and parking arrangements, inappropriate uses, and disrepair of the physical fabric of the corridor.



Negative Aspects of  
the Boundary St.  
Corridor

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# III. Design Issues & Recommendations

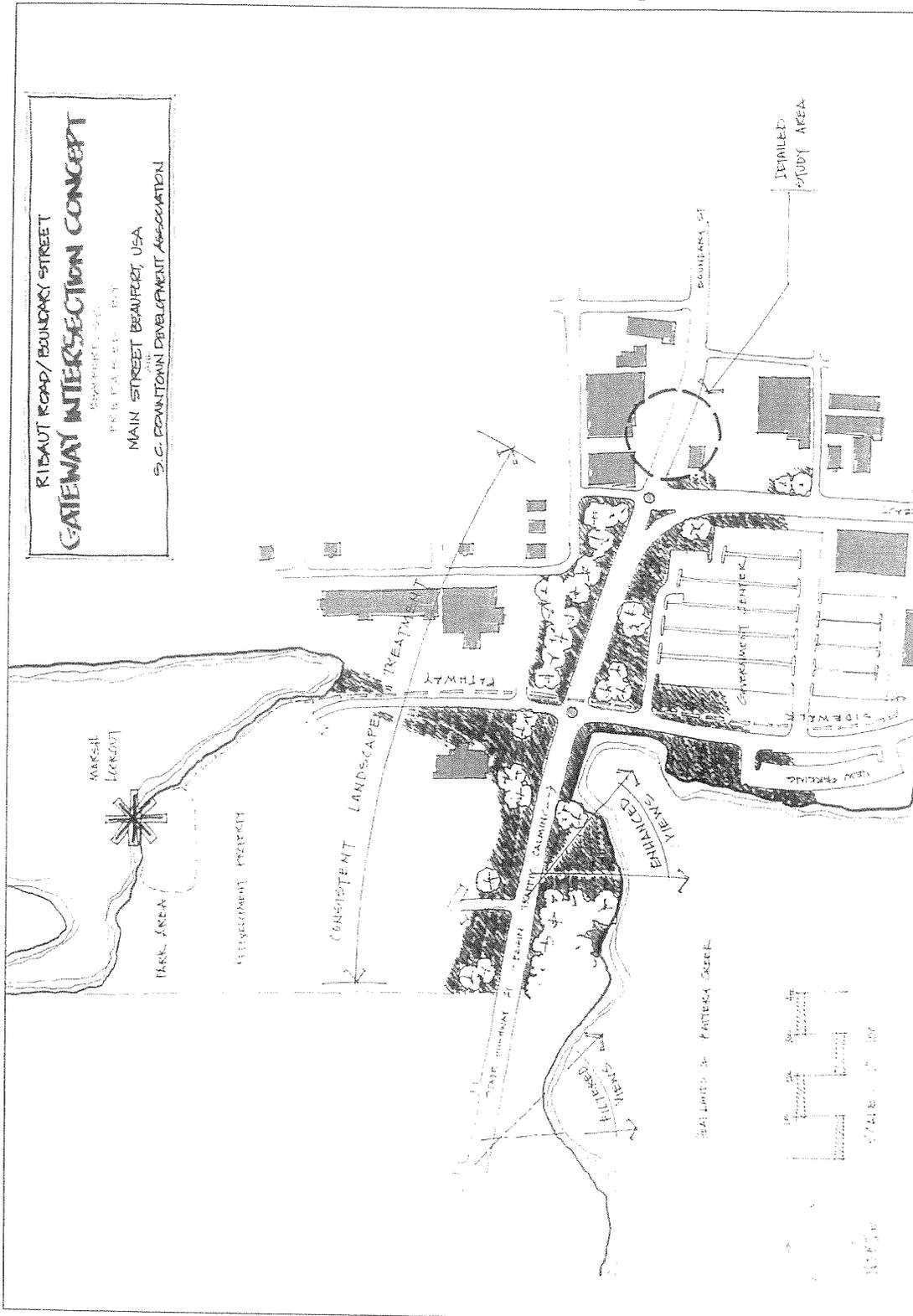
BROADENING  
OUR HOUSING

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## B. HIGHWAY 21 TO RIBAUT ROAD

The first part of the study area addresses Highway 21 to Ribaut Road. This piece is characterized by highway commercial on the north side of the highway and the more open natural views to the marsh on the south.



commercial on the north side of the highway and the more open natural views to the marsh on the south. Because this is the beginning of a transition from highway commercial to commercial in the more traditional form of downtown it is important to begin to convey to the motorist that something different is happening. There are a variety of ways to do this.

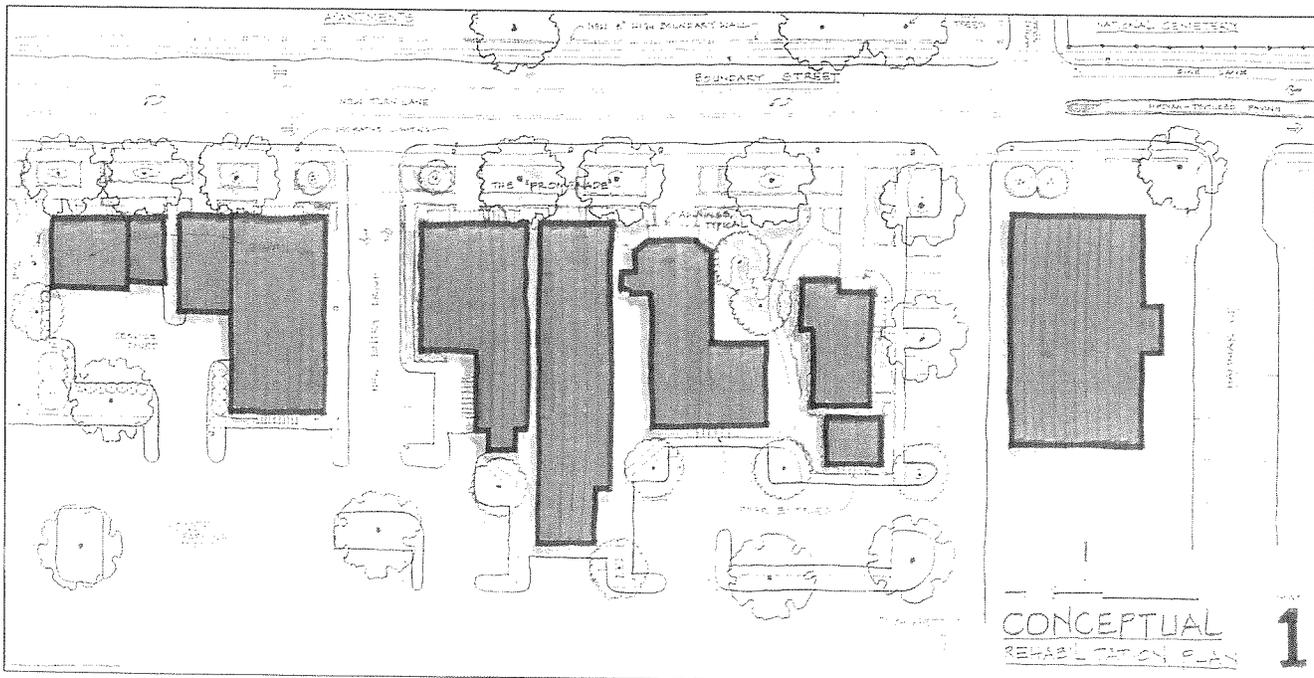
- Add to and enhance the "green" created by the marsh views. This can be done by enhancing the views through the cemetery, dealing with the negative view created by the parcel to the east of the cemetery, and

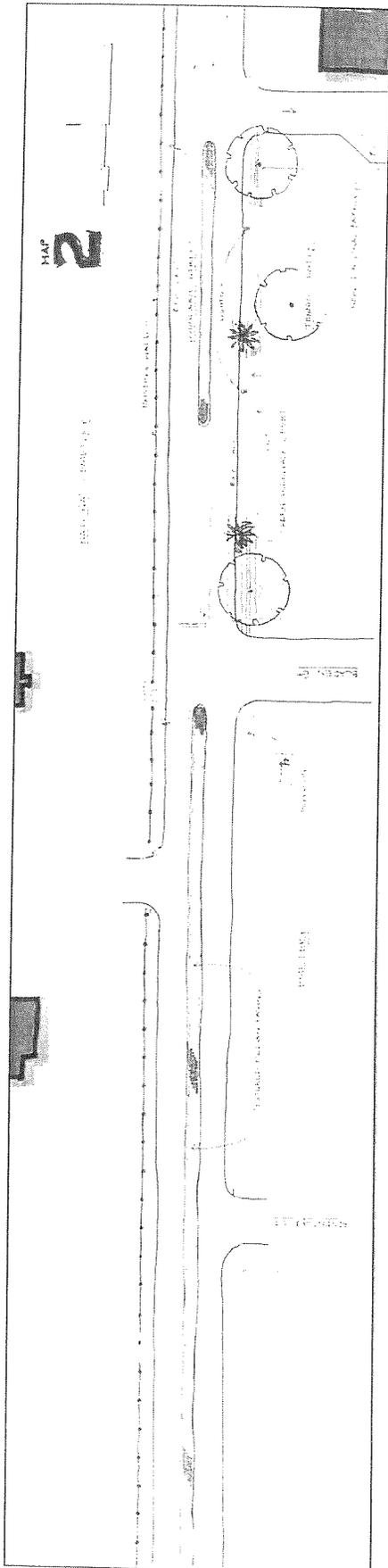
greening up the north side of the highway.

- Create a park at the intersection of Ribaut road to complement and reinforce Lovejoy Park.
- Realign highway 21 as it enters Ribaut to provide an easier turn that will accommodate more traffic.
- Improve directional signage to show clearly the way to downtown straight ahead on Boundary and the way around town on Ribaut.
- Develop the properties owned by Dick Stewart in a way to reinforce the transition. Suggestions include making the property pedestrian oriented, connecting it to the government center so the two sides of the highway begin to support each other, consider office use with some specialty retail including a restaurant, and provide public access to the marsh with a park or boardwalk or both.

### C. RIBAUT ROAD TO HAMMAR ROAD

The second part of the study area looks at the area from Ribaut to Hammar. This is the second area of major transition. The two sides of Boundary are more alike than the previous area and precedes the green space created by the cemeteries. It is an area of neighborhood scaled buildings unlike the highway commercial of Highway 21. Our suggestions:





- Encourage locally owned businesses.
- Encourage mixed use including office, residential and retail.
- Provide grouped parking behind the buildings to provide the needed space and to eliminate or reduce unsightly parking in front.
- Further the transition with wider sidewalks and the addition of bicycle lanes.
- Employ traffic calming to slow traffic and enhance the use by pedestrians and bicyclists. This is accomplished, in part, by reducing travel lanes to two with a middle turn lane. It is further accomplished by beginning a textured, slightly raised median (still able to be crossed and traveled on) at the west end of the national cemetery.
- Decorative lighting further helps define the area as different from Highway 21.

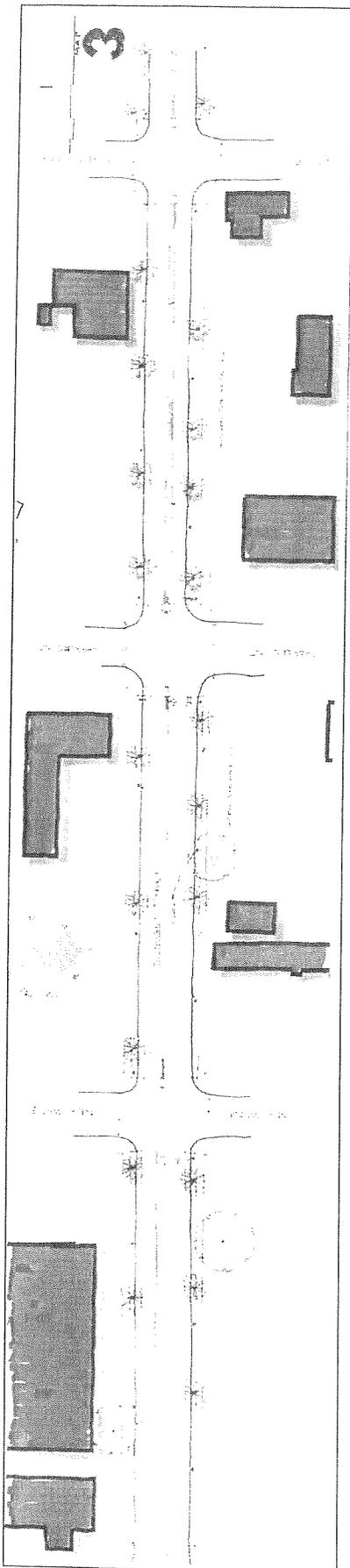
#### D. CEMETERY AREA

The cemeteries naturally create the third piece of the study area. There is a clear character change created by the tree canopy and open space.

- Open views into the National Cemetery to reinforce the sense of openness and to entice people into the cemetery.
- Continue the bicycle lanes and wider sidewalks begun at the beginning of Boundary.
- Continue traffic calming strategies.
- Continue decorative lighting.
- Selectively add palmetto trees.

#### E. CEMETERY AREA TO WEST STREET

The next piece of the area runs from the cemeteries to West Street. The previous transitions deliver you to a clearly different place with its own characteristics different from the rest. At this point the motorist clearly understands that they are in a real place. Treatment of the public space and the business spaces as the motorist moves out of the cemetery area in to this one is important. Continuity is provided by several design elements, while the change in use is reinforced.



- Encourage specialty, low impact retail that supports both surrounding residential and the tourist.
- Continue traffic calming, wider sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
- Continue decorative lighting and palmetto trees.
- Add angled parking on the side streets to accommodate parking needs.
- Look at build-to lines so that consistency is developed in the building setback and to prevent narrow parking space between buildings and sidewalks.

#### F. WEST STREET TO BELLAMY CURVE/CARTERET

The final area addresses the transition to Carteret and merely suggests keeping the existing streetscape and adding bicycle lanes.

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# IV. Implementation Recommendations

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## A. REGULATORY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highway Corridor Overlay ordinance calls for the creation of a "harmonious theme" along the highway corridors. This can only take place over time as changes occur along the corridors. Some of this will happen through private sector redevelopment and some through public sector initiatives.

**RECOMMENDATION** In order to create a harmonious theme along Boundary, you must first understand its characteristics. To this end we recommend that you study Boundary Street to understand what is there, and take the steps necessary to preserve and enhance it. These steps should include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Study the Boundary Street Corridor to gain an understanding of its design characteristics.
- Determine the characteristics you wish to preserve and enhance.
- Develop a highly illustrated "prototype" guideline based on the foregoing. This might include pictures of appropriate design, or line drawings to illustrate what is desired. Use the local architectural community to assist in the development of this guide. Refer to the appendix for an example of what this guide would provide. Consider the use of photo-manipulated renderings to demonstrate what Boundary Streets' aesthetic could look like. (See Appendix D)
- Part of the guidelines should include a "build-to" line to create an edge of buildings up close to the street.
- The Corridor Development Board should be provided training in the design review process. The South Carolina Downtown Development Association can provide this training.

## B. ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to move development along this corridor in the way you want, a number of organizational considerations must be addressed. What follows is a series of recommendations that will assist.

**RECOMMENDATION** Expand the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district covering the western edge of the study area to include that portion of Boundary Street not in the district. This will provide a funding source for improvements.

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**RECOMMENDATION** Carefully consider an organizational approach to promoting and guiding improvements along Boundary Street. Just as Main Street Beaufort has focused with success on the traditional downtown core, it will take a similar effort on Boundary Street. We recommend that the Main Street Executive Committee, the Chair of the Corridor Development Board and the Mayor or City Manager sit down to discuss and decide upon the following options.

- Expand the Main Street program so it assumes responsibility for the Boundary Street corridor.
- Create a new organization whose sole function is the corridor.
- Create a development arm or subsidiary organization of Main Street Beaufort.

**RECOMMENDATION** Develop a strategic plan for Boundary Street. To move forward with success a plan is needed. The SCDDA would be happy to facilitate the development of such a plan once the organizational framework for carrying a plan forward is established.

### C. FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION** Put in place funding strategies to assist improvements. It is important to remember what you have accomplished in the past. You have a long track record of supporting worthy efforts. The possibilities include:

- **Tax Increment Financing**

A TIF is a mechanism for capturing increases in the tax base within a specified area and using those increases to fund public improvements there. A TIF only works if there is significant new investment in the target area and requires the approval of the County Council and School Board. For more information contact the SCDDA.

- **S.C. Department of Transportation**

Probably the single most effective source of funds for streetscape improvements is SCDOT and their T-21 Enhancement Program (formerly ISTEPA). This program

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provides funding for streetscape improvements, beautification of rights-of-way, rehabilitation of old depots, bicycle trails and other enhancements to the transportation system. This source is also popular because it requires only a 20% match from local government.

T-21 is highly competitive with 2 or 4 times more applications than can be funded. This is one reason why up front planning is essential.

Contact: Vivian Patterson, SCDOT, 803.737.2314

- **Municipal Improvement District**

Existing enabling legislation allows SC towns and cities to levy special assessments against downtown property owners (direct beneficiaries of public improvements). Funds generated must be spent in the area from which they are collected. The law allows a wide range of improvements. Several SC communities have used this tool for public improvements downtown - Conway, Hartsville, and Laurens. For more information contact your City Attorney or SCDDA.

- **Community Development Block Grant Program**

In some instances, the Community Development Block Grant Program administered by the S.C. Department of Commerce may be a source of funds. Again, contact should be made with a representative of that agency to determine if CDBG funding would be applicable.

Contact: Bonnie Ammons, 803.734.0429

- **Local Funding Mechanisms**

The most typical local funding mechanism are budgeted funds in either the operating or capital improvements budgets of the City. Streetscape improvements are public improvements to the public realm and are as valid as improvements to water or sewer infrastructure, streets, parks, or other public responsibilities.

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Other local funding mechanisms are also possible. Bond issues are sometimes used to fund capital improvements (including streetscapes). In this case, the City borrows the money needed and repays, sometime from a dedicated source.

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The study area is of tremendous importance to Beaufort. It is a critical entry to your community and speaks volumes about Beaufort as a place. It currently presents a different picture to the outside world than what Beaufort truly is. It not only misspeaks who you are, it is unattractive. It can provide a transition from the generic to the real.

This report provides recommendations on how to make that transition. Ultimately, however, Beaufort must shoulder the responsibility for the details and implementation of a creating a successful change from the outside world to the beauty of Beaufort. We hope you will call on us if we can help.

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# V. Conclusion

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Appendix A:  
Charette  
Agenda

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## Beaufort Charette Schedule

### Day One Wednesday, January 19, 2000

12:00	Design Team Arrives	Set-up and coordination lunch with Marcia Spivey
2:30	Input Session 1*	Business & Property Owners, General Public
4:00	Input Session 2	Parks & Trees Commission, Recreation Commission, General Public
5:30	Input Session 3	General Public
7:30	Working Dinner	Charette Team

### Day Two Thursday, January 20

8:00	Input Session 4	Main Street Beaufort, USA, General Public
9:30	Input Session 5	Board of Architectural Review (BAR), Corridor Committee, City Planning Staff, General Public
11:00	Input Session 6	Chamber of Commerce, General Public
12:30	Working Lunch	
2:00	Input Session 7	Planning Professionals Input Meeting (DOT, SCE&G, Sprint, Falcon Cable, City Public Works, Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects, Planners, Traffic Consultants)
4:00	Design Team Session	Brainstorm Preliminary Design Concept Recommendations
6:00	Input Session 8	Meeting with Mayor and City Council to gather input and float preliminary recommendations for validation
7:30	Working Dinner	Design Team

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**Day Three    Friday, January 21**

8:00	Input Session 9 Design Team Works	General Public
9:30	Input Session 10 Design Team Works	General Public
11:00	Input Session 11 Design Team Works	General Public
12:30	Working Lunch	
2:00	Charette Team Works	Review Input & Analyze; Test Design Concepts against input; Outline Presentation and roles; Delegate Tasks; Commence work
7:30	Working Dinner	
9:00 - Until?	Design Team Works	

**Day Four    Saturday, January 22**

9:30 - 11:00	Public Presentation	Presentation of input findings, design concept recommendations, questions & answers, press releases.
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\*All input sessions to include walking tours prior to commencement.

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Appendix B:  
Input  
Responses

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*Things we like:*

Tennis Courts = activity  
Park at Bellamy Curve  
All cemeteries  
Live oaks and palmettos, Spanish Moss  
Balance of architectural scale; small scale of buildings  
Park and grounds at municipal building  
Historic street lights  
From a pedestrian point of view: businesses like "For the Birds" and the art supply shop  
Few gas stations  
Buildings that retain their original/historic character  
Sidewalks  
Variety of architecture  
Traffic naturally slows  
Ribaut Rd. pocket park  
Locally owned businesses  
Adjacent neighborhoods  
Setbacks  
B & G Club  
Vista to river  
Open/protected area at Bellamy Curve  
New owners/improved aesthetics  
Governmental center/civic element  
New construction, CBC – sensitive to context  
Sidewalks ADA compliant (most)  
Plenty traffic for commercial district  
Human scale  
Width of road  
Open space-potential  
Building site renovation manageable  
Improvements needed not too costly  
Nothing really awful  
Variety of retail architecture  
Long term established businesses  
Redevelopment  
View of National Cemetery from on high  
Residential conversion to commercial  
Traffic count for businesses  
Demand will create on-going redevelopment  
Cemetery removed billboard  
Corridor overlay  
Individuality  
Retained historic character

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Open space  
Park at courthouse  
Reinvestment activity  
Long view down Boundary – feels like a boulevard  
Keyserling Bldg. and it's design/use  
Mix of sun and shade on street

*Things we don't like:*

Speed limit typically exceeded  
No left turn light from Boundary to Ribaut  
Lack of landscaping (all kinds)  
Asphalt seas – parking areas  
Billboards  
Inefficient use of existing space adjacent to buildings  
Lack of building/parking lot/sign maintenance  
No unifying element for corridor; lack of continuum – some  
junky, some nice – no rules to follow to create con  
tinuum.  
Disparity in rules between BOAR and Corridor Board  
Tacky signs  
Incompatible use of buildings  
Illumination of some signs (too bright)  
Crosswalk – no safe crossing place-hard to cross for pedes  
trians and cyclists  
No bikeway  
Lack of historic signage at cemeteries  
Neighborhoods behind commercial negatively affected by  
commercial  
Open spaces have no seating or way to enjoy it – over-man  
icured for the view  
No pedestrian actuated cross-signals  
Overhead utilities  
Sidewalks narrow and immediately adjacent to road  
Sidewalks in disrepair  
Minimal tree canopy  
No street furniture/shelters @ LRT stops  
Insufficient lighting  
No civic signage – clubs, etc.  
Inadequate parking  
Vacant storefronts  
Lack of signage clarity to direct to downtown/historic com  
mercial district  
2-way traffic @ Carteret and Bridge

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Too many curb cuts  
Minimum landscape/no continuity  
Road surface  
Fence @ 16 Gates (can't be cleaned)  
Appearance of cemeteries  
Awful-looking architecture  
Litter  
Noisy  
Existing landscape – no character  
Shabby feel  
Some businesses incompatible with pedestrian use  
Past the government center you feel like you have made the  
wrong turn  
Parking lots in front of buildings  
K-Mart parking lot and storage containers  
Quality of commercial  
Inconsistent setbacks  
Retail doesn't attract; little destination retail  
Lacks critical mass of retail  
Dark and unsafe feeling at night  
Cross streets not easily identifiable; hard to find  
Chaotic traffic  
No sense of anticipation – no hope it will improve  
Green Boat Business  
Parking close to street  
Car lots  
Cemeteries poorly signed and lack edges  
Lack of identity  
Lot size too small

### *Magic Wand/One Thing I Would Change If I Could*

Tree lined streets (buffer)  
Businesses to attract people – pedestrian friendly environment  
Force redevelopment before new construction sprawl  
At least one lane of on street parking  
Park benches and other street furniture  
Better access to water  
Things to get people out of their cars – crosswalks with  
mandatory traffic stops  
Business mix with neighborhood and tourist support

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Clean up buildings  
Open vistas – water as focus (existing and future development)  
Consider side streets off Boundary for improvements  
Color scheme for buildings  
Central parking area with shuttles for downtown  
Clean up properties (buildings, landscaping, parking, etc.)  
Wider sidewalks set back from street, landscaping and lighting  
Pedestrian friendly  
Create an island (D.O.T. to channel)  
Traffic calming @ speed reduction areas (170/Bridge) – e.g. stamped paving/textured  
SCDOT as a partner  
Public art  
Highlight cemeteries as an asset  
Open vista/entry @ National Cemetery  
Create "green node" l&r of National Cemetery  
Eliminate marsh stench  
Vistas to water  
Control architectural change/new/additions  
Negotiate win/win for relocation of incompatible businesses  
Unified design scheme  
Narrow road to 2-3 lanes  
Let it evolve naturally  
Convention or meeting center  
Workable ordinances – strong, enforceable and enforced  
Long term strategic plan  
Preserve adjacent neighborhoods  
Commercial development that support locals  
Eliminate parking in front of buildings  
Variety-mixed use  
Highway 21 as parkway  
Street design – functionality  
Tear it all down and start over  
Façade guidelines  
Streetscape, but only with private sector involvement

### *3 tracts site development*

Park

Don't block view of water/marsh; capitalize on the view of the marsh

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Connect views at neck near Holiday Inn  
Use determined by a strategic plan  
Dense-mixed use development  
Set backs  
Parking garage with retail and public transportation to  
downtown  
Small upper scale conference with retail – conference orient  
ed to marsh with retail on the road  
Move museum to the site – mix with visitor center/cultural  
center  
Maintain Arsenal as visitor destination and site  
Public access to marsh  
Reconnect waterways  
Keep DOT building and have low impact development  
Relocate visitors center = more parking  
Cluster shops and boutiques  
Meeting space

***One Place on the corridor you would take a visi-  
tor:***

National Cemetery  
Sgt. White's Bar-be-que  
Love Joy Park  
Visitors Center  
There is no place on the corridor I would take a visitor  
Palm Theatre (restored)

***Streetscape ideas:***

Textured pavement  
Utilities buried  
Reflect character of Beaufort  
Landscaping different from Bay St.  
2-lane Boundary St.

***Obstacles to achieving vision:***

Existing businesses  
Redirecting traffic

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***Design Statement:***

Maintain urban character  
Marsh views  
Public art  
Fountain

***What it could be:***

Work with property owners to create more specialty retail  
Without intervention there will be slow improvement

***Concerns:***

Impact of gentrification –commercial and residential  
Impact of commercial on residential  
Height restrictions?  
Dissimilar regs on 2 sides of street  
Formula retailQ  
Need a master plan for the city  
How much tourism does the city want – what is the capacity – places to stay? – parking, shopping, etc.  
Is Beaufort a place where people can stay and visit for a couple of days and use it as a home base to visit other tourist areas (HHI? – Savannah?) or is it a short term destination site?

***Recommendations:***

The two organizations governing the two sides of Boundary Street need to come together and have uniform decisions.  
Decide what's considered architecturally "compatible"?  
Develop a vision and a master plan that will be compatible with existing development that is considered acceptable.

***Elements people want:***

Public Art  
Water features  
urban character maintained  
Existing marsh views preserved

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Appendix C:  
Charette  
Participants

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J. Edward Allen  
P.O. Box 292

Genevieve L. Green  
1202 Boundary St.

Donna Alley  
908 Scott St.

Catherine Hill  
801 Duke St.

Libby Anderson  
City of Beaufort

Walter Hill  
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George Babalis  
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Steve Herring  
(CDB)

Frank Bond  
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John Horton  
219 Scott's St.

Loretta Bitty Brant  
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Greg Huddy  
(BOAR), 606 Carteret St.

Steve Camp  
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Luis P. Jenkins  
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Quinton Chapman  
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O. Floyd Johnson  
910 Greene St.

Ann Collins  
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Knute Knudson  
510 Craven St.

Gloria Dalvine  
1311 North St.

Joni Kost

Edward Dukes  
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1404 Boundary St.

Jean Lebno  
Chamber of Commerce

Ed Gray  
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Robin Leverton  
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---

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LaRose Smith  
CDB

Scott McKenney  
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Dick Stewart  
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Jeff Mansell  
HBF

Bob Stoothoff  
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Cindy Thomas  
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Becky Trask  
John Trask, III  
1905 North St.

Judy Nash  
City of Beaufort

Carol Tuynman  
805 Duke St.

Jimmy Orr  
1800 Boundary St.

Jessica Vanegeren  
Beaufort Gazette

Lynne Peer  
Beaufort Liquor Max,  
Chamber Board of Directors

Jay K. Weidner  
1307 Calhoun St.

Cooter Ramsey  
1003 Charles St.

Jacque Wooler  
HBF

Brad Samuel  
222 Green Winged Teal Dr.

Jess Yopp  
902 Boundary St.

Yan Seiner  
920 Bay St.

Ken Singleton  
1210-1212 Boundary St.

Isiah Smalls

John Gettys Smith  
901 Prince St.

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Appendix D:  
Digital Design  
Charette  
Primer

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# Digital Design

## Digital Design Charette: "Glamour Shots" for Downtowns

### Description:

A digital design charette is a participatory design visualization tool which utilizes photographs and photo-manipulation software to demonstrate "before & after" scenarios for buildings, parks, streetscapes, and other design issues facing downtowns.

### The Process:

The designer meets with various building owners/tenants throughout the day to interactively determine which alternatives (such as color, awnings, landscaping, etc.) should be applied to the subject property. The designer then applies the suggestions and modifies them as necessary to satisfy both parties. Thereafter, a before and after print out is supplied to the participant along with any necessary documentation noting suggested paint colors, awning specifications, maintenance checklist, etc. The charette is conducted in as public a space as possible to generate public interest and enthusiasm for the process.

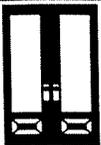
### The Benefits:

- Due to the process being participatory, with the building owners/tenants involved in the decision-making process of how their buildings will be improved, they tend to be far more emotionally vested in ensuring follow-through after the charette.
- People understand photographs far more easily than architectural drawings and renderings, therefore the designs are done in a format easily accessed and understood by non-design professionals.
- It allows the development and review of multiple options quickly and easily. The ability to see the building in various paint schemes and awning options is as easy as a few clicks of the mouse.
- Because the participants not only see the 'before & after' but also the "during or between" steps, it demystifies the process of transforming their building from before to after. Further, it also provides an incremental transformation with each transformation able to have a financial value associated with it so that the participants can realize what "bangs" they can receive for each "buck."
- The thrill and excitement of seeing a building transformed right in front of your eyes is more valuable than the designer lecturing on the value of good design. The value of good design becomes immediately obvious as the process unfolds.

### The Procedures:

- Determine the goals and scope of the charette in conjunction with our staff.
- Schedule the charette and procure a highly visible space where it will be conducted.
- Publicize the event and schedule appointments with participants who will have their buildings studied.
- Pre-charette planning: Schedule photo shoot; arrange for a color printer on-site if on-the-spot output desired.
- Conduct the charette!

SOUTH CAROLINA  
DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION



**SCDDA**

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Internet: [rwilson@masc.state.sc.us](mailto:rwilson@masc.state.sc.us)

Interested? **contact**

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# Appendix E: Sample Design Guidelines

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The following pages are representative of the Design/Development Design Guidelines formulated for the City of Columbia by LDR International. They are considered to be an excellent set of guidelines because they are highly illustrative in nature, providing graphic images of intent as opposed to relying solely on text. Moreover, they are based on fairly universal design principles which allow for a certain degree of creativity within the constraints of satisfying their intent. They are enforced via a review commission which further promotes a common sense approach to enforcement on a case by case basis.

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RANDY WILSON



# CITY OF COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

## *CITY CENTER DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES*

November 18, 1998

prepared for

*The City of Columbia, South Carolina*

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## CHAPTER 5

# GUIDELINES FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The construction of new buildings and renovation of existing buildings are principally the domain of the private sector development community. This chapter provides guidance concerning new development and renovation, with the understanding that City Center is a complex area with a variety of development settings. Accordingly, this chapter consists primarily of practical directions for retaining existing positive qualities and creating new projects that contribute to the distinct and exceptional character of City Center.

The guidelines in this chapter are illustrative rather than prescriptive. They describe appropriate kinds of changes and improvements that can be made to existing structures, as well as recommending the incorporation of particular design elements into new construction. These guidelines, while attempting to be comprehensive in scope, are not exhaustive in detail. The aim is to engender creative approaches and solutions within a workable framework, rather than laying out detailed and rigid standards.

The overall objective of this chapter is to ensure that new development projects contribute to the continued economic vitality of City Center. The key emphasis of the guidelines in this chapter is to reinforce the existing fabric of City Center by ensuring that new projects are developed within the rhythm of the existing development pattern. This "contextual" approach to evaluating the design of new projects is fundamental to the implementation of the *Guidelines*.

### 5.2 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OR THEME

No predetermined architectural style or design theme is required in Columbia's City Center; however, the design of a building should be compatible with its function and with its surroundings (context). New buildings should be compatible with the existing more traditional buildings; their design, particularly front facades, should be influenced by the other facades on the street, but should not attempt to copy them. New buildings should take care in material selections and architectural detailing so they do not look like cheap historic imitations. These projects should be sympathetic and compatible with surrounding buildings in terms of mass, scale, height, facade rhythm, placement of doors and windows, color, and use of materials without giving the feeling that new or renovated structures must duplicate an architectural style from the past to be successful.

### 5.3 BUILDING MASS AND ORGANIZATION

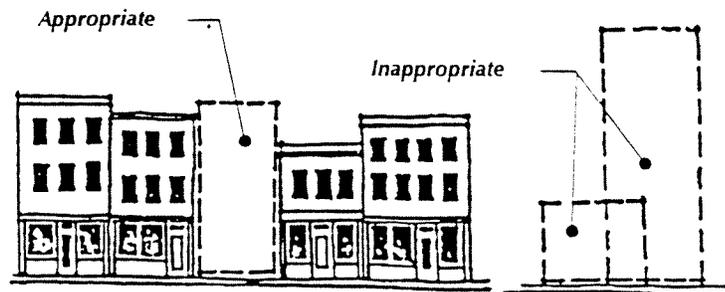
The height and scale of new buildings within City Center should complement existing structures while providing a sense of human scale and proportion. New infill structures should be designed to provide storefront windows, doors, entries, transoms, awnings, cornice treatments and other architectural features designed to complement existing structures without duplicating a past architectural style. This section outlines guidelines for building massing and organization.

While these *Guidelines* do not address the regulation of uses within buildings, the City strongly encourages that—in retail and commercial areas of City Center—the ground level of buildings be developed with retail uses. Such uses will draw activity to the street, thereby enlivening the area.

#### 5.3.1 Building Heights

The City's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance are the primary legal vehicles for expressing regulations concerning the height of buildings. This section provides non-binding general direction for development within City Center, with the recommendation that the City's regulatory plans and codes be amended to reflect the guidance included here. The overall objective of addressing building heights within the *Design/Development Guidelines* is to help achieve the desired urban character for City Center. An important element of this character in Columbia is the retention of important viewlines; in particular, views of the Capitol and the Congaree River and its river valley are important to City Center's image.

Except for areas where existing structures are predominantly single-story, the most fundamental guidance for building heights in City Center is that the minimum height for any new building in the district should typically be two stories, even if the building contains only one functional story (e.g., a single-story, high-ceilinged commercial building). Low profile office buildings, commercial buildings, and residences will not yield the density, urban scale, and character desired for City Center, and should, therefore, be discouraged.



Infill Building Heights

As a general rule, and consistent with current zoning provisions, buildings within most of City Center should be no more than five stories. There are, however, exceptions. Parts of City Center are already

See Zoning Height  
Regulations in  
NAC Code!

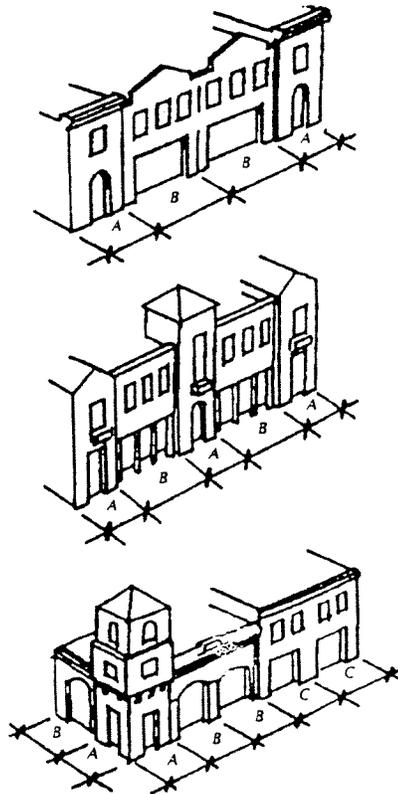
Min. Bldg Hgt of  
2 Stories of a  
max. height of  
5 Stories.

\* While we have authority  
to require the 2-5 device,  
best to defer to Zoning Ord  
rel to heights

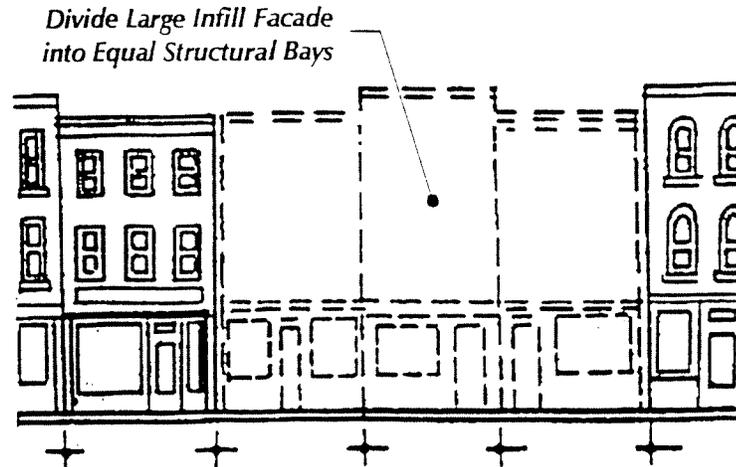
developed with buildings as tall as 25 stories (350 feet), mostly within the Central Business District. For the most part, these areas are zoned either C-4 (Central Area Commercial) or C-5 (Central Business District); neither of these zones includes any specific restriction on height. As noted above, it is not the intent of these Guidelines to establish new height standards for development in City Center. It is, however, critical that in applying these Guidelines—as well as other development regulations—the City be consistent in considering the height of proposed structures as they relate to the adjacent development context. Building height should be considered on a case-by-case basis recognizing the importance of the Columbia Vista and views of the Capitol dome from key locations throughout the city.

### 5.3.2 Facade Proportion and Rhythm

The facade is literally the exterior of a building that “faces” the street. It is the architectural front of the building and is typically distinguished from other faces by elaboration of architectural or ornamental details. Building facades are critical to the pedestrian quality of the street. The width and pattern of facade elements can help pedestrians negotiate a street by providing a standard measure of progress. This is true regardless of the overall width of the building; for example, a building can extend for the full length of a block and still have a facade design that divides the building into smaller, pedestrian scale elements. The following guidelines deal with establishing a pedestrian-friendly rhythm in new buildings, while subsequent sections address facade detail.



- The characteristic proportion (relationship of height to width) of existing facade elements should be respected in relation to new infill development.
- Whenever an infill building is proposed that is much "wider" than the existing characteristic facades on the street, the infill facades should be broken down into a series of appropriately proportioned "structural bays" or components typically segmented by a series of columns or masonry piers that frame window, door, and bulkhead components.



### 5.3.3 Proportion of Openings

- Maintain the predominant difference between upper story openings and street level storefront openings (windows and doors). Usually, there is a much greater window area (70 percent) at the storefront level for pedestrians to have a better view of the merchandise displayed behind as opposed to upper stories which have smaller window openings (40 percent).
- Whenever an infill building is proposed between two adjacent commercial structures, the characteristic rhythm, proportion and spacing of existing door and window openings should be maintained.

### 5.3.4 Horizontal Rhythms/Alignment Of Architectural Element

- Whenever an infill building is proposed, the common horizontal elements (e.g., cornice line and window height, width, and spacing) established by neighboring structures should be identified and the infill design should complement and accentuate what is already in place.

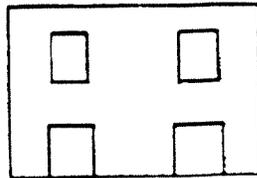
### 5.3.5 Wall Articulation

- Long, blank, unarticulated street wall facades should not be allowed. Facades should instead be divided into a series of structural bays (e.g., masonry piers which frame window and door

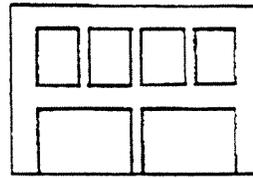
elements). This subdivision of the wall plane establishes a rhythm similar to many existing older buildings found in City Center.

- Monolithic street wall facades should be "broken" by vertical and horizontal articulation (e.g., sculpted, carved or penetrated wall surfaces defined by recesses and reveals). These features are characterized by: (a) breaks (reveals, recesses) in the surface of the wall itself; (b) placement of window and door openings; or (c) the placement of balconies, awnings, and/or canopies.

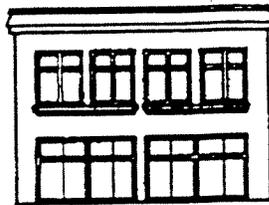
**Breaking-Up a Building Facade to Achieve Greater Articulation**



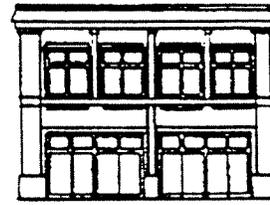
*Openings too Small Relative to Building Mass*



*Increase Size of Openings*



*Articulate Openings*



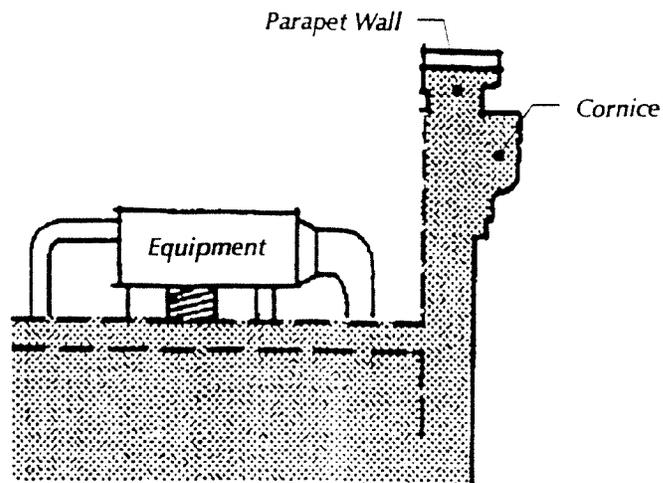
*Break-Up Building Mass*

- Large unbroken facade surfaces should be avoided, especially at the storefront level. This can be achieved in a number of ways including: (a) dividing the facade into a series of display windows with smaller panes of glass; (b) constructing the facade with small human scale materials such as brick or decorative tile along bulkheads; (c) providing traditional recessed entries; (d) careful sizing, placement and overall design of signage; and (e) providing consistent door and window reveals.

**5.3.6 Roofs and Upper Story Details**

- Roofs may be flat or sloped. The visible portion of sloped roofs should be sheathed with a roofing material complementary to the architectural style of the building and other surrounding buildings.
- Cornice lines of new buildings (horizontal rhythm element) should complement buildings on adjacent properties to maintain continuity.

- Radical roof pitches that create overly prominent or out-of-character buildings (e.g., A-frames, geodesic domes, or chalet style buildings) are strongly discouraged. Shallow gables or fenestrated parapets may be allowed if in character with surrounding buildings.
- In the case of high-rise structures and Churches, however, some roof treatment such as a gable or spire is encouraged to add variety to the City's skyline and/or replace spires that have been removed from the City's churches over the years.
- Roof mounted mechanical or utility equipment should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the structure in terms of materials, color, shape and size. Equipment should be screened by solid building elements (e.g., parapet wall) instead of after-the-fact add-on screening (e.g., wood or metal slats).



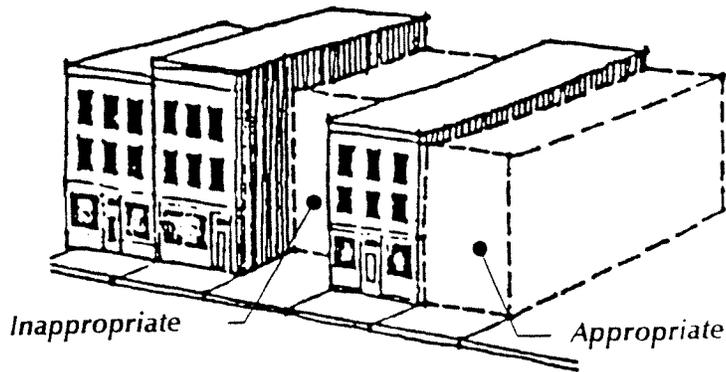
## 5.4 SITE PLANNING

The manner in which a building and its accessory uses are arranged on a site are critical to how the building contributes to the overall quality of the built environment. This section outlines a series of site planning guidelines that will help establish a human scale, pedestrian-friendly quality in City Center.

### 5.4.1 Setbacks

The horizontal distance between a lot line and the edge of the nearest building on the lot, including porches or any covered projection thereof, excluding steps, is referred to as the "setback." The most densely-developed areas of central cities typically have uniform setbacks, with building edges very near to or abutting the lot line, and thus the right-of-way (ROW) or sidewalk edge. This development pattern conveys a strong urban feeling by creating a sense of containment along the street edge, which, in turn, adds to a feeling of pedestrian security and comfort.

Much of the underlying zoning in Columbia City Center establishes a minimum setback of 25 feet while other areas have no specific setback standards. The overlay Design/Development zone will supercede the zoning underneath and establish new setback standards that will be uniform in their application throughout City Center. This will preserve the urban feel of City Center while allowing flexibility in development depending on the context of the block on which a new development is being built.



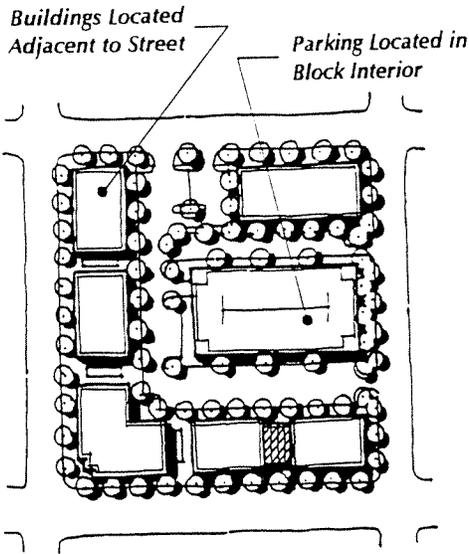
In order to preserve the scale of the pedestrian environment and continue to foster the urban character of the City Center, the Design/Development District will have no minimum required front yard setback. The maximum setback for any new structure should be the average of the existing setback in the block and adjacent blocks where the project is to be constructed. In situations where the average is not established, the setback will be ten feet.

Although the criteria for setbacks will be the same throughout the City Center Design/Development District, some areas of the district have a more urban commercial character and others maintain a residential character. Each project still should be evaluated in context with its surroundings in order to properly decide whether a minimum or maximum setback should be used so that the overall character of the street is preserved.

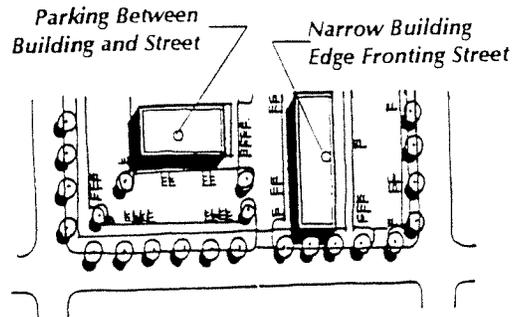
#### 5.4.2 Street Orientation

The way that a structure is oriented to the street plays a big role in establishing the overall feeling of the street. As a general rule, buildings should be oriented so as to engage and maintain pedestrian interest. Following are specific directions on how this can be accomplished.

- Storefronts should be designed to orient to the major street frontage. While side or rear entries may be desirable, the predominant major building entry should be oriented toward the major street.
- The front building facade should be oriented parallel to the street or toward a major plaza or park.
- Buildings on corners should include storefront design features for at least 50 percent of the wall area on the side street elevation.



*Appropriate Siting*



*Inappropriate Siting*

## 5.5 OPEN SPACES IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

City Center's streets, with their street trees and pedestrian amenities, are the district's primary open space. The narrow setbacks are specifically intended to prevent development of the broad landscaped open spaces typical of suburban campus-like settings. Any unbuilt zones along the setback line (i.e., plazas, entrance courts) should be small, intense areas that are placed and designed so that they will be occupied at various times of the day.

To invite public use and ensure user security, plazas or other public open spaces should be visible from streets and sidewalks, and should be surrounded by actively programmed building spaces such as shops, restaurants, residential units or offices.

The design of plazas and open spaces in private development should conform to the guidelines for public open spaces, and the landscaping guidelines in the following section.

## 5.6 LANDSCAPING

The streetscape, which is installed and maintained by the public sector, is the most important landscape element in City Center, as described in Chapter 4. There will, however, be many opportunities for landscaping in conjunction with private development. Goals and methods for landscaping in an urban setting differ from common suburban practices; the following guidelines emphasize those differences, without

