



CITY MANAGER
TERESA WILSON

City Manager's REFLECTIONS ON 2014



2014 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Inclement Weather Center
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- Walk Bike Columbia Initiative
- Neighborhood Improvement Plan
- Police Recruitment and Retention Initiative
- City LIGHT's
- Access Columbia
- Bull Street Redevelopment Project and Entertainment Venue

BUILD
RUN. GROW. TRANSFORM.
COLUMBIA



We Are Columbia

Inclement Weather Center Set to Open

United Way of the Midlands, in partnership with Transitions, Salvation Army and the City of Columbia, will operate an Inclement Weather Center at 191 Calhoun on nights that are expected to drop to 40 degrees or below until April 1, 2015.

"My sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to all of our partners and to the staff at the City of Columbia for all of their work related to the opening of the Inclement Weather Center," said City Manager Teresa Wilson. "This collaboration is a true example of how we can work together toward a common goal and implement a plan of action for a worthy cause. We will continue to work together to provide shelter and other resources to those who need assistance."

Adult men and women who use the Center are picked up between 5:45 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at 1219 Laurel Street. Guests will not register in advance. The Salvation Army will prepare hot meals for dinner along with a small breakfast and services such as showers. The shelter closes every morning by 7:00 a.m.



City Manager Wilson announces Inclement Weather Center partnership for operations during press conference on Nov. 6.

To find out if the shelter will open on a particular night, call 2-1-1 or go to www.midlandshomeless.com.

"I am proud of the commitment and dedication demonstrated by our team at the City and by those who represent our partner agencies."

~City Manager Teresa Wilson

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

City Manager Teresa Wilson recognized the City of Columbia Finance Department's staff in September for their efforts in receiving the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting.

The Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. This is the first time since 2005 that the City has received this award.

"It was my honor to recognize and thank our staff for all of their hard work. Their hard work and commitment are to be commended and I could not be more proud of this outstanding



City Manager Wilson with Finance Department Staff

achievement," said City Manager Teresa Wilson. "This has been a collective effort between our city's leaders, management and the Finance Department's team. We will continue to work diligently to sustain our strong foundation and be good stewards of the City of Columbia's finances."

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

Finlay Park Master Plan Public Meeting, Focus Groups and Survey

The City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department held seven focus group meetings from October 6 - 8 with City staff, emergency personnel, special events staff, business leaders/developers and members of the Columbia Council of Neighborhoods. In addition, a public meeting was held on Wednesday, October 8, at Earlewood Park Community Center where residents were able to have roundtable discussions with design team representatives from Consulting Services Inc. An online survey was also created to gather the public's input on current features and improvements.

The purpose of the focus group meetings was to identify the community's needs and concerns for the future of Finlay Park. The groups shared their opinions on what areas or features they thought needed improvements including enhancing access to the 18-acre park. Other ideas included adding or renovating bathrooms, incorporating public art, building a conference center or meeting space, and making a better connection between open spaces. Some residents also suggested developing more water features and renovating areas of the park to encourage more physical activities.



Walk Bike Columbia Initiative



The City of Columbia has partnered with the Central Midlands Council of Governments to develop a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Bike Share Plan, called Walk Bike Columbia, with funding provided in part by the Federal Transit Administration, Palmetto Health, and Abacus Planning. The planning process was kicked off at a press conference on Tuesday, May 20, 2014 and will extend through April 2015. The project will recommend a network of complete streets for the City of Columbia, as well as biking and walking

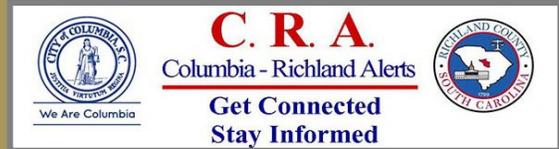
related programs and policies. The completion of this Plan will set the stage for the City of Columbia achieving a higher national designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community and becoming the first nationally designated Walk Friendly Community in South Carolina!

In recent years, the City of Columbia and partners have taken steps to improve its multi-modal network and advance the culture of bicycling and walking and transit. Examples include additions to the Three Rivers Greenway, the completion of Phase I of the Vista Greenway, installation of bicycle corrals and the first HAWK pedestrian signal in South Carolina, as

well as successful programs like Bike and Walk to School Day, "handlebar happy hours," and the creation of the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). In 2008, Columbia earned the national designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community and in 2012, the University of South Carolina became the first Bicycle Friendly University in the state and one of only a few dozen around the country.

With the launch of the walkbikecolumbia.org website, citizens will be able to learn about the planning process, find out about public meetings and important project dates, suggest walking and bicycling improvements, and review draft materials from the Plan.

Citizen Alert System: Columbia Richland Alerts



The City of Columbia and Richland County have launched a new alerts program designed to provide citizens with time-sensitive information for public safety and community awareness. The notification system ensures that citizens can be reached with critical information quickly with a variety of contact preferences. [Click here to Register!](#)

[Registration](#) is easy and citizens can choose the updates they would like to receive.

- Public Safety
- Power Outage
- Missing Persons
- Community Events
- Road Closures
- Public Meetings/Hearings
- Traffic Safety
- Water/Sewer

Neighborhood Improvement Plan



View the [Build Columbia: Neighborhood Improvement Plan](#) show featuring City Manager Wilson.

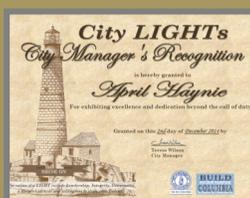
City Manager Teresa Wilson kicked off the City's Neighborhood Improvement Plan for identified neighborhoods/communities that were experiencing an increased volume of calls for quality of life issues. Effective July 1, 2014, the Code Enforcement Division's operations were moved under the Columbia Police Department as a part of the City Manager's new organizational structure. Columbia Police Chief William "Skip" Holbrook presented the plan to City Council on August 5 and City Manager Wilson followed up by touring neighborhoods and communities with CPD officers and community leaders to see first-hand what needed to be done to improve those specific areas. This plan will be a combined effort between the Columbia Police Department, Code Enforcement and Zoning to concentrate in identified neighborhoods for 30-60 day time period.

City LIGHT's

City LIGHT's is a platform for recognizing employees who engage in random acts of kindness and go above and beyond the call of duty to help those in need or exceed expectations as an employee and ambassador for the City of Columbia. LIGHT is an acronym that represents the values of the program. Employees are recognized for displaying Leadership, Integrity and Generosity or for having a Helpful attitude and sharing their Talent to help others or benefit the community.

The following employees have been recognized by City Manager Wilson for their exemplary services:

Allen Donnell Etheredge, Metro WWTP Maintenance Tech II
 Matthew Derrick Gunning, Metro WWTP Utility Worker II
 Tamara Kelly, Community Safety Officer
 Luis Campos, Fire Captain
 Michael Rushman, Fire Engineer
 April Haynie, Firefighter
 Thomas Bookman, Firefighter



"There is a light within all of us that only we can dim and this employee recognition program will recognize our staff who let their lights shine brightly."

—City Manager Teresa Wilson

Access Columbia



City Manager Wilson welcomes the participants at Access Columbia.

Access Columbia, a free financial literacy expo, was held on Saturday, April 5, 2014 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

"Hundreds of families across the Midlands live on the financial edge, just one unexpected setback from a major financial crisis. For low-income families already struggling to meet basic needs, such occurrences can trigger a devastating chain of events that leads to unemployment, homelessness and family instability. The City can help families and neighborhoods become more economically secure by developing strategies to address their financial needs," Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine stated.

According to the U.S. Census' American Community Survey, South Carolina has more residents living in poverty than in 2000.

The U.S. Census Bureau goes on to report that the number of people living below poverty in Columbia is 23.4 percent. That is compared to the state of South Carolina rate of 17.6 percent and the national rate of 14.9 percent.

"Access Columbia is our effort to empower the community at-large with the financial information they need to build a better quality of life. Everyone needs basic financial tools in order to plan for major life decisions such as building a good credit history and buying a home. We want to provide this financial seminar to help families build a strong foundation for future generations," Devine stated.

Calvin H. Elam, CEO and Senior Financial Consultant of Elam Financial Group, was this year's keynote speaker.

There was an informational fair with vendors ranging from banks, financial institutions and more.

Participants were allowed to take up to two of the following classes:

- Give Credit ... When Credit is Due
- Creating Cash on a Budget
- Why It's Best to Invest
- Cash 4 College
- Teenagers and Money
- Climbing the Money Tree
- The Search for Fair Housing



Councilwoman Devine and Community Development staff.

Please contact Community Development at 803-545-3373 for more information about their financial literacy programs.

City Received Major Transportation Grant



Congressman James E. Clyburn announced on September 9th that the City of Columbia will receive a highly sought after Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The grant, worth \$10,000,000, will provide funding to the city's Seamless City Revitalization Project to revitalize a 1.27-mile portion of North Main Street between Anthony and Fuller avenues in support of the City of Columbia's extensive downtown streetscaping initiative.

Introduction of the new Police Chief

The City of Columbia hosted an Introduction Ceremony for the new Police Chief on March 21 at Police Headquarters, located at 1 Justice Square. Mayor Benjamin, City Council members, City Manager Wilson, Police Chief Search Committee members, Police Chief Search Community Stakeholders Panel, Law Enforcement Officials, Community Leaders and City staff were in attendance to welcome Chief William "Skip" Holbrook.



(L-R) City Manager Teresa Wilson, Chief William Holbrook and his wife, Michelle.

"I am proud to welcome Chief Holbrook to the City of Columbia and look forward to working with him, the command staff and the men and women of the Columbia Police Department to take our public safety operations to the next level. Through Chief Holbrook's guidance, we will begin a new era of integrity and strong leadership in the Office of the Chief."

~ City Manager Teresa Wilson

Police Recruitment and Retention Initiative

Chief William "Skip" Holbrook launched a major Recruitment and Retention Initiative on Tuesday, December 9 that will allow the Columbia Police Department to hire qualified applicants for 45 (forty-five) vacant law enforcement officer positions. The Department's Plan also includes a 7% (seven percent) pay increase and a host of incentives to help recruit and retain law enforcement personnel.

These initiatives are critical to public safety, as the Columbia Police Department works to become fully-staffed and better positioned to compete with neighboring law enforcement agencies, whose salaries and incentives have historically given them a competitive advantage over the CPD--making it more difficult for the Department to recruit and retain good officers.



The Columbia Police Department hopes to change that. Beginning in 2015, positions that require specialized skills and training will receive additional pay for their expertise. Officers who live in the City can look forward to a \$500 annual Residency Bonus and Educational Pay Incentives will be available to all personnel who earn professional degrees while working with the Columbia Police Department. Incentives also include signing bonuses for qualified and certified (new) officers, as well as low interest home loan programs.

These employment opportunities, as well as the Recruitment and Retention Incentives, will be widely publicized within the industry and are expected to attract candidates from across the Midlands and Southeastern United States.

For more information about the Columbia Police Department and these exciting new opportunities, please contact:

Columbia Police Department
Office of Staff Development
803-545-3552

Or

City of Columbia
Human Resources Department
803-545-3010



Chief Holbrook was sworn in as Columbia's new Police Chief on April, 11, 2014.

Campus Public Safety Meeting



The Columbia Police Department hosted a roundtable discussion regarding safety and security matters for protecting our student population while they are both on and off local campuses.

The roundtable participants included a combination of both academic administrators and law enforcement representatives. The event was held on October 14 at the Canal Room, located inside EdVenture Children's Museum.

The safety of students is important to the City of Columbia, and the goal of the roundtable discussion was to continue to work collaboratively to identify best practices and enhance measures in the city and on local campuses.

Eau Claire Development Corporation held Ribbon Cutting

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

Currently, ECDC is developing Burton Heights III, located off of Farrow Road on Burton Heights Circle. The subdivision will accommodate 26 single family residential homes. There have been 20 newly constructed homes sold and 6 more are being developed this year. The homes will range from 1,300-1,600 sq. ft., 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, with all major appliances and a one car garage. The new homes feature smart home smart touch technology, Kenmore appliances, tankless water heaters, cherry-colored cabinets and hardwood floors and an irrigation system.

"By the end of 2014, Eau Claire Development Corporation will have injected \$650,000 through Federal HOME Funds to create 6 residential affordable housing units for households at or below 80% of Area Median Income. ECDC continues to strive to make North Columbia a great place to live, work, play and raise a family. In all, there are a total of 26 units of residential homes in Burton Heights Phase 2. There has been a total of more than \$2.5 million in funding for the project since 2007 in an effort to create affordable housing," Michael Strange, Eau Claire Development Corporation executive director said. Since ECDC's inception, which derived from the 1998 Eau Claire Task Force Report and the 1993 Eau Claire Redevelopment Plan, ECDC's overarching goal continues to focus on revitalization efforts in Eau Claire/North Columbia that support and uplift cultural diversity, urban renewal, residential vibrancy, sound economic investments and financial prosperity. The past, current and future development projects and initiatives are the vehicles that have and will continue to steer both commercial and residential growth and renewal.



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



Bull Street Redevelopment Project and Entertainment Venue



The City has been engaged in discussions related to the Bull Street Redevelopment Project for numerous years. While community planning sessions and discussions were taking place well in advance of 2012, the first official City action taken was the approval of the Bull Street PUD in March of 2012. Since that time, there have been numerous actions taken to include approval of the Bull Street Development Agreement (July 2013), and associated approvals to proceed with a City lead Multi-Use Entertainment Venue (March and June of 2014). Upon the directive from Council to move forward with the project, staff has been working diligently on the Venue project to ensure the facility is open in time to throw the first pitch in April 2016. The Venue design has been unveiled and construction is scheduled to be underway within the next week.

It was with much excitement that the City announced Spirit Communications as the naming rights partner this past November. Spirit Communications' commitment to the project is another demonstration of confidence in the success of this project and the belief in its value to Columbia.

The City has also successfully demonstrated the commitment to utilize local firms by setting aspirational goals for the local and disadvantaged business participation in the project. The construction of Spirit Communications Park is being led by a local team of successful and experienced professionals, comprised of Contract Construction, Construction Dynamics, EnviroAG Sciences and joined by Barton Mallow Construction, all of which are committed to the success of the project and its positive impact to our community.

While the Multi-Use Entertainment Venue is only one component of the Bull Street Redevelopment Project, it is one that has brought about much discussion and active participation from all segments of our community. As the project progresses forward, it will be great to see our City rally around our new professional baseball team (name yet to be announced) and embrace the opportunities that will follow minor league baseball. We will do so while remaining committed to all of our other entertainment options and hospitality districts.

Bull Street Related Action Items

Document Name	Approval Dates
• Bull Street PUD	1st Reading: 03/27/12 2nd Reading: 10/02/12
Bull Street Development Agreement	1st Reading: 07/01/13 2nd Reading: 07/09/13
• Bull Street DA Amendment 1 (Ordinance # 2014-024)	1st Reading: 03/04/14 2nd Reading: 04/08/14
• Venue License Agreement (Ordinance # 2014-021)	1st Reading: 03/04/14 2nd Reading: 04/08/14
• Reimbursement Bond Referendum	1st Reading: 04/08/14
• Voluntary Cleanup Contract (Ordinance # 2014-063)	1st Reading: 06/24/14 2nd Reading: 07/15/14
• Venue Development Agreement (Ordinance # 2014-049)	1st Reading: 06/17/14 2nd Reading: 06/24/14
• Reimbursement Resolution (R-2014-076)	08/19/14
• Hospitality Tax Bond Ordinance (Ordinance # 2014-052)	1st Reading: 06/24/14 2nd Reading: 07/15/14
• Hired Architect	08/19/14
• Hired CM@ Risk	10/07/14
• MiLB Approval of Relocation Application	10/17/14
• DMH / Hughes Property Transaction	Oct. 2014
• Naming Rights Agreement Executed	12/02/14
• Early Site Release Package Approval	12/16/14
• Ceremonial Ground Breaking	01/06/15

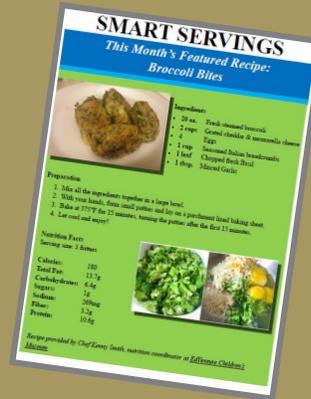
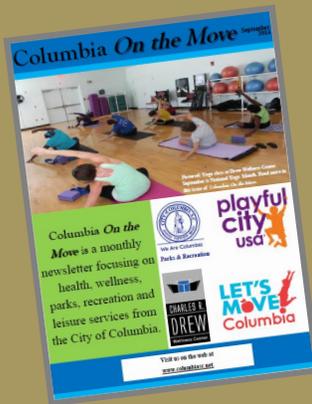
Pending Action

- Venue Property Donation to City Pending –01/12/15

NLC Recognizes City's Marketing and Branding for Let's Move! Initiative



The National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (NLC) has recognized the Let's Move! Columbia initiative in their Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties (LMCTC) Guide. Let's Move! Columbia is featured in the Marketing and Branding Spotlight for communication efforts with residents using a variety of methods, including Twitter, local TV shows, and a monthly Let's Move! newsletter featuring recipes, event ideas, parks and recreation programs and healthy living tips. The City of Columbia has also branded related city programs as Let's Move! activities such as basketball camp, kid's cooking classes and back to school events. The most recent addition to the City's marketing efforts is a special Let's Move! TV show that features exercise tips, health information and interviews with City officials and local health experts.



Council Chambers at City Hall Receives Preservation / Restoration Award

To celebrate the accomplishments of local architectural, construction and rehabilitation projects, Historic Columbia Foundation held its annual Preservation Awards Luncheon on Thursday, May 8 at 701 Whaley. The City of Columbia received one of these awards for the restoration of Council Chambers.



The restoration of the third floor council chambers in City Hall began as a small project intended to repair historic plaster and paint. As City of Columbia staff removed ceiling tiles, they uncovered a long-hidden skylight, prompting City Council to increase the project's scope. The final restoration came to also include new lighting, a new audio/visual system and the complete restoration of the historic skylight. Previous renovations to Council Chambers had severely damaged the original plaster ceiling and parts of the walls; the specialists in historic plaster restoration at Dillon Construction addressed structural concerns, restored damaged plaster and replicated missing decorative elements to bring the room back to its original appearance. The project was completed with a historically-sensitive color palette and subtly selected modern bench and carpet fabrics.

For decades Historic Columbia has recognized local projects that have maintained or added to the historical, architectural and cultural heritage throughout Columbia and Richland County by presenting recent preservation projects with awards in Preservation Leadership, Preservation/Restoration, Adaptive Use and New Construction in a Historic Context.

View more photos of the Council Chambers renovations on our [website](#).

2014 Citizen Satisfaction Survey

As part of the City's collaborative efforts, City Manager Wilson announced that the City of Columbia has partnered with the National Research Center to conduct a citizen satisfaction survey. The City's most recent survey was conducted in 2007. A citizen survey is just one of the methods used to seek citizen engagement and collaboration on the services provided to the citizens of Columbia. The survey includes questions about quality of life in the community, local policies, rating of local government services and resident use of services. The survey will be used to measure residents' perceptions and attitudes about City services, participation in and satisfaction with various programs, and attitudes about issues such as quality of life, public safety and other services. This survey will serve as a base year in which future changes in public opinion and concerns will be compared.

Why should we survey our citizens?

- to measure service performance;
- to benchmark service quality ratings;
- to assess community needs;
- to make long-range, short-term or strategic plans;
- to demonstrate the receptivity of our government;
- to evaluate potential policies or community characteristics;
- to evaluate trend lines from periodic surveying.

Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of Columbia citizens, asking for feedback on the quality and usefulness of city services. Scientific sampling and weighting of the responses ensure accurate and reliable results. The results will be included in a final report that city officials can use in planning for the future.



Residents expect their local government officials to be as well informed about customer perspectives just as the best businesses are informed.

~City Manager Wilson

Columbia Empowerment Zone Inc.



City Manager Teresa Wilson provided greetings during the Lady Street Suites ribbon cutting ceremony.

Columbia Empowerment Zone Inc. hosted a ribbon cutting on Thursday, October 9 for its new multi-tenant building, Lady Street Suites, located at 1509 Lady Street. The building will serve as office space for small businesses; and offices are available for rent. Please contact CEZ, Inc. Executive Director Felicia Maloney at 803- 255-8129 for more information.

"It takes the village of our staff and dedicated community partners to make things like this happen."

~City Manager Teresa Wilson

Zoning Division Conducts Sign Sweep

The City of Columbia's Zoning Division, with the support of Administration and several neighborhood leaders, recently conducted a sign sweep in the N. Main area in an attempt to clean up the proliferation of illegal signs that littered many store fronts. This was a very productive effort by the Zoning Division.



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

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

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



Main Street Capital Loan Program Unveil Press Conference

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

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

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

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

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

United Way Kick-Off Campaign

City Manager Wilson gave the first pledge to the United Way 2014 kickoff campaign for the City of Columbia on Thursday, Nov.6. The City is one of United Way’s top 40 contributors in employee giving. Last year’s City campaign raised \$53,305.

“The City of Columbia is an important partner in our shared mission of serving Midlands residents,” said Chris Burnette, Assistant Vice President of United Way of the Midlands. “The United Way is appreciative of City employee contributions, which help us focus on Financial Stability, Healthcare and Education for those who need it most.”

United Way of the Midlands works to determine and respond to the critical human service needs of the community. For more information, visit www.uway.org.



City Manager Wilson and Mac Bennett, President and CEO of United Way of the Midlands

City Manager's **REFLECTIONS ON 2014**



For more information, contact City Manager Teresa Wilson:

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