



FINAL REPORT:

Gaffney

Sponsored by:

ULI South Carolina

Center for Sustainable Leadership

ULI-the Urban Land Institute

Recommendations from Technical Assistance Panel

Gaffney, SC—April 11, 2008

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I. Acknowledgements:

ULI South Carolina and the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) members express their appreciation to the town of Gaffney for opening up their community to our team and allowing us to be a part in their successful future.

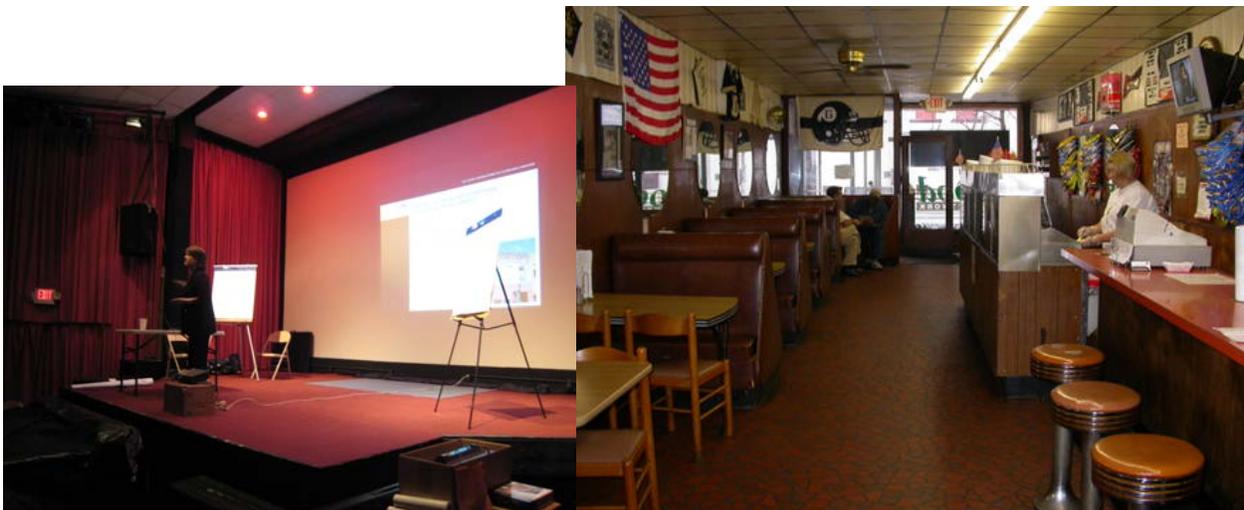
We would especially like to thank James Taylor, town administrator, for his partnership on the project through compiling background information, arranging interviews, providing superb hospitality, and donating countless hours of his valuable time to fielding questions and providing the team with valuable information.

Thanks are also in order to Mayor Jolly for his support of the project, his excellent input, and the myriad of projects he has already begun and completed in Gaffney. Pat Throneburg, project coordinator for the visitor center, was also a great help in the preparing of this report and the gathering of information.

The panel would also like to thank all of the members of the communities who participated in the visioning session and the final presentation. It is only through this collaboration that any of our recommendations have meaning.

We would like to thank John Knott, Chair of the ULI Sustainable Leadership Class, for his excellent leadership and direction, as well as Paige King, Executive Director of ULI South Carolina and Katye Rhett, Associate, ULI South Carolina, for their continued support and guidance.

The Panel would also like to thank those who we may have failed to mention, but are still grateful to.



II. Who we are:

Urban Land Institute:

ULI-the Urban Land Institute is a nonprofit education and research institute that is supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Established in 1936, the Institute today has over 40,000 members in 90 countries representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. They are comprised of developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students and librarians. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

ULI South Carolina:

In local communities, ULI District Councils bring together a variety of stakeholders to find solutions and build consensus around land use and development challenges. The ULI South Carolina District Council was formed in 2005 to encourage dialogue on land use and planning throughout this state and within each of the three main regions (Upstate, Midlands, Coastal), and to provide tools and resources, leadership development, and a forum through which the state can become better connected. The District Council is led by an Executive Committee with statewide and regional representation, as well as steering committees within each region that focus on the development of membership, sponsorship, programs and Young Leaders activities. With over 600 members, ULI South Carolina is committed to bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs.



III. The Assignment:

This is a group of Urban Land Institute Leaders with the task of assisting the Pacolet-Glendale community with strategies to encourage economic development while maintaining quality of life. The Panel process provides a structure for examining current and future market conditions, the values and expectations of the residents, the planning reports and studies. The Panel's recommendations are developed through an interactive discussion that draws on the expertise of Panel members that usually include developers, lenders, architects, planners and others. The panel will begin its process by reviewing the values of the community, and conducting a mini SWOT, assessing the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of the situation under review. The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) itself is a one and a half day experience with the study community resulting in a presentation to all available stakeholders. In the set of recommendations, the Panel provides development strategies and steps for implementing the overarching vision.

Core Questions:

1. How to encourage higher density and infill housing while protecting the character and integrity of the neighborhoods?
2. How to provide more affordable housing?
3. How to utilize the available legal, political, financial, and public relations tools to change the status quo?
4. What are the constraints and how to overcome them?



Panel Chairs:	Mary Beth Branham	LS3P Associates, Ltd.
	Fred Delk	Columbia Development Corporation
Project Manager:	Paul Stavovy	ULI – Intern/Research Assistant
Panelists:	Ed Garrison	Town of Blythewood
	Matt Kennell	City Center Partnership
	Gene Luna	University of South Carolina
	Pat Mason	Center for Carolina Living
	Bob Mundy	Estates Management Company
	Milton Pope	Richland County Council
	Kit Smith	County Council

IV. Introduction:

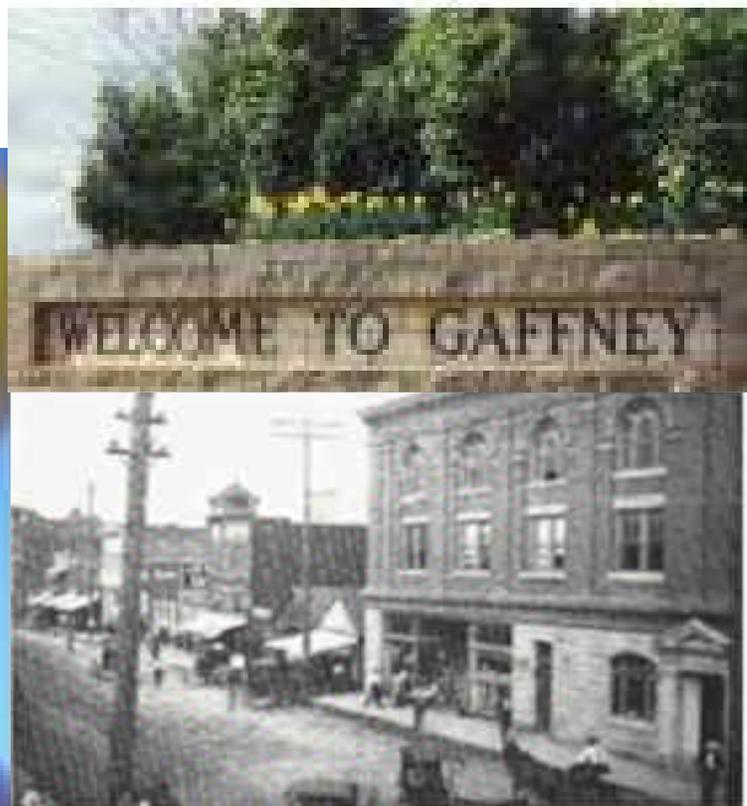
A. A Brief History of Gaffney

-submitted by Pat Throneburg

The City of Gaffney, a Bicentennial city, is located in Cherokee County, home to Cowpens National Battlefield and Kings Mountain National Military Park. There are three Nationally Certified Historic Districts in the City Gaffney, and numerous historic sites, including the Michael Gaffney Log Home, Limestone College, two historic cemeteries, the beautiful Limestone Springs, and the limestone quarry that produced the South Carolina stone incorporated in the Washington Monument.

Although Gaffney is best known for the Peachoid (a million-gallon water tank shaped like a peach), and its historical sites, the city offers visitors many other attractions including beautiful parks, shopping at Gaffney Prime Outlets and in historic downtown Gaffney; the South Carolina Peach Festival; Christmas on Limestone; Irishfest; the annual Michael Gaffney Day celebration; and the Shindig at the Gaffney Cabin concerts.

Located on I-85, approximately 50 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina, and 50 miles north of Greenville, South Carolina, residents have the best of both worlds: the safety and friendship offered by a small town, and all the benefits found in the nearby larger metropolitan cities. Our temperate climate, low tax rates, two colleges, good schools and teachers, modern medical facilities, active cultural and civic organizations, and a caring and progressive city government provide an excellent quality of life for our residents, regardless of age.



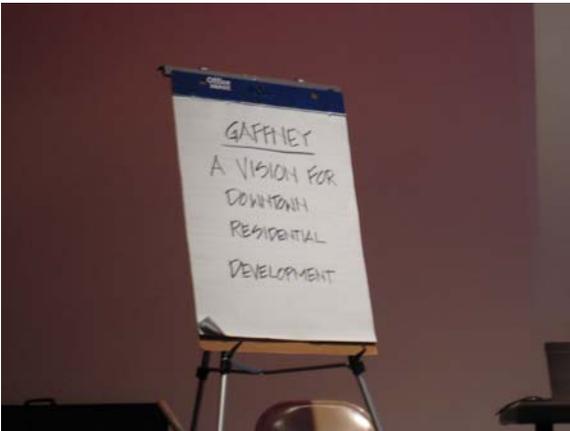
B. The Process

A preliminary site visit was made to Gaffney, SC on March 15, 2008. The purpose was an initial orientation of the town, background on “key” community leaders and to get a “feel” of the community. An in depth interview of the Editor to the Gaffney Times was conducted at the time. James Taylor, City Administrator, gave the team an overview of the political climate of the town. He then took the team on a motor tour of the city, pointing out “key” areas of interest as well as areas of particular concern. It gave the team members a “good” feel for the town. He was open and forthcoming with his information.

The two day visit began in the afternoon with an overview of the program visit and why the TAP’s Team was in Gaffney. We then conducted an open forum or charrette style meeting. The Mayor, Mayor Jolly was in attendance and somewhat overshadowed the initial comments. He was politely asked to allow others to comment and the discussion became more open and specific in its comments. The session lasted approximately three hours. Comments were somewhat critical of the city government. Later, it was concluded, much had been done by the city fathers, but had not been communicated to the community.

The team members retired to the hotel for the evening and further discussion of the town meeting comments. Much discussion ensued during the dinner hour. At that time, it was decided to tour the downtown at night. The team wanted address whether the downtown was “unsafe” or that it was a perception. After the dinner hour, four members rode into downtown and drove around the area. It was judged to have a well lighted main street but the remainder of the town area did not create a similar feeling of security.

In the morning, the team gathered to prepare for the 1:00 PM presentation in the City Council Chambers. The team finally agreed to an outline that would address the TAP’s mission to Gaffney, SC. The main focus was to increase the opportunity for downtown residential development. The Team also felt there needed to be a stronger commitment to revitalizing the city by its city government. We have a program built around the three C’s: Clear Vision for the Community, Communicate the vision broadly to the community and Commitment to implementation of the recommendations.



-submitted by Bob Mundy

V. Summary of Recommendations

Steps to Development Success, Gaffney SC

The City of Gaffney, South Carolina is uniquely positioned to effect redevelopment and residential enhancement of its downtown area. Downtown Gaffney has tracts of vacant and under-utilized developable property, existing upper story residential and vacant upstairs space ripe for residential development and is fortunate to have a strong core of public institutions and retail uses. These assets, coupled with the national trend towards downtown living, create a formula for a successful residential redevelopment.

This Plan for Downtown Gaffney outlines broad economic development steps. The policy recommendations, revitalization strategies, funding opportunities, and economic development goals, opportunities, and partnerships, can result in substantial reinvestment and revitalization of the downtown Gaffney.

A. Create a downtown residential development strategy:

The nationwide trend towards downtown living can create a real buzz about the revitalization of downtown Gaffney. An inventory of residential development sites, coupled with incentives, partnerships, and other assistance, will facilitate additional development. There are a number of existing buildings in which residential development is likely and opportunity sites for creation of new residential communities. The residential revitalization of the downtown area will breathe new life into surrounding neighborhoods. New restaurant, retail, and other commercial development will naturally occur when more people live in the area.

B. Create a retail strategy and recruitment program:

The City of Gaffney should work with the Gaffney Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Businesses to establish a retail strategy and related recruitment program for the downtown area. While retail development is not likely to be the strongest phase of early re-development of downtowns, businesses that encourage residential development should be strengthened. The creation of a pedestrian environment will result in the need for additional retail business. Shops, restaurants, and services already in the Gaffney area can be encouraged to create “second” businesses, and appropriate incentives should be established when necessary to encourage these businesses.

C. Establish incentive programs:

The City of Gaffney should establish a list of economic development tools and create local incentives to assist in the redevelopment of downtown Gaffney. Economic development tools will include local, state, and federal incentives, many of which already exist and others, which may be created specifically for Gaffney.

D. Develop an Arts and Cultural Strategy for Gaffney:

The City of Gaffney has had amazing success in promotion and development of parks and cultural events in the downtown area, setting the stage for additional cultural enhancement. Southern culture, the small town atmosphere of Gaffney and the slower pace of life have an opportunity to attract both visitors and new residents to the community. Enhancement of the community’s cultural assets will help attract those visitors and increase community awareness of local culture.

F. Marketing Gaffney

The City of Gaffney should leverage and coordinate the existing destination marketing efforts to brighten the Gaffney “brand” as a great place to visit and live for skilled, educated, entrepreneurial and affluent families of all ages. Gaffney should add new programs that will bring traction and improve in-bound relocation frequency of closure, as well as build the Gaffney visitor and “in-migration” market share among the competitive set of southern destinations.

VI. Recommendations in Detail

A. Create a downtown residential development strategy

-submitted by Bob Mundy

Recommendations regarding downtown residential strategies might include:

1. Hold a real estate input meeting whereby realtors could share their thoughts regarding what would be helpful to reinvest in downtown housing development.
2. Use the students at Limestone College to do a study project that would create a downtown inventory that would identify all buildings in the downtown with residential potential. It would include:
 - Square footage
 - Parking and # of spaces
 - Age of the building
 - Qualify for historic tax credits
 - Number of floors
 - Square footage on each floor
 - Ground floor space for retail, office or other special space on the ground floor
 - Special “features” in the building
 - Details on the exterior of the building
 - Type of construction
 - Photo of exterior and interior
 - Additional information to enhance the building’s appeal and function
3. Create a need or reason for the local realtors association and the Downtown Business Association to meet on a quarterly basis to exchange information and ideas as how to promote downtown living with retail, business and residential.
4. Create a link to the Gaffney website that would show available properties in the downtown area. Also include any special incentives, grants or financing available.
5. Forge a partnership between the City of Gaffney, Realtors Association, the Tourism Office and the Downtown Business Association that would have a joint board that could provide the guidance to downtown housing retail programs.
6. Host a wine and cheese party in the evening that would showcase existing projects





and even those that are under construction? This gives motivation, ideas and incentives available for redevelopment to property owners and future purchasers in the market.

7. Schedule an “After Five party”, starting in the spring, that would be held every Thursday night event with a band, beer and wine and eventually move into food.

8. Create a Point of Contact (POC) at the city in the Economic Development office that becomes the premier resource for downtown housing,

small business and marketing. They provide individuals all the information, loan applications and general information regarding downtown development.

9. As part of the tourism office, showcase pictures of redeveloped properties and create some excitement. Have the Mayor hold a ribbon cutting for the next residential property grand opening, issue a press release and create a special event.
10. The connection between Limestone College and the downtown area is prime for redevelopment. It has the potential to attract students, faculty, retirees and empty nesters to the area. Between the downtown area and the 17 acres on the Milliken site, great opportunity exists for the eventual harvesting.
11. The right people need to get involved. This is a community garden of sorts. Develop their work plan, plant the seeds, work the plan and reap the fruits of their labor. See what other communities may have done with similar circumstances and do the same thing. Why not mimic their success? The time is now while the market is reorienting itself. The time is now!



B. Create a retail strategy and recruitment program:

- submitted by Matt Kennell

The City of Gaffney should work in partnership with the Gaffney Chamber of Commerce, the newly formed Gaffney Downtown Business Association, individual businesses, downtown property owners, and real estate brokers on a coordinated retail recruitment and retention program for the downtown area. In addition to providing needed products and services for existing residents, downtown retail is a key element necessary to attract more people to live in downtown Gaffney and within the city limits.

A successful retail program would improve the retail environment in Gaffney by retaining the best retailers, expanding retail potential, and recruiting new retailers which are desired by the Gaffney community and have the best chance for long term success. Recent initiatives in Gaffney such as the new City Hall and adjacent park, the new galleries and proposed community theater, along with some very good established retailers and well known restaurants provide an excellent base to build on if a sound strategy is followed. The ULI team talked to many Gaffney residents and business persons who believed that more and “finer” restaurants and shops would be supported in the downtown area but experience from other cities leads us to recommend that these shops and restaurants are not likely to discover downtown Gaffney unless recruited in a well organized manner using real data.

To this end, the first and maybe most important part of any retail strategy is to conduct a demand analysis based on existing and potential retail demand for space in a defined area using both demographic (population and income statistics) and psychographic (buying habits) of the Gaffney market area. The Chamber of Commerce or other area economic development organizations may have some of this information or there are a number of good consulting firms that can help determine what the market for retail is in Gaffney. Members of the ULI team can provide some names of such consultants upon request.

Once the market demand is determined, it is suggested that at least a part time city employee or an employee of a partner organization such as the Chamber of Commerce or downtown business organization be dedicated to recruiting new quality retailers and restaurants to the downtown Gaffney area using the data from the study to demonstrate demand for the goods and services that are sought after. As an independent, non – commissioned recruiter, this person can bring qualified prospects to Gaffney property owners and brokers who then can make the deals necessary to fill storefronts with quality businesses. These prospects may be local businesses who would consider opening a second or third location or out of the region businesses that may have been successful in other cities, particularly cities of similar size and demographics in North or South Carolina. It would also be helpful for the retail recruiter to have a “tool box” of small incentives that they could use to help attract retailers to the area, particularly in the first year or two of this effort. “Tools” that have worked well in other cities include forgivable start up loans, façade improvement grants and loans, and waivers of fees such as building permits or business license fees.

C. Establish Incentive Programs

- submitted by Fred Delk

Local Program Ideas—An Economic Development Tool Kit

A Local Bank-Funded Loan Pool:

Many communities trying to revitalize downtowns turn to local banks in an effort to support the financing of their project. Low-interest loan pools are an attractive way for banks to participate in the process spread the risk and infuse capital into the target area.

Most loan pools involve a number of banks, but a single financial institution is all that is necessary. Generally the participant with the largest contribution to the pool is tasked with servicing the program and will handle all applications and payments. Some pools dedicate funds at normal market rates to a specific geographic area. Occasionally pools will find ways to reduce rates for qualified borrowers (e.g., Prime rate minus 2%). Loans are secured, and risk is evaluated according to normal lending practices.

In some cases local governments or development authorities can provide funding to buy down interest rates for borrowers through contributions to the fund or direct payments of a portion of the interest by the entity.

Non-Profit-Facilitated “Bargain Sales”:

This tool, available to eleemosynary not for profits, can allow a tax break to a property owner who sells a building or land to the non-profit entity for less than its appraised value. This can facilitate the purchase of property at reduced costs.



Community Development Block Grants:

The City of Gaffney has access to Community Development Block Grant monies annually which can be utilized in a variety of ways to benefit the downtown redevelopment effort. City of Gaffney staff is well-versed in eligible activities and can develop some creative programming for any portion of funds the city may wish to allocate to these efforts, including the following: (a) Façade Loans/Grants. Matching grants and loans can result in substantial accomplishments, and these type improvements are often catalysts for adjacent property owners to initiate improvements. (b) Sign Loan/Grants-The sign loan program is another eligible activity for the use of CDBG funds. These programs can be particularly successful if sign design standards result in creative or unusual signage. Sign programs can be funded by a number of sources.

TEA 21 Highway Grants:

The City of Gaffney can receive TEA 21 and other Transportation Enhancement monies

through the SC Department of Transportation. Downtown revitalization and transportation improvement projects are generally eligible activities. These funds can be used for pedestrian improvements in some cases. This type enhancement of sidewalks and lighting in the area of a redevelopment project is often a good enticement to a privately funded project.

City of Gaffney Fee Waivers:

The City of Gaffney could create policies, which result in substantial cost savings for a qualifying development project in the downtown.

Landfill Fee Waivers: for example the city could offer a subsidy of 50% of landfill fees for projects which meet qualifications established to assist the downtown effort.

Construction Permit Fee Waivers: Full waiver of construction permit fees on qualifying projects.

Business License Reduction: Qualifying projects could receive a reduction in business license fees.

Assistance with Historic “Part 1” Historic Preservation Tax Credit Applications

The City of Gaffney may wish to provide technical assistance for property owners to determine if their buildings are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore are eligible for federal and state historic preservation tax credits. A Historic Preservation Certification Application is the first part of the process used by the federal Department of the Interior in determining eligibility. The city could provide this service directly, or could contract this service with a local preservation consultant.

Create a development “library” for targeted projects:

Redevelopment of existing structures is particularly difficult to achieve. Private developers often avoid these projects because of the high up-front risk and the investment in time and money required just to determine if the project will work. The City of Gaffney should consider creation of a development library for particularly complex properties, and invest in studies and assessments that make that early determination by a private developer or development partner easier. Environmental assessments, structural analyses, land surveys, historic resources surveys and other documentation/evaluation tools can be paid for by the city using, for example CDBG or Brownfield’s funds, and utilized by a series of private developers until an ultimate deal is accomplished. This library of project information can grow with each developer's planning process, paving the way for a later development effort.

State and Federal Funding Ideas

Tax Increment District

South Carolina law allows the creation of a Tax Increment District (TIF) in areas that have been determined “blighted or economically distressed”. The district does not result in any increase in tax but rather will re-direct tax dollars to a special “tax increment fund” to pay for public improvements defined in a project plan. TIF districts can operate up to 15 years and the law allows local governments to sell bonds or borrow from financial institutions or from a local government general fund for improvement projects.

Tax Credits

The Federal and State Governments offer tax credits to promote and encourage private development, especially for development that has a public benefit but may prove too costly or unfeasible without these special incentives. The City of Gaffney staff should have a basic understanding of tax credits and other resources and can serve as a clearinghouse and referral agency for these benefits.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits:

Currently, federal law provides a 20% federal income tax credit for income-producing, rehabilitated buildings. This federal credit is available for buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing to a district. All rehabilitation work must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

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South Carolina Historic Preservation Tax Credits

The SC Historic Preservation Tax Credit creates a similar statewide program available to both income-producing and residential properties. This incentive can reverse disinvestment and blight in historic neighborhoods through home ownership and is ideal for historically designated areas in downtown Gaffney. The tax credit is particularly attractive as a way to assist downtown redevelopment projects.



The South Carolina Historic Preservation Tax Credit:

1. Creates a **state tax credit** for the rehabilitation of historic properties. This includes both income-producing and non-income-producing properties.
2. Creates a **20%** state tax credit for rehabilitating an income-producing historic property. Rehabilitation must be substantial. (Can be combined with current 20% federal tax credit).
3. Creates a **20%** state tax credit for rehabilitating **residential historic properties**. Rehabilitation must be substantial; expenses must exceed \$25,000 within a 24-month period. In the case of a historic house located in a HUD target area, a 25% state tax credit is available. The maximum credit for a residential rehabilitation is \$30,000 per dwelling unit.

Property Tax Abatement:

South Carolina Law to allow abatement of tax increases for up to 20 years for historic property that has been rehabilitated. The “Bailey Bill” allows local governments to set the minimum expenditure allowed for each project, and the length of time the property taxes are abated. This results in a freeze of local taxes at the pre-rehab level and can result in substantial tax savings to the owner of a historic building.

SC Textile Communities Revitalization Tax Credit:

Buildings in Gaffney formerly used for the textile industry may be eligible for this credit. *Abandoned textile manufacturing and related facilities* are defined in the law as "a site that is designed for use or has in fact been used as a textile manufacturing facility or uses ancillary to it and is located in South Carolina". "Abandoned" is defined as "at least eighty percent of the facilities of the eligible site has been continuously closed to business or otherwise non operational for a period of a least one year immediately preceding the time at which the determination is to be made."

The law offers two options, a **25% credit against real property taxes, or a 25% state income tax credit** Both credits are calculated on "*rehabilitation expenses*" which are "the expenses incurred in the rehabilitation of the eligible site, excluding the cost of acquiring the eligible site or the cost of personal property maintained at the eligible site."

Properties that qualify for the *state historic tax credit* can also take advantage of this incentive. (S.C. Code of Laws, Section 12-6-3535 allows a 10% state income tax credit for properties qualifying for the 20% federal income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic income-producing properties.)

Low Income Housing Tax Credits:

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program is run by the IRS and allows companies to invest in low-income housing, while receiving 10 years of tax credits. This important program works with state housing finance agencies to administer the program on a state level. Housing credit units are privately owned by developers and are run at a profit. These credits can be used for low-income, elderly, and handicapped residential projects. In exchange for the Housing Credits, the developer must reserve either 20 percent of the units for residents who earn 50 percent or less of the median income or 40 percent of the units for residents who earn 60 percent or less of the median income. The financial incentive provides a dollar-for-dollar reduction in federal tax liability for developers of income-restricted housing.



The South Carolina Housing Finance and Development Authority (SC HFDA) administers the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program. This agency directs a competitive, unbiased application process and closely monitors existing projects to ensure their compliance with Internal

Revenue Service guidelines. Gaffney should seek out and develop a relationship with the SC HFDA and direct projects to this agency and support appropriate applications for tax credits.

New Market Tax Credits

The New Markets Tax Credit Program permits taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated areas. The credit provided to the investor totals 39 percent of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period.

The New Market Tax Credits program promises to channel billions of dollars of new private investment into economically distressed cities; neighborhoods and rural areas and downtown Gaffney South Carolina is eligible. The City of Gaffney will find that the most efficient way to use the NMTC program is to work with one or more of the large national financial institutions that have obtained credits as opposed to applying directly for a tax credit allocation. No South Carolina banks are in the program, but most large Atlanta based banks are participants. The City of Gaffney should consider seeking out these banks and considering participation in the program

Environmental Assistance

Environmental issues will be one of the major obstacles in the redevelopment of downtown Gaffney and the surrounding neighborhoods. Asbestos, underground storage tanks, chemical spills, and railroad right-of-ways will all present environmental challenges. Fortunately there are resources to assist both public and private development.

EPA Brownfield's Programs:

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a number of grant programs that could provide substantial assistance to the downtown redevelopment project. Brownfield's Assessment Grants and Petroleum Assessment Grants applications are available each December. These grants are for up to \$200,000 each, and can last 3 years. Funding can pay for Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental assessments of eligible properties, as well as development of health and safety and clean-up plans. These grants, if successful, can lead to eligibility to substantial loan/grant programs for the actual clean up from the EPA. These programs have the added benefit of creating a permanent revolving loan for environmental clean up at the local level.

An application for EPA Assessment Grants is relatively simple to prepare and the likelihood of successful funding is good. Environmental assessment of any sub-standard redevelopment structure is likely to be required. These funds can be a key part of the tool kit for Gaffney.

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC):

This state agency can assist the City of Gaffney with the application for the EPA grants and may also have funding available for similar projects in the absence of such grants. If substantial clean-up projects are necessary, DHEC will likely manage the Voluntary Cleanup Contract, which will protect the property owner from future environmental liability.

D. Develop an Arts and Cultural Strategy for Gaffney:

Using Arts and Culture as an Economic Driver in Gaffney

- submitted by Fred Delk

Downtown Gaffney is in an especially favorable position to capitalize on the arts and culture in the redevelopment effort. Artists love downtowns, and the older buildings, creative spaces and lower costs of the downtown area can provide opportunities for arts and culture to flourish. Cultural assets already in downtown Gaffney include parks, the Michael Gaffney Log Home, the CAVA Gallery and the plans for the Gaffney Little Theater. Existing cultural assets like parks and community events, concerts and art shows are a good base of activity that should be built upon.



Consider forming an Arts Coalition Group

Gaffney Arts and Cultural Organizations should consider forming a coalition group, a unified effort to develop and enhance the artistic, cultural, and historic aspects of Cherokee County. Recruiting the assistance of the SC Arts Commission in this effort and fully engaging Limestone College, the Cherokee County Schools. Creation and promotion of cultural activities at all levels and at any location is positive for Gaffney and Cherokee County. The spin off advantages and the occasional use of downtown as a venue for performances and visual art shows will enhance the living environment of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

CAVA Gallery

The Cities plan to utilize the old Gaffney Post Office for the CAVA art gallery and Visitors Center is a great first step in using arts as an economic development tool to bring creativity and activity to Gaffney. Bringing this public use to a building of substantial significance is a positive move. Gaffney officials should consider related active uses like classroom space and community activity rooms to increase use and exposure. It is also important to link this facility to other cultural amenities and downtown businesses through cross promotions and signage.

Gaffney Little Theater:

The cities planning process to support the Gaffney Little Theater in their proposed building renovation can also have substantial effect on creating an arts “buzz” that will help the downtown revitalization effort. Keeping the Little Theater downtown had unanimous support of the Gaffney TAPS team. A number of opportunities and alternatives exist that could enhance this project and create cross promotional use of the space. Limestone College should be at the table with the city and the Little Theater as the planning for this project continues.

Cultural Gateway to the Downtown:

The locations of the Gaffney City Hall and the Michael Gaffney Cabin have created the beginnings of a “cultural gateway to the downtown area, and the potential to enhance the connections between downtown Gaffney and Limestone College. The plans to move the city-owned Visitors Center to the Old Post Office leave an opportunity for conversion of this building into artist studio space or some other medium to high activity cultural use. The Capri Theater across the street from the current Visitors Center offers a unique and disappearing cultural amenity, and opportunity for partnerships with Limestone College. The plan for this “gateway” was more fully explored by an earlier study, and should be strongly considered.



ered.

Limestone College:

One of the strongest cultural assets in Gaffney is Limestone College. The location near the downtown in the Historic District should provide many opportunities for linkages and collaboration that could help spur the creative development of downtown. The Limestone Art Department publishes an annual arts calendar with over 20 major events, music, theater and visual arts. The use of downtown in cross-promotion of these events or even providing venues for a few of these activities would strengthen both Downtown Gaffney and Limestone. A special movie showing co-sponsored by the City and Limestone at the Capri Theater, A preview of a theater event with music at a function in the park, an outdoor art stroll on Limestone Street or utilization of an empty storefront to display art, all these activities will promote and enhance both Limestone College and Gaffney.

Other Important Arts and Cultural Drivers:

These organizations and locations provide additional activities in the area of historic preservation, arts, culture, and community awareness. They provide a sense of community that makes Gaffney a unique place. These agencies and others should all be partners in the process of revitalizing downtown Gaffney and making it a unique and creative place to live.

- SC Arts Commission
- Cherokee County Arts Council
- Cherokee County History and Preservation Society
- City Hall Gallery
- Kings Mountain State Park
- Cherokee County History and Arts Museum
- Cherokee County Veterans Museum

Ideas to help create a “buzz” among residents and bring in tourists from the interstate...

1. Create a Historic District Residential and Garden Tour
2. Create a Downtown Residential Tour
3. Host a walking tour of local and regional art in the downtown area.

Artist Housing and Art Studios:

Art studios are a natural use for downtown buildings in Gaffney. Existing structures in and adjacent to the downtown area are ideal for art studios, and possibly conversion to live/work space for artists. Buildings in the downtown can easily be converted to studios with a central gallery. These spaces can become activity centers for evening art show openings as artist coops lease the galleries for events from private shows to parties to public openings.

Most artists prefer raw space with little up fit provided, preferring instead to build out and personalize spaces. Art studios can be created from spaces providing little more than partition walls and a centralized bathroom. Some artists require a sink and running water. Industrial artists, sculptors, glass blowers, furniture makers may require large spaces and will need to be segregated from other studios for noise and safety reasons.

Art space as an economic development driver has been widely exploited all across the country and numerous agencies; white papers and funding models exist. A number of these resources are available upon request.



F. Marketing Gaffney

- submitted by Pat Mason

Proposed Objectives:

1. Leverage and coordinate the existing destination marketing efforts to brighten the Gaffney “brand” as a great place to visit and live for skilled, educated, entrepreneurial and affluent families of all ages.
2. Add new programs that will bring traction and improve in-bound relocation frequency of closure.
3. Build the Gaffney visitor and “in-migration” market share among the competitive set of southern destinations.

Current Conditions:

1. The town currently funds media in the form of outdoor boards, and print ads in Sandlapper Magazine, CarolinaLiving and Blue Ridge magazine. The message theme is to attract visitation for small town history experiences. See below the current full-page ad running in CarolinaLiving.



2. The town operates an attractive Welcome Center and art gallery in the down town area with professional staff that also fulfills inquiries. Unofficial observations by staff suggest that there is very little relocation traffic and most of those are seeking low cost land out in the County. A few come from FL. Others from the Hendersonville area seeking lower cost living.
3. There are virtually no private sector residential community developers marketing their offerings in the immediate region.
4. An informal review of school population reflects flat to negative enrollments in most years.
5. According to CarolinaLiving National Change of Address Audits, in the 36 months ending 10/07, 28 families that “registered” as they completed the 26-question Caro-

lina Lifestyle Survey™ relocated into the Gaffney regional 293 zip code. Of those, 35% were over age 50, 77% have earned college degrees and 10% indicated intention to start a business. Note: both moves to Gaffney were reported in the April 2007 NCOA Audit. (see table)

Moved to City	Count
Inman	5
Spartanburg	5
Moore	4
Duncan	3
Boiling Spgs	2
Gaffney	2
Roebuck	2
Chesnee	1
Landrum	1
Laurens	1
Lyman	1
Pacolet	1
Grand Total	28

6. The origin MSA for the 28 moved families was as follows:

MSA Name	Count
Not from an MSA	5
Orlando, FL MSA	3
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	2
Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, CMSA	2
Pittsburgh, PA MSA	2
Auburn-Opelika, AL MSA	1
Biloxi-Gulfport-Pascagoula, MS MSA	1
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY MSA	1
Cleveland-Akron, OH CMSA	1
El Paso, TX MSA	1
Jacksonville, FL MSA	1
Mobile, AL MSA	1
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island	1
Punta Gorda, FL MSA	1
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA CMSA	1
San Luis Obispo-Atascadero-Paso Robles, CA MSA	1
Syracuse, NY MSA	1
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL MSA	1
York, PA MSA	1
Grand Total	28

Recommendations:

Gradually increase the Gaffney visitor marketing budget and include a stronger suggestion in the message relating to lifestyle. Insist on a first class design and clear branding logo with slogan/caption. Gear up for a sustained media presence with full consideration for the competitive environment and agonizing lead-time from inquiry to actual visit and potential relocation.

Build a beefy section to the Gaffney web site with rich content data on living there. Taxes, history, cost of living, school options, housing costs, neighborhoods, political environment, churches, civic clubs, life long learning, entrepreneurial opportunities, health care, low crime, etc. Fund appropriate search engine marketing tactics so as to insure competitive rankings.

Establish a fulfillment package to be called “Gaffney Discovery Kit” that will be advertised online and in print ads and be sold for \$12. Public and private sector entities wanting to include their insert materials will pay a reasonable fee. Successful examples flourish at the Greenville and Asheville Chambers.

SC-PRT national marketing budget is flush with \$10 million for FY 2009 on top of \$31 million for FY 2008. This is way over and above traditional budgets amounting to \$3-4 million/yr. These funds are aggressively being dispersed via grants to rural communities and Gaffney should apply for these grants.



VII. Key Initiatives for the Strategic Action Plan

-from TAP presentation (directed by Mary Beth Branham)

- Fund & hire the staff for community economic development & code enforcement
- Develop design guidelines and enhancement of the commercial maintenance code
- Fully develop the Theatre/Arts potential as an economic driver and residential catalyst
- Create a retail and restaurant recruitment plan
- Create small business incentive package
- Educate real estate and residential development partners on existing opportunities & incentives
- Strengthen alliances with Public Schools, Limestone & Spartanburg Community College
- Strengthen pedestrian/bike access from Limestone through Historic District to downtown
- Enhance downtown image: lighting, neighborhood watch, etc.

VIII. Conclusion

Gaffney has a great opportunity to make things happen. After multiple successful site visits, elite interviews, and a productive visioning session, the ULI team has come up with several recommendations for the town that are outlined in this report. The information below is the take-home message from the TAP presentation to the town of Gaffney. Hopefully through this information and the multiple steps outlined in detail in the previous pages, Gaffney can secure their future.

The Three C's for Gaffney's Success:

Clarify the Vision: consolidate existing plans

Communicate the Vision: market to internal audiences & involve the public

Commit to implementation: allocate resources & staff

Remember, the key to attracting and retaining residential growth is to continue to create a great place to live, work, and play. Today's economic development depends on creating a sense of place, not just recruiting industry.

The New Economy: Quality of life = Economic Success