



For Immediate Release. For More Information, Contact Margaret Woodard at 706-722-8000.

Augusta Downtown Development Authority to Begin Retail Recruitment

The Downtown Development Authority announced today the beginning of an aggressive retail recruitment initiative for the urban core.

Chairman Cameron Nixon says, "This is the natural next step in our revitalization strategy. The DDA has worked diligently over the last five years to increase downtown housing units. With 75 new units completed last year, a 99% occupancy rate and with the successful efforts in Laney Walker and East Boundary, we need retail to support the existing base and attract future investments."

Executive Director Margaret Woodard adds, "These are exciting times for downtown Augusta. With the recent grand opening of the TEE Center and the possibility of a future college campus, we are perfectly poised to begin a retail program."

The DDA has hired Retail Strategies LLC a retail consulting firm offering market analysis, strategic planning and retail recruitment. The three year contract will cost \$40,000 to \$60,000 and will involve private sector involvement. To date, Augusta Tomorrow, ARC, The Emporium, and Golden Living Centers of Augusta have contributed financially to the project.

Nixon says, "The demographic reports alone are worth the investment. The GAP analysis will be available for existing businesses to look at expansion efforts and maintain a competitive edge as well as attract new retail." The project also includes a building inventory, strategic plan and recruitment strategy.

Mayor Deke Copenhaver says, "Based on national demographic trends showing the mass migration of Millennials and Baby Boomers to the urban core, Augusta is extremely well positioned to begin the aggressive recruitment of retail to our city center. I fully support the efforts of the DDA as I believe we have now reached a tipping point in our downtown revitalization efforts with great things to come."

The DDA Board will finalize the agreement at their May Board Meeting but have proceeded in order for Augusta to be represented at the International Shopping Center Conference in May.

###