

# 2006 Spring Update



The Downtown Development Authority of Augusta was re-established in 1992 by Act of General Assembly to renew, revitalize and beautify distressed areas of downtown Augusta. As an independent public agency that is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Richmond County Commission, DDA works with local government and the private sector to strengthen the economic climate of downtown Augusta.

DDA's mission is to lead a coordinated strategy of economic development and civic design strengthening downtown Augusta as:

- The heart of the city of all Augustans;
- The economic hub of the region;
- A prosperous place for business and institutions; and
- An attractive urban environment for residents and visitors.

# 2006 Milestones

Building on accomplishments of 2005, and with the strategic plan in place for 2006, DDA will continue to guide the redevelopment of downtown Augusta.



## Organization

### Strategic Plan

Driving the vision of downtown requires a strategic plan. On February 9, 2006 at the Board of Directors Meeting, the Board approved and adopted a strategic operating plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide a clear understanding of downtown Augusta's current situation and identify critical issues and challenges relative to the downtown business district. The plan includes the DDA 4-point approach to revitalization

## Economic Restructuring

### Recruitment Package

To recruit new retail and businesses downtown effectively an informational and marketing package is vitally important. DDA has raised \$4500 in private funds to produce phase I of this initiative. The Profile Reports are completed and available at the DDA offices and will be available in PDF format on the new Downtown Development Authority website on May 15<sup>th</sup>. For more information, please visit [www.augustadda.org](http://www.augustadda.org). The DDA may now begin an aggressive retail and business recruitment program.



### Business Improvement District

The DDA has taken the role as the sponsoring organization that is willing to undertake the work in establishing a BID. A downtown BID is funded by property owners who voluntarily increase their property taxes to pay for functions that include enhances public safety services, enhanced maintenance and trash removal, planning an design, marketing and image enhancement, economic development, special events and parking management. The informational newsletter has been written, produced and mailed to 800 downtown property owners.

## Design

### Parking Study

Carl Walker, Inc. completed a parking study for the DDA in April 2005. A review of existing parking management practices indicates that a more effective and efficient strategy in downtown Augusta is needed. A site visit to Athens was completed in March 2006 and the DDA is currently preparing a cost/revenue budget that reflects the costs and incomes associated with implementing a parking management system.



# 2006 Board of Directors

**Paul King**, Chair / The Rex Group; **Julian Roberts**, Vice Chair / Augusta Information Technologies; **Dr. James Carter, III**, Secretary / Property Owner; **Phil Wahl**, Treasurer / Bank of America; **Steven Kendrick** / Augusta Blueprint; **Brad Owens** / Owens Contracting; **Commissioner J.R. Hatney**; Staff: **Margaret Woodard**, Executive Director; **Sherry Miller**, Assistant

## Design

### Demonstration Block Streetscape Project

The DDA has put together a team of public/private partners to complete a model streetscape project on the west side of 10<sup>th</sup> Street between Broad and Ellis St. The project would include streetlamps, new sidewalks with brick pavers, street furniture, trees and landscaping. Currently a budget and time-line are in production. The DDA hopes this project will serve as a stimulus to complete a block-by-block streetscape project for downtown Augusta.



## Design

### Mothball Ordinance

This year, with review and support from the DDA, the mothballing ordinance was passed to set standards of how a building must be secured. Mothballing is defined as a method used to protect a vacant structure from weather damage and vandals while preserving the structure for future use. The goal is to protect the property to allow the owner to plan the property's future, or acquire funds for preservation, rehabilitation or restoration.



## Promotion

### Saturday Market On Broad

The DDA believes that promoting downtown to residents and visitors is key to the revitalization process. The Saturday Market has received funding from the commission that will cease this calendar year. The Market needs \$40,000 per year to operate at a break-even point. To date the market has received \$10,000 in private sponsorships, \$10,800 in in-kind donations and a new campaign "Friends of the Market" has netted \$1500. Vendor participation for the opening market on May 6<sup>th</sup> has increased by 100 percent. In addition, grant application funding in the amount of \$75,000 has been applied for to support next year's continued operation.

