



**Columbia Area  
Development Partnership**  
Richland County's Economic Engine

**Columbia Area Development Partnership (CADP)  
Board Meeting Minutes  
November 24, 2025 | 11:30A.M.  
Parker Poe Conference Room  
1221 Main St., 1100, Columbia SC29201  
Jessica Mackey, Co-Chair Damon Jeter, Co-Chair**

**Board Members Present:** Damon Jeter, Co-Chair; Jessica Mackey, Co-Chair; Kim Smith; Stephen Cutler; Robert Dozier; Rick Shippey; Tracy Dunn; Heather Mitchell (*via Zoom*)

**CADP Staff Present:** Jeff Ruble, Melissa Harrill, Kate Bugby, Carrie Turner, Terry Wise

**Guest Present:** Ray Jones; Beth Webb

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Co-Chair Mackey called the meeting to order at 11:35
- II. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Co-Chair Mackey made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Stephen Cutler and adopted unanimously, without debate.
- III. **APPROVAL OF 9-22-25 MEETING MINUTES:** Robert Dozier made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Mackey and approved unanimously, without debate.
- IV. **REPORTS:**
  - A. **Financial Report**

Melissa Harrill gave detailed report of finances noting that she is working closely with the accountants; giving details for the FY25-26 budget showing various categories of expenditures utilizing charts and graphs for clarity.
  - B. **Report of Co-Chair on Strategic Planning**

***Ad Hoc Committee of County Council:*** Co-Chair Mackey gives a Strategic Plan update. addressing the current progress, initiatives and objectives for the goals of the strategic plan.

With the focus on strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities The County strongly supports the current strategic goals of investing in economic development and foresees economic development continuing to impact the workforce, quality of life and better establishing Richland County as a desired location for quality of life and work. Prioritizing for growing population and increasing infrastructure needs.

Jeff Ruble speaks to the Strategic Planning from the Economic Development perspective. Working to establish better measures to track the needs, outcomes and progress, while staying competitive.

C. **New-Projects**

Jeff Ruble gave a follow up on new projects, identifying 7 projects, including, descriptions and the status of each project.

*(No Action Taken on Reports)*

V. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None Existing

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Commercial Development Policy**

Jeff Ruble gave a presentation and background on the Commercial Development Program. The program was created in response to: more structured parking, high property tax rates, and to spur Economic Development. The evolution began in 2014 with student housing and in 2018 the program expanded. By 2021 parameters needed to be adjusted, in 2023 began to address the City's request, and in 2025 Workforce Housing became a concern.

Jeff Ruble informed the board of the current guidelines, for commercial development and discussed recommended changes. A crucial recommendation is to commission housing, parking, childcare studies to inform overall goals. In addition, recommending to continue to operate with guidelines, not by ordinance; another was to incorporate the City into the decision-making process for projects in the City of Columbia; also add critical milestones to the application process, to include application fees.

Co-Chair Jeter asked the board, if there were any questions. Heather Mitchell states her support of the initiatives, stating this type of thinking and research is really powerful, recognizing there is a need and asking, how do we get there, from a staffing and funding standpoint, to be able to commission some of these studies that give us the data to make smart decisions. Suggesting that the CADP take a look at where we want to be in 3 years to do these studies and have more comprehensive policies and strategies in place and figuring out where the CADP budget should be. Heather Mitchell noted, once these strategies and policies are in place, when engaging with the private sector, and seeking funding these policies will allow for stronger talking points. Heather inquired about the time line for the changes in policy, what exactly is the Board recommendation to the EDC.

Jeff suggests taking the recommendations before the ED Ad-Hoc committee on 12-2-25 and also meeting with the City for further discussion.

Co-Chair Mackey acknowledged from County Council's perspective, understanding the need for a new Commercial Development policy and expresses, in the interim, we've paused some new commercial development as we work towards developing the new policies; Jeff has put together a list of recommendations. Noting the changes would be a multi-step process and the City of Columbia is a huge player in the discussions, the current policy has been in place and the developers do have a understanding of the current policy. The P3 comes into play once we have completed the studies, and have the data, we go to the city to say, here is what we have, using the information, as a form of early communication, to the community, notifying folks of the upcoming changes and here's why.

Ray Jones added, as the board is thinking through the process some changes can be fairly immediate. He explains, there is no need to delay the application fee or the process of communication with the City, although the process is multi-step, changes can be made. First step being the application fee, you can also make them aware that incentive up to 50% is no longer the standard. Forecasting that the current policy and guidelines are evolving.

Heather asks, if it's helpful to support the recommendation to the EDC. Co-Chair Mackey responds, yes, if you choose to do so and if the Board desires, she would entertain a motion.

Co-Chair Jeter, stated that in concept, we can all agree to support the goals that CADP is trying to accomplish, without delaying the process and called for a motion.

Stephen Cutler made a motion, that the Board endorse the recommended policy changes as presented, understanding that it is fluid and subject to change based on research data. data. The motion was seconded by Kim Smith and approved unanimously without debate.

Heather Mitchell asked to amend the motion and add the wording:

"endorses the Commercial Development policy changes." to the current motion, Stephen Cutler accepted the motion to amend.

Co-Chair Jeter asked if all members were in favor of the amended motion, all members approved unanimously without debate.

**Executive Session Item for Discussion:** Co-Chair Jeter called for a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:05pm to discuss the following item.

#### **B. CEO Goal Setting**

- VII. Adjourn:** Stephen Cutler made a motion to adjourn at 1:45pm so moved by Kim Smith, approved unanimously without debate. Meeting adjourned.







