

Cities Mean **BUSINESS**

A photograph of a man performing a fire-breathing act on a stage. He is wearing a colorful, patterned shirt and dark pants, and is holding a torch that is emitting a large, bright flame. He is leaning back slightly, and his mouth is open as if he is breathing fire. In the background, there is a large screen displaying the letters "OB" and some stage equipment.

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The creative class

Attracting young,
creative professionals

What makes a city?

Mayors from across
the state weigh in

An ideal fit

Higher ed programs bring
new life to downtown areas

Letter from the **EDITOR**

What draws people to live in a city? Some would say it's the basic

services provided like police and fire protection, or infrastructure like water and sewer. Others might say it's the access to recreational and cultural amenities available to residents. Still others might point to quality of life attributes a city or town can provide.

This issue of *Cities Mean Business* magazine examines three perspectives on what draws people to live in cities and towns and what makes them attractive for job growth and economic development.

First, we look through the eyes of several South Carolina mayors to get their insight on the role of cities. From planning and economic growth to collaboration and a sense of community, these mayors from cities and towns of all sizes discuss their points of view on how cities build a sense of community for their residents.

Local leaders around the state also are doing more and more to integrate higher education institutions into the fabric of their downtowns. We've explored this in an article that focuses on four growing partnerships that are bringing a variety of institutions to downtown spaces. Local leaders say the long-term economic development implications of this type of partnership are huge.

Tying directly to the idea of locating higher education programs downtown is the value of recruiting and retaining young talent and "creative class" workers in a community. We've also included an article that reveals what three cities are doing to attract and keep young and creative talent in their hometowns.

In these times of economic stress, it's even more important to stay focused on the long-range plans that make our cities and towns magnets for job growth and economic development. Join us in reading about how that's happening in communities of all sizes around the state.



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Editor

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A city is more than just an address. Several mayors across the state in municipalities large and small give their insight about what being a city means.

Cover photo: A fire-eating display during a presentation at Pecha Kucha Beaufort. (Photo/Riann Mihiylov)



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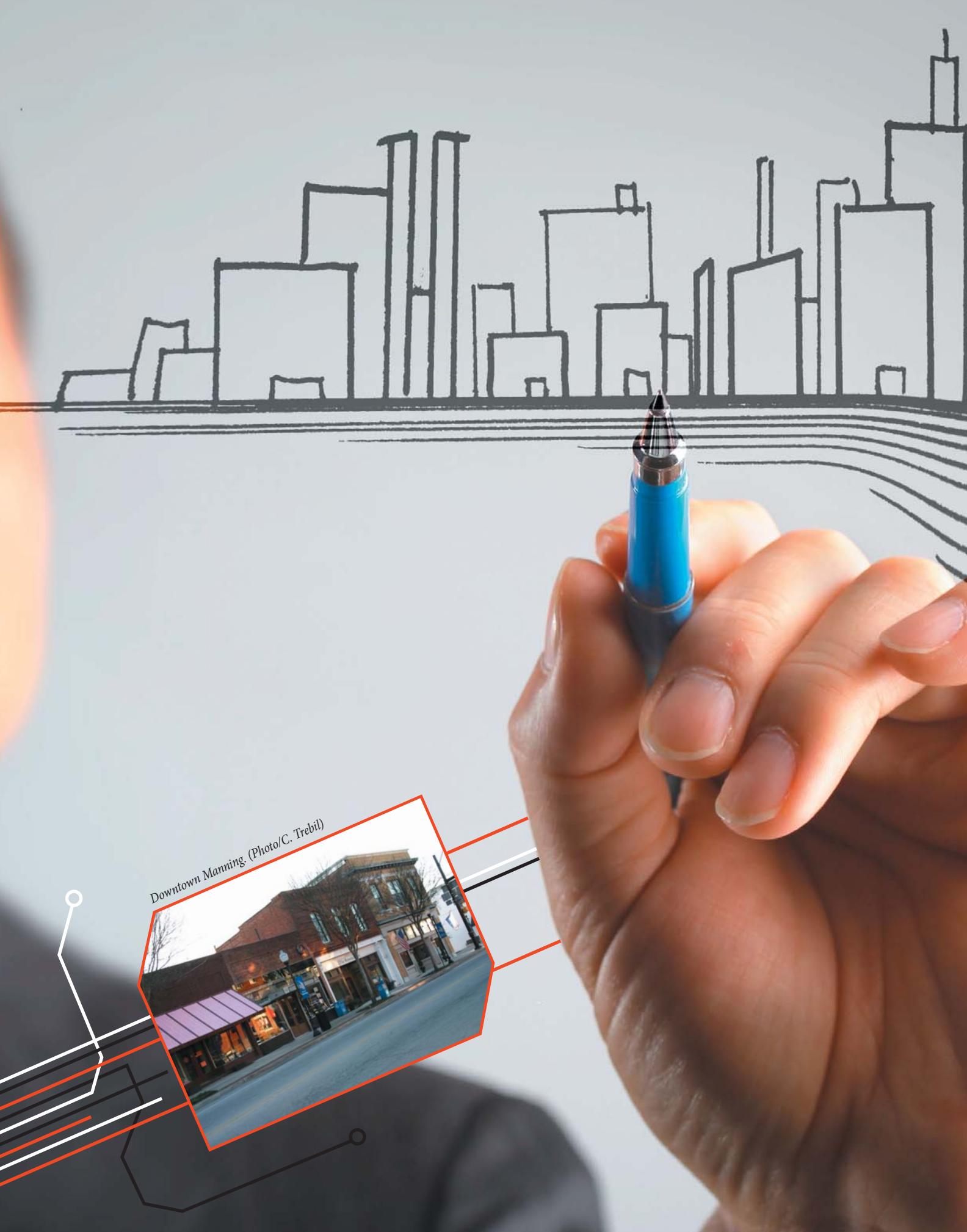
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By Amy Geier Edgar, Contributing writer

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Higher ed programs bringing new life to downtown areas

By Amy Geier Edgar, Contributing writer



Downtown Manning. (Photo/C. Trebil)



What makes a city?

When people talk about cities, many things might come to mind: city hall and local government, or the entity that provides utilities, sanitation, public safety and transportation, or the quality of life that comes from living in a city or town.

Indeed, cities are all of these things, but they also are so much more. Cities are where people live, work and play. They are economic engines for the state. They plan for the future, pro-

vide a safe and welcoming place for residents to call home, and care for those most in need. Cities are multi-functioning and ever-changing.

The Municipal Association of South Carolina spoke to several mayors across the state, in municipalities large and small, to get their insight about what being a city means.

PLANNING

An important function of cities is the planning process. Required by

statute to complete and update a comprehensive plan, cities use these plans to create goals for the physical, social and economic growth, and development and redevelopment of the area.

"It is important for cities to make sure that they are meeting the expectations of the residents, as well as those that they hope will move there," said Mayor Kevin Johnson.

"One way to meet those expectations is to have a long-range plan and



Crowds flocked to Greer City Park for the inaugural Freedom Blast on July 4, 2009. Attendance topped 8,000 by the end of the evening. (Photo/Steve Owen, city of Greer)

to keep that plan current. The long-range plan is also important as it relates to land development and zoning issues," he said.

Long-term planning is especially important for smaller cities, said Arvest Turner, mayor of the town of Ninety Six.

"The future of cities depends upon strategic planning. This is especially true for small towns. We struggle to survive with status quo. Long-term planning sets a goal to work toward. If we do nothing, small towns will cease to exist," Turner said.

It is the planning process that is the hallmark of cities — that ability to "control our own destinies, to control what we look like in the future," said Greer Mayor Rick Danner.

"Typically a city — as opposed to a county or a state — has a smaller defined area and a much better ability to do comprehensive and long-range planning," Danner said. "We have the tools to do planning on an intimate, detailed level."

Greenville Mayor Knox White agreed, saying, "One of the hallmarks of cities is we focus more intently on planning and on proactive economic planning."

Long-range plans help cities prepare for growth or recession, and help establish goals to get residents what they really need from their cities, according to Newberry Mayor Ed Kyzer.

Once a plan is in place, planning officials meet goals or adjust them as necessary. The end result can benefit the entire community, as seen in North Augusta, which has recently completed a \$20 million municipal center and

has a 5- to 10-year plan to add a second major municipal park, said Mayor Lark Jones.

Community design is an important part of long-range planning, said Little Mountain Mayor Buddy Johnson.

"Some designs only accommodate automobiles, there's no lighting, no sidewalks," Buddy Johnson said. "Unless you have the infrastructure set up on the front end, everything can be really bland."

A key to good planning is to gather residents' input and to have a focused, common goal, he said.

"If you don't have the input and don't plan in advance, you're always trying to catch up and don't have an enhanced quality of life," Buddy Johnson said. "When you look at why people want to live in certain areas, community design is very important."

QUALITY OF LIFE

A city with a good quality of life will attract more residents and is more desirable for businesses or industries looking for a place to locate.

These mayors agree that a strong system of parks and trails, playgrounds and recreation centers, and accessible green space all contribute to a good quality of life. A community with strong cultural programs, safe neighborhoods, good design and walkability also is appealing to residents.

The development of a new city park in Greer is the perfect example of the blending of park space and an urban environment,

Danner said. It has opportunities for residents to walk, play, relax or picnic.

"This is truly a city park," Danner said. "It offers opportunities for all the people in the city."

Recreation for everyone, from youth to senior citizens, is an important factor for quality of life, as well as events such as festivals and cultural events that interest residents, said Manning's Kevin Johnson.

"But I think things that add beauty and hospitality to the town are also amenities that residents appreciate," he added. "The quality of life for residents is automatically improved when residents live in a clean, litter-free environment where they are friendly and respect each other."

The availability of dependable services also is a factor in good quality of life, said Turner.

"We must continue to have our residents as a priority," Turner said. "By providing basic services such as fire protection, police protection, street and sanitation services, residents get a sense of security that they are being looked after by their town or city."

That sense of security is important so that residents can feel safe and comfortable leaving their homes and enjoying all their city has to offer, Kyzer said. Activities and entertainment options can include everything from theater and shopping, to skate parks and bowling, to music and festivals held on Main Street, Kyzer said.

For a larger city, such as Greenville, quality of life is impacted by positive redevelopment of blighted areas and smart growth and development, which considers environmental issues and the walkability factor for pedestrians, said White.

Other quality of life factors important to many citizens are good schools and educational opportunities. Libraries and neighborhood schools, such as the historic Little Mountain Elementary, provide a valuable education for the youngest residents and can become the center of the community, Buddy Johnson said.

BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Cities often establish their own identity and build a sense of community around their history or traditions, such as Little Mountain's school. Others find their identity through their geographical surroundings. However a city defines itself, it's important for a city to understand its assets and work with them, White said.

"People are in search of authenticity," White said. "The challenge is not to fall into the trap of what's trendy, but to look deeper."

A city needs to be about more than just an address for residents, Danner said. People need to have a sense of what the community is about. Although Greer is among the state's 20 largest cities, most people consider it a small town and that pleases local officials, he said.

"People here feel like they're part of a caring community," Danner added.

One challenge with growth is maintaining that sense of community, North Augusta's Jones said. "The sense of community is in the minds and hearts of residents, but there are things local government can do."

Establishing community parks and holding downtown festivals are ways to create a common identity, he said. Community building also is considered when planning, Jones said, adding that North Augusta is growing two major city parks and is contemplating whether to make them "identical twins" that offer the same amenities such as soccer fields and basketball courts, or "brother and sister" parks that offer different features. The major concern, Jones said, is making both parks accessible to all residents and maintaining that sense of community.

One way to build a sense of community is through citizen involvement, Kevin Johnson said.

"This involvement allows them to buy into decisions that impact their daily lives and makes them feel like they are a big part of the community. Involving key influencers and stakeholders in the discussions and decisions helps build a close-knit community. There is not much that can't be accomplished when you have a close knit community that feels like they are a part of what the city has to offer."

Turner agreed. "It takes all organizations, civic groups and residents working together to improve the quality of life for all involved. It is necessary to have public meetings, neighborhood gatherings, etc., to emphasize the importance of community pride."

Building that sense of community pride was so important in Little Mountain that officials developed a digital archive of their oral histories, artifacts and photos, and hired a media production company to produce a short documentary detailing the community's heritage.

"There have been a lot of people moving in who don't know of our history and



customs," Buddy Johnson said. "Unless you have something to show them, it's difficult to continue with our goals of having village characteristics."

PROVIDING SERVICES

Communities also are built around the services that cities provide, from essential services like public utilities and public safety, to social services like caring for the homeless or elderly.

"As citizens of a community, we need to help those who need it," Danner said.

Social services are valuable to a community, especially in tough economic times, said Kevin Johnson.

"I think it is important to emphasize that a community is no stronger than its weakest resident," he said. "A strong community is one in which everyone looks out for those in need."

Often, social responsibilities fall to cities alone, White said. Greenville has worked to address its homelessness issue by creating an extensive housing program and providing affordable housing, he said.

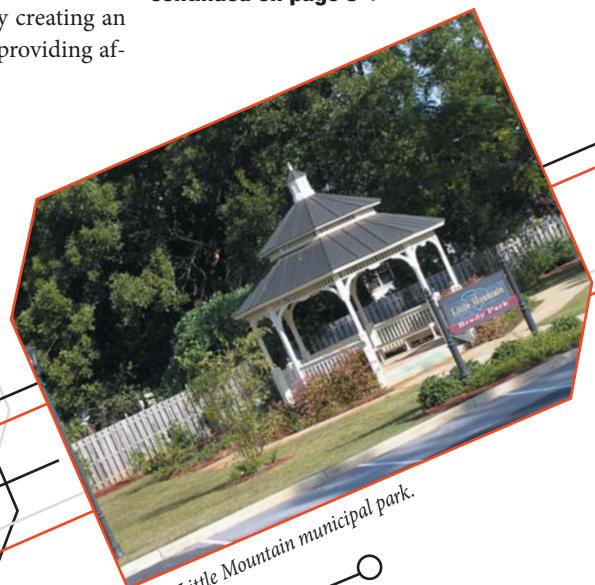
TRAINING/LEARNING FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Many times, cities can find solutions to their most challenging issues by looking to other cities.

"By learning from our neighbors, we can put into practice things that they are doing that will work well in our town," Kevin Johnson said. "More importantly, we can learn to avoid mistakes that might have been made by them. As we visit nearby cities or attend training sessions, some of the most valuable lessons are given when we share ideas, issues and concerns with our neighbors. We can also discover ways that we can work together which will give us the opportunity to serve our constituents in a more efficient manner."

The best way to improve a city or community is to look to other towns or cities that are successful, Danner said.

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Little Mountain municipal park.



The Newberry Fire House Conference Center draws residents and visitors downtown for meetings, training, weddings and other social events. (Photo/city of Newberry)

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"We've looked to Rock Hill, Aiken and others for insight to programs they may be offering," Danner said. "We usually look to cities that are larger, because they offer ideas on how we can move forward in the future as we grow."

White said he is a big believer in searching for best practices from other cities. He cites the Reedy River project as an example and said Greenville officials traveled to a number of other cities to review other river redevelopment projects.

"They provided valuable ideas," White said, "but it was also important for us to stay authentic to our own experience."

Along with best practices, training programs also are vital for councilmembers and city employees to keep abreast of changing technology and information, Danner said.

"Cities are competing in an environment of choice — businesses can choose to go anywhere," he said. "It's critical that we have training and ongoing education to compete."

While many elected officials receive technical training on their duties and responsibilities, Buddy Johnson said officials also should receive training on leadership and community building. He has attended various training sessions over the years in the South and in Boise, Idaho, and said the experience is invaluable.

"Economic development starts with good communities and good communities don't

just happen. They are built by leaders with a shared community vision," he said.

ECONOMIC ENGINES

Not only are cities the economic engines of the state, Danner said they are also "the engine that is going to pull the train of economic recovery."

Danner said he thinks economic recovery in South Carolina is linked directly to cities, noting that BMW and Boeing — two of the largest economic drivers in the state — are regional and statewide drivers.

In the new economy, more people want to live and work in urban areas, White said. When businesses are scouting for sites, cities with a good quality of life are a natural magnet, he said.

"It's no wonder that, across the country, urban areas are stronger in the recession," White said.

For small towns, regional cooperation is the best way to survive in this economy and to provide maximum services to citizens, said Kevin Johnson.

"We need to understand the importance of recruiting economic development as a region and understand that although

a particular development is not in our city, we can still benefit by the fact that the development is located within our region," he said.

Turner said small towns struggle financially, and it is crucial that they are involved with their local economic development associations within their counties.

"With that relationship, we can keep our small towns and surrounding areas in the loop of the considerations that will be made within the county," Turner said.

CITIES AND COUNTIES WORKING TOGETHER

Cities and counties need to have good working relationships to allow areas to grow and be progressive, Jones said.

In some areas, the relationship between city and county governments can be weak. Part of the issue is the fractured offering of services by cities, counties, the state and special purpose districts, Danner said. That leads to a lot of overlap. Still, "there definitely is a role for cities and the services they provide, and a role for counties and their services," Danner said. "There is also a future for collaborative efforts and even potential for other special purpose districts to offer an even higher level of service."

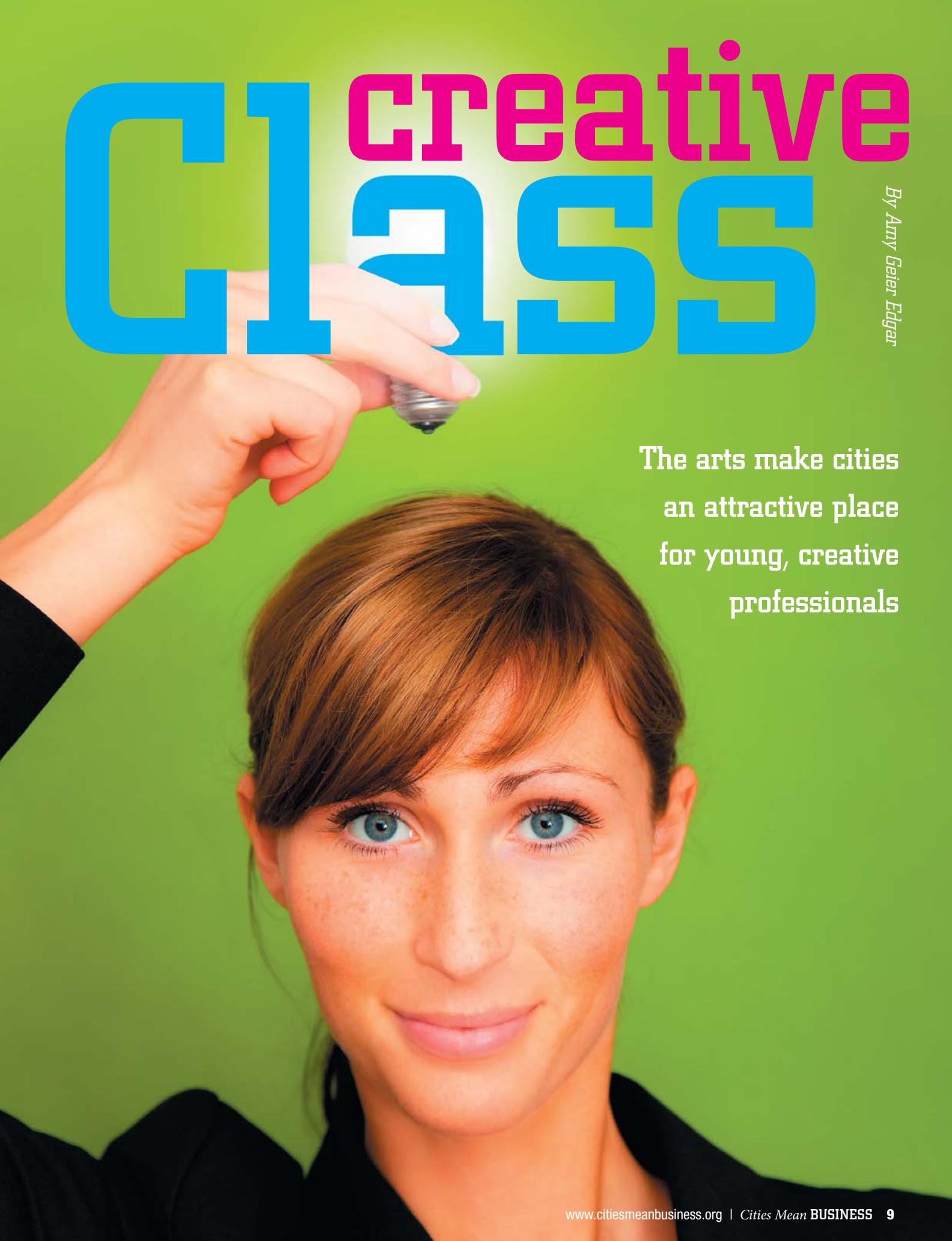
Increasingly, cities and counties share economic relationships. While manufacturers may need to locate in a county for reasons of size and scale, it's likely their executives may want to live in a city for all of its amenities and quality of life offerings, White said.

"Counties need strong cities as economic engines to attract businesses in the 21st century," White said. "We need healthy, vibrant cities."



Downtown Manning, SC (Photo/C Trebil)

Creative Class



By Amy Geier Edger

The arts make cities
an attractive place
for young, creative
professionals



typical work day for the Go To Team video production company might involve shooting sports footage or producing videos for ESPN, Fox Sports or ABC News.

The company was founded in 1997 in Charleston by Patrick Bryant and Dwaine Scott, who saw a shortage of quality, organized camera crews outside of Atlanta. Over the years, it has attracted the attention of national clients, and has grown from two employees to 16, with five offices in the Southeast and a new branch opening soon in Atlanta.

With all of their growth and success, the Go To Team chooses to keep its headquarters in Charleston.

"Charleston is a fabulous town with a great quality of life," said Bryant, managing partner. "That's what municipalities need to have to keep and attract the professional young people that Go To Team hires."

Nationally, the economy is shifting away from manufacturing industries to the high-tech, knowledge economy. The knowledge economy includes a sector of people coined the "creative class" by Richard Florida, author of *Rise of the Creative Class*. Florida said these creative types are highly-educated, well-paid

professionals whose work includes technology, finance, journalism, high-end manufacturing and the arts. The author said these creative workers often are young entrepreneurs and involved in their communities.

Most importantly, the type of work they do allows them to choose where they live. Instead of moving for work, these creative workers will move where they want to live and the jobs follow.

Many cities are realizing the impact that the creative class has on the economy and are taking steps to nurture it.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CLUSTER

New Carolina — South Carolina's Council on Competitiveness — is a public-private partnership working to improve the state's economy. Its goal is to develop clusters — groups of businesses in a certain region that focus on or service the same industry. Companies within clusters come together to increase efficiency and innovation within that industry, while boosting the overall economy in their region.

New Carolina identified a creative industries cluster in the Lowcountry, made up of the fields of preservation and restoration, cultural heritage, architecture and urban design, performing and visual arts, culinary arts, literary arts and publishing, and digital media and design.

The Charleston Creative Cluster, dubbed "Parliament," was formed two years ago, according to New Carolina's Beth Meredith. She organized

a meeting with creative leaders in the city to discuss how to move forward. Meredith realized that creative people don't work well sitting in a boardroom. So they set up a Pecha Kucha Night in Charleston.

Pecha Kucha is an international event (about 200 cities worldwide hold similar events) that comes from the Japanese phrase "sound of conversation." It's a performance night that brings creative businesses together to explain and display their work, and also provides an opportunity to celebrate the city's arts and culture. Performers have included skateboarders, chefs and poets, Meredith said. Similar Pecha Kucha nights have since been held in Beaufort, Columbia and Greenville.

"We structure ours so that presenters talk about what inspires them and what keeps them in Charleston," Meredith said. "It's an opportunity to connect these creative people who otherwise would not meet. Some creative businesses are now working together."

The creative economy not only adds to quality of life for residents, but also is key for the future, Meredith said.

"The creative economy is full of entrepreneurs," she said. "As a city or town, we don't want to rely just on big industry. We want to have a mix."

And the presence of the arts makes a city more attractive to young people. If you were to ask 20- to 30-somethings why they are in Charleston, they would reply that they want to live there, Meredith said. That's because Charleston is a "cool" city, with great music and art scenes, wonderful cuisine and special events like Spoleto and Pecha Kucha.

BEAUFORT GETS ON BOARD

Other communities also are taking steps to highlight their "cool" factor to young, creative types. Beaufort County held its first Pecha Kucha Night in October with 12 presenters and about 300 audience members attending the event in Port Royal. Organizers hope to hold the events four times a year.

"It breathed some real energy into our artist and young professional communities. There was just an energy there that isn't matched by many events and was just totally different," said Ian Leslie, director of marketing and membership for the Lowcountry Economic Network.

"Secondly, we showed young, creative, knowledge-intensive artists and business people that there are like-minded people already here. The purpose was to market that aspect to the people within our own county, but also to



take the message outside the region and show others why they should consider moving their businesses here and working here,” he said.

The arts are important in Beaufort because they makes the community better for the people who live there, said Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling.

“With the support of the city, a community that has that artistic ambiance begins to attract young professionals and businesses,” Keyserling said. “While there’s a direct economic benefit for a community to be involved in the arts, the actual perception that a community is identified with the arts is an asset in and of itself. More economic development deals probably have been closed at Charleston’s Spoleto Festival than in the boardroom of the S.C. Department of Commerce.”

Beaufort is keeping the creative class in mind as area leaders plan for the future. Low-country Economic Network Executive Director Kim Statler said growing knowledge-intensive, creative businesses is one of her group’s top four focus areas for economic development.

“The reason we believe this strategy will be successful in Beaufort is because of the quality of life and character the city offers,” Statler said. “So many of the prospects we deal with already have a relationship with Beaufort and just need a little push to understand that they can live and work here. This doesn’t have to be solely a vacation destination for them.”

In order to promote that, Statler said, they work on events like Pecha Kucha, and promote infill development and creating the types of office space that the new young professionals want to work in.

It’s already clear that the arts are making an economic impact in Beaufort County. The Arts Council of Beaufort County, or ACBC, conducted an Economic Impact of the Arts study in 2008 through a grant from the S.C. Arts Commission matched by the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce. The study, conducted by Georgia Southern University, found that the total arts economy output in Beaufort County is more than \$213 million.

The ACBC partners with the city of Beaufort to help grow the arts and to make sure everyone understands that the arts can be an economic driver, said J.W. Rone, ACBC’s executive director.

“When we present an appealing community, that attracts industry,” Rone said. “The high-tech industries and jobs in the creative economy don’t need an industry base. They can move where they want to, so quality of life issues become even more important for workers.”



Yoga abilities on display during the Pecha Kucha event in Beaufort. (Photo/Riann Mihiylov)

The quality of life in Beaufort was appealing enough for artist Deanna Bowdish to move there seven years ago and purchase a gallery. The Gallery offers original contemporary works of art by more than 60 local, regional and national artists. Bowdish notes that Beaufort is a wonderful community for artists with a wide range of art available, a good cost of living and supportive local organizations.

“A strong arts community is essential to helping to create an identity for a community,” Bowdish said. “The creative work force is essential to a well-rounded community because they can adapt and adjust and offer fresh perspectives and ideas and help to revitalize a community.”

THE SPINOFF EFFECT

That was the case in the city of Abbeville, where downtown revitalization was sparked in the 1970s by the renovation of the historic Abbeville Opera House.

Today, thousands of theater patrons each year visit the opera house, including a number of artists. The city is now home to a number of antique and gift shops, boutiques, restaurants, hotels, and bed and breakfasts. Special arts events are held downtown, such as a Wine Walk — sponsored by the city’s art galleries, the opera house and local businesses — and the Art and Antiques on the Square — sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, the Abbeville Artists’ Guild and the city.

The city also has partnered with local artists by allowing the Artists Guild to sell commemorative bricks as a fundraiser. The bricks

will be used in the third phase of the city’s streetscape project. In addition, the city is renovating an old livery stable, which includes 6,000 square feet of open space that will be used for live music and entertainment.

“When you draw people into a city for the arts, it has a spinoff effect,” said Assistant City Manager Ashley Ramey. “Our small businesses are so important to us here. When people come for theater, they stay for food, shopping and other entertainment.”

Having artists as residents also contributes to the revitalization of the historic city, Ramey said.

“We have a historic downtown area and historic homes. These are attractive to people who are interested in art. They help to save these structures. Creative people are the ones who have the skills and interest in renovating these structures,” Ramey said.

One such creative type who decided to stay in Abbeville is artist and gallery owner Judson Arce. Originally from Sullivan’s Island, Arce had been living in Florida and moved to Abbeville five years ago.

“I fell in love with the charm of the town,” Arce said. “Plus the price is right. To buy real estate was very reasonable. I wouldn’t have been able to have my own gallery in Florida or Charleston.”

“This is a lovely town. It does lend itself to being an arts destination,” said Arce, who serves as president of the Abbeville Artists’ Guild. “I’ve been impressed with the help I’ve gotten from members of the community and people with the city.”

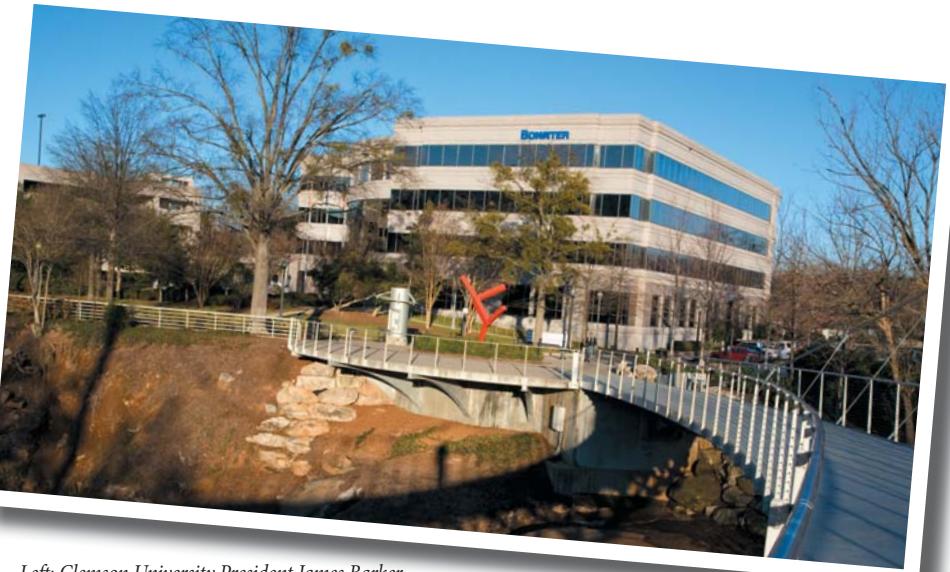
An ideal fit

Higher ed programs bringing new life to downtown areas

By Amy Geier Edgar

When Clemson University decided to move its graduate business program, a downtown location with access to real world business experience seemed an ideal fit.

In November, Clemson announced plans to relocate its Masters in Business Administration program to downtown Greenville. The university leased more than 30,000 square feet of downtown office space in a building overlooking the Reedy River falls and park.



Left: Clemson University President James Barker (left) joins Greenville Mayor Knox White to raise the Clemson colors over the university's new business graduate school home overlooking the Reedy River falls. (Photo/James T. Hammond)
Above: Downtown Greenville. (Photo/Kevin Greene)

Clemson's recent move is part of a trend of higher education institutions locating specific colleges or programs to downtown areas. Both sides can benefit from the arrangement. In many cases, cities will offer land or buildings to encourage colleges to locate downtown.

The influx of hundreds of students and staff often leads to significant growth and development for a city. In addition, the chance to get hands-on experience with businesses and live in a "cool" urban environment is appealing to educated workers and students.

"It was a high priority for the city to bring higher ed into downtown," said Greenville Mayor Knox White. "We're very pleased to have an emerging relationship with Clemson, first with ICAR and now with the business school downtown."

The university had been considering a downtown location for its MBA program for some time. About 10 years ago, a partnership began between the city of Greenville and Clemson when the university president held a summit seeking ways for the school to be more engaged in the city. The partnership first began with the International Center for Automotive Research, or ICAR, an advanced-technology research campus dedicated to the automotive industry, said Nancy Whitworth, economic development director for the city of Greenville.

Greenville does not have a major research university, but ICAR and the Clemson business school bring with them researchers, graduate students and the types of jobs so critical to the knowledge economy, Whitworth said.

"From an economic development standpoint, it's huge," she added.

Bruce Yandle, professor emeritus of economics at Clemson, was one of the early supporters of moving the business school to downtown Greenville.

"Ideally, every graduate student in a downtown-located program will be engaged in a real-world, funded project with real deadlines, product expectations, and regular meetings with sponsors and team members," Yandle said. "In other words: Welcome to the real world. Students engaged and coordinated by faculty members will be learning by doing. Their consulting experience will become the most significant part of their education. They will smoothly move from graduate students to work or to their own businesses."

The location also has an impact on faculty and helps attract students and staff, Yandle said.



A rendering of Presbyterian College's new pharmacy school, which will be located in downtown Clinton.

"Many of the best faculty want to be in the center of things. They want to be engaged in their disciplines. They, too, are inspired by engagement," he said. "Being located in the center of a dynamic downtown makes their Clemson affiliation all the more attractive and valuable."

Meanwhile, the city of Greenville's leaders are excited to have an influx of some 300 people downtown to help with office and business recruitment, White said. "They'll be bringing students, faculty, administration and staff to the downtown area. It's like bringing any major employer downtown."

There also is the potential for those students to stay and work downtown after they have completed their degrees, White added. That would cut back on the "brain drain" that occurs when graduates leave an area for work in another location.

"Graduate and advanced undergraduate programs located in the downtown centers put students where they want to be," Yandle explained. "Some will establish residential locations that they will love. Some will marry or form close relationships they will want to maintain. Some will fall in love with the city itself and find it hard to pull up roots and leave. And most of all, some will become engaged in businesses as leaders or as owners. They will become wealth producers in the region."

Moreover, when those educated workers stay in the community, it helps build up the state's burgeoning knowledge economy. Though progress is being made, the state ranks 40th among the 50 states in recent estimates of the knowledge economy index, Yandle said. That is because South Carolina lags in educational attainment. Part of the lag relates to the fact that the state has been a net exporter of college graduates, he said.

Other universities also realize the significance of an urban location. The USC Upstate Web site plainly states that the school seeks to "become one of the Southeast's leading 'metropolitan' universities ... a university which acknowledges as its fundamental reason for being its relationship to its surrounding cities, their connecting corridors and expanding populations."

As part of that vision to become a metropolitan university, USC Upstate decided to move its Johnson College of Business and Economics to downtown Spartanburg. Construction began in November 2008 and will be complete in the summer of 2010.

"We certainly reached the conclusion that the business school would be a business driver in the downtown. It will lead to a demand for student housing and retail. It's a nice match for what we're doing in the downtown," said Spartanburg City Manager Ed Memmott. "It also fits our larger goals for having a more highly-educated work force."

Colleges are attractive to cities because they "are typically stable employers and attract an educated work force," Memmott said.

The city of Spartanburg made land available to the business school and agreed to build a parking garage behind it. In addition, the city is constructing roads and infrastructure to support the business school as well as other projects that officials hope will follow.

For instance, there is a large building next to the business school that is currently vacant. Memmott said city officials are hopeful that the new school will lead to redevelopment of that building, perhaps with student housing on the upper levels and retail on the first floor. If that student housing happens, it could lead to the growth of more shops, restaurants and entertainment in the downtown area.



David H. Wilkins, Knox White and James Barker with the new Clemson facility in the background.

(Photo/James T. Hammond)

"We think this will be a real catalyst," Memmott said.

The locale will benefit students by giving them more of a connection to downtown businesses. Students will have the opportunity to participate in activities like a new business incubator program or an enterprise class that works on business plan projects for both existing and start-up businesses, said Dr. Darrell Parker, dean of the Johnson College of Business and Economics.

Parker co-wrote a paper, with USC Upstate Chancellor John Stockwell, on the decision to move the business school to downtown Spartanburg.

They wrote, "The presence of the business campus will strengthen the city's position in attracting investment, increasing its tax base and enhancing the flow of downtown traffic to the benefit of local businesses.

Long-range benefits will accrue to the city including stimulating innovation, supporting incubation, enabling continuing education and enhancing the downtown 'cool' factor. Most importantly, the downtown campus will be predisposing some graduating business majors by virtue of their experience, comfort levels, internship connections, etc. to build careers and perhaps to live in the city."

"With a college that's open 16 to 18 hours a day, it creates other business options. It puts life into the downtown."

Dr. Charles Gould
president, Florence-Darlington Technical College

Memmott said he sees real potential in keeping those students in the city after they graduate.

"If you look at trend lines and projections of how folks will want to live and what will be attractive in the future, the long commute is not what people want," Memmott said. "They're looking for walkable, and bikeable, distances to work and entertainment. The

more highly-educated folks are a piece of the demographic seeking that (type of) lifestyle in the future."

In Clinton, Presbyterian College's new pharmacy school will locate in the downtown area. The city and county have worked together to bring the school into a building that had been sitting vacant. The city purchased the building and is leasing it to the college, said Mayor Randy Randall, who also serves as executive director of alumni and community relations for the college. The county plans to buy the land

around the building and make parking lots, which will be deeded to and maintained by the city.

Randall expects the city to see numerous benefits from the new pharmacy school, which welcomes its first class in the fall of 2010.

"In addition to having 350 more people downtown, there are apartments being built downtown, people are renovating buildings

for apartments, people are looking at building eating establishments," Randall said. "Hopefully there will be growth in several areas like restaurants and retail."

In addition, Randall hopes that some of the students will see the benefit of staying in the area after they graduate. "The need for pharmacists is in small, rural communities," he said.

Many technical colleges also have a downtown presence. Florence-Darlington Technical College has branches in Florence, Darlington, Hartsville, Lake City and downtown Mullins.

A downtown satellite school is very important to a small city like Mullins, said FDTC President Dr. Charles Gould.

"It gives a group of citizens access to higher education that they wouldn't have otherwise," Gould said.

The school also creates business opportunities for the city, Gould added.

"With a college that's open 16 to 18 hours a day, it creates other business options. It puts life into the downtown. It brings cars, people and lights to the downtown. It means restaurants might stay open later," he said.

It also helps with economic development by providing work force development and offering one more tool in the inventory for county economic developers seeking to attract industry, Gould said.

Gould said he has seen a boom in enrollment numbers. That could be partly due to laid-off workers going back to school for more training, but Gould said more importantly the message is sinking in that nearly 85 percent of all jobs, now and in the future, will require some college-level training.

As the state's economy continues to shift from manufacturing to a knowledge base, it is critical to provide higher education to students, and to find ways to keep those students in state after they graduate and join the work force. Increasingly, cities will be the key to engaging these educated workers.

"People with advanced education typically like urban life, the arts, creativity, and engagement with ideas and knowledge. They may not wish to live in the heart of a city, but they want to be able to engage in activities in that city," said Clemson's Yandle. "And interestingly enough, knowledge workers want to be around students and university life. Our research shows that immigration to urban locations is strongly associated with the number of university and college students located in those urban areas." 



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