



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at City Hall (Mayor’s Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Peter M. Brown, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and the following members were present:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Peter M. Brown	Chair	Present
Will Brennan	Member	Present
Aditi Bussells	Member	Absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 29, 2025 Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the April 29, 2025 Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes.

PRESENTATIONS FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

2. City Center Partnership Update - Mr. Matt Kennell, President and CEO – *Received as information*

Mr. Matt Kennell, President and CEO of the Main Street District shared how the organization supports the City of Columbia’s Economic Development Focus Areas through efforts to enhance quality of life, safety, walkability, and downtown business growth. He emphasized the district’s role in attracting and retaining talent, encouraging entrepreneurship, and promoting a strong city identity. The Yellow Shirt Ambassadors use smart technology to maintain a clean and safe downtown, while ongoing communication supports existing businesses. He also outlined key business challenges and opportunities for Fiscal Year 2025–2026.

There was discussion about communication with businesses in relation to the Assembly Street project; the vibe on Main Street; merchant feedback regarding parking changes; and seamless growth versus growth with challenges.



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3. USC/Columbia Technology Incubator Update - Mr. Rick Finch, Interim Executive Director – *Received as information.*

Mr. Rick Finch, Interim Executive Director of the USC/Columbia Technology Incubator shared the organization’s origin as a 501(c)(3) and direct arm of economic development for the Midlands, with a focus on job creation and innovation. He clarified the difference between incubators (long-term, product-focused spaces) and accelerators (short-term, growth-focused programs). He emphasized the need for improved communication and collaboration within the region’s fragmented innovation ecosystem and stressed the value of dedicated space for that collaboration. He noted the incubator’s \$22 million economic impact last year, with 60% of companies being minority-led. He highlighted hitting the metrics set by the committee and what he’s looking forward to in the future.

There was discussion about looking at spaces in the Vista, Bull Street, or Five Points; branding initiatives with the City of Columbia; and having multiple locations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Committee voted unanimously to enter Executive Session at 9:54 a.m. to discuss **Item 4** as amended to include Project Catalyst.

4. Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(5)
- *Project WF*
 - *Project Momentum*
 - *Project Tango*
 - *Project Catalyst*



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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk