

Upstate Update

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Upstate Forever's Monthly Bulletin on
Important Issues and Events in the Upstate

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1. Green Developments in the Upstate.

We hear a lot of talk about "green development," but what is it and where can we see it in the Upstate? Green development encompasses many aspects: using sustainably harvested or recycled building materials, constructing buildings that use renewable energy or are energy-efficient, adaptive reuse of previously developed sites, designing structures with smaller footprints and more green space, and more. Some examples in the Upstate include:

- **QS/1 Data Systems Corporate Headquarters, Spartanburg:** The pharmaceutical software corporation built their new headquarters in downtown Spartanburg, rather than on green space in the suburbs. The building itself, designed by McMillan, Smith & Partners architects, is the first multi-story building in South Carolina on track to be LEED-certified by the U.S. Green Building Council for its low energy consumption, low environmental impact and high quality indoor environment. Green features include: high-performance windows that make use of natural light, a rainwater collection system to irrigate the landscaping, carpeting and wallboard manufactured from recycled materials, a low-emissions air conditioning system, and minimized exposure of workers to noise and chemical fumes. Other Upstate projects seeking or already awarded LEED certification¹:
 - 200 East Broad (office), Greenville
 - Clemson University's Campbell Graduate Engineering Center and Hardin Hall Renovation, Clemson, and the Advanced Material Research Laboratory, Anderson
 - Furman University's Duke Library Addition/Renovation, Furman Hall Renovation, Hipp Hall, and Younts Conference Center, Greenville
 - Fraternity Renovations, Clemson
 - Mary Black Foundation Office, Spartanburg
 - North Church Street Office, Spartanburg
 - Riverside High School, Greenville
 - Rosewood House of Recovery, Greenville
 - Washington @ McBee (mixed-use development), Greenville
- **BMW Plant, Greer:** A 9.5-mile long pipeline connects the Palmetto Landfill in Spartanburg County to the auto plant, carrying naturally-occurring methane gas that would ordinarily be burned off as waste. The gas is converted to electricity and hot water used in the plant, and will save an estimated \$1 million in energy costs and 55,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually. In addition, BMW has reduced the energy used to manufacture each vehicle by fifty percent and lowered its production of hazardous solid wastes by more than thirty percent.

¹ According to the U.S. Green Building Council web site (www.usgbc.org) as of July 12, 2005.

Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate

- Upstate House and Woodland Garden, Greenville: Upstate House is a demonstration of green building principles applied to residential construction. A joint project of the Home Builders Association of Greenville, *Upstate Forever* and numerous public and private partners, the house shares many features with the QS/1 headquarters. Located in the Pettigru Historic District downtown, Upstate House is being constructed with sustainably-produced and recycled materials and makes use of passive solar heating and natural daylighting. The adjacent Woodland Garden will be a focal point for urban small site conservation and native plant restoration, irrigated by collected rainwater. Once completed, the garden will reopen a historic pedestrian link to Cleveland Park. For more information, see [Upstate Update 64](#) or www.upstatehouse.org.
- Acadia and Verdae Developments, Greenville: These two planned developments will follow New Urbanist design principles, with traditional town centers, narrow streets, and mixed uses. Residents will be able to access neighbors, shops, offices, and recreational amenities without getting in their cars. What's more, these sites are located in urbanizing areas of Greenville, meaning that 11,000 new residents will be living where some of the infrastructure already exists to support them. For more information about these developments, visit <http://www.acadiasc.com/> and <http://www.verdaedevelopment.com/>

2. Pickens County Welcomes Public to a Natural Treasure.

A natural waterslide. Perfectly round pools, carved eons ago by glaciers, now populated with tadpoles. Rocks for sunbathing, and shady woods for when the sun gets to be too much. A patch of sandy mud ideal for children's fingers and toes.

Pack a picnic and head to Long Shoals Roadside Park on Highway 11 in Pickens County, six miles west of Highway 178.

This small but spectacular park, known to locals for many years as "Sliding Rock," is located on S.C. Forestry Commission land and has recently been reclaimed by local citizens working in concert with a multitude of government and nonprofit groups. According to George Smith and Dennis Chastain, two of the primary organizers, the rocks had for thirty years been a center for wild parties and off-road vehicles, dramatically degrading the site. A \$5,000 accommodations tax grant from Pickens County got the ball rolling, to date leveraging over \$50,000 in time, labor, and materials. Public, private, and nonprofit groups joined in to improve landscaping, create a picnic area and parking lot, clean up trash, and build a restroom. (Future plans call for more trails and an observation deck.) The result of all their hard work is a unique and thrilling addition to our recreational options in the Upstate.

3. Alternative Energy and Fuels.

Amid rising gasoline prices, air quality alerts, and concerns about peaking world oil production, consumers are increasingly turning to alternative-energy vehicles. The best-known option, **gas-electric hybrids**, combine a regular gasoline engine with an electric motor and battery that is kept charged by capturing the energy generated during braking. The cars get up to 60 mpg and emit fewer pollutants than vehicles with standard engines. Comprising 0.5 % of the U.S. new car market in 2004, hybrids sales are on the rise, and are predicted to increase to 3.5% of the market by 2012, with more SUVs and mid-size models becoming available.

Many environmentalists and policy-makers believe **hydrogen fuel cells** to be our nation's best hope for reducing both emissions and our dependence on foreign oil. Clean-burning hydrogen fuel produces electricity and emits only water vapor as a by-product. Honda already leases a hydrogen-powered model to several city governments, and has just begun leasing the cars to a limited number of individual

customers. These cars will not be available on a large scale for some time, as the high cost of production, lack of a distribution network, scarcity of fueling stations, and need for more research must be addressed. The Upstate hopes to be in the vanguard of this research with the Clemson-ICAR (International Center for Automotive Research), currently under construction in Greenville. (For more information about ICAR and hydrogen research go to <http://www.newstarget.com/009097.html>.)

Some consumers refuse to wait for advances in technology and are manufacturing their own fuel at home. **Bio-diesel** is produced from used cooking oil, lye, and methanol for as little as fifty cents per gallon and can be used in any diesel engine. Besides being cheap, bio-diesel emits 75 percent less carbon dioxide and less particulate matter than gasoline. Industry is catching on: nationwide, there are 35 large-scale bio-diesel production plants, and 25 more under construction. Locally, members of Furman University's Environmental Action Group set up their own bio-diesel processor this spring. Using discarded grease from the dining hall, the students will produce fuel to power campus maintenance equipment.

While not powered by an alternative fuel, the petite German **Smart car** is worth noting: it has won kudos in Europe for its low-emission engine and high fuel efficiency, and its French manufacturing plant was designed to make production as environmentally-friendly as possible. The 60 mpg coupes will be available in the US market this summer, with an SUV planned for release in 2007.

4. *Has the Urban Bubble Burst?*

While the 1990's saw a resurgence in population and vitality of our nation's central cities, that growth has cooled since 2000, according to just-released Census estimates and reported in USA Today. Older cities such as Boston and Chicago have reversed population trends and lost residents in recent years, attributable in part to high costs of living and changes in immigration patterns. Sunbelt cities continue to experience rapid growth rates, but the big story is in the suburbs. Areas outside traditional urban centers, such as Gilbert, Arizona, and Miramar, Florida - places you may not have ever heard of - now boast six-figure populations and the highest growth rates in the country.

Here in the Upstate, the trends mirror those of the nation. Despite the spate of new downtown developments, the cities of Greenville and Anderson each grew only 0.2% between 2000 and 2004, while Spartanburg lost 3.0% of its population and Greenwood's population remained unchanged. Meanwhile, Mauldin and Greer bucked the national trend and grew by 19.9% and 16.1%, respectively.

For the full story and related articles, see http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2005-06-29-slow-cities-inside_x.htm. Tables of population estimates for every town and city in the nation are available at <http://www.census.gov/popest/cities/SUB-EST2004-4.html>.

5. *Upstate Forever News.*

Spartanburg Office Update

The Spartanburg office has retained the services of The Conservation Fund, a non-profit Maryland Corporation, to complete an assessment of park acquisition and green space needs for Spartanburg County. The goal of the assessment is to generate public interest and support for more parks in Spartanburg County, hopefully leading to additional funding for green space and parks.

In addition, the "Active Living Assessment" of the City of Spartanburg and Spartanburg County codes, ordinances and regulations is almost complete. The Lawrence Group of Davidson, North Carolina reviewed all relevant plans and documents to identify provisions that affect or impede the development of Active Living neighborhoods and communities. The Lawrence Group will present the Final Report late this summer.

Walking the Talk at Our New Headquarters

In last month's *Upstate Update*, we told you about our move to from the West End Market to 119 Manly Street in the Pettigru Historic District in downtown Greenville. What you might not know is that our new main office is a tangible expression of *Upstate Forever's* values: located in a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood, we used low-VOC paint (no fumes!) on repainted surfaces, furnished the workspaces with "pre-owned" desks and chairs, and use recycled office products whenever possible. In fact, the building itself is "recycled": this former residence was built in 1925 and later served as a law office. We are committed to taking into account the environmental impacts of all future purchases.

6. *Upcoming Events.*

Upstate Forever Events

October 14, Vince Graham, Spartanburg County Public Library, Barrett Room, 7:30 a.m. The developer of I'on Village in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina will talk about his endeavors as a builder and renovator of traditional neighborhood developments. Co-sponsored by the Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce.

November 5, Upstate Forever's Annual Meeting, Asbury Hills Methodist Camp, Cleveland, SC. Mark your calendars; details will follow later this summer.

Other Events

Third Saturday of Each Month, Garner's Natural Market and Café, Greenville, SC. Shop at Garner's and help raise money for *Upstate Forever!* On the third Saturday of every month, Garner's will donate 10% of what you spend to *Upstate Forever*. Simply mention that you are making the purchase in our name and Garner's will handle the rest! For more information about Garner's, visit www.garnernatural.com.

August 4, Informal LEED Orientation, Columbia, SC, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. A free introduction to the LEED process and green buildings. For more information, call 803-777-9911 or go to http://www.usgbc.org/Chapters/southcarolina/docs/pdf/LEED-NC_tech_review_night_before.pdf.

August 25, Driving Down the Cost of LEED, Driving Up the Value of Your Building, Savannah, GA, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Offered by Paladino & Company in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council. To register, go to www.paladinoandco.com, click "Events," then "Get to Green."

August 26-28, Thunderhead Training, Decatur, GA. The Thunderhead Alliance is a national coalition of state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations working in unison to break down the barriers to safe bicycling and walking in North American communities. This training is for leaders to help their organizations grow and become more effective. <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org>

September 13-21, 2005 Physical Activity and Public Health Courses, Hilton Head, SC. For public health professionals; learn how to promote active living. <http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/seapines/index.htm>

Oct 14, Building Green Communities Conference, South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Council, Columbia, SC. Workshops on incorporating tree preservation and environmental conservation into the development process. <http://www.scurbanforestry.org/pages/760088/index.htm>

7. *Lots o' Links.*

Wal-Mart Drops Plan for Side-by-Side Stores. To get around local size restrictions in Calvert County, Maryland, Wal-Mart had proposed to build two buildings with a shared parking lot, as reported in *Upstate Update 63*. But following widespread public outcry, the corporation scrapped these plans and now hopes to build a single store within the 75,000 square-foot limit. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/16/AR2005051601271.html?sub=AR>

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Big Box Battles: Regulating Large Retailers. Austin, TX experiences success with high-reaching design standards and environmental guidelines. http://www.theslatinreport.com/top_story.jsp?StoryName=0629austin.txt

Two Viewpoints on Eminent Domain. The Supreme Court's recent decisions in two cases have inflamed passions nationwide about this economic development tool long used by cities. Have these rulings gone too far in eroding private property rights?

Pro: <http://www.planning.org/amicusbriefs/emdomain.htm>

Con: <http://www.nbnnews.com/NBN/issues/2005-06-27/Front+Page/index.html>

Calculate Your Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Punch in your location, monthly miles traveled, and vehicle type to determine how your transportation choices effect global warming. <http://www.travelmatters.org/>

Tips to Improve Your Gas Mileage. Reduce those emissions and save money! <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml>

Urban Poor Pay More for Everyday Goods and Services. A new report identifies economic barriers keeping the urban poor from entering the middle class and what one city can do about it. http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20050404_PricelsWrong.pdf

Driven to Spend: Pumping Dollars out of Households and Communities. This new study by the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) and the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) shows that families are paying a high price to meet their transportation needs, and families in areas with fewer transportation choices carry even greater burdens. <http://www.transact.org>

Too Much Cheap Parking Costs Cities More in Long Run. As Upstate cities scramble to provide more free downtown parking, a UCLA professor decries the practice from both a fiscal and environmental perspective. His new book proposes new ways for cities to regulate parking that he claims will make parking easier and driving less necessary. <http://www.planning.org/bookservice/highcost.htm>

The Best Nature-Friendly Places to Live in the U.S. A new book describes these cities and how they protect their natural areas. The list of cities is available on this website: <http://www.naturefriendlytools.org/>.

Green Building Makes for a Healthy Bottom Line. Developers and architects are finding ways to earn profits while they reduce the environmental impact of buildings and homes. At the same time, customers are acknowledging that protecting the planet matters to them, too, creating a surge in demand for green housing. http://www.uli.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Current_Issue&CONTENTID=26201&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm

Urbanism Holds Promise for Reducing Energy Use. Even relatively small improvements in density and transit yield sizable reductions in automobile usage. <http://www.newurbannews.com/EnergySaving-InsideJul05.html>

The Overlap Between New Urbanism and Christianity. A Pastor says city planning can have an important influence on religious experience. <http://www.sgvtribune.com/Stories/0,1413,205-12220-2939413,00.html>

"The Mozart of Place": Creating Social Spaces. Fred Kent of the Project for Public Spaces has spent three decades developing a common-sense approach to streets, buildings and human sociability. <http://governing.com/archive/2005/apr/spaces.txt>

Smart City Radio Looks at the People, Places, Ideas and Trends Shaping Cities. Listen to this fascinating NPR show on the internet. <http://www.smartcityradio.com/>

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8. Quote of the Month.

"You couldn't pick a prettier part of South Carolina..." Mark Sanford, South Carolina Governor, at the Chattooga River in Oconee County, *Anderson Independent-Mail*, 6/15/05

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