

WELCOME TO DOWNTOWN

*New Business Guide
for Downtown Florence*



Downtown Development
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FULL LIFE. FULL FORWARD.
FLORENCE
DOWNTOWN



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ABOUT DOWNTOWN FLORENCE

Downtown Florence is located in Florence, South Carolina and is served by the Florence Downtown Development Corporation (FDDC). Founded in 2002, FDDC is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization established by the City of Florence to facilitate and promote the redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown Florence as the civic, cultural, and commercial center of the City of Florence as well as the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina. Over the past ten years, \$250 million of private and public funds have been invested in Downtown.

FDDC is led by an 11-member Board of Directors elected to manage the corporation's activities, affairs, property, and associated assets. The FDDC staff is comprised of two City employees enlisted to manage the day-to-day operations of the organization.

Some notable highlights of the progress FDDC has made with Downtown include:

- Aiding in the development process of more than 100 projects including the construction of 8 new buildings in Downtown.
- Securing approximately 150,000 square feet of underused space that will be available for developing restaurants, shops, and entertainment venues.
- Obtaining over \$1 million in funding for streetscape and beautification projects.
- Outlining the geographical boundaries of the Downtown Redevelopment District.
- Completing the Downtown Revitalization Strategy with the help of Hunter Interests Incorporated.



BY THE NUMBERS

Within ten minutes of Downtown...

**45,905
Residents**

**70,955
Daily
Visitors**

**2,756
Businesses**

**41,638
Employees**

Of those 45,905 residents:

- 31%** are high school graduates
- 28%** have some college education
- 30%** have a Bachelor's Degree or higher

- 64%** are white-collar employees
- 16%** are blue-collar employees
- 19%** are in the service industry

***41% of the 45,905
residents have a
household income
of \$50,000 or higher***

Consumers within a ten minute drive-time of Downtown prefer:

- buying American-made goods
- paying with credit instead of waiting to purchase
- quality over price
- price over brand name

They also will:

- pay more for products and services that are environmentally-friendly
- buy more from businesses that partner with or contribute to non-profits

Downtown Florence is above the national average for market potential in the following categories:

- Fine jewelry, costume jewelry, & watches
- Video games
- All grocery categories
- Steakhouse dining
- Take-out food options

Downtown Florence has a high demand for the following industries:

- Specialty food stores & special food services
- Drinking places (alcoholic beverages)
- Jewelry, luggage, & leather goods stores
- Sporting goods, hobby, & musical instrument stores
- Office supplies, stationery, & gift stores
- Home furnishings & lawn and garden stores

Within Downtown...

**160
Hotel
Rooms**

**99
Residential
Units**

WHAT WE OFFER

FDDC and the City of Florence Downtown Development department are here to help the Downtown Florence businesses succeed and grow. We offer a wide range of services from business assistance and promotion to financial incentives.

Business Assistance

The Downtown Development department can provide guidance or training on areas such as:

- Writing a business plan
- Training on social media or marketing
- Networking
- Growing and expanding your business

Business Promotion

Downtown Florence businesses will have frequent opportunities for their products, services, events, and more to be featured on our website, Facebook, Instagram, and weekly e-newsletter. Businesses can also participate in the seasonal events hosted in Downtown Florence each year.

Financial Incentives

To encourage appropriate redevelopment work within the City of Florence's Overlay Districts, qualified projects undertaken in these districts may be able to apply for financial incentives.

Available financial incentives include:

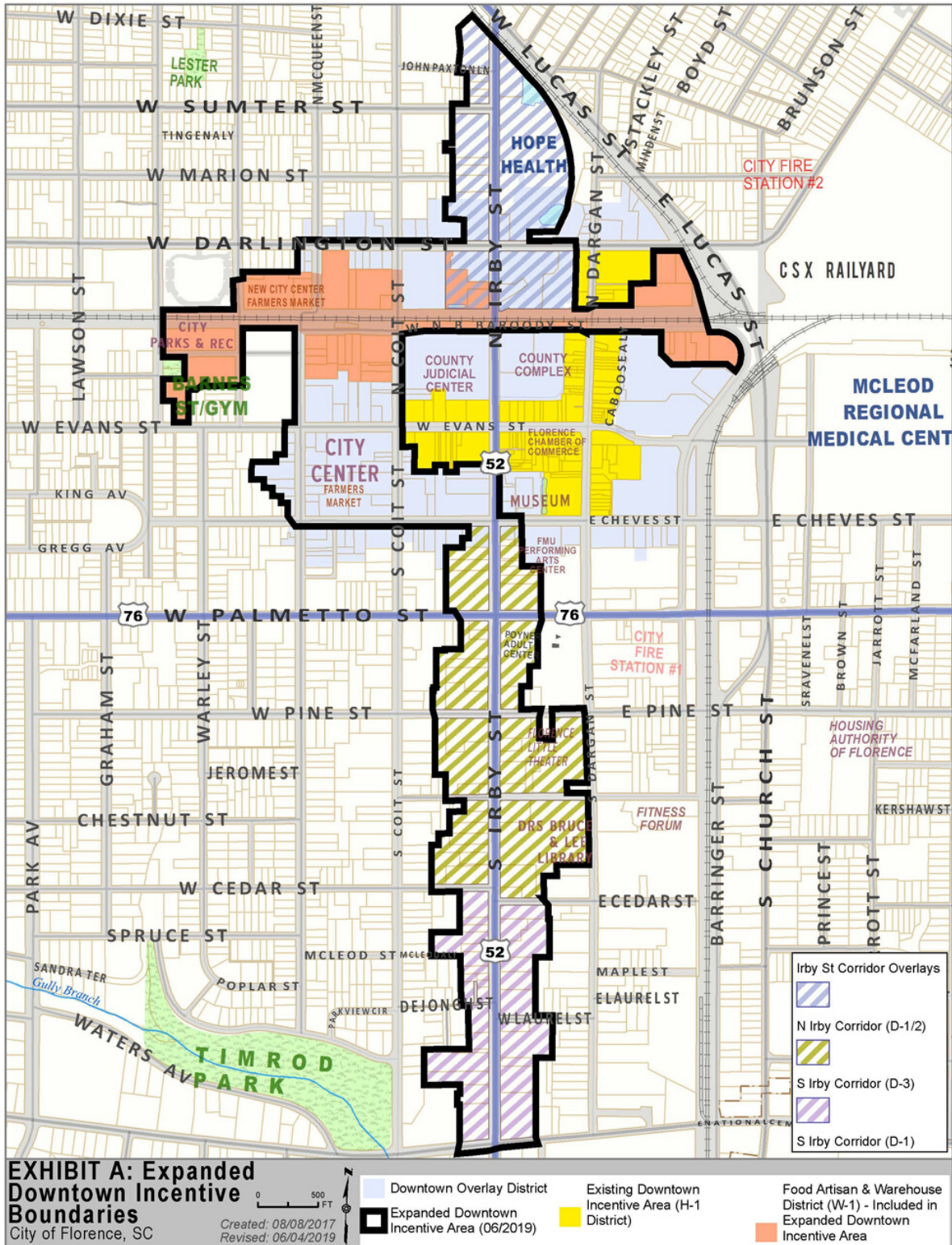
- On-going grants for the sign, design, or facade of the building
- Business license credits
- Reduction, reimbursement, or waiver of costs associated with City water and sewer services
- Competitive grants for building maintenance, interior up-fit, facade improvements, and rent subsidy
- Low interest and micro-loans

For more information about Downtown's services, please visit the Downtown Florence website or call 843-678-5912 to schedule an appointment.



DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

The Downtown Redevelopment District is the focus of the FDDC and was originally a seventy square block area encompassing some 500 acres in the heart of the City of Florence. The present day Downtown Redevelopment District is outlined in black below and includes the Historic District (highlighted in yellow) and the Food Artisan & Warehouse District (highlighted in red). Businesses can be eligible for different incentives based on which district their business is located in.



WHO TO CALL

Downtown Police Assistance

Downtown Police Substation
843.665.4008

Business Licenses, Taxes, & Fees

City of Florence Licensing & Permitting
843.665.3173

Business Plan Development & Workshops

Kelley Center for Economic Development
843.661.1205

Signage or Facade Questions

City of Florence Planning & Development
843.665.2047

Pot Holes or Damaged Sidewalks

City of Florence Public Works
843.665.3236

Sewage Leaks or Odors

City of Florence Public Utilities
843.665.3236

Damaged/Unclean Dumpsters & Trashcans

City of Florence Sanitation Division
843.665.3296

Damaged/Non-Functioning Street Lights

City of Florence Public Utilities
843.665.3236

Damaged/Non-Functioning Traffic Signs

City of Florence Public Utilities
843.665.3236

Road Closure & Construction Information

City of Florence Planning & Development
843.665.2047

State, Alcohol, or Retail Licensing

SC Department of Revenue
844.898.8542

Food Permits & Safety Regulations

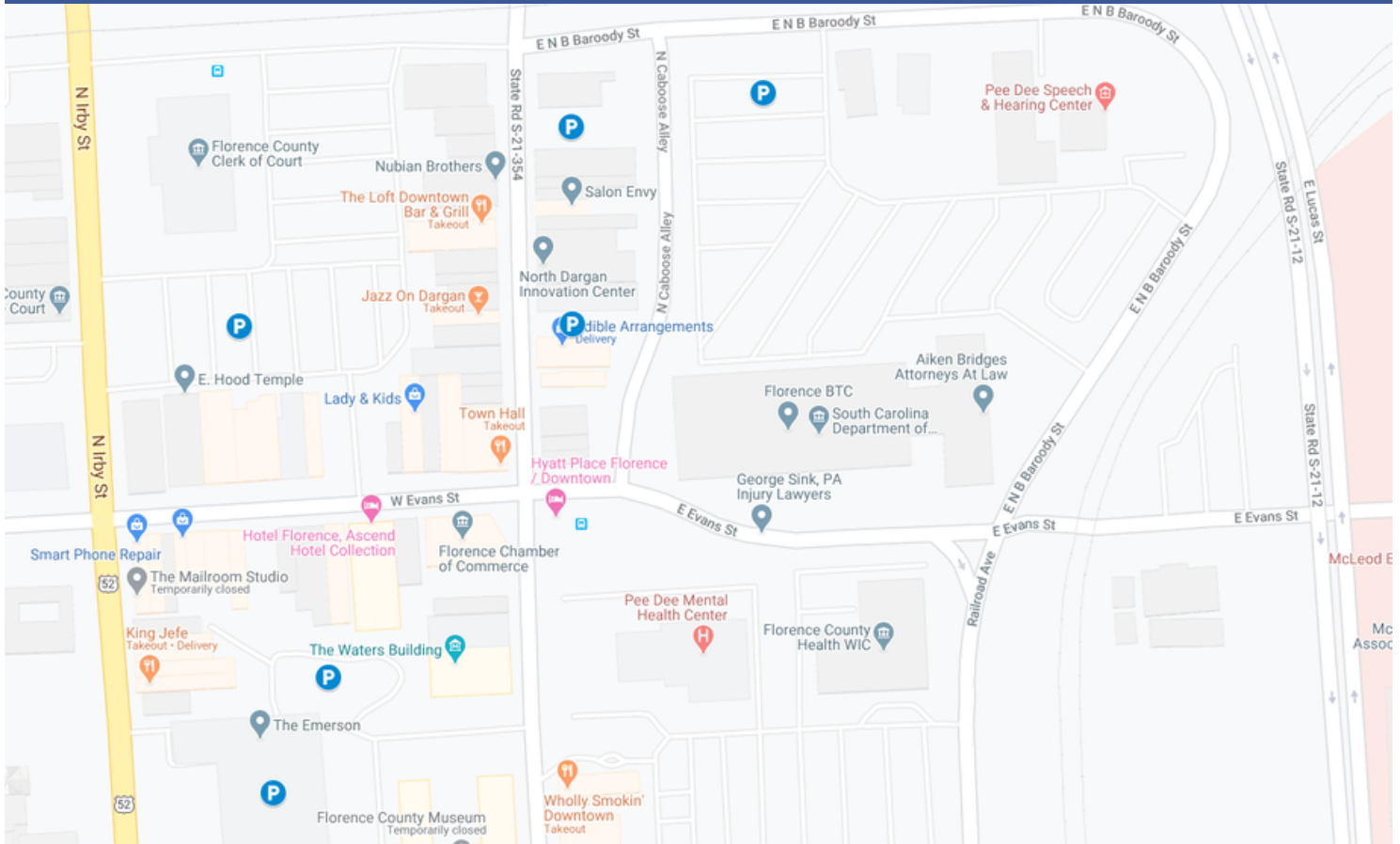
SC Dept. of Health & Environmental Control
843.661.4825



DOWNTOWN PARKING

Downtown Florence currently has 2,500 free parking spaces available for visitors and Downtown business employees. To increase the ease of walking access to your business and to prevent ticketing, we recommend having your employees utilize the parking garage or surface lots noted below and allow customers to park in the two-hour limit on-street parking.

Downtown Florence Public Parking Locations



Downtown Surface and Garage Parking Locations

- City of Florence Parking Garage (150 S. Irby Street inside the Emerson)
- County Complex Surface Parking Lot (180 N. Irby Street)
- BTC Surface Parking Lot (164 E NB Baroody Street)
- N. Dargan Surface Parking Lot (Adjacent to 170 N. Dargan Street)

Downtown On-Street Parking Locations (2-Hour Limit)

- 200 block of W. Evans
- 100 block of W. Evans
- 100 block of N. Dargan
- 200 block of N. Dargan
- 100 block of S. Dargan

DOWNTOWN LODGING & TRANSPORTATION

Lodging

Guests in Downtown Florence can currently choose between two conveniently-located hotels in Downtown for their short-term or long-term lodging needs.

Hotel Florence

Hotel Florence is a unique and upscale boutique hotel located at 126 West Evans Street. The hotel offers a total of 56 rooms plus a grand penthouse suite. It also houses the popular local restaurant and bar, Victors, on its first floor. Victors' indoor and outdoor spaces are available for events or meetings.

Hyatt Place Florence/Downtown

The Hyatt Place in Downtown Florence is located at 100 East Evans Street and offers a total of 103 rooms. The hotel is pet-friendly and also offers an on-site restaurant and bar and outdoor pool. Small to medium size meeting rooms are available for booking and guests can enjoy the 2nd floor outdoor terrace that overlooks Downtown.

Transportation

Thanks to funding from several local and federal organizations and businesses, the Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority is able to offer a free shuttle service for residents and visitors for stops in Downtown Florence. There are also shuttles out to other popular Florence destinations for a base fare of \$1.50 per ride. Discount passes are available.

PDRTA's Free Downtown Shuttle

The free PDRTA Downtown Florence Shuttle runs from Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Shuttle operation occurs every 30 minutes between 9:00am to 11:00am, every 15 minutes between 11:00am to 3:00pm, and back to every 30 minutes between 3:00pm to 5:00pm. The shuttle goes North to Darlington Street, West to Warley Street, South to National Cemetery Road, and East to William H. Johnson Street.



DOWNTOWN EVENTS

Downtown Florence is home to many award-winning street festivals, outdoor concerts, family events, and more. The FDDC currently produces six signature events during the ten-month event season including Pee Dee favorites such as the South Carolina Pecan Festival and Florence After Five. The event season kicks off in March and runs until December. A full event schedule can be found online at florencedowntown.com/downtown-events.

Downtown's Signature Events

South Carolina Pecan Festival



**SOUTH CAROLINA
PECAN
FESTIVAL**

Held annually on the first Saturday in November, the

SC Pecan Festival is an all-day free event featuring live music, 250+ food and craft vendors, art demos, kids zone, amusement rides, and more. Takes place in the 100 blocks of Evans, Irby, Dargan, and Cheves Streets.

Florence After Five



Held on the Final Friday of the month, Florence After Five is a free concert series event that runs every month from April to October with a new band and a new music genre for each event. Food and beverage vendors are available and the event takes place on the 100 block of South Dargan Street.

Oktoberfest



The Downtown Florence Oktoberfest is a free event held each year during the month of October. This event features authentic German food, beer, and wine along with weenie dog races, beer stein races, barrel races, and more. Takes place on the 100 block of South Dargan Street.

Downtown Christmas Magic



Held annually at the beginning of December, Downtown Christmas Magic features holiday lights and music, hot cocoa and marshmallow stations, live holiday entertainment, kids zone area, gift market, and more. Takes place on the 100 block of West Evans and South Dargan Streets.

Tap Into Downtown



Held in September, the Tap Into Downtown event annually transforms 12 Downtown businesses into craft beer tasting rooms. A ticketed event, attendees receive a beer glass, a pretzel necklace, and a chance to sample 24 different craft brews.

Downtown Chocolate Crawl



The Chocolate Crawl is a ticketed annual event held in mid-December that allows attendees to enjoy sweet chocolate samples and even sweeter holiday shopping sales as they visit 10+ businesses throughout Downtown Florence.



DOWNTOWN ATTRACTIONS

Downtown Florence is home to several of Florence's premiere cultural institutions as well as other facilities that annually attract thousands of visitors both locally and from the surrounding areas.

FMU Performing Arts Center



An approximately 68,000 square foot facility that provides state-of-the-art performance and educational venues. Its main elements include an 849-seat Mainstage, a 100-seat flexible Black Box Theatre, an Academic Wing for the Department of Fine Arts, and the BB&T Amphitheatre. The FMU PAC is located at 201 S. Dargan Street.

Florence Little Theatre



Originally started by a local group called the Community Players in 1923, the Florence Little Theatre currently offers a regular schedule of six Broadway-type shows, youth productions, workshops, and more. Located at 417 S. Dargan Street, their indoor facilities along with the outdoor courtyard can be rented for use as an event space.

Florence County Museum



Through a dynamic range of exhibitions, studios, lectures, and family programming, the FCM provides an engaging educational experience to visitors of all ages. The FCM is located at 111 W. Cheves Street and also has an event rental space and a small gallery space in the Waters Building located at 135 S. Dargan Street.

Drs. Bruce & Lee Foundation Library



Part of the Florence County Public Library system, the Florence branch of the system offers books, reference services, books on tape, audio tapes, printing and Internet access, and more services for free. Located at 509 S. Dargan Street, the Library also offers several meeting rooms for free use by groups depending on the purpose of the meeting.

City Center Farmers' Market



A year-round market open on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings that features Carolina-grown & Carolina-made products. Customers can find meat, dairy products, fruits, vegetables, sweets, wood and paper crafts, body products, and more. The market is located at 200 Sanborn Street and can be rented as an event space.

Andrew H. Griffin Plaza Splash Pad



Part of the Griffin Plaza space, the splash pad is an interactive water feature designed for children 12 & younger. Open from June to September during select hours, the splash pad area includes eight spray jets and one column of water with various spray and LED lighting effects. The Plaza is located at S. Dargan Street beside Wholly Smokin'.

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC SPACES

Downtown visitors and businesses alike can enjoy several public spaces located throughout the Downtown area. Along with providing ease of access to streets and parking lots, these spaces also feature public seating areas and public art displays.

[The Breezeway on Evans](#)

Located at 160 West Evans, the Breezeway has ample bench seating and is a favorite photography spot for locals. The space provides easy walking access from the parking lot and parking garage on South Irby to the businesses on West Evans. It is also the home of the latest public art installation, a statue of Florence native, renowned artist William H. Johnson.

[James Allen Plaza](#)

Located at 109 South Dargan, the Plaza was designed as a community square and is used during many Downtown events. The Plaza can be rented for use for private and public events and bench seating is available. Iron, metal, and glass work created by local South Carolina artists is also featured throughout the plaza space.

[Kress Alley](#)

Located on North Dargan, this is a community public space that is adjacent to the Kress Building and the Los Cajun restaurant (coming soon). The alleyway also provides easy walking access to North Dargan Street from the County Complex parking lots.



STAY CONNECTED



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