

Columbus Business Development Center

ENTERPRISE ZONE



What is the Enterprise Zone?

- The State Enterprise Zone program intends to improve geographic areas within cities and counties that are suffering from disinvestment, underdevelopment, and economic decline, encouraging private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate such areas.
- **The Enterprise Zone area must meet at least three of five criteria:**
 - **Pervasive poverty** established using the most current United States decennial census prepared by the U. S. Bureau of Census .
 - **Unemployment Rate** (average for preceding yr.) at least 10% higher than State or significant job dislocation.
 - **Underdevelopment** evidenced by lack of building permits, licenses, land disturbance permits, etc. lower than development activity within local body's jurisdiction.
 - **General distress** and adverse conditions (population decline, health and safety issues etc.).
 - **General Blight** evidenced by the inclusion of any portion of the nominated area in an urban redevelopment area.

Commercial Criteria

In order to be eligible for incentives, eligible businesses must:

- Increase employment by 5 or more new full-time jobs;
- Maintain the jobs for the duration of the tax exemption period;
- Whenever possible, at least 10% of the new employees filling the jobs that satisfy the job creation requirement should be low to moderate income individuals;
- Provide economic stimulus with sufficient quantity and quality as shall be determined by the local government; and
- Such business or service enterprise may be new, an expansion, or reinvestment of an existing business or service enterprise, or a successor to such business or service enterprise.

Residential Criteria

To qualify for tax exemption for the housing enterprise zone, to include new residential construction, residential rehabilitation, or other rehabilitation of an existing structure, the value of the improvement must:

- Exceed the value of the land by a ratio of five to one (exceptions apply to ANY entity); and**
- In no event shall the value of the property tax exceptions granted to qualifying business or service enterprises within an enterprise zone created by the City exceed 10% of the value of the property tax digest of the jurisdiction.**

Benefits

Businesses/residential developments, which locate within the Enterprise Zone, may receive tax abatements for the first ten years of operation, excluding property taxes imposed by school districts. The following table describes the tax exemptions that a qualified business/residential development may receive for the first 10 years of operation.

Year	1	6	8	9	10
Benefits	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%

- School taxes, sales and use taxes, and taxes imposed for G.O. debt are excluded
- Enterprise must maintain a minimum of five jobs
- Total exemptions limited to 10% of tax digest

Additional Incentives

Other incentives that may be granted will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Department and could include exemption from any or all of the following:

- Building Permit fees
- Sign Permit fees
- Business License Administration fees
- Rezoning fees
- Engineering fees
- Other local fees authorized by the City Council, as applicable

History of Effort – The Enterprise Zone

- Georgia Enterprise Zone Employment Act of 1997 established Enterprise Zones for:
 - Job Growth
 - Utilization of Undeveloped Land
 - Provides property tax exemption over a ten-year period
- Ordinance #98-30 established the local enterprise zone
 - “Columbus Business Development Center” is the name given to the area

History of Effort – The Enterprise Zone

- **Ordinance #00-106 amended Ordinance #98-30.**
 - **“To provide that new residential construction and residential rehabilitation shall be permitted as qualified business enterprises for purposed as defined under the Georgia Enterprise Zone Employment Act of 1997, as amended.”**

History of Effort – The Enterprise Zone

- Residential development becomes eligible in Ord. 00-106
- Expanded in 2001 per Ord. 01-29
 - 420 acres added
 - Added Winterfield, 30th Avenue area, Torch Hill Road area, and the Winston Road area
- Readopted in Ord. 08-69
- Expanded in 2014 per Ord. 14-48
 - This expansion included Benning Hills, the Liberty District, Benning Tech Park, and Bull Creek Trailer Park (includes new Elliot's Walk)

Enterprise Zone Funding

Funding Sources

- **1999 SPLOST (\$7,000,000)**
 - **“The acquisition and development of property for commercial and industrial use in the defined enterprise zone area. Costs include property acquisition, infrastructure, demolition, site preparation, and construction of improvements.”**
- **1999C Bond Series (\$2,000,000)**
 - **“This project consists of acquiring approximately 200 acres of land in south Columbus for industrial development.**
 - **The property purchased would be reassembled and marketed for industrial uses to generate new jobs in Columbus.”**

Residential Redevelopment since 1998

- Arbor Pointe
- Patriot Pointe (55+)
- Avalon apartments
- Liberty Commons apartments (EZ)
- Springfield Crossing apartments
- Lumpkin Park apartments (EZ)
- Sheraton Estates Mobile Home Park (EZ)
- New/Rehabbed single family residential throughout the Zone (EZ)
- Elliot's Walk

Commercial Redevelopment since 1998

- **BD&K Foods (EZ)**
- **Ankerpak, LLC (EZ)**
- **Wells Motors (EZ)**
- **McDonald's (EZ)**
- **Columbus Tire Company (EZ)**
- **Chairmans Foods (EZ)**
- **Sun South (EZ)**

Investment Spurred By EZ & BRAC

- Valley Healthcare System
- Walmart Supercenter
- 5 hotels
- Bojangles
- Waffle House
- Taco Bell
- Family Dollar
- Dollar General
- AIM

Govt. Investment since 1998

- Victory Drive Overlay
- Follow Me Trail (TIA 1)
- Fort Moore Gateway
- Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Trail
- Liberty Theater ownership
- Resting Gardens
- Brown Avenue Bridge
- Cusseta/Brennan/Ft. Benning roundabout
- National Infantry Museum
- Baker Middle School
- Dorothy Height Elementary
- Spencer High School
- Odis Spencer Stadium
- South Columbus Library
- Demo of State Farmers Market
- Fort Benning Road streetscapes

What's Coming!

- Spiderweb Phase 2 (TIA 1)
- Buena Vista Rd/I-185 DDI
- 10 Ave/Victory Dr signal
- Military Drive
- Infantry Drive (almost ready for construction)
- I-185/Cusseta Road interchange (TIA 1)
- Riverwalk repaving (TIA 2)
- South Lumpkin Road improvements (TIA 2)
- Liberty Theater block enhancements (TIA 2)
- Andrews Road improvements (TIA 2)
- Brennen Road improvements (TIA 2)
- Buena Vista Road improvements (TIA 2)
- Cusseta Road improvements (TIA 2)
- Bull Creek Dragonfly Trail Connector (TIA 2)
- Resurfacing (Torch Hill, 30th Ave, North Lumpkin) (SPLOST)
- New Rigdon Park pool (SPLOST)

Expansion - 2024

- Warren Williams Homes
- Bull Creek
- St. Mary's Road Mobile Home parks

