

# Big Idea #5: Champion

## Dedicated Maintenance and Programming of Public Open Space.



Downtown is a unique geography within the City of Columbia and plays a significant role in the economic, cultural and social life of the City:

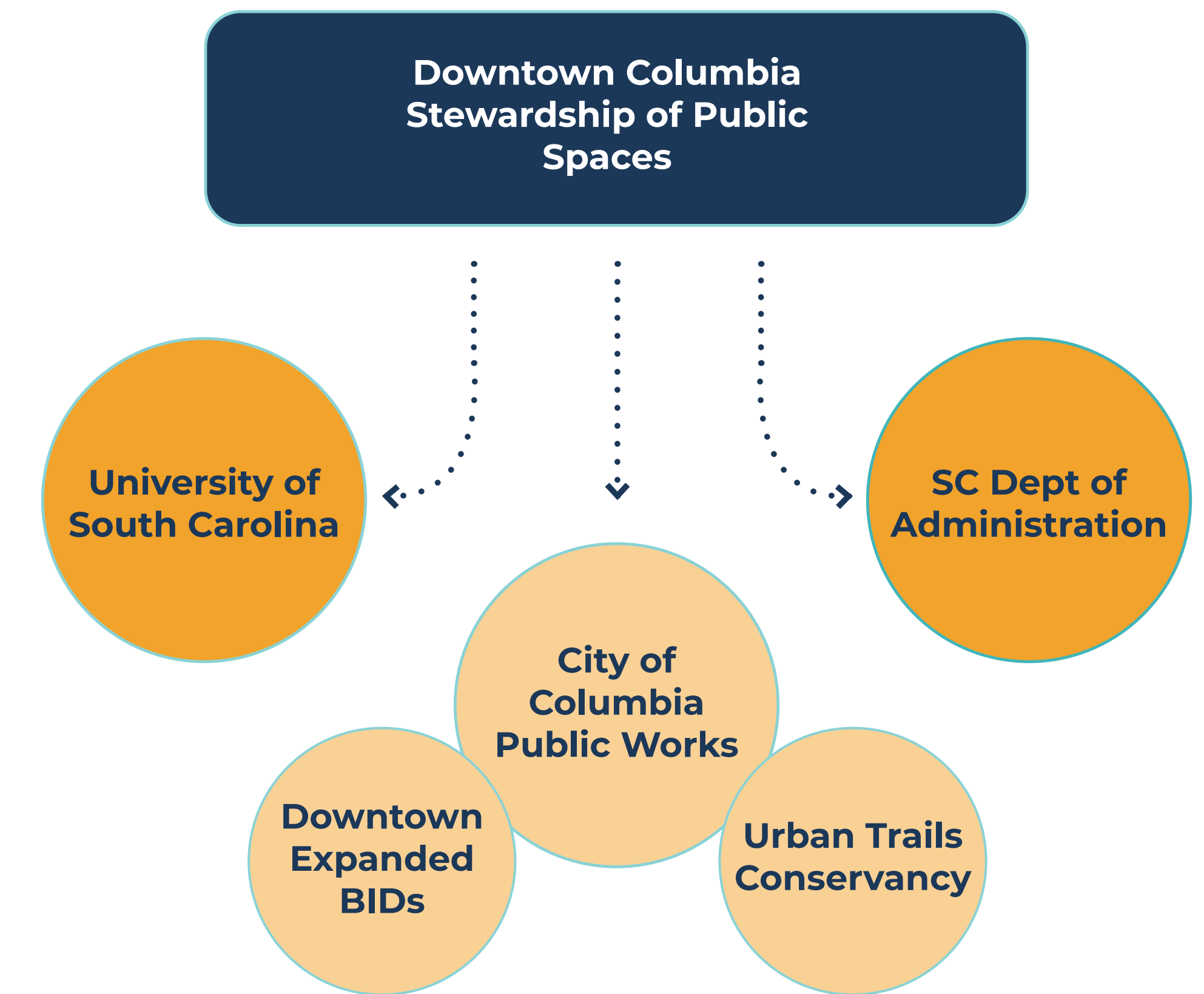
- **High Visibility & Visitorship:** Downtown hosts a substantial concentration of visitors and is a large part of the brand and identity of greater Columbia
- **Business & Employee Density:** Downtown has a critical mass of both small business and large employers
- **Tax Base & Fiscal Impact:** The value of Downtown property and the result of economic activity downtown is a driver of fiscal resources and a key part of the local and regional economic development strategy
- **Cultural & Historic Resources:** Downtown Columbia is home to a wealth of cultural and historic resources which, in addition to their inherent value, form the core of civic pride and community identity while making significant contributions to the local economy.
- **State Capital & Flagship University:** The industries of state government and public education are towering institutions within Downtown Columbia with state, national, and international significance.

[On why Main Street is enjoyable]: "Because other locations downtown have been overlooked and yet to be kept up. If more emphasis was placed on other areas I would enjoy other locations more."

"Use of sidewalk space on Main Street since COVID has improved street life"

"Recommend pausing on all new public spaces managed by the City until current ones have been restored (Memorial Park, Finley Park, and Vista/Downtown area sidewalks in neighborhoods)"

### Downtown Public Spaces Roles & Responsibilities



### Supporting Data

#### Facts about Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

- There are over 400 BIDs functioning in 42 states in the US.
- Studies have shown that on average, the value of commercial property within a BID increases by approximately 15 percentage points more than comparable properties in the same neighborhood but outside the BID.
- BIDs are rarely if ever disbanded, showing that property owners realize real value from BID services.

**More Open Spaces Downtown!** "Privately owned public spaces, also known by the acronym POPS, are spaces dedicated to public use and enjoyment and which are owned and maintained by private property owners, in exchange for bonus floor area or waivers... POPS provide a myriad of opportunities to sit, relax, people watch, eat, meet others – in other words, to partake and enjoy in urban life in one of the world's greatest cities."

New York City's Privately Owned Public Spaces, NYC Planning - <https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/pops/pops.page>

# Big Idea #5: Champion



**Let's champion these ideas!**

How can we rally folks to support downtown?  
What are some organizations, groups that could champion these big ideas? Tell us with a post-it!
