



## NEWS RELEASE

*Media Contacts:*  
Glenn Brill 716-3660 or  
Amanda Brasier, 512-1027

### **Anderson County Residents Asked to ‘Imagine Anderson’ in 20 Years**

*(Aug. 15, 2006, Anderson, S.C.)* -- Over the next three months, Anderson County residents will be invited to share their ideas for making Anderson not just a good community, but a great place to live, work and play now and for years to come.

“Imagine Anderson,” a community-visioning initiative designed to gather input from as many of the county’s 170,000 citizens as possible, will get under way officially at a public kick-off event scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 29, at the Anderson Civic Center.

The goal of the initiative, which is being directed by a steering committee made up of nearly 50 Anderson area leaders, is to involve and engage residents in planning the county’s future. With broad-based citizen-input, project leaders hope to develop a vision for the “ideal” Anderson, as well as a plan for achieving goals identified during the “imagining” process.

The information-gathering effort will include one-on-one meetings with opinion makers and trendsetters from different businesses, churches, schools, communities and civic groups around the county, as well as focus groups and town hall meetings. Citizens will also be able to share their ideas electronically by accessing the initiative’s web site at [www.imagineanderson.com](http://www.imagineanderson.com).

“Taking time to think about the future of Anderson will enable us to shape how growth takes place,” said Doug McDougald, Jr., chairman of the Imagine Anderson steering committee. “We have two choices. We can let the future happen to us or we can be a part of shaping it.

“Over the next 20 years, growth and progress are inevitable. We need to plan how we would like that growth to develop. We need ideas from people from all generations and backgrounds. ‘Imagine Anderson’ is a way to give a lot of citizens a say in their community’s future.”

The individual interviews, the focus-group sessions and the town-hall meetings will be facilitated by consultants with Carpe Diem Community Solutions, Inc., a Florida-based firm with extensive experience in helping communities develop a shared image for their future.

“We plan to gather the hopes, dreams and aspirations of 170,000 Anderson County residents,” said Anderson businesswoman Louise Trammell, who is spearheading the initiative’s efforts to involve every segment of the community in the visioning and goal-setting process. “We want to

make all Andersonians a part of the process and owners of the vision. We want them to ‘imagine’ what Anderson could be. We want them to come up with a picture for the future. Then we want to inspire them to make it happen.”

The community forums will allow residents to discuss topics of interest and concern to them and their families in the areas of business and economic development, education, the arts, government, diversity and environment.

Using community input, Carpe Diem consultants will work with the steering committee to develop a list of goals, along with vision statements for each goal. A proposed vision plan will be presented to the community in early 2007. An implementation team will work with groups, churches, organizations and individuals who agree to support one or more objectives of the vision plan once it’s approved.

“When citizens are brought into the vision-creation process,” Mr. McDougald said, “they become invested. A community vision emerges that they ‘own.’ They become stakeholders in their community’s future.”

The leadership for Imagine Anderson is made up of a diverse group of business owners, civic leaders, educators, physicians and government officials. Several organizations are helping to cover the costs of the project. Imagine Anderson is not a new concept for Anderson. The county has undergone community and vision planning in the past, according to Lee Luff, president of the Greater Anderson Chamber of Commerce.

“A number of years ago,” Mr. Luff said, “our community – Anderson, Belton, Honea Path, Iva, Pendleton, Pelzer, Piedmont, Starr and Williamston – went through a visioning process that led to the creation of some groundbreaking facilities, such as the Anderson Civic Center, which hosts Freedom Weekend Aloft and other key community events, and the Westside Community Center, which has improved access to healthcare and human services in the community. We want to continue that momentum and progress into the next 20 years.”

### Imagine Anderson Key Dates:

Aug. 29/ 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.	Community Kickoff at Anderson County Library
Oct. 9/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>Pendleton/Townville</b> Community Meeting at Pendleton High School
Oct. 10/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>Powersville/Piedmont</b> Community Meeting at Wren High School
Oct. 16/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>Starr/Iva</b> Community Meeting at Crescent High School
Oct. 17/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>Belton/Honea Path</b> Community Meeting at Belton-Honea Path High
Oct. 23/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>Williamston/Pelzer/West Pelzer</b> Community Meeting at Palmetto High
Oct. 24/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	<b>City of Anderson</b> Community Meeting at City Recreation Center
Jan. 9, 2007/6 p.m.-8 p.m.	Review of Draft Plan
February 2007	Community Celebration