



STAFF PHOTOS BY MARCUS SABINI

**Above:** Rodney S. Tucker, Hartsville's planning and development director, stands behind his office on South Fourth Street, which is one of the sites the city has been developing to package and sell to developers. **Below:** The plans for the Vista site include a hotel and a restaurant, as well as a pond and park to connect Coker College's campus with the S.C. Governor's School for Science and Mathematics.

# Hartsville package promotes growth

**By Candace Jarrett**

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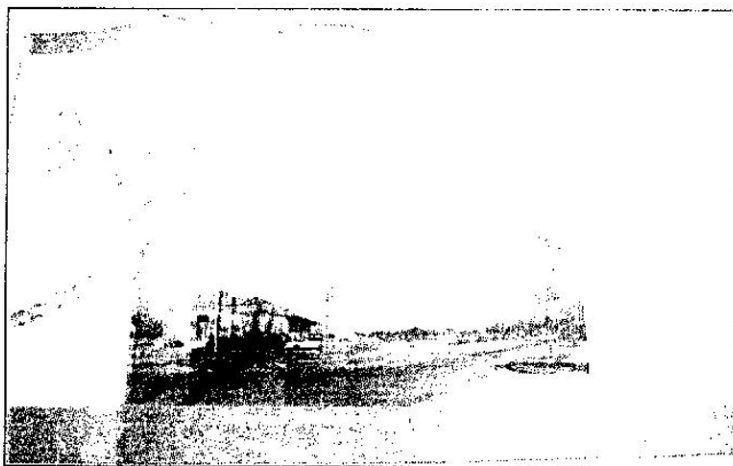
**HARTSVILLE** — Hartsville has developed steadily throughout the years and is emerging as a competitor, along with larger neighboring cities, for urban development.

In an effort to continue growing, the city's planning department has developed a package geared toward showing those interested prime downtown property that's for sale.

"We are very optimistic about Hartsville's development potential," Rodney S. Tucker, the city's planning and development director, said. "We want to maximize the best use of the sites."

Tucker designed and drafted the proposal, which includes layout schemes for perpetual business growth at two sites, one being the former armory building that served as the city recreation department until last summer. That site isn't in the downtown district, but edges the boundary where it stops.

"The proposal envisions the building being razed and



developed as a mixed use project," he said. "The portion facing West Carolina (Avenue) depicts a two-story office building with a landscaped garden."

Tucker said the site would include a residential element with a concept of townhouses or condominiums to tie into the Richardson Circle Subdivision located just behind the armory.

"Naturally, there's some things that we would want to see happen in that area more than others," said city councilman Robert Braddock Jr., who lives in the subdivision. "We need something to help build our tax base, and Rod-

ney hit it on the head. We are looking to try to maximize the development potential, get the right businesses in that area and support the community that's already there."

The other site in which the city is trying to spark interest is the Vista railyard site. The city, Coker College and the S.C. Governor's School for Science and Math collaborated on constructing a serpentine walkway to connect the schools and downtown as a key part of the project.

Vista also encompasses Burry Park, which is considered the city's urban green

space. Tucker said the city would like to see a hotel and eateries develop there.

"That area has a more contemporary feel," he said. "Ideally, the city wants another hotel, and development of this magnitude would positively impact our downtown and ignite additional investments."

Judi Elvington, director of the Hartsville Downtown Development Association, said although the armory project is outside of the downtown district, it's part of a corridor that leads into downtown.

"From a personal perspective, I do want to see something creative develop at the armory," she said. "For 20 years, this association has been creating this downtown cultural and historical environment, so any retail development that would advance the look of the downtown area and entering into it, is good."

Tucker said a few interested parties have looked at the properties.

He said he created the proposal to put pictures to a concept and give prospects an idea of the potential.