

**SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 26, 2025 — 5:00 PM
MUNICIPAL COURTROOM
2222 HIGHMARKET STREET
GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA
AND LIVESTREAM:**



<https://www.facebook.com/cityoftown/>

Notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws as amended.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DEVICES**
- 3. PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
 - A. Motion to approve a Designated Marketing Organization agreement between the City of Georgetown and the Georgetown Business Association for three years, through June 30, 2028.**
 - B. Motion to approve the Georgetown Business Association FY 2026 budget for the activities as the Designated Marketing Organization.**
- 4. ENGINEERING**
 - A. Water Treatment Plant Condition Assessment Report Presentation**
- 5. ADJOURNMENT**
 - A. Motion to Adjourn the Special Meeting of City Council.**



120 North Fraser Street • Georgetown, SC 29440 • (843) 545-4000

ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	June 26, 2025
Department:	Planning & Community Development
Issue Under Consideration:	Motion to approve a Designated Marketing Organization agreement between the City of Georgetown and the Georgetown Business Association for three years, through June 30, 2028.
Amount Requested:	N/A
In Current Budget?:	Yes.
If not, please explain:	n/a
Financial Impact:	Marketing and advertising for the City of Georgetown.
Points to Consider:	This is the only marketing for the City. The GBA has been the DMO for three years. We have seen increases in tourism each year.
Options:	Approve or Disapprove
Staff Recommendation:	Approve.

Reviews:

Clarissa Tindall	Approver	Created/Initiated
Ryan Call	Approver	Approved
Kathy Vermeland	Approver	Approved
Elise Crosby	Approver	Approved
Scott Whittier	Approver	Approved
Stephanie Buccione	Approver	Final Approval

Attachments:

1. DMO Renewal COG GBA

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
)
)
CITY OF GEORGETOWN)
)
)

DESIGNATED MARKETING ORGANIZATION
SERVICE AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE
CITY OF GEORGETOWN AND THE
GEORGETOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 2025, effective immediately and ending June 30, 2028, the “Effective Dates,” by and between the City of Georgetown, South Carolina, (“City”) a duly organized and validly existing body politic of the State of South Carolina, and the Downtown Georgetown Revitalization Association, d/b/a Georgetown Business Association (GBA), a South Carolina non-profit corporation.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council of the City of Georgetown (“City Council”) recognize the attraction of visitors and tourists is a key element in the economic development of the City of Georgetown, and the City has the need for a qualified, experienced, and capable organization to serve as the designated marketing organization (“DMO”) for the City for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (FY 2025) through June 30, 2025 pursuant to the requirements of S.C. Code Ann. Section 6-4-10; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to an Agreement dated January 21, 2021, the GBA is currently the City's DMO, effective with FY 2021 ("FY 2021 MOU"); and

WHEREAS, the FY2021 MOU was extended under its terms for three consecutive terms, expiring June 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, a one year agreement was made for FY2025 to expire June 30, 2025: and

WHEREAS, the GBA has an existing, ongoing tourism promotion program; and

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to work in conjunction with the GBA to continue increasing tourism¹ by promoting the City as a tourist destination in FY 2026, and the GBA and the City Council wish to continue the working relationship to promote and increase tourism in the City during the Effective Dates; and

WHEREAS, Both parties recognize the need, benefit, and value of tourism and tourism promotion for the City; and

WHEREAS, The City and the GBA wish to enter into an Agreement for the GBA to function as the official DMO for City for FY 2026 and subsequent renewal terms as optioned under the terms of this Agreement.

¹ Section 6-4-5 of the SC Code of Laws defines "Travel" and "tourism" as “mean the action and activities of people taking trips outside their home communities for any purpose, except daily commuting to and from work.”

NOW, THEREFORE, both parties agree to the following:

a) *City of Georgetown*

Pursuant to the terms of S.C. Code Ann. Section 6-4-10 and Sections 21-33(b) and 21-35(b)(5) of the City of Georgetown Code of Ordinances, for the Effective Dates, the City Council agrees to:

- a.1) Contract for the GBA to serve as the City's Designated Marketing Organization
- a.2) Fund the GBA with all mandated funds as required by S.C. Code Ann. Section 6-4-10(3) (Exhibit A) and provide additional funds from the local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax.²

State Accommodations Tax

- i. The City will provide the State Accommodations Tax. The balance will be paid upon receipt of the funds from the State of South Carolina on a quarterly basis. These funds are strictly used to promote the City as a tourist destination according to State law.

Local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax

- i. The City will provide an amount dependent on the final budget from the Local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax to the GBA.
- ii. Funds will cover a contract with a professional marketing/advertising organization to develop a comprehensive multi-year marketing plan for the entire City.

b) *Georgetown Business Association*

For the Effective Dates (section (c)), the GBA agrees to:

- b.1) Contract with the City to serve as its Designated Marketing Organization
- b.2) Abide by the public disclosure requirements of a tax-exempt nonprofit organization, as defined by Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
- b.3) Administer the marketing efforts and manage the funds provided by the City as follows:

State Accommodations Tax

- i. Provide a detailed budget to be approved by City Council outlining the expenditures as follows:
 - a. FY 2026: the budget has been submitted to the City by the GBA for City Council approval prior to June 30, 2025
 - b. FY 2027: the budget will be submitted by February 1, 2026, to the Finance Department for City Council approval prior to June 30, 2026
 - c. FY 2028: the budget will be submitted by February 1, 2027, to the Finance

² Year one of this three year term. The funds for each fiscal year will be presented prior to commencement of the following fiscal year, for Council approval of the DMO budget.

Department for approval by City Council.

- ii. The GBA will deposit these funds with a separate checking account and administer the State Accommodations Tax funds properly, as required by law.
- iii. Execute placement of limited advertising to promote the City of Georgetown through June 30, 2028.
- iv. Identify opportunities for electronic and print advertising, develop content and place ads to be executed for a period that ends on June 30, 2028.
- v. Provide quarterly reports to City Council, through the Finance Department, on the implementation of the marketing efforts on behalf of the City.
- vi. Provide the State-required accounting and documentation to support this effort and submit an accurate reporting of actual expenditures on a quarterly basis and each year with its proposed budget, by June 30.. The City agrees to work with the GBA to minimize the effort of the required accounting and reporting.

Local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax

- i. Provide a detailed budget to be approved by City Council outlining the expenditures as follows:
 - a. FY 2026: the budget has been submitted to the City Finance Department by the GBA for approval by City Council.
 - b. FY 2027: the budget will be submitted by February 1, 2026, to the Finance Department for approval by City Council.
 - c. .FY 2028: the budget will be submitted by February 1, 2027, to the Finance Department for approval by City Council.
 - d.
 - ii. Create a scope of work and contract with a marketing/advertising organization to develop a comprehensive multi-year marketing plan for the entire City of Georgetown. The scope of work will be based on the expectation that the selected agency will incorporate plans for all areas, activities, events and attractions throughout the City that warrant inclusion in the plan. The resulting plan and all associated work products will become the joint property of the City of Georgetown and the GBA.
 - i. Solicit input from the City on the scope of work.
 - ii. Identify, screen and select an agency and coordinate their work effort.
 - iii. Interview multiple marketing companies.
 - iv. Be the primary point of contact to provide the information necessary in order to develop the overall City marketing plan.
 - v. The GBA will provide invoices to the City's Finance Department in order to pay expenses directly to the vendor(s).
- b.4) Each year prior to City Council's consideration of the GBA's proposed DMO budget, the GBA will provide proof of professional liability insurance for any subcontractor receiving public funds allocated to the GBA as DMO.

c) Term and Termination

This Agreement is for three years (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2028). A new agreement for sequential years will be required at the discretion of City Council.

d) Force Majeure

Force majeure includes acts of God, natural or man-made disasters, riots, public health emergencies, acts of other branches of government in either their sovereign or contractual capacities, or any similar cause beyond the reasonable control of the parties. Any delays in or failure of performance by either party that are caused by a Force Majeure shall not constitute breach of this Agreement. In the event that any event of force majeure occurs, both parties shall be entitled to a reasonable extension of time for performance of work. In the event of a force majeure, if the City is forced to change the DMO appropriation, both parties will collaborate in adjusting the budget in the best interest of both parties.

e) Notices

All notices shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been given by either hand delivery, U.S. Mail with delivery confirmation, or certified or registered mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the party to whom intended at the address provided below, with a copy via email, or at such other address as such party shall hereinafter designate to the other party in writing:

City of Georgetown:

City of Georgetown, South Carolina
Attention: City Administrator
Post Office Box 939
Georgetown, South Carolina 29442

Georgetown Business Association:

Georgetown Business Association
Attention: President
103H Queen St.
Georgetown, SC 29440

f) Entire Agreement.

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and may not be modified or amended except in writing signed by all parties. In the case of any conflict between the terms and conditions of this Agreement and any other agreement between the parties, the terms of this Agreement shall control.

g) Severability.

If any part or provision of this Agreement is held invalid or unenforceable under applicable law, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not in any way affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining parts and provisions of this Agreement.

h) Governing Law.

This Agreement and the rights, obligations and remedies of the parties hereto, shall in all respects be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of South Carolina, and disputes to be submitted to a South Carolina state court with jurisdiction.

i) Assignment

The rights and obligations of the parties hereto shall not be assigned, in whole or in part,

without the written consent of the other party hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the duly authorized representatives of the parties have executed this Agreement as of the date first above written.

ATTEST: CITY OF GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA

Stephanie Buccione, City Clerk

Carol Jayroe, Mayor

Georgetown Business Association

By: _____
Greg Metcalfe, President

Approved as to Form:

Elise F. Crosby, City Attorney

CHAPTER 4
Allocation of Accommodations Tax Revenues

SECTION 6-4-10. Allocation to general fund; special fund for tourism; management and use of special fund.

(3) Thirty percent of the balance must be allocated to a special fund and used only for advertising and promotion of tourism to develop and increase tourist attendance through the generation of publicity. To manage and direct the expenditure of these tourism promotion funds, the municipality or county shall select one or more organizations, such as a chamber of commerce, visitor and convention bureau, or regional tourism commission, which has an existing, ongoing tourist promotion program. If no organization exists, the municipality or county shall create an organization with the same membership standard in Section 6-4-25. To be eligible for selection the organization must be organized as a nonprofit organization and shall demonstrate to the municipality or county that it has an existing, ongoing tourism promotion program or that it can develop an effective tourism promotion program. Immediately upon an allocation to the special fund, a municipality or county shall distribute the tourism promotion funds to the organizations selected or created to receive them. Before the beginning of each fiscal year, an organization receiving funds from the accommodations tax from a municipality or county shall submit for approval a budget of planned expenditures. At the end of each fiscal year, an organization receiving funds shall render an accounting of the expenditure to the municipality or county which distributed them. Fees allocated pursuant to this subsection must not be used to pledge as security for bonds and to retire bonds. Also, fees allocated pursuant to this subsection must be allocated to a special fund and used only for advertising and promotion of tourism to develop and increase tourist attendance through the generation of publicity, and not used to pledge as security for bonds and to retire bonds



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ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	June 26, 2025
Department:	Planning & Community Development
Issue Under Consideration:	Motion to approve the Georgetown Business Association FY 2026 budget for the activities as the Designated Marketing Organization.
Amount Requested:	\$285,000
In Current Budget?:	Yes
If not, please explain:	n/a
Financial Impact:	\$285,000
Points to Consider:	The GBA is the DMO for the City currently.
Options:	Approve or Disapprove.
Staff Recommendation:	Approve.

Reviews:

Clarissa Tindall

Approver

Created/Initiated

Ryan Call

Approver

Approved

Scott Whittier

Approver

Approved

Stephanie Buccione

Approver

Final Approval

Attachments:

1. DMO Budget GBA COG

DMO RENEWAL

Subject: DMO Budget for 2025-2026

Social/ Google:	\$72,000
TV / Streaming:	\$60,000
SCPRT digitals:	\$20,000
SCPRT print ad:	\$15,000
Photo/Video:	\$18,000
Postcard Ads:	\$10,000
Radio/Billboard:	\$25,000
Agency Cost:	\$50,000
Administrative:	\$15,000
Total:	\$285,000



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ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	June 26, 2025
Department:	Engineering
Issue Under Consideration:	Water Treatment Plant Condition Assessment Report Presentation
Amount Requested:	
In Current Budget?:	
If not, please explain:	
Financial Impact:	
Points to Consider:	
Options:	
Staff Recommendation:	

Reviews:

Stephanie Buccione

Approver

Created/Initiated

Attachments:

None