



Press Release

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For immediate release

For more information contact:
Carrie Gartner (573) 442-6816
Debbie Sheals (573) 874-3779

The SBD Officially Placed on the National Historic Register *Historic Designation Will Benefit Property Owners*

Columbia—The Columbia Special Business District (SBD) application for the National Historic Register was just approved by the National Park Service. In addition, the North Village and the former Glenn's Building were placed on the Historic Register as well.

The Columbia SBD was submitted as a Multiple Property Submission (MPS), a designation that allows for a broader inclusion of properties. Because the SBD has remained vital over the years, many buildings have been substantially modified. An MPS allows these buildings to be included based on the overall historic quality of the larger area. Debbie Sheals, a locally-based historic consultant, was retained to research and prepare this proposal.

This move was designed to encourage property owners to nominate their own buildings for the register and take advantage of state and federal incentives available for historic preservation.

This new historic designation will benefit the SBD in several ways:

- National and state recognition of the historic value of the Columbia Special Business District.
- Simplification of the nomination process for individual buildings.
- Substantial cuts (approximately 50%) in the cost of nominating individual buildings. (Currently, consultant fees for individual building nominations start at \$3500; with a new district the cost per property drops to \$1800.
- Increases eligibility for state and federal tax credits for historic renovation, a key economic development tool for city centers.

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The recent trend within the SBD, spurred by the highly successful renovation of the Atkins City Centre, has been to place individual properties on the register and apply for state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. With this recent announcement, property owners within the SBD who have been considering placement on the Historic Register have an added incentive to do so. The SBD Board's decision to help provide incentives for owners to fix up private property comes on the heels of their plan to beautify the public spaces within the district.

Designation as historic does not involve any restrictions as to what can be done to buildings, although inappropriate changes may result in a building being removed from the register.

The Columbia Special Business District is an organization dedicated to beautification, business recruitment, economic development, historic preservation and other issues. Its sister organization, the Central Columbia Association, is a voluntary merchants' association dedicated to promoting shopping, dining and entertainment.