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New Paths Development & Consulting,  
LLC

New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC  
1400 Battleground Ave. Suite 211  
Greensboro, NC 27408  
Phone: 336-207-7546  
Fax: 336-441-5924

[John@NewPaths.Net](mailto:John@NewPaths.Net)

**FAX**

**Fax Transmittal Form**

**To:** Governor Haley's Ofc., Attn. CS

**From:** New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC

**Fax:** (803) 734-5167

**Date sent:** January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

# of pages including cover page: 4

**Urgent  
For Review  
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**Message:**

We are requesting funding from the state via grants and other sources from the Governor by way of the various state and federal agencies. We understand that Kevin A. Shwedo, State Disaster Recovery Coordinator may be a source for this funding request.

**John Lewis**  
New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC  
336-207-7546



*New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC  
1400 Battleground Avenue, Suite 118  
Greensboro, NC 27408*

### **Woodbrier St. Project Summary**

New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC (**New Paths**) is a commercial real estate development and financial consulting firm that specializes in providing development & financial solutions and services for our clients.

On behalf of our client, Amare Hanna Group, LLC, we are excited about the opportunity to develop and construct approximately Thirty-Four (34) for-sale townhouse units with 3 bedrooms & 2.5 baths for Work Force Housing owners in Columbia, South Carolina. This location in the Ridgewood Community is in a highly distressed census tract.

The proposed site fronts on Woodbrier Street and includes eight (8) lots totaling 4.2 acres that will be subdivided. The assemblage of those eight lots will create a site to allow six (6) multi-unit buildings to be constructed. All of the required property is currently owned or will be acquired by Inez Martin Hicks family members and will be deeded to the project owners Amare Hanna Group, LLC.

The project budget is projected to be less than \$5 million with unit sales prices estimated at \$129,900. The project will be financed via a commercial construction/development loan and anticipated partnership investment from local, state, and federal government.

Construction will begin in the spring of 2016 with completion projected by the end of 2017, the Construction period will be 18 months.

We will support community and public involvement. Additionally, we will implement and execute a very active Section 3 program to provide opportunities for small minority businesses and contractors to receive job training and career development in major construction projects.

***We strongly believe that there is a need for this type of project in the Ridgewood Community and that the impact to the community will be great. This project is in strong alignment with Richland County's already-established plans for revitalization of the entire Ridgewood community and will continue to build upon the foundation and investment that has already begun!***

**John J. Lewis III  
New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC**



New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC  
1400 Battleground Avenue, Suite 118  
Greensboro, NC 27408

## **Martin Family Land – Ridgewood's Past and Future Ridgewood Community Richland County, Columbia, SC**

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*The Martin Family patriarch was Arnette Martin. He was from the area of Richland County just beyond what is now Jenkinsville, SC. During his early adult years, he married Annie Mae Clark and they began their family. Arnette and Annie Mae worked very hard, and settled in what is now the Ridgewood section of Richland County.*

*Arnette and Annie Mae had six children – five girls and one boy. The oldest was Inez Martin, who passed July 24, 2015 as the last living member of this branch of the Martin family. Inez always wanted to be a teacher; she left Columbia after graduating from high school with the hope that she would find better opportunities in education in the North. She settled in New York City, and began a series of jobs that eventually led to a teaching position in the New York public school system.*

*When she was 30, Inez was called home by her father. He was ill, and wanted her to return to Columbia to take over several family endeavors. By this time, Arnette had purchased and subdivided several small parcels of land with the idea of building homes for each of his children. The first house he built was the family home at 5227 Woodbrier Street. He and his wife Annie Mae resided there until their deaths. Prior to his death, he was able to build homes for his daughter Vivian (at 5225 Woodbrier) and Frances (at 5229 Woodbrier). When Inez returned to Columbia in 1950, she purchased a house that was slated for demolition and moved it to the adjacent lot at 5231 Woodbrier. She also built several outbuildings that became part of the well-known Hicks Day Care facility, one of Columbia's first black owned and female owned full-service daycare businesses. Inez and a loyal cadre of staffers built the business from the ground up, and many of Columbia's black middle class (and their children) are alumni.*

*Arnette and Annie Mae's 4<sup>th</sup> daughter was Eddie Ruth Martin. After graduating from Eau Claire High School, Ruth moved to New York and joined Inez. She soon met and married an Army war veteran, Nevaniel Black, and they moved to his home in Newport News, VA. Ruth and Nevaniel also had six children – also five girls and one boy. Although this family did not live close to Columbia, warm relations were maintained throughout, and each of Ruth's children was able to visit their South Carolina family members during their growing-up years. After Ruth and Nevaniel died, their children continued to maintain close relations with their South Carolina family, including aunts, uncles, and cousins.*

*Ridgewood is one of Richland County's oldest communities, and has been predominantly African-American since inception. During the 1980's and 90's, this community suffered a decline. As those who grew up in Ridgewood gained a measure of affluence, they moved away to more modern suburban communities, leaving elderly parents and neighbors unable to afford (or unwilling) to move. Unfortunately, criminal activity increased and a pattern of "benign neglect" of the neighborhood began. Abandoned and ill-maintained housing increased. The sense of community declined, and many of the residents fled to safer, better-lit neighborhoods with more services. Sadly, what was once a thriving working class neighborhood of well-maintained bungalows and small Craftsman-style houses slowly fell into disrepair, crime, and neglect. And, during this time, Hicks Day Care mirrored the decline of the neighborhood, and enrollment declined dramatically.*

*Inez tried to hang on to the day care business, but eventually gave up and closed around 2007. She tried to re-purpose the family housing via rentals, but the tenant pool interested in living in Ridgewood was transitory, low-income, and often moved away owing back rent and utilities. She suffered several debilitating strokes in the early and mid-2000's, and has never fully regained her health. There were several instances of late payment of real estate taxes, and at least 1 parcel was lost to the family due to non-payment of taxes.*

*In the meantime, the children of Ruth and Nevaniel and Vivian and Wendell attempted to help by providing emergency financial support. As they traveled to Columbia throughout this time, they realized that Columbia might be a good place to retire because of the city services, health care, weather, low taxes, reasonable housing costs, and more. However, the most important connection and "draw" was the sense of family connection and "homeplace."*

*Now that Inez has passed (she was 95 on her birthday in 2015), several family members have come to realize the enormity of her accomplishments in hanging on to the Martin family land. She made sacrifices and employed extremely creative and business-minded tactics to maintain ownership of 5 parcels of land. The family members realize it's now time to recognize her efforts and honor her commitment to family by re-purposing the land to a higher use.*

*Inez Hicks' niece and nephew Donna Black Turner and husband Rob Turner have stepped up this challenge. They are working with a development firm, New Paths Development & Consulting to regain ownership of several family parcels that were lost to tax sales with the ultimate goal of building 34 for-sale townhomes for people of modest means.*

**(Note: Ridgewood is within Census tract 106 with 68% or more of low and moderate income residents.)**

*The hope is that these Workforce Housing units will be an integral part of the County's already established plans for revitalization of the entire Ridgewood community. This development effort is in strong alignment with the Richland County "Ridgewood Neighborhood Revitalization Master Plan (Dated August 2004), and fully supports the neighborhood master plan project goals of:*

- improving the quality of life for Ridgewood residents*
- expanding neighborhood connectivity and beautification*
- upgrading infrastructure, recreation, and natural environments*
- improving housing and raising property values*
- policing neighborhood and increasing code enforcement*

*(from the 2014 Ridgewood Revitalization Progress Report, retrieved on March 2, 2015 from <http://www.richlandonline.com/Portals/0/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Docs/Revitalization%20newsletter%202014%20Final%20Version.pdf>*

**Submitted on behalf of The Martin Family,**

**John J. Lewis III  
New Paths Development & Consulting, LLC**