

AN ORDINANCE

TO LEVY AND IMPOSE A ONE PERCENT SALES AND USE TAX, SUBJECT TO A REFERENDUM, WITHIN GREENVILLE COUNTY PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-37-30 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED; TO DEFINE THE SPECIFIC PURPOSES AND DESIGNATE THE PROJECTS FOR WHICH THE PROCEEDS OF THE TAX MAY BE USED; TO PROVIDE THE MAXIMUM TIME FOR WHICH SUCH TAX MAY BE IMPOSED; TO PROVIDE THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE PROJECTS FUNDED FROM THE PROCEEDS OF THE TAX; TO PROVIDE FOR A COUNTY-WIDE REFERENDUM ON THE IMPOSITION OF THE SALES AND USE TAX AND THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND TO PRESCRIBE THE CONTENTS OF THE BALLOT QUESTIONS IN THE REFERENDUM; TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE REFERENDUM BY THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION OF GREENVILLE COUNTY; TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TAX, IF APPROVED; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE TAX, IF APPROVED; AND TO PROVIDE FOR OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF GREENVILLE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, IN MEETING DULY ASSEMBLED:

Section 1. Recitals and Legislative Findings. As an incident to the enactment of this Ordinance, the County Council of Greenville County, South Carolina (the “County Council”) has made the following findings:

1.1 The South Carolina General Assembly has enacted Section 4-37-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended (the “Act”), pursuant to which the county governing body may impose by ordinance a sales and use tax in an amount not to exceed one percent, subject to the favorable results of a referendum, within the county area for a specific purpose or purposes and for a limited amount of time to collect a limited amount of money.

1.2 Pursuant to the terms of Section 4-37-10 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, the South Carolina General Assembly has authorized county government to finance the costs of highways, roads, streets, bridges and other transportation related projects either alone or in partnership with other governmental entities. As a means to furthering the powers granted to the County under the provisions of Section 4-9-30 and Sections 6-21-10, *et seq.* of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976 as amended, the County Council is authorized to form a transportation authority or to enter into a partnership, consortium, or other contractual arrangement with one or more other governmental entities pursuant to Title 4, Chapter 37 of the Code of Laws of the South Carolina 1976, as amended. The County Council has decided to provide funding for highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related projects, *inter alia*, without the complexity of a transportation authority or entering into a partnership, consortium, or other contractual arrangements with one or more other governmental entities at this time; provided that nothing herein shall preclude County Council from entering into

partnerships, consortiums, or other contractual arrangements in the future. County Council may utilize such provisions in the future as necessary or convenient to promote the public purposes served by funding highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related projects as provided in this Ordinance.

1.3 The County Council finds that a one percent sales and use tax should be levied and imposed within Greenville County, for the following projects and purpose:

(i) For financing the costs of highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects and facilities, and drainage facilities related thereto.

(ii) For financing the costs of mass transit systems operated by Greenville County or jointly operated by the County and other governmental entities.

(a). For the purposes of this Ordinance, mass transit is to include but not be limited to the operation and expansion of the mass transit system as defined by Greenville Transit Authority's Transit Development Plan including improved frequency and enhanced routes.

(iii) For the financing the costs of greenbelts.

(a.) For the purposes of this Ordinance, greenbelts are to include but not be limited to acquiring land and conservation easements for the following: expanding public parks and green spaces, lands for active sports fields, securing water access points, expanding trails and greenways, protecting lands critical to wildlife, floodwater management, working farms and forests, natural resource management, historic preservation and protecting drinking water sources and water quality in rivers, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies.

(the above herein referred to as the "projects").

For a period not to exceed 8 years from the date of imposition of such tax, to fund the projects at a maximum cost not to exceed \$1,100,000,000 to be funded from the net proceeds of a sales and use tax imposed in Greenville County pursuant to provisions of the Act, subject to approval of the qualified electors of Greenville County in referendum to be held on November 3, 2026. The imposition of the sales and use tax and the use of sales and use tax revenue, if approved in the referendum, shall be subject to the conditions precedent and conditions or restrictions on the use and expenditure of sales and use tax revenue established by the Act, the provisions of this Ordinance, and other applicable law. Subject to annual appropriations by County Council, sales and use tax revenues shall be used for the costs of the projects established in this Ordinance, as it may be amended from time to time, including, without limitation, payment of administrative costs of the projects, and such sums as may be required in connection with the issuance of bonds, the proceeds of which are applied to pay costs of the projects. All spending shall be subject to an annual independent audit to be made available to the public.

1.4 County Council finds that the imposition of a sales and use tax in Greenville County for the projects and purposes defined in this Ordinance for a limited time not to exceed 8 years to collect a limited amount of money will serve a public purpose, provide funding for highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related projects as provided in this Ordinance to facilitate economic development, promote public safety, provide needed infrastructure, promote desirable living conditions, enhance the quality of life in Greenville County, and promote public health and safety in the event of fire, emergency, panic, and other dangers, and prepare Greenville County to meet present and future needs of Greenville County and its citizens.

Section 2. Approval of Sales and Use Tax Subject to Referendum.

2.1 A sales and use tax (the “Sales and Use Tax”), as authorized by the Act, is hereby imposed in Greenville County, South Carolina, subject to a favorable vote of a majority of the qualified electors voting in a referendum on the imposition of the tax to be held in Greenville County, South Carolina on November 3, 2026.

2.2 The Sales and Use Tax shall be imposed for a period not to exceed 8 years from the date of imposition.

2.3 The maximum cost of the projects to be funded from the proceeds of the Sales and Use Tax shall not exceed, in the aggregate, the sum of \$1,100,000,000, and the maximum amount of net proceeds to be raised by the tax shall not exceed \$1,100,000,000, which includes administrative costs and debt service on bonds issued to pay for the projects. The estimated principal amount of initial authorization of bonds to be issued to pay costs of the projects and to be paid by a portion of the Sales and Use Tax shall not exceed \$150,000,000, excluding such premium, if any, named by the purchaser or purchasers of the bonds as a portion of the purchase price of the bonds.

2.4 The Sales and Use Tax shall be expended for the costs of the following projects, including payment of any sums as may be required for the issuance of and debt service for bonds, the proceeds of which are applied to such projects, for the following purposes:

- (i) For financing the costs of highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects facilities, and drainage facilities related thereto, which may include, but not limited to:

Local paving, resurfacing, congestion management, intersection improvements, transportation-related drainage projects, bike/pedestrian facilities, and rural road safety projects. Transportation projects shall be no more than \$990,000,000 of the total amount collected.

Municipalities, as defined by S.866, 126th General Assembly, and codified at Section 5-41-110(4) of the Code of Laws of South

Carolina 1976, as amended, located wholly or partially in Greenville County that have not imposed any tax pursuant to S.866, 126th General Assembly, as codified in Section 5-41-110, *et seq.* of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, shall receive a pro rata share of the total net taxable sales tax collected within the municipality, after a twenty percent reduction and the prorated share of 2.4(ii) and 2.4(iii). The twenty percent reduction will be applied to place the municipality in a same or similar position as would enacting a tax pursuant to S.866, 126th General Assembly, and codified at Section 5-41-120(2)(B) and (3). Municipal pro rata allocations will be calculated using the South Carolina Department of Revenue's actual sales tax collections within the municipalities. Sales and Use Tax revenues distributed to a municipality under this subsection may be used by the municipality only for the projects and purposes authorized by Section 4-37-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, and described in this Ordinance, and for no other purpose. A municipality's share is subject to the same restrictions on the use and expenditure of Sales and Use Tax revenues that apply to the County under the Act and this Ordinance and may be expended only for highways, roads, streets, bridges, transportation-related projects and facilities, drainage facilities related thereto, mass transit systems, or greenbelts as approved by the qualified electors in the referendum. As a condition of receiving any distribution under this subsection, each municipality shall agree in writing to these restrictions, shall account for its expenditure of the funds, and shall provide to County Council an independent annual audit of its use of the funds in the form required by Section 3.2(c). If the South Carolina Department of Revenue, an independent audit, or a court of competent jurisdiction determines that a municipality has expended any portion of its share for a purpose not authorized by the Act or this Ordinance, the municipality shall promptly repay that amount to the County for reallocation in accordance with this Ordinance, and County Council may withhold or offset the amount against future distributions to that municipality. Any portion of a municipality's share that remains unexpended upon termination of the Sales and Use Tax shall be returned to the County and applied in accordance with Section 2.7.

The amount of the maximum total funds to be collected which shall be expended for these projects and purposes shall be no more than \$990,000,000.

- (ii) For financing the costs of mass transit systems operated by Greenville County or jointly operated by the County and other governmental entities. The amount of

maximum total funds to be collected which shall be expended for these projects and purposes shall be no more than three percent (3%) of the tax collected with a maximum of \$33,000,000.

- (iii) For financing the costs of greenbelts. The amount of the maximum total funds to be collected which shall be expended for these projects and purposes shall be no more than seven percent (7%) of the tax collected with a maximum of \$77,000,000.

2.5 If the Sales and Use Tax is approved by a majority of the qualified electors voting in a referendum to be held in Greenville County on November 3, 2026, the tax is to be imposed on the first day of May, 2027, provided the Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Greenville County shall certify the results not later than November 30, 2026, to Greenville County Council and the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Included in the certification must be the maximum cost of the projects to be funded in whole or in part from the proceeds of the tax, the maximum time specified for the imposition of the tax, and the principal amount of initial authorization of bonds, if any, to be supported by a portion of the tax.

2.6 The Sales and Use Tax, if approved in the referendum conducted on November 3, 2026 shall terminate on the earlier of:

- (1) Eight (8) years from the date of imposition; or
- (2) the end of the calendar month during which the Department of Revenue determines that the tax has raised revenues sufficient to provide the greater of either the costs of the projects as approved in the referendum or the cost to amortize all debts related to the approved projects.

2.7 Amounts of Sales and Use Tax collected in excess of the required proceeds must first be applied, if necessary, to complete each project for which the tax was imposed. Any additional revenue collected above the specified amount must be applied to the reduction of debt principal of Greenville County on transportation infrastructure debts only.

2.8 The Sales and Use Tax must be administered and collected by the South Carolina Department of Revenue in the same manner that other sales and use taxes are collected. The Department may prescribe amounts that may be added to the sales price because of the tax.

2.9 The Sales and Use Tax is in addition to all other local sales and use taxes and applies to the gross proceeds of sales in the applicable area that is subject to the tax imposed by Chapter 36 of Title 12 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, and the enforcement provisions of Chapter 54 of Title 12 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended. The gross proceeds of the sale of items subject to a maximum tax in Chapter 36 of Title 12 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, are exempt from the tax imposed by this Ordinance. The gross proceeds of the sale of food lawfully purchased with United States Department of Agriculture Food Stamps are exempt from the tax imposed by this Ordinance. The tax imposed by this Ordinance also applies to tangible property subject to the use tax in Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as

amended.

2.10 Taxpayers required to remit taxes under Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, must identify the county in which the personal property purchased at retail is stored, used, or consumed in this State.

2.11 Utilities are required to report sales in the county in which the consumption of the tangible personal property occurs.

2.12 A taxpayer subject to the tax imposed by Section 12-36-920 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended, who owns or manages rental units in more than one county must report separately in his sales tax return the total gross proceeds from business done in each county.

2.13 The gross proceeds of sales of tangible personal property delivered after the imposition date of the Sales and Use Tax, either under the terms of a construction contract executed before the imposition date, or written bid submitted before the imposition date, culminating in a construction contract entered into before or after the imposition date, are exempt from the sales and use tax provided in this ordinance if a verified copy of the contract is filed with Department of Revenue within six months after the imposition date of the sales and use tax provided for in this Ordinance.

2.14 Notwithstanding the imposition date of the Sales and Use Tax with respect to services that are billed regularly on a monthly basis, the sales and use tax authorized pursuant to this ordinance is imposed beginning on the first day of the billing period beginning on or after the imposition date.

**Section 3. Remission of Sales and Use Tax; Segregation of Funds;
Administration of Funds; Distribution to Counties; Confidentially.**

3.1 The revenues of the Sales and Use Tax collected under this Ordinance must be remitted to the State Treasurer and credited to a fund separate and distinct from the general fund of the State. After deducting the amount of any refunds made and costs to the Department of Revenue of administering the tax, not to exceed one percent of such revenues the State Treasurer shall distribute the revenues quarterly to the Greenville County Treasurer and the revenues must be used only for the purposes stated herein. The State Treasurer may correct misallocations by adjusting subsequent distributions, but these distributions must be made in the same fiscal year as the misallocation. However, allocations made as a result of city or county code errors must be corrected prospectively.

3.2 (a) Any outside agencies, political subdivisions or organizations designated to receive funding from the Sales and Use Tax must annually submit requests for funding in accordance with procedures and schedules established by the County Administrator. The County Administrator (or his/her designee) shall prepare the proposed budget for the Sales and Use Tax and submit it to the County Council at such time as the County Council determines. At the time of submitting the proposed budget, the County Administrator shall submit to the County Council

a statement describing the important features of the proposed budget.

(b) County Council shall adopt annually and prior to the beginning of fiscal year a budget for expenditures of Sales and Use Tax revenues. County Council may make supplemental appropriations for the Sales and Use Tax following the same procedures prescribed for the enactment of other budget ordinances. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to prohibit the transfer of funds appropriated in the annual budget for the Sales and Use Tax from one project or purpose approved under Section 2.4 of this Ordinance to another project or purpose approved under Section 2.4 of this Ordinance, when such transfers are approved by County Council; provided, however, that no Sales and Use Tax revenue may be transferred to, or expended for, any purpose other than the projects and purposes approved by the qualified electors in the referendum and stated in this Ordinance, consistent with Section 4-37-30(A)(15) of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended. In the preparation of the annual budget, County Council may require any reports, estimates, and statistics from any county agency or department as may be necessary to perform its duties as the responsible fiscal body of the County.

(c) Except as specifically authorized by County Council, any outside agency or organization receiving an appropriation of the Sales and Use Tax must provide to County Council an independent annual audit of such agency's or organization's financial records and transactions related to the use of said funds and such other and more frequent financial information as required by County Council, all in form satisfactory to County Council.

3.3 The Department of Revenue shall furnish data to the State Treasurer and to the Greenville County Treasurer for the purpose of calculating distributions and estimating revenues. The information which must be supplied to the County upon request includes, but is not limited to, gross receipts, net taxable sales, and tax liability by taxpayers. Information about a specific taxpayer is considered confidential and is governed by the provisions of S.C. Code Ann. Section 12-54-240. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to the penalties provided in S.C. Code Ann. Section 12-54-240.

Section 4. Transportation Transparency Committee.

4.1 The County Council hereby authorizes the establishment of a transparency oversight committee (the "Transportation Transparency Committee") comprised of at least six members to be appointed by County Council. The Transportation Transparency Committee will be responsible for reviewing appropriations and expenditures of Sales and Use Tax revenues to ensure that such revenues are appropriated and expended in accordance with the Act and this Ordinance.

4.2 Members of the Transportation Transparency Committee shall be County residents who are neither elected or appointed officials or employees of any government nor officials or employees from any agency or organization that either oversees or benefits from the proceeds of the Sales and Use Tax. The County Auditor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Transportation Transparency Committee.

4.3 Members of the Transportation Transparency Committee shall serve terms of four (4) years and until their successors are appointed and qualify; provided, however, that of the initial members, three (3) members shall serve initial terms of two (2) years as determined by County Council.

4.4 The Transportation Transparency Committee governance must be in accordance with State law. The Transportation Transparency Committee may elect officers and approve procedures for governing the Transportation Transparency Committee. Meetings of the Transportation Transparency Committee shall be open to the public and held in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. The Transportation Transparency Committee shall meet quarterly, at a minimum, and may meet more frequently if necessary, to receive updates from the County Administrator and his or her staff regarding the appropriations and expenditures of Sales and Use Tax revenues and the progress of related projects. The Transportation Transparency Committee shall provide quarterly updates to the County Council regarding the appropriations and expenditures of Sales and Use Tax revenues and the progress of related projects. Nothing in this ordinance shall prohibit any member of County Council, in accordance with applicable state law, from requesting and receiving updates from the County Administrator or his or her staff or the Transportation Transparency Committee regarding the appropriations and expenditures of Sales and Use Tax revenues or the progress of related projects, as such Council member may request or as circumstances may require. The Transportation Transparency Committee shall dissolve after all Sales and Use Tax revenues are expended and a final report is submitted to the County Council.

Section 5. Sales and Use Tax Referendum; Ballot Question.

5.1 The Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Greenville County shall conduct a referendum on the question of imposing the Sales and Use Tax in the area of Greenville County on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. under the election laws of the State of South Carolina, *mutatis mutandis*. The Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Greenville County shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation the question that is to appear on the ballot, with the list of projects and purposes as set forth herein, and the cost of projects, and shall publish such election and other notices as are required by law.

5.2 The referendum question to be on the ballot of the referendum to be held in Greenville County on November 3, 2026, must read substantially as follows:

GREENVILLE COUNTY SPECIAL SALES AND USE TAX

QUESTION 1

I approve a special sales and use tax in the amount of one percent to be imposed in Greenville County for not more than eight (8) years, or until a total of \$1,100,000,000 in resulting revenue has been collected, whichever occurs first. The sales tax proceeds will be used to fund the following projects:

Project (1) For financing the costs of highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects facilities, and drainage facilities related thereto. \$990,000,000.

Project (2) For financing the costs of mass transit systems operated by Greenville County or jointly operated by the County and other governmental entities. \$33,000,000.

Project (3) For financing the costs of greenbelts. \$77,000,000.

YES _____
NO _____

Instructions to Voters: All qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of levying the special sales and use tax shall vote “YES;” and

All qualified electors opposed to levying the special sales and use tax shall vote “NO.”

QUESTION 2

I approve the issuance of not exceeding \$150,000,000 of general obligation bonds of Greenville County, payable from the special sales and use tax described in Question 1 above, maturing over a period not to exceed eight (8) years, to fund completion of projects from among the categories described in Question 1 above.

YES _____
NO _____

Instructions to Voters: All qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of the issuance of bonds for the stated purposes shall vote “YES;” and

All qualified electors opposed to the issuance of bonds for the stated purposes shall vote “NO.”

5.3 In the referendum on the imposition of a special sales and use tax in Greenville County, all qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of imposing the tax for the stated purposes shall vote “yes” and all qualified electors opposed to levying the tax shall vote “no”. If a majority of the electors voting in the referendum shall vote in favor of imposing the tax, then the tax is imposed as provided in the Act and this Ordinance. Expenses of the referendum must be paid by Greenville County government.

5.4 In the referendum on the issuance of bonds, all qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of the issuance of bonds for the stated purpose shall vote “yes” and all qualified electors opposed to the issuance of bonds shall vote “no”. If a majority of the electors voting in the referendum shall vote in favor of the issuance of bonds, then the issuance of bonds shall be authorized in accordance with S.C. Constitution Article X, Section 14, Paragraph (6). Expenses of the referendum must be paid by Greenville County government.

Section 6. Imposition of Tax Subject to Referendum.

The imposition of the Sales and Use Tax in Greenville County is subject in all respects to the favorable vote of a majority of qualified electors casting votes in a referendum on the question of imposing a sales and use tax in the area of Greenville County in a referendum to be conducted by the Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Greenville County on November 3, 2026, and the favorable vote of a majority of the qualified electors voting in such referendum shall be a condition precedent to the imposition of a sales and use tax pursuant to the provisions of this Ordinance.

Section 7. Miscellaneous.

7.1 Upon enactment of this Ordinance, the Clerk to County Council is directed to provide the same to the Greenville County Election Commission with direction to provide for the submission of the Ballot Question to the electors of the County at the Referendum.

7.2 The County Council authorizes the County Administrator to take all actions necessary and convenient in connection with implementing this Ordinance.

7.3 If any one or more of the provisions or portions hereof are determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to law, then that provision or portion shall be deemed severable from the remaining terms or portions hereof and the invalidity thereof shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this Ordinance; if any provisions of this Ordinance shall be held or deemed to be or shall, in fact, be inoperative or unenforceable or invalid as applied to any particular case in any jurisdiction or in all cases because it conflicts with any constitution or statute or rule of public policy, or for any other reason, those circumstances shall not have the effect of rendering the provision in question inoperative or unenforceable or invalid in any other case or circumstance, or of rendering any other provision or provisions herein contained inoperative or unenforceable or invalid to any extent whatever; provided, however, that the Sales and Use Tax may not be imposed without the favorable results of the referendum to be held on November 3, 2026.

7.4 This Ordinance shall be construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of South Carolina and all suits and actions arising out of this Ordinance shall be instituted in a court of competent jurisdiction in this State.

7.5 The headings or titles of the several sections hereof shall be solely for convenience of reference and shall not affect the meaning, construction, interpretation, or effect of this ordinance.

7.6 This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon approval following third reading.

7.7 All previous ordinances regarding the same subject matter as this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS _____ DAY OF JULY, 2026.

Benton Blount, Chairman
Greenville County Council

ATTEST:

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council

Joseph M. Kernell
County Administrator

First Reading: _____
Public Hearing: _____
Second Reading: _____
Third Reading: _____