

## Soul City <sup>[1]</sup>

### Soul City

by Raymond Gavins, 2006

#### THE FIRST CITY IN THE WORLD THAT'S BUILT AROUND YOUR FAMILY.

Before we laid a brick, we laid plans for a clean, uncongested city of 40,000. On 3,500 acres of beautiful land in Warren County, N.C.

There will be 18,000 jobs at Soul City. But while people will work in a city, they'll live in a village. Within ten minutes of work.

All types of homes are available at Soul City. Everything you need to live here is here now. Plus many recreational facilities.

Here people of all ages, races and religions work together. Play together. Learn together.

Soul City. A fresh start.

To make a fresh start for your family or industry,

contact Floyd B. McKissick,  
The Soul City Company,  
P.O. Box 188,  
Soul City,  
North Carolina  
27553.  
Telephone  
(919) 456-3111.



Soul City is a new community assisted by the New Community Development Corporation of HUD.

Soul City advertisement in the June 1977 issue of *Black Enterprise*

<sup>[2]</sup>Soul City, a small town located one mile off U.S. 1 between Warrenton and Manson in Warren County <sup>[3]</sup>, is a symbol of black economic aspiration fueled by the civil rights gains of the 1960s and 1970s. McKissick Enterprises, headed by civil rights activist Floyd B. McKissick (1922-91), financed the development of an African American community mainly with federal loan guarantees, grants, and contracts totaling \$31 million from 1971 to 1978. With completion of the infrastructure, including a water treatment plant, hope abounded for the community's success. However, job-creating industries did not come, and housing construction dragged. The developer also faced damaging federal audits and political opposition, eventually defaulting in 1980.

Although the federal government foreclosed on the Soul City project, the community continued to grow. In the mid-1980s the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation <sup>[4]</sup> gave a grant of \$20,000 to renovate the historic Green Duke House and turn it into a Jobs Link Center. By the early 2000s Soul City was a 5,000-acre development with a few hundred occupants and assets that included a fire station, a janitorial supplies manufacturer, a poultry-processing plant, the Healthco Clinic, the Floyd McKissick Assisted Living Center, a Head Start preschool center, and recreational facilities.

#### References:

Jason Alston, "Soul City's Dream Is Unfulfilled, but Not Dead," *Durham Herald-Sun*, 30 Aug. 2003.

Osha Gray Davidson, *The Best of Enemies: Race and Redemption in the New South* (1996).

Floyd B. McKissick, *Three-Fifths of a Man* (1969).

#### Additional resources:

Articles in NC LIVE <sup>[5]</sup>

Minchin, Timothy J. "A Brand New Shining City': Floyd B. McKissick Sr. and the Struggle to Build Soul City, North

Carolina." *The North Carolina Historical Review* 82, no. 2 (2005): 125–55. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23523505> [6].

**Image Credit:**

Soul City advertisement originally appeared in the June 1977 issue of *Black Enterprise*. Accessed via [Google Books](#). [2]  
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**Subjects:**

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**Authors:**

[Gavins, Raymond](#) [10]

**Origin - location:**

[Warren County](#) [11]

**From:**

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press](#). [12]

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