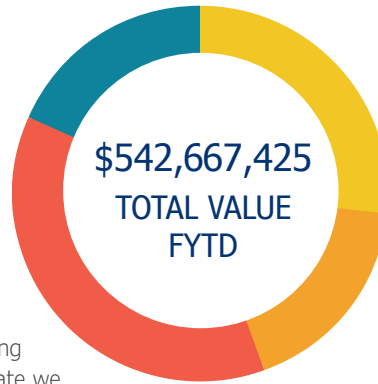


Insights

As we enter the Spring months, you may note that it is one of the busiest times for construction. Looking at this month's data in comparison to recent months, you'll probably note the uptick in trades permits, likely due to the significant number of residential units recently permitted. There is always a slight lag between applications for a main building permit and its associated trades permits, and March's numbers certainly reflect this.

Also, as we anticipated, we've seen some increase in permitting likely tied to the pause in permitting due to the software update we saw in late February. We also saw the highest monthly total for commercial permit values that we've seen all fiscal year.



FY 2024-2025 TO DATE

- SINGLE/TWO-FAMILY/TOWNHOME NEW CONSTRUCTION
760 permits, \$145,831,683
- MULTI-FAMILY NEW CONSTRUCTION
23 permits, \$96,159,982 (692 units)
- COMMERCIAL
262 permits, \$202,007,795
- TRADES/OTHER
2,333 permits, \$98,667,965

*Values rounded to the nearest whole number.

Getting Started

Helping Facilitate the Development Process in March

PRE-DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

14

ANNEXATION REQUESTS

5

ZONING CONFIRMATIONS

162

Meetings to discuss development proposals prior to formal plan/permit submittal

Property owner petitions for annexation into the City

Requests to confirm zoning associated with new business ownership, business relocations, etc.

FY 2024-2025 TO DATE

111 21

961

1,093

LAND USE BOARDS & COMMISSION REVIEWS

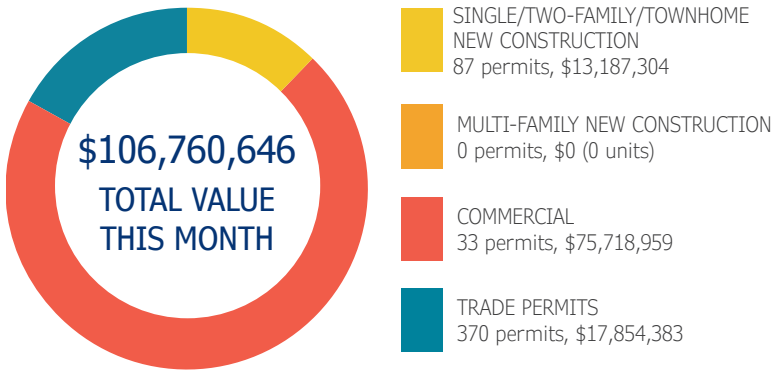
March 2025

	CONSENT AGENDA	REGULAR AGENDA
Board of Zoning Appeals (BoZA)	3 CASES / 100%	
Design/Development Review Commission (D/DRC)	5 CASES / 71%	2 CASES / 29%
Planning Commission (PC)	4 CASES / 50%	4 CASES / 50%

Under Construction

Permits Issued in March

PERMIT VALUATION* & NUMBER OF PERMITS

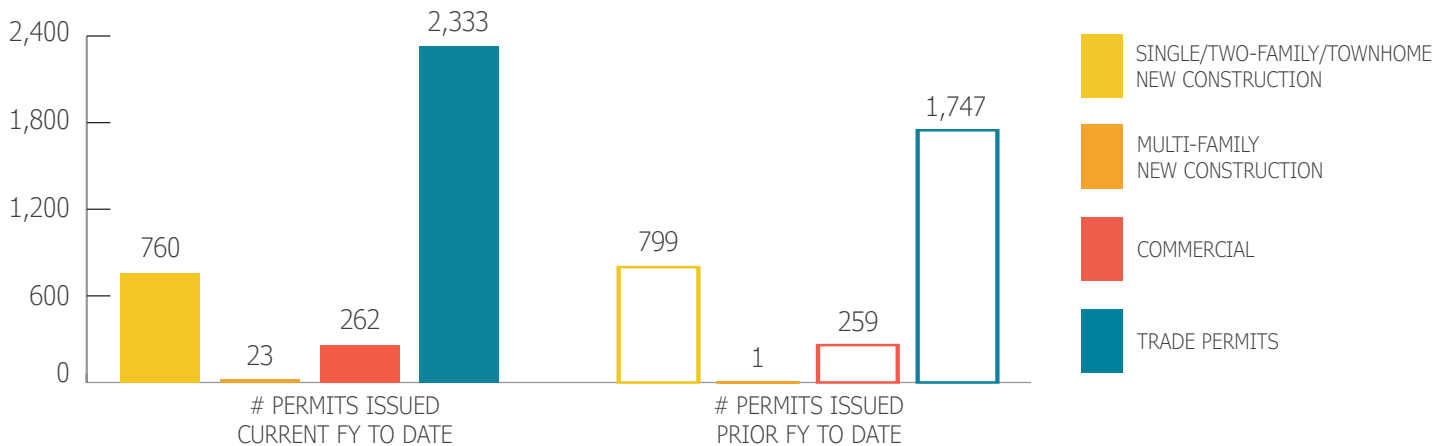


*Values rounded to the nearest whole number.

Celebrate this May!

Each year City Council joins a nationwide celebration by proclaiming May to be Bike Month and Historic Preservation Month in the City of Columbia. The Planning Division supports month-long community celebrations and develops community calendars with a host activities, resources, and community connections.

How will you celebrate this year? Stay tuned to columbiacompass.org/celebratemay, where we'll be releasing this year's calendars shortly!



DESIGN REVIEW

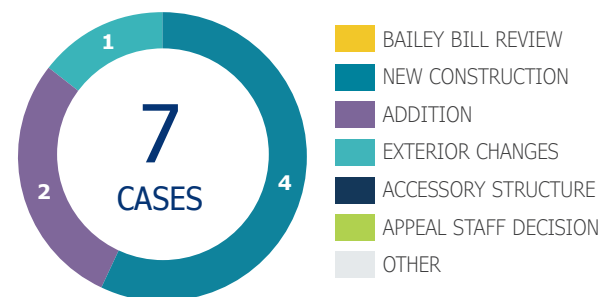
Design review is required for certain projects within the City's urban design and historic preservation zoning overlays. The vast majority of these reviews are completed at the staff level, however certain types of projects require D/DRC review.

All applications for the Bailey Bill tax abatement program must be reviewed by the D/DRC per ordinance; you can learn more about the Bailey Bill and other preservation incentives [here](#).



COMMON D/DRC REQUESTS

Cases Heard in March



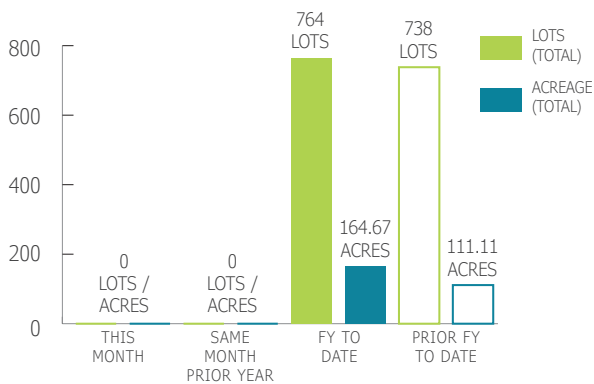
Under Construction

Land Development Reviews

Approval for Major Subdivisions and Major Site Plans is granted at the Planning Commission level, whereas Minor Subdivisions and Minor Site Plans are reviewed solely by staff for compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). **Major Subdivisions** are subdivisions of lots where platting, construction, opening, or extension of at least one of the following occurs: new streets, improvement of existing streets, water or sewer facilities, storm drainage facilities, and other utilities. **Major Site Plans** propose at least one of the following: nonresidential development of 100,000 square feet or greater, multi-family development of more than 25 units, or the development of new principal uses and structures on a lot.

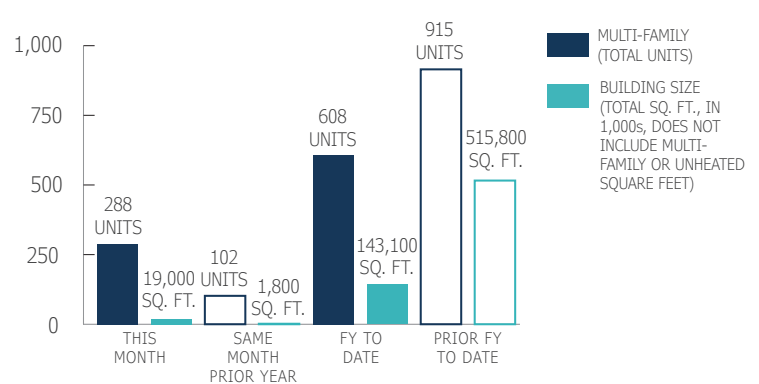
MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

Approved by Planning Commission



MAJOR SITE PLANS

Approved by Planning Commission



BY THE NUMBERS - MARCH



Ensuring Compliance

Inspection & Enforcement Activities in March



Permitting by the Numbers

Dive into the Details

Permit Type	#
Certificate of Design Approval	23
Commercial Building	33
Commercial Building Trade - Electrical	36
Commercial Building Trade - Gas	11
Commercial Building Trade - Mechanical	40
Commercial Building Trade - Plumbing	18
Commercial Roofing	9
Construction Trailer	1
Curb Cut	3
Demolition (Commercial)	1
Demolition (Residential)	14
Fire Alarm System	5
Fire Extinguishing System	5
Fire Sprinkler System	13
Land Disturbance	3
Oversized Moving	0
Prescribed Grazing	0
Residential Building	174
Residential Building Trade - Electrical	99
Residential Building Trade - Gas	15
Residential Building Trade - Mechanical	71
Residential Building Trade - Plumbing	80
Residential Roofing	54
Sign	31
Swimming Pool	4
Urban Forestry	1
Zoning Permit *	31
Zoning Temporary	1
Zoning Wireless Communication Facility	1
Total Permits	777

Permits Issued For	This Month	Same Month Last Year	FY to Date	Last FY to Date
Residential Building New One Family/Townhouse	85	100	735	787
Residential Building Two Family	2	2	25	12
Residential Building Renovation	79	104	749	650
Commercial Building New	6	1	61	26
Commercial Building Renovation	27	23	219	222
Swimming Pools	4	3	34	37
Demolition	15	2	52	53
Zoning Permits	31	47	303	294
Total Value of Buildings	\$112,564,415.64	\$64,426,990.22	\$803,304,095.12	\$644,564,606.39
Total Building Inspections Made	1,694	1,458	14,015	14,244
Total Fees Collected **	\$196,352.00	\$211,511.50	\$1,917,450.97	\$1,805,086.45
Plan Reviews	127	147	1,168	1,117
Fees Collected Plan Review	\$3,957.07	\$4,647.50	\$39,085.97	\$38,893.23

* Zoning Permits are combined with Building Permits. The Zoning Permit count is for Zoning Only Permits (fences, temporary signs, Wireless Communication Facilities, etc.)

** Totals provided are specific to Planning & Development Services fees only; other fees that are collected by the Development Center as part of the permitting process, such as business license or land disturbance permit fees, are not included in the above totals.



Downtown Strategic Plan & Design Guidelines

Planning Division staff hosted two public open houses on Wednesday, March 12th to facilitate community conversation around the draft guidelines, which are a key deliverable of the planning process that have the potential to shape Downtown Columbia’s built environment for years to come. Both the draft guidelines and draft plan document, as well as the meeting displays, are available [on the project website](#), and public comment was accepted both in-person and online through March 21st.

Final edits to the draft documents are underway, and the process to adopt the plan and guidelines documents involves review and recommendation by both the City’s Planning Commission and Design/Development Review Commission prior to votes by City Council. As the guidelines are proposed to support a new urban design overlay district, meant to consolidate and replace the existing City Center and Innovista overlay districts, staff is also working to identify the necessary updates to the City’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and official zoning map.

City welcomes new Community Planner



Afroza Hossain Misty joined our team as an Associate Planner in February, focusing on active transportation initiatives and community engagement. She brings planning experience from both the U.S. and internationally. Originally from Bangladesh, Afroza earned her bachelor’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning and worked with the country’s Capital Development

Authority. She subsequently completed her master’s in Urban and Regional Planning at Portland State University, and during her studies also contributed to transportation safety initiatives with the City of Beaverton, Oregon. Afroza will be working to support a number of Planning Division efforts, including active transportation, annexation, and comprehensive planning.



SCDOT Plans for a Safer Gervais Street

SCDOT hosted a public information meeting on Thursday, March 27th to discuss the findings of their road safety assessment (RSA) of Gervais Street between the river and Millwood Avenue. The City’s transportation planning team, including members of the Planning Division, participated in the assessment process as stakeholders, and continues to be part of the conversation as SCDOT develops plans in response to the assessment findings and public feedback received.

Planning efforts result in meaningful + long-term impacts.

With the recent adoption of the *Reaching Riverbanks Community Mobility Plan*, and the recently released draft *Downtown Strategic Plan*, you might be wondering a bit about the area planning process, and why area plans are an important component of City policy. The Planning Division recently put together an FAQ to address some of the questions we often receive about how plans are used, and how they remain relevant to decision makers, city staff, partner agencies, and citizens alike.

You can check out the FAQ, and City plans and studies, at bit.ly/COC-Plans

The Gervais RSA is one of a series of RSAs that SCDOT has been working on in Columbia - an initial public information meeting regarding Assembly (Elmwood - Rosewood) was held last Fall, and a final report and subsequent meeting on Millwood (Gervais - Devine) is anticipated later in 2025. These assessments inform and help with the development of recommended infrastructure improvements focused on increasing multimodal safety along each corridor, and initial recommendations are presented at public information meetings before the projects are fully designed and implemented by SCDOT.

SCDOT will accept comments on initial recommendations for Gervais Street [online through April 11th](#). Once feedback is reviewed, more detailed designs for the corridor will be developed through 2026, with subsequent construction anticipated along the corridor in 2026-2027.

Devine Street Corridor Study

SCDOT recently hosted a community meeting with nearby residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to better understand the community's vision for Devine Street between Harden and Millwood.



This Spring and Summer, SCDOT's consultant team will continue with data gathering and begin conceptual design of multiple options. These options (generally referred to as "alternatives"), will be presented back to the community stakeholders and the public in order to receive additional feedback and identify a preferred alternative before more detailed design moves forward, likely sometime in 2026.

Tracking Transportation Projects

If you're struggling to keep tabs on upcoming transportation projects, we might be able to help. Our [departmental annual report](#) provides a yearly snapshot of ongoing and upcoming projects, and you can sign up for our Walk Bike Columbia e-newsletter [here](#) to be notified about upcoming planning efforts and projects as we have information to share.

Reimagine Richland

Discovery • Development • Direction

Richland County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan update (Reimagine Richland) is now entering Phase II of the process. In Phase II Community Planning and Development (CP&D) staff will hold a second round of public forums in May, to begin receiving input on potential future growth scenarios. This will require feedback and input from the Advisory Committee, citizens, stakeholders, County Council, and the Planning Commission. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend a meeting:

- » Thursday, May 1, 5-7PM, EdVenture (211 Gervais)
- » Wednesday, May 7, 5-7PM, Ballentine Community Ctr (1009 Bickley)
- » Monday, May 12, 5-7PM, North Springs Community Ctr (1320 Clemson)
- » Wednesday, May 14, 5-7PM, Doko Manor (100 Alvina Hagood)
- » Wednesday, May 21, 5-7PM, Garners Ferry Adult Activity Ctr (8620 Garners Ferry)

Results from the Phase I survey and draft guiding principles are now available on their [project website](#). An existing conditions report will be made available on the website in the near future.



Want to access a digital version of this report or others? Check out our reporting + outreach page - visit bit.ly/PDS-report or use this QR code.