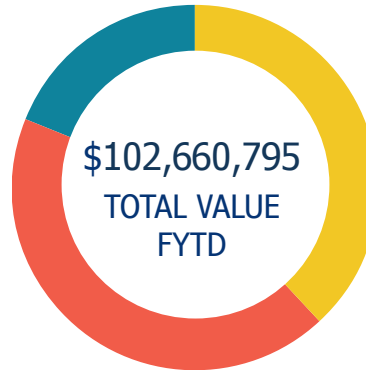


## Insights

Fall is always a busy season here in Columbia, and that is certainly true for planning-related activities! Each year, we gear up to count bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users (with your help) and to celebrate PARK(ing) Day in September and Planning Month in October.

In the midst of these annual activities, we are also kicking off a new public planning process (see page 6) and will be moving offices in September to join other City Departments at 1401 Main Street, on the 3rd floor.



### FY 2025-2026 TO DATE

- SINGLE/TWO-FAMILY/TOWNHOME NEW CONSTRUCTION  
235 permits, \$39,108,159
- MULTI-FAMILY NEW CONSTRUCTION  
0 permits, \$0 (0 units)
- COMMERCIAL  
71 permits, \$44,177,752
- TRADES/OTHER  
612 permits, \$19,374,884

\*Values rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Getting Started

Helping Facilitate the Development Process in August

PRE-DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

10

ANNEXATION REQUESTS

1

ZONING CONFIRMATIONS

158

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 2025-2026 TO DATE

27 4

290

321

## LAND USE BOARD & COMMISSION REVIEWS

August 2025

CONSENT AGENDA

REGULAR AGENDA

Board of Zoning Appeals (BoZA)

2 CASES / 50%

2 CASES / 50%

Design/Development Review Commission (D/DRC)

7 CASES / 70%

3 CASES / 30%

Planning Commission (PC)

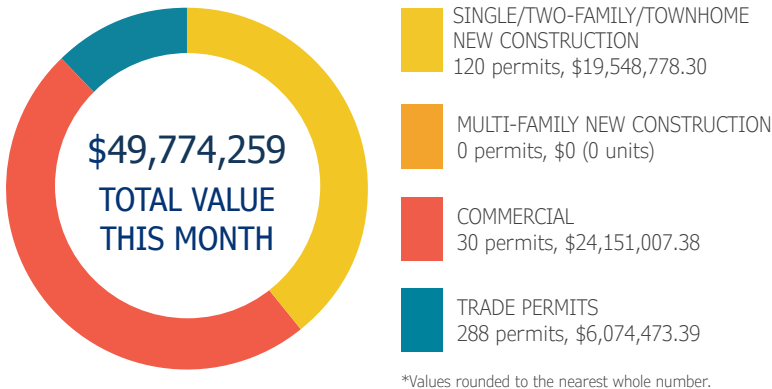
4 CASES / 50%

4 CASES / 50%

## Under Construction

Permits Issued in August

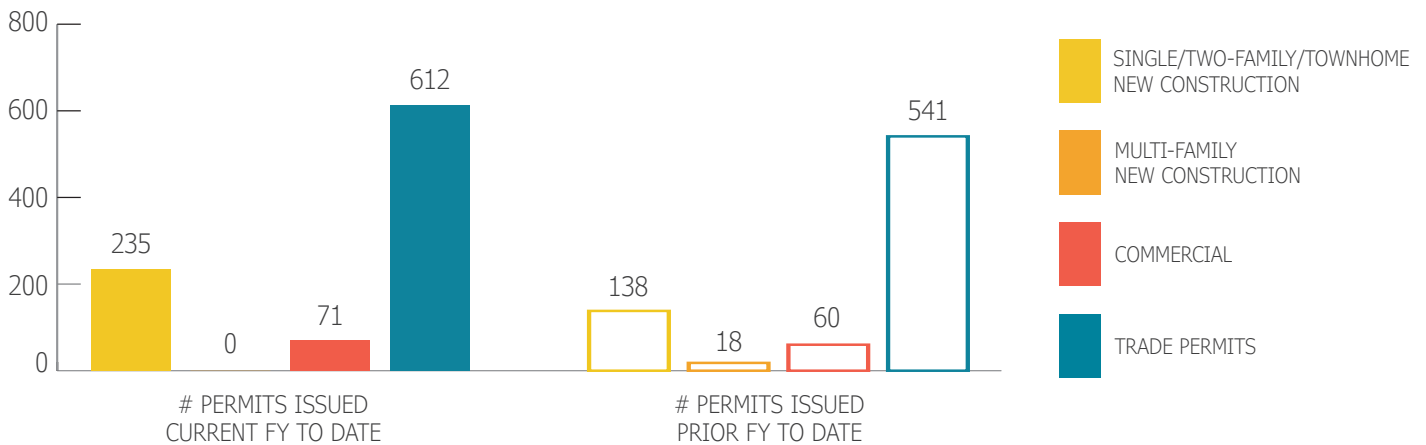
### PERMIT VALUATION\* & NUMBER OF PERMITS



## Pondering Parking Policy

Did you know that much of Columbia’s downtown and urban corridors do not require developers to provide parking? As Henry Grabar noted in his book *Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World*, there are up to six parking spaces for every car in America, and most vehicles spend about 95% of their lifespan simply parked. That’s why we think it’s worth re-sharing that parking minimums do not apply in seven of the City’s zoning districts (DAC, RAC, CAC, NAC, MC, MU-2, and MU-1). Check out this [illustrative map](#) to see more.

Ready to think differently about parking spaces? Don’t miss this year’s PARK(ing) Day celebration—see [page 5](#) for details!



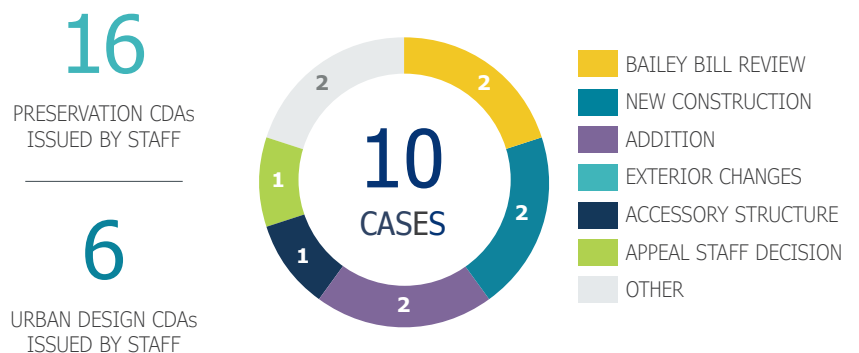
## DESIGN REVIEW

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 August



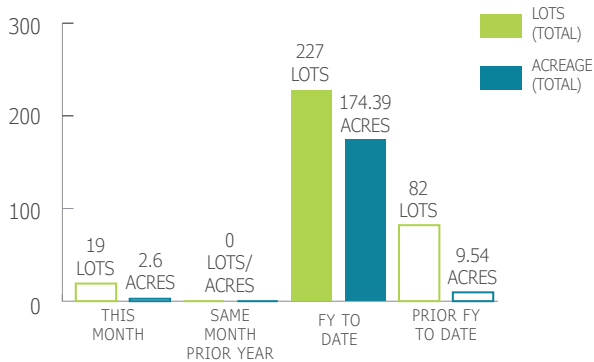
# Under Construction

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.

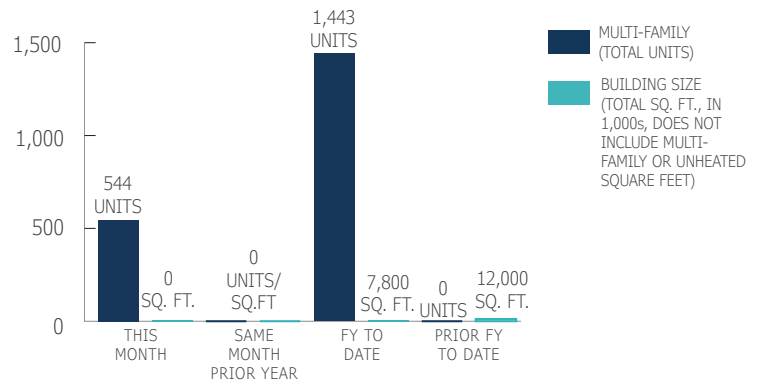
## MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

Approved by Planning Commission



## MAJOR SITE PLANS

Approved by Planning Commission



## BY THE NUMBERS - AUGUST

<h1>1</h1> <p>MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS APPROVED BY PC</p>	<h1>1</h1> <p>MAJOR SITE PLANS APPROVED BY PC</p>	<h1>4</h1> <p>MINOR SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS PROCESSED</p>	<h1>1</h1> <p>LAND DISTURBANCE PERMITS ISSUED</p>
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# Ensuring Compliance

Inspection & Enforcement Activities in August

<p>CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY ISSUED</p> <h1>82</h1>	<p>BUILDING INSPECTIONS</p> <h1>1,568</h1>	<p>LAND DEVELOPMENT INSPECTIONS</p> <h1>6</h1>	<p>ZONING SITE VISITS</p> <h1>79</h1>
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# Permitting by the Numbers

Dive into the Details

Permit Type	#
Certificate of Design Approval	22
Commercial Building	30
Commercial Building Trade - Electrical	32
Commercial Building Trade - Gas	4
Commercial Building Trade - Mechanical	21
Commercial Building Trade - Plumbing	16
Commercial Roofing	6
Construction Trailer	1
Curb Cut	0
Demolition (Commercial)	0
Demolition (Residential)	4
Fire Alarm System	13
Fire Extinguishing System	4
Fire Sprinkler System	8
Land Disturbance	1
Oversized Moving	0
Prescribed Grazing	3
Residential Building	397
Residential Building Trade - Electrical	62
Residential Building Trade - Gas	36
Residential Building Trade - Mechanical	75
Residential Building Trade - Plumbing	42
Residential Roofing	45
Sign	21
Swimming Pool	4
Urban Forestry	1
Zoning Permit *	44
Zoning Temporary	4
Zoning Wireless Communication Facility	0
<b>Total Permits</b>	<b>896</b>

Permits Issued For	This Month	Same Month Last Year	FY To Date	Last FY To Date
Residential Building New One Family/Townhouse	120	71	231	136
Residential Building Two Family	0	0	4	2
Residential Building Renovation	274	82	345	152
Commercial Building New	5	3	8	23
Commercial Building Renovation	25	22	63	54
Swimming Pools	4	4	8	12
Demolition	4	0	6	2
Zoning Permits	44	41	67	73
Total Value of Buildings	\$83,104,960.22	\$105,438,177.57	\$149,134,057.13	\$245,240,200.16
Total Building Inspections Made	1,568	1,509	3,459	3,286
Total Fees Collected **	\$315,447.00	\$130,154.80	\$540,981.68	\$523,158.80
Plan Reviews	393	110	542	210
Fees Collected Plan Review	\$11,583.00	\$3,943.80	\$16,819.68	\$7,370.80

\* 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.

## Save the date: PARK(ing) Day is Friday, September 19th!



Our 10th annual PARK(ing) Day celebration will be here soon – this year we celebrate on Friday, September 19th! This year’s theme builds on the [Downtown Columbia Strategic Plan and Guidelines](#), encouraging creative ideas for making the public realm more engaging and inviting in Columbia. Hope you’ll join the fun—whether hosting a park or exploring them all!

### What is the public realm?

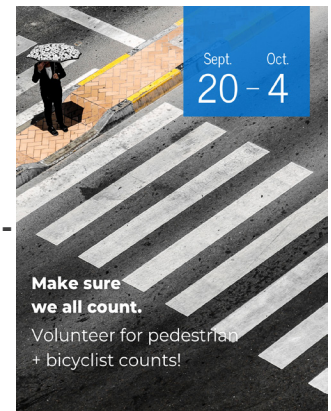
It’s that part of our urban fabric that is made up of publicly owned places and spaces that belong to and are accessible by everyone – our streets, plazas, sidewalks, trails, parks, open spaces, and more. The pedestrian realm, which encompasses the open space between a building’s face and the curb, is host to any number of streetscape elements that help contribute to a pleasant, walkable city. How would you populate the pedestrian realm? The possibilities are endless. Learn more about PARK(ing) Day [here](#).

## Share Two Hours + Your Insights

By counting pedestrians and bicyclists, volunteers and city staff help to ensure that all of the City’s residents count: transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists are often not accounted for in traffic studies – the same traffic studies used to make important decisions about our City’s landscape. For example, we were able to provide SCDOT and their consultant team with count data and observations from prior counts along and adjacent to Assembly Street and Millwood Avenue - data that helped frame the conversation during the Road Safety Assessment process!

Counts are conducted during a two-hour time period, on a weekend (Saturday from 10am – noon) or weekday (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 7:30 – 9:30am).

This Fall, we’ll be counting on **Saturdays, 10am – 12pm, September 20 + 27, + October 4 + on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 7:30 – 9:30am, September 23-25 and September 30 October 2.** Set aside a couple of hours on your calendar to volunteer to help make sure we all count – and [sign up today!!](#)



## Congratulations to our Paws for Preservation cover photo contest winner!

After nearly 1,000 votes, one pup stood out as the clear favorite - congratulations to Maggie! Learn more about her and the calendar [here](#).



The **Paws for Preservation Calendar** is an annual fundraiser for the Coalition of Columbia’s Historic Districts (CCHD). The funds raised by CCHD through 2024 and 2025 calendar sales were used to support preservation workshops for 2025 National Historic Preservation Month. To learn more about the CCHD and Paws for Preservation

efforts, visit [their webpage](#). If you’d like to join or volunteer with the Coalition, please contact us by [email](#).



## Urban Design Highlight: Gateway 737 Opens in Downtown Columbia

Planning staff attended the opening of Gateway 737, a major student housing development on Gadsden Street between Greene and Devine. Approved by the Planning Commission in 2023 and constructed in 2024, the 650,000-square-foot mixed-use project adds 940 student beds, ground-floor retail, and structured parking. Its walkable location strengthens connections to Greene Street, The Vista, and the university campus, supporting the City's goals for higher-density, mixed-use development and expanded student housing near the University of South Carolina. For leasing details and more information, visit their website [here](#).



We are kicking off a public planning process to improve safety for all roadway users – from our more vulnerable users like pedestrians and cyclists, to transit riders and personal and commercial vehicle operators. This planning process is about how we can move towards creating a Columbia where we can all travel our city public rights-of-way safely – and that's why we're calling it Sharing the Road. The first public engagement for SS4A Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will be on **Wednesday, October 8th (11AM - 1PM or 4PM - 6PM)** at **Richland Library**. More details will be shared soon—stay tuned by signing up for our [Columbia Compass Newsletter!](#)

The [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is federally-funded, and with an in-kind match of City hours dedicated to the planning process, allows the City procure a consultant team to build on the success of the Walk Bike Columbia plan, developing a comprehensive safety action plan that utilizes the Safe System Approach and meets with the SS4A requirements for subsequent infrastructure funding. This procurement process wrapped up towards the end of FY 2024-2025, and a team from Kimley-Horn was recently selected to help facilitate the planning process, which is anticipated run throughout FY 2025-2026.

# Reimagine Richland

Discovery • Development • Direction

Richland County is moving into the third phase of updating its Comprehensive Plan for 2025, [Reimagine Richland](#). This plan will serve as a long-term guide for future development policies. The process is divided into three phases: 1. Discovery Phase, 2. Plan Development Phase, and 3. Plan Direction. The County is currently in the "Plan Direction Phase," which presents the Policy Recommendations & Action Plan and the Priority Investment Element.

Join the project team from 5:30-7:30PM (with a presentation starting at 6PM) at one of their upcoming meetings:

- » Wednesday, September 10th, Upper Richland Community Center (280 Camp Ground Road)
- » Monday, September 15th, Garners Ferry Adult Activity Center (8620 Garners Ferry Road)
- » Wednesday, September 17th, Pine Grove Community Center (937 Piney Woods Road)
- » Monday, September 22nd, Blythewood Middle School (2351 Longtown Road E)
- » Wednesday, September 24th, Ballentine Community Center (1009 Bickley Road)
- » Monday, September 29th, Bluff Road Park (148 Carswell Road)

Information about upcoming Phase 3 meetings, results from the Phase 1 & 2 survey, and draft guiding principles are now available on their [project website](#). Please also take a moment to take their Phase 3 survey, [available here](#).



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.