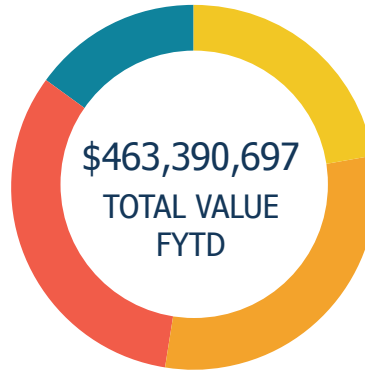


Insights

While our Winter months can signal a slight lull in permitting and development, you may notice that this month we've seen some notable increases - in trade permits, and with a sizable permit for multi-family new construction - in this case, the 201 unit Silver Hills development. While these swings are certainly interesting to observe, perhaps of greater import this month is the information you can find regarding ongoing planning efforts - and how you can engage in helping to plan for your community. Planning efforts are built upon the insights shared by community stakeholders - something our new Planning and Development Services Director, Justin Steinmann, is quite passionate about. Learn more about Justin, and about how you can be involved in planning, from small-scale data collection to helping frame broader goals and visions, on the last two pages of this month's report.



FY 2025-2026 TO DATE*

- SINGLE/TWO-FAMILY/TOWNHOME NEW CONSTRUCTION
614 permits, \$103,800,437
- MULTI-FAMILY NEW CONSTRUCTION
4 permits, \$140,576,206 (750 units)
- COMMERCIAL
268 permits, \$150,568,803
- TRADES/OTHER
2,091 permits, \$68,445,252

*Values rounded to the nearest whole number.

Getting Started

Helping Facilitate the Development Process in January

PRE-DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

22

ANNEXATION REQUESTS

2

ZONING CONFIRMATIONS

84

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

117 13

876

1,006

LAND USE BOARD & COMMISSION REVIEWS

January 2026

CONSENT AGENDA

REGULAR AGENDA

Board of Zoning Appeals (BoZA)

2 CASES / 67%

1 CASE / 33%

Design/Development Review Commission (D/DRC)

4 CASES / 67%

2 CASES / 33%

Planning Commission (PC)

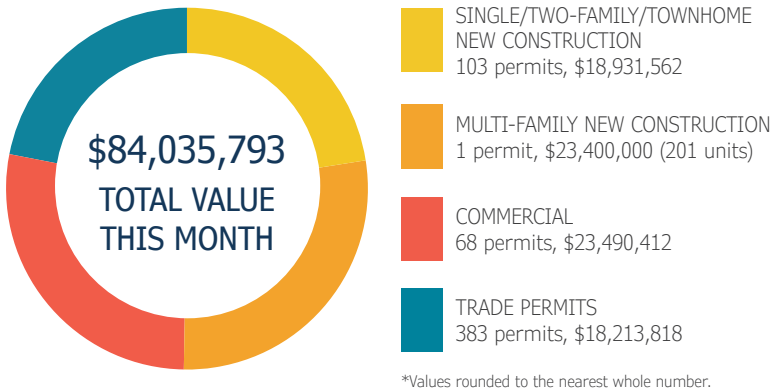
3 CASES / 75%

1 CASE / 25%

Under Construction

Permits Issued in January

PERMIT VALUATION* & NUMBER OF PERMITS

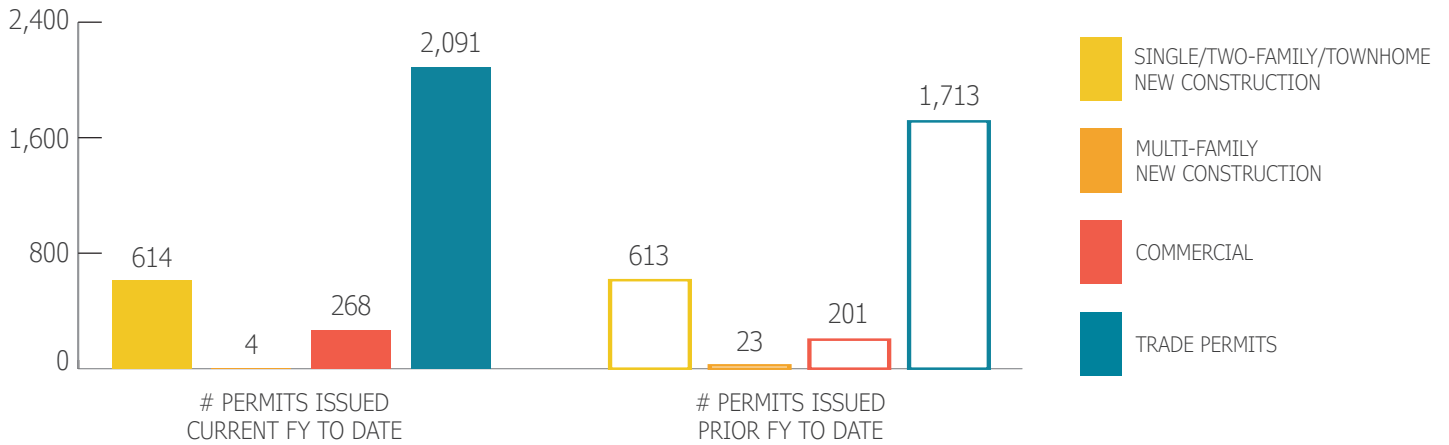


*Values rounded to the nearest whole number.

What is a LRTP + why does it matter?

A Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) sets priorities for spending federal funds on transportation projects in a federally-designated region. This includes highways, roads, bridges, transit facilities and service, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and related enhancements. The LRTP may have a long-term horizon, but your input in this critical process can help lead to funding priorities in the short term.

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) and Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS MPO) are starting this critical planning process locally. Take a moment between February 3th and March 4th to **take and share their survey**, which will help guide our regional LRTP update.



DESIGN REVIEW

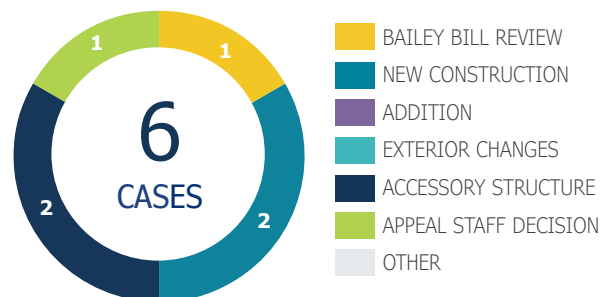
Design review is required for certain projects within the City's urban design and historic preservation zoning overlays. The vast majority of these reviews are completed at the staff level, however certain types of projects require D/DRC review.

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 January



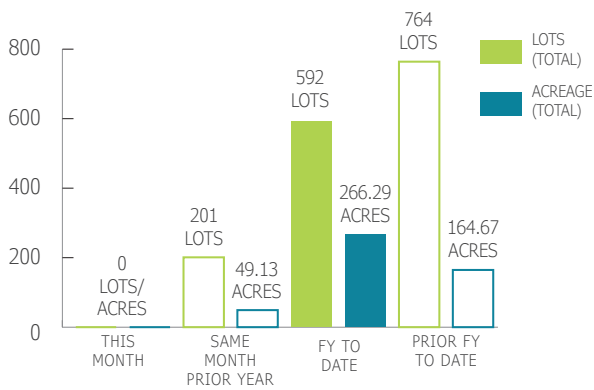
Under Construction

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.

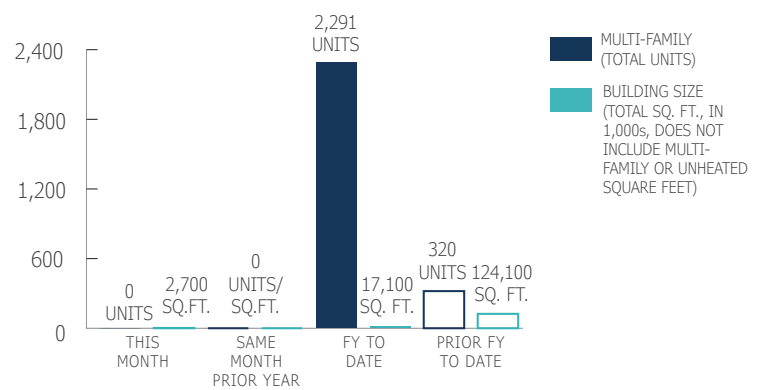
MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

Approved by Planning Commission



MAJOR SITE PLANS

Approved by Planning Commission



BY THE NUMBERS - JANUARY

<h1>0</h1> <p>MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS APPROVED BY PC</p>	<h1>1</h1> <p>MAJOR SITE PLANS APPROVED BY PC</p>	<h1>2</h1> <p>MINOR SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS PROCESSED</p>	<h1>6</h1> <p>LAND DISTURBANCE PERMITS ISSUED</p>
---	---	--	---

Ensuring Compliance

Inspection & Enforcement Activities in January

<p>CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY ISSUED</p> <h1>144</h1>	<p>BUILDING INSPECTIONS</p> <h1>1,571</h1>	<p>LAND DEVELOPMENT INSPECTIONS</p> <h1>9</h1>	<p>ZONING SITE VISITS</p> <h1>42</h1>
--	--	--	---------------------------------------

Permitting by the Numbers

Dive into the Details

Permit Type	#
Certificate of Design Approval	24
Commercial Building	68
Commercial Building Trade - Electrical	80
Commercial Building Trade - Gas	13
Commercial Building Trade - Mechanical	29
Commercial Building Trade - Plumbing	53
Commercial Roofing	8
Construction Trailer	2
Curb Cut	1
Demolition (Commercial)	0
Demolition (Residential)	2
Fire Alarm System	4
Fire Extinguishing System	2
Fire Sprinkler System	13
Land Disturbance	6
Oversized Moving	0
Prescribed Grazing	0
Multifamily Building	2
Residential Building	165
Residential Building Trade - Electrical	57
Residential Building Trade - Gas	16
Residential Building Trade - Mechanical	82
Residential Building Trade - Plumbing	53
Residential Roofing	31
Sign	16
Swimming Pool	0
Urban Forestry	0
Zoning Permit *	18
Zoning Temporary	2
Zoning Wireless Communication Facility	0
Total Permits	747

Permits Issued For	This Month	Same Month Last Year	FY To Date	Last FY To Date
Residential Building New One Family/Townhouse	97	90	592	590
Residential Building Two Family	6	11	22	23
Residential Building Renovation	57	74	678	604
Commercial Building New	4	5	35	51
Commercial Building Renovation	64	18	235	168
Swimming Pools	0	5	16	27
Demolition	2	9	22	30
Zoning Permits	18	24	197	235
Total Value of Buildings	\$142,540,128.08	\$83,302,549.75	\$619,259,850.25	\$560,732,675.04
Total Building Inspections Made	1,571	1,530	11,781	10,708
Total Fees Collected **	\$309,085.50	\$238,696.00	\$1,762,035.18	\$1,518,628.90
Plan Reviews	133	149	1,102	937
Fees Collected Plan Review	\$3,920.50	\$3,999.00	\$35,334.18	\$32,071.90

* 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.

Employee Spotlight



Justin Steinmann joined the City in January as our new Planning and Development Services Director. Stepping into the role after longtime director Krista Hampton's retirement in late 2025, Justin brings over two decades of progressive municipal experience spanning community planning and large-scale operations leadership. His planning career

includes roles with the cities of Kingsport and Chattanooga, Tennessee, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency, the City of Auburn, Alabama — where he led creation of the city's first Comprehensive Plan — and the Town of Holly Springs, North Carolina. He later held senior leadership roles with the City of Chattanooga, including Strategic Capital Planning Manager, culminating as Director of Administration for the City's sewer utility. Justin has also served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Auburn University and Adjunct Instructor at the University of Charleston, teaching courses in transportation planning, smart growth, and the social sciences. He holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



Just as we are excited to celebrate Justin's arrival, we are also saddened to report that **Afroza Hossain Misty**, who has brought such joy and passion to our team, left Columbia at the beginning of February to relocate closer to family in Oregon. During her time with the City as a Community Planner, Afroza helped facilitate our Pedestrian and

Bicyclist Count program and reporting; took up the mantle of pulling together these monthly reports; helped organize the City's annual celebration of Bike Month; and worked to support Planning Division efforts including the *Downtown Columbia Strategic Plan*, the charrette process for the former I-277 right-of-way, and the *Sharing the Road Comprehensive Safety Action Plan*. Generous with both her time and her spirit, we know she will be an asset to the communities she serves in the future. We will miss her greatly!



Help Make Sure We All Count

With the help of staff and volunteers, the Planning Division routinely conducts **Pedestrian & Bicyclist counts** throughout Columbia. This helps 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.

Set aside two hours this Spring + join us:

- » Saturdays, April 11, 18, and 25, 10:00am-noon
- » Weekdays (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays),
- » April 14-16 and April 21-23, 7:30-9:30am

Sign up today: bit.ly/2026SpringCounts



Grant funds Bicycle Wayfinding Signage

The City of Columbia is working in partnership with Cola Town Bike Collective (CTBC) to expand our bicycle wayfinding network down Lincoln Street, with Phase 1 signage nearing completion. The project is funded by a grant from Wholespire to CTBC, and Planning Division and Public Works staff are collaborating on sign design, placement, and installation.

The main objective of the program is to successfully map, design, and deploy a pilot project of bicycle wayfinding signage within the City of Columbia. Built upon the recommendations of Walk Bike Columbia, this pilot project will be located on Lincoln Street from the Vista Greenway to Greene Street, due to the segment's

centralized connections to key landmarks and accessible bike facilities.

In total, the pilot will include 30 signs consisting of decision signs, bike route confirmation signs, and turn signs. From Five Points to Finlay Park and many locations in between, this wayfinding project will allow for ease of connectivity and navigation of existing bike facilities for users of all abilities.

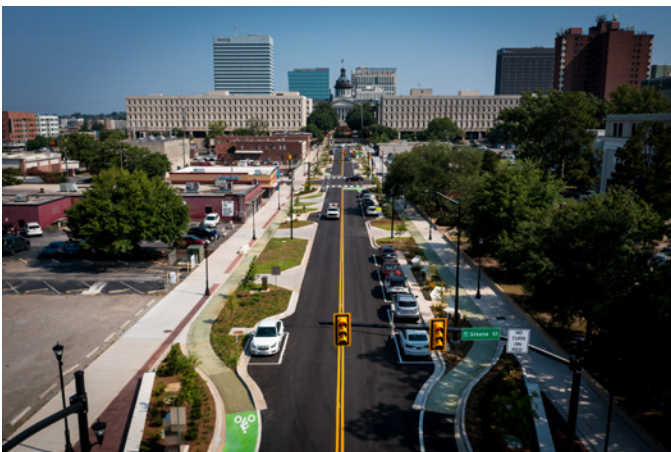
Main Street Cycle Tracks Make National List

We're excited to share that the cycle tracks installed as part of the rebuild of Main Street between Pendleton and Blossom have garnered national attention! This project, led by SCDOT, was [implementation of an adopted plan](#), and the product of collaboration between the City, SCDOT, and the University. [People for Bikes recently named this project one of "The Best New U.S. Bike Lanes of 2025"](#) - and we certainly agree!



Left: Main Street, as seen from below College Street looking north, prior to the extensive rebuild (drone photography courtesy of City of Columbia Public Relations, Media, and Marketing, taken July 2021)

Below: Main Street as seen from Greene Street looking north once the project was substantially completed. Drone photography by Jeff Blake for the City of Columbia, taken July 2025



Exciting Updates on the Future Park along the Congaree River

In late December City Council approved a contract with Field Operations, LLC to develop a collaborative master plan for the future park along the Congaree River to be located west of the Williams Street expansion between Gervais and Blossom Streets. This project will be funded in part by a generous gift from the Boyd Foundation, announced at the same Council meeting.

A key recommendation of Columbia Compass was to better integrate our rivers into City life, and we are excited to see this monumental project move forward!

Field Operations will work closely with the City and project partners to:

- » Establish a connected park system linking Riverfront Park and Granby Park;
- » Celebrate the natural landscape and honor the area's history;
- » Identify complementary private development opportunities that support economic growth; and
- » Design spaces for both passive and active recreation, including trails, picnic areas, water access, natural gardens, and greenways.

Public engagement will be a central component of the master plan process, so stay tuned for details as they become available! In the meantime, you can find additional details in [the City's Press Release](#).



Drone photography of the future park location, with Blossom Street in the foreground, and Gervais Street (and the Gervais Street bridge across the river) in the background. Image courtesy of the City of Columbia.



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.