



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia City Council conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at City Hall (Council Chambers), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:26 p.m. and the following members were present: The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., The Honorable Will Brennan, Mayor Pro-Tempore, The Honorable Aditi Bussells, The Honorable Peter M. Brown, and The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey. The Honorable Tina N. Herbert was absent. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. offered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Rick Patel, 1400 Main Street expressed concerns regarding Item 31 (Ordinance No. 2025-109 Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City of Columbia and The Kessler Enterprise, Inc.). He stated that he previously submitted a higher bid for the Washington Square Office Building. He questioned the financial terms of the current agreement, cited potential loss of value to taxpayers.

Mayor Rickenmann took a moment of personal privilege to recognize Dr. Bussells as she concludes her historic term on City Council. He honored her as the first Asian American Pacific Islander woman elected to the body. He highlighted her data-driven public health leadership, national and state recognitions, and lasting contributions to homelessness initiatives, Black Maternal Health Week, and the City's branding efforts.



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Dr. Bussells stated that her service on City Council is not an ending but a moment to recognize growth and reaffirm her belief that public service should be human and rooted in listening, compassion, and inclusion. She emphasized that many of the City's most impactful initiatives originated from community voices and expressed gratitude to City staff and fellow council members for their collaboration and shared commitment to progress. She concluded by stating that while she is stepping away from her seat, she is not stepping away from the City of Columbia.

Mr. Aubrey D. Jenkins, Fire Chief / Columbia Fire Department presented Dr. Bussells with the Columbia Fire Department Commemorative Patch and declared her an honorary member of the Columbia Fire Department.

Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Police Chief / Columbia Police Department presented Dr. Bussells with the Chief's Award of Excellence for unwavering support and contributions to the Columbia Police Department.

Mr. Darrin Thomas, President of Thomas Media Group thanked Dr. Bussells for her involvement with Black Expo and for challenging him to use the event as a platform to empower residents, particularly in addressing health concerns.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Council is asked to approve the December 2, 2025 City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes. – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to approve the December 2, 2025 City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes.

PRESENTATION

2. "Finally Finlay" by Ms. Jennifer Bartell Boykin, City of Columbia Poet Laureate

Ms. Jennifer Bartell Boykin, City of Columbia Poet Laureate shared a video presentation of her poem titled "Finally Finlay". She expressed gratitude for living in a city that values poetry and for the establishment of a Poet Laureate position. She emphasized that poetry, like public parks, is for everyone. She encouraged the continued use of words to heal and uplift the community.



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Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager took a moment of personal privilege to honor Assistant City Manager Pamela Benjamin, who is retiring after 14 years of service with the City of Columbia.

Ms. Pamela Benjamin, Assistant City Manager of Administrative Services expressed gratitude for the friendships and support she experienced during her 14 years with the City of Columbia. She emphasized the shared commitment to serving the citizens of Columbia and thanked Ms. Wilson for her leadership. She also acknowledged fellow assistant city managers, department heads, and staff for making her time with the City meaningful and rewarding.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 3 THROUGH 18

Mayor Rickenmann highlighted Item 19 (Professional Services Contract for the Riverfront Project Plan and Design Master Plan) He noted strong global interest with 19 respondents seeking to participate in reshaping Columbia's riverfront. He emphasized the opportunity to expand public access, create a central gathering space, and better connect residents to the river. The plan will link to the city's 27 miles of trails, ultimately forming a continuous urban trail from the dam through Granby Park and back into the city.

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to approve **Consent Agenda Items 3** through **18**.

3. Council is asked to approve the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Contract for Assistance with Talent Attraction and Retention, Professional Development, and Community Engagement as requested by the Economic Development Department. Award to Columbia Opportunity Resource (COR) in the amount of \$50,000.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. - *Approved*

Funding Source: Economic Development - Special Contracts (5511301-638300). The original budget amount is \$50,000.00.

Endorsed by the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee on August 26, 2025.



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4. Council is asked to approve Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Contract Renewal for Entrepreneurial Support, Management, and Assistance, as requested by the Economic Development Department. Award to USC/Columbia Technology Incubator in the amount of \$200,000.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Economic Development - Special Contracts (5511301-638300). The original budget amount is \$200,000.00.

Endorsed by the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee on September 23, 2025.

5. Council is asked to approve a new Contract for the Management and Administration of Employee Medical Services at the Employee Health Center, as requested by City Administration on November 26, 2025. Award to Novant Health, Inc., for the term of three (3) years in an amount not to exceed \$1,074,482.88 for year one (1). This firm is located in Winston Salem, NC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Employee Health Center - Medical Services (6048920-636900) \$1,029,482.88; Employee Health Center - Drugs and Medical Supplies (6048920-624900) \$45,000.00. The original budget amount is \$1,074,482.88.

6. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Fuel Focus Hardware and the Annual License Fee, as requested by the Fleet Services Division on November 6, 2025. Award to AssetWorks, Inc., using the General Services Administration (GSA) Contract in the amount of \$118,278.76. This vendor is located in Wayne, PA. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Equipment Services - Professional Services (6308971-636600). The original budget amount is \$118,278.76.



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7. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of the Unified Computing System (UCS) upgrade and Cisco UCSx Platform Deployment, as requested by the Information Technology Department on November 18, 2025. Award to SHI International Corporation, using the South Carolina State Contract and OMNIA Cooperative Contract in the amount of \$537,383.16. – *Approved*

Item	Vendor and Location	Description	Procurement Method	Amount
a.	SHI International Corporation Piscataway, NJ	Unified Computing System (UCS) Upgrade	SC State Contract #4400032484	\$483,836.76
<i>Funding Source: Technology Contingency – Computer/Electrical Equipment-Capital (5518408-658600) \$241,918.38 and Program Management Office – Computer/Electrical - Equipment-Capital (6218950-658600) \$241,918.38. The original budget amount is \$483,836.76.</i>				
b.	SHI International Corporation Piscataway, NJ	Cisco UCSx Platform Deployment	OMNIA Cooperative #2024056-02	\$53,546.40
<i>Funding Source: Technology Contingency - Professional Services (5518408-636600) \$26,773.20 and Program Management Office – Professional Services (6218950-636600) \$26,773.20. The original budget amount is \$53,546.40.</i>				
Total				\$537,383.16

8. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Vehicles and Heavy Equipment for several City Departments, as requested by the Fleet Services Division. Award to multiple vendors in the total amount of \$376,840.80. – *Approved*

Item	Vendor and Location	Vehicle/Heavy Equipment	Procurement Method	Amount
a.	COS Chevrolet, LLC dba Hendrick Chevrolet Charlotte, NC	Two (2) 2026 Chevrolet Trailblazers for the Water Customer Services Department, as requested on December 2, 2025.	SC State Contract #4400037566	\$51,966.00
<i>Funding Source: Customer Care - Auto, Trucks, Heavy Equipment - Capital (5511407-658500). The original budget amount is \$51,966.00.</i>				



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b.	Carolina Environmental Systems, Inc. Kernersville, NC	One (1) 2025 Kenworth T880 Hoist for Columbia Water, as requested on November 17, 2025.	Sourcewell Contract #010825-WQI	\$324,874.80
<i>Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects – Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant Dewatering Roll-off Receiving Station - Capital Project Costs (5529999 - SS762301 - 658650). The original budget amount is \$324,874.80.</i>				
Total				\$376,840.80

9. Council is asked to approve a new Construction Contract for Leroy Moss Multipurpose Center Roof Replacement at Hyatt Park, as requested by General Services on November 13, 2025. Award to Spann Roofing & Sheet Metal, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$408,813.85, using the Sourcewell Cooperative Contract. The initial term of the contract will take effect upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed with an end date sixty (60) days from commencement. This contractor is located in Conway, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: General Support Services - Buildings and Fixed Equipment (1011201-659300) \$369,174.25; Parks - Buildings and Grounds - Maintenance and Service Contract (1015104-638200) \$39,639.60. The original budget amount is \$408,813.85.

10. Council is asked to approve a new Construction Contract for the Lady, Sumter, Taylor, and Arsenal Hill Parking Decks Capital Improvement Project, as requested by Support Services on April 9, 2025. Award to Carolina Restoration & Waterproofing, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$1,609,208.70, which includes contingency. The initial term of the contract will take effect upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed with an end date three hundred sixty-five (365) days from commencement. This contractor is located in Creedmoor, NC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Parking Improvement Project - Parking Improvement Project - Capital Project Costs (5329999-PG001134-658650). The original budget amount is \$1,609,208.70.

Carolina Restoration & Waterproofing, Inc., is the prime and will provide parking deck restoration services at 89.87% (\$1,314,725.00) of the total contract amount.

The following subcontractor will provide additional services/supplies:

MWM Supply, LLC, located in Wake Forest, NC, will provide construction materials at



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10.13% (\$148,192.00) of the total contract amount.

11. Council is asked to Ratify four (4) Emergency Procurements, as requested by Columbia Water. Award to the lowest responsive bidder for each project in the total amount of \$3,460,430.38. – *Approved*

Item	Vendor and Location	Description	Amount
a.	Shady Grove Construction, LLC Irmo, SC	Project SS766701; Columbia Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant Hydronics Boiler Piping repair, as requested on September 23, 2025.	\$229,391.00
<i>Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects – Columbia Metro Hydronics Boiler Capital Project Costs (5529999-SS766701-658650). The original budget amount is \$229,391.00.</i>			
b.	McClam & Associates, Inc. Little Mountain, SC	Project SS765601; Repairs to collapsed sewer main on South Beltline Boulevard, as requested on September 19, 2025.	\$934,082.63
<i>Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects – South Beltline Sewer Relocation - Capital Project Costs (5529999-SS765601-658650). The original budget amount is \$934,082.63.</i>			
c.	L-J, Inc. Cayce, SC	Project SD844802; Penn Branch Footer replacement, as requested on November 4, 2025.	\$670,156.75
<i>Funding Source: Storm Water Improvement Capital Projects Control – Penn Branch Wall Stabilization - Capital Project Costs (5549999-SD844802-658650). The original budget amount is \$670,156.75.</i>			
d.	M.B. Kahn Construction Company, Inc. Columbia, SC	Project WM483002; Lake Murray Water Treatment Plant Filters 1 and 2 rehabilitation, as requested on November 24, 2025.	\$1,626,800.00
<i>Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects – Lake Murray Water Treatment Plant Filter 1 and 2 Rehabilitation - Capital Project Costs (5529999-WM483002-658650). The original budget amount is \$1,626,800.00.</i>			
Total			\$3,460,430.38



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12. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #4 for Project WM4393-SS7409; Utility Relocation Inspection Services at Leesburg Road between Fairmont Road and Lower Richland Boulevard, as requested by Columbia Water on November 13, 2025. Award to Mead and Hunt, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$189,441.00. The current term of the contract ends on July 1, 2026. This firm is located in Lexington, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Water and Sewer Capital Projects - Leesburg Road Inspections - Capital Project Costs (5529999-WM439302-658650) \$94,720.50 and Water and Sewer Capital Projects - Leesburg Road Inspections - Capital Project Costs (5529999-SS740902-658650) \$94,720.50. The current budget amount is \$813,184.70. The budget amount for this amendment is \$189,441.00. The total revised budget amount is \$1,002,625.70.

This is a Mentor Protégé Program project. Mead and Hunt, Inc., is the mentor and will provide project administration, engineering services during construction and project closeout services at 76.29% (\$144,522.00) of the amendment amount.

Highfill Infrastructure Engineering, PC, located in Columbia, SC, is the protégé and will provide construction inspection services at 23.71% (\$44,919.00) of the amendment amount.

13. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #3 for Project WM4750; Water System Hydraulic Modeling, as requested by Columbia Water on November 20, 2025. Award to Hazen and Sawyer in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00. The current term of the contract ends on December 31, 2025 and this amendment extends the contract to June 30, 2026. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Engineering Water Systems Improvement - Special Contracts Water/Sewer, Stormwater (5516220-638305). The current budget amount is \$865,804.00. The budget amount for this amendment is \$350,000.00. The total revised budget amount is \$1,215,804.00.

This is a Mentor Protégé Program project. Hazen and Sawyer is the mentor and will provide water system consulting services at 79.87% (\$279,562.40) of the amendment amount.

DESA, Inc., a Minority Business Enterprise (W), located in Columbia, SC, is the protégé and will provide assistance with water consulting task services at 20.13% (\$70,437.60) of the amendment amount.



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14. Council is asked to approve a new Professional Services Contract for Water Distribution Contractor Services, as requested by Columbia Water on July 2, 2025. Award to Lake Murray Utility Company, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.00. The initial term of the contract will take effect upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed with an end date six (6) months from commencement and the option to renew for three (3) additional one-year periods. This firm is located in Chapin, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Utilities Water Distribution and Maintenance - Maintenance and Service Contract (5516203-638200). The original budget amount is \$1,000,000.00.

15. Ordinance No.: 2025-092 - Granting an encroachment to Francis Goldstein for the use of the right of way area of the 300 and 400 blocks of Harden Street for the installation and maintenance of a stucco wall with two gates, landscaping and irrigation adjacent to 411 Harden Street, Richland County TMS# 11311-03-09 – *Approved on second reading.*

First reading approval was given on December 2, 2025.

16. Ordinance No.: 2025-093 - An Eighteenth Supplemental Ordinance Providing for the Issuance and Sale of City of Columbia, South Carolina, Waterworks and Sewer System Revenue Bonds, in one or more series, in the aggregate principal amount of not exceeding \$215,000,000, in order to refinance certain outstanding indebtedness and to finance various capital projects and improvements to the system, any necessary debt service reserves, capitalized interest and issuance costs; authorizing the Mayor, the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager for Development and Finance, or any two of them acting together, to determine certain matters with respect to the bonds; prescribing the form and details of such bonds; and other matters relating thereto – *Approved on second reading.*

First reading approval was given on December 2, 2025.

17. Ordinance No.: 2025-097 - Granting an encroachment to Stephen Gillespie for the use of the right of way areas of the 800 block of Kilbourne Road and the 3800 block of Devereaux Road for the installation and maintenance of landscaping and irrigation adjacent to 854 Kilbourne Road, Richland County TMS# 13905-11-01 – *Approved on second reading.*

First reading approval was given on December 2, 2025.



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18. Ordinance No.: 2025-100 - Approval for Conveyance of Tract 4 (0.059 Acre) being a portion of the Lower Richland Fire Station located at 2612 Lower Richland Boulevard to Richland County for the Lower Richland Boulevard Widening Project; Richland County TMS#21800-01-20 (Portion); CF#250-677 – *Approved on second reading.*

First reading approval was given on December 2, 2025.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, CONTRACTS AND CHANGE ORDERS

Mayor Rickenmann thanked Mr. George Bailey and the Boyd Family Foundation for their decades-long partnership and financial support of the Riverfront project. He recognized former Assistant City Manager Missy Gentry for her persistence, along with Richland County Council, and Penny Sales Tax. He also recognized Mr. Charlie Thompson and the Guignard Family for their contributions, including a key property donation that made the project possible.

19. Council is asked to approve a new Professional Services Contract for the Riverfront Project Plan and Design Master Plan, as requested by City Administration on January 13, 2025. Award to Field Operations, LLC, in an amount not to exceed \$1,690,553.00, which includes contingency. The initial term of the contract will take effect upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed with an end date one (1) year from commencement and the option to renew for two (2) additional one (1) year periods. This firm is located in Philadelphia, PA. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Riverfront Fund - Riverfront Master Plan (4199999-WP001001). The original budget amount is \$1,690,553.00.

Field Operations, LLC, is the prime and will provide project management, existing conditions analysis, schematic design, draft and final master plan, and presentation services at 52.07% (\$765,910.00) of the total contract amount.

The following subconsultants will provide additional services:

The Boudreaux Group, Inc., located in Columbia, SC, will provide architecture planning and public engagement services at 7.83% (\$115,205.00) of the total contract amount.

HR&A Advisors, Inc., located in New York, NY, will provide funding governance and revenue generation services at 10.18% (\$149,660.00) of the total contract amount.

Biohabitats, Inc., located in North Charleston, SC, will provide ecological restoration



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and nature-based solution services at 7.54% (\$110,910.00) of the total contract amount.

ETM Associates, located in Highland Park, NJ, will provide operations and maintenance services at 2.97% (\$43,660.00) of the total contract amount.

Seamon Whiteside, located in Mount Pleasant, SC, will provide civil engineering services at 3.42% (\$50,280.00) of the total contract amount.

Toole Design Group, LLC, located in Silver Spring, MD, will provide multi-modal transportation services at 4.99% (\$73,436.00) of the total contract amount.

Chernoff Newman, located in Columbia, SC, will provide public engagement services at 7.28% (\$107,000.00) of the total contract amount.

Dharam Consulting, LLC, located in West Chester, PA, will provide cost estimating services at 3.72% (\$54,680.00) of the total contract amount.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to approve a new Professional Services Contract for the Riverfront Project Plan and Design Master Plan, as requested by City Administration on January 13, 2025. Award to Field Operations, LLC, in an amount not to exceed \$1,690,553.00, which includes contingency. The initial term of the contract will take effect upon issuance of the Notice to Proceed with an end date one (1) year from commencement and the option to renew for two (2) additional one (1) year periods. This firm is located in Philadelphia, PA.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager recognized Mr. George Bailey for his leadership and efforts on behalf of the Boyd Foundation. She emphasized the collaborative work among City staff, the Boyd Foundation, the University of South Carolina, the University of South Carolina Foundation, and Richland County. She clarified that the approved contract covers design work and indicated that Mr. Bailey would provide a future presentation outlining the next phase related to construction.



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Mr. George Bailey, President / The Boyd Foundation expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts behind the project and shared his enthusiasm in seeing it come to fruition. He said it was a pleasure to work with all partners involved and he presented a \$5 million contribution to the City of Columbia in support of the project.

RESOLUTIONS

20. Resolution No.: R-2025-085 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Columbia and Richland County for the Riverfront District – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2025-085 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Columbia and Richland County for the Riverfront District.

Mayor Rickenmann emphasized the importance of proactive planning for the park's long-term maintenance by capturing growth and reinvesting it upfront. He also highlighted the critical partnership between the City of Columbia and Richland County in establishing the district and ensuring its successful planning and execution.

PUBLIC HEARING & FIRST READING FOR ZONING / PLANNING MATTERS

Council opened the public hearing at 5:07 p.m.

21. ANNEXATION, FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 5603, 5607, and 5615 Old Forest Drive, TMS# 16711-05-13 and 16711-05-14 – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-094 - Annexing 5603, 5607, and 5615 Old Forest Drive, Richland County TMS # 16711-05-13 and 16711-05-14 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036 and the Official Zoning Map – Approved on first reading.

Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to annex the property, assign the land use classification of Urban Edge Regional Activity Center (UEAC-2) and assign zoning of General Commercial District (GC) for a pending annexation. The property is currently classified as Mixed



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Residential (High Density) and zoned General Commercial (GC) by Richland County.

Applicant: Dorothy S. Hendrix / Old Forest Storage Partners LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 10/09/2025; Approval (7-0)

No one appeared at this time.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Bailey, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to the Annexation, Future Land Use Map Amendment, and Zoning Map Amendment for 5603, 5607, and 5615 Old Forest Drive, TMS# 16711-05-13 and 16711-05-14 **and** Ordinance No.: 2025-094 - Annexing 5603, 5607, and 5615 Old Forest Drive, Richland County TMS # 16711-05-13 and 16711-05-14 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036 and the Official Zoning Map.

22. ANNEXATION, FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 101 (portion), 119, and 125 Lake Murray Boulevard, TMS# 04908-01-01 (portion), 05009-01-01, and -02 – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-104 - Annexing 101 (portion), 119, and 125 Lake Murray Boulevard, Richland County TMS # 04908-01-01 (portion), 05009-01-01, and -02 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036 and the Official Zoning Map – Approved on first reading.

Proposal: Request to annex the property, assign the land use classification of Urban Edge Mixed Residential (UEMR) and assign zoning of Residential Mixed District (RM-2) for a pending annexation. The property is currently classified as Mixed Residential High Density and zoned Residential 3 (R3) by Richland County.

Council District: 1

Applicant: Harolyn Boulware, Harolyn Boulware Trust, and Barbara B. Zimmerman / Tyler Watson, Olympus Development Company.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 11/13/2025; Approval (8-0)



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Councilor Bailey asked about the plans for the area.

Mr. Tyler Watson, applicant outlined a proposal for approximately 300 market-rate garden apartment units, similar to a recently completed project in Lexington County. He noted the potential inclusion of townhomes or single-family residences on the remaining portion of the site. The development is planned near the Broad River interchange adjacent to the city-owned fire station.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to the Annexation, Future Land Use Map Amendment, and Zoning Map Amendment For 101 (Portion), 119, And 125 Lake Murray Boulevard, TMS# 04908-01-01 (Portion), 05009-01-01, and -02 **and** Ordinance No.: 2025-104 - Annexing 101 (portion), 119, and 125 Lake Murray Boulevard, Richland County TMS # 04908-01-01 (portion), 05009-01-01, and -02 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036 and the Official Zoning Map.

23. ANNEXATION, FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 2430 Chappelle Street and unincorporated portion of 2428 Chappelle Street, TMS# 11605-15-04 and a portion of 11605-15-03 – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-105 - Annexing 2430 Chappelle Street and unincorporated portion of 2428 Chappelle Street, Richland County TMS # 11605-15-04 and a portion of 11605-15-03 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036 and the Official Zoning Map – Approved on first reading.

Proposal: Request to annex the property, assign the land use classification of Urban Core Residential Small Lot (UCR-1) and assign zoning of Residential Single Family Medium Lot (RSF-2) for a pending annexation. The property is currently classified as Mixed Residential (High Density) and zoned Residential 5 (R5) by Richland County.

Council District: 2

Applicant: Nova Homes-CAE, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 11/13/2025; Approval (8-0)

No one appeared at this time.



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Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Bailey, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to the Annexation, Future Land Use Map Amendment, and Zoning Map Amendment for 2430 Chappelle Street and unincorporated portion of 2428 Chappelle Street, TMS# 11605-15-04 and a portion of 11605-15-03 **and** Ordinance No.: 2025-105 - Annexing 2430 Chappelle Street and unincorporated portion of 2428 Chappelle Street, Richland County TMS # 11605-15-04 and a portion of 11605-15-03 into the City of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incorporating said property into Columbia Compass: Envision 2036.

24. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for the 1700 Block of Rosewood Drive and Fulton Street, TMS# 11309-18-10 – *Deferred*

Ordinance No.: 2025-103 - Amending the Official Zoning Map to modify the zoning for the 1700 block Rosewood Drive and Fulton Street, Richland County TMS # 11309-18-10 – Deferred

*Proposal: Request to rezone the property from Neighborhood Activity Center/Corridor District in an Airport Safety Overlay District (NAC, OV-A) to Neighborhood Activity Center/Corridor District (NAC).
Council District: 3*

Applicant: Ashok Kumar, Kumar Construction

Staff Recommendation: Denial

PC Recommendation: 11/13/2025; Approval (8-0)

Councilor Brennan requested that the vote be deferred pending legal staff's review of a letter from the Aeronautics Commission.

Mayor Rickenmann noted that the item had already been approved by staff, the public, and the Planning Commission, but the letter received this week warranted additional review to ensure there were no outstanding concerns.

Mr. Peter Cevallos, Airport General Manager for the Jim Hamilton–L.B. Owens Airport spoke in opposition to the item, stressing the airport's importance as a community and economic asset. He stated that the Airport Safety Overlay District protects public safety and airport operations. Removing it could allow incompatible residential development near flight paths and create long-term safety concerns.



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Mayor Rickenmann asked how the location of the described parcel would impact travel.

Mr. Peter Cevallos, Airport General Manager for the Jim Hamilton–L.B. Owens Airport added that maintaining the overlay supports safe aircraft operations as airport activity grows. He stressed the importance of remaining good partners while balancing development with aviation safety.

Mr. John Hodge, South Carolina Aeronautics Commission explained that state law requires consideration of airport land use and safety zones in rezoning decisions. He cautioned that removing the airport overlay could conflict with Title 55, set a precedent for spot zoning, and affect compliance with grant assurances. He urged City Council to deny the request and consider alternatives that would not remove the overlay.

Councilor Brennan asked if the investment into infrastructure of the local county airport is on Richland County's priority list and if so, what does that look like.

Mr. Christopher Eversmann, Director of Airport Development / South Carolina Aeronautics Commission stated that while the Federal Aviation Administration has not yet approved the runway extension study, future consideration remains possible. He emphasized continued support for the airport, noting an upcoming \$7 million Federal Aviation Administration funded taxiway reconstruction project.

There was discussion about collaborative efforts regarding future development plans; planes taking off and landing per day; and the types of planes.

Mr. Ashu Kumar, Kumar Construction stated that the applicant intends to build a three-story residential structure on the property. He emphasized that the proposal is limited in scope and would comply with any conditions required by the Aeronautics Commission. He noted that the primary concern is related to building height.



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Mr. Andrew Livengood, Zoning Administrator / Planning and Development Services explained that the airport overlay district includes two key restrictions: a strict 35-foot height limit and a prohibition on residential units within non-residentially zoned properties. He added that one alternative available to the applicant would be to request rezoning to a Residential Mixed District, which exists across the street and would alter the Neighborhood Activity Center/Corridor without removing the overlay.

Ms. Bri Barrineau, Richland County Airport Commission said that the commission is not opposed to development. She emphasized the importance of ensuring growth occurs in alignment with existing infrastructure and ordinances, including the airport overlay district. Speaking as a community resident, aviation planning professional, and airport vice chair, she urged City Council to keep the overlay in place to protect the airport, public safety, and surrounding neighborhoods while pursuing a collaborative path forward.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Bailey, Council voted unanimously to defer the Zoning Map Amendment for the 1700 Block of Rosewood Drive and Fulton Street, TMS# 11309-18-10 **and** Ordinance No.: 2025-103 - Amending the Official Zoning Map to modify the zoning for the 1700 block Rosewood Drive and Fulton Street, Richland County TMS # 11309-18-10.

25. AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE to amend the definitions of Townhome, Multifamily, and Two-family Dwellings – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-095 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement Sec. 17-9.3(a)(3)a – Approved on first reading.

Proposal: Amend the Unified Development Ordinance, Chapter 17 – Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement Sec. 17-9.3(a)(3)a. Household Living Uses, to clarify definitions of Townhome, Multifamily, and Two-family Dwellings.

Applicant: Andrew Livengood, Zoning Administrator

Staff Recommendation: Staff Sponsored

PC Recommendation: 10/09/2025; Approval (7-0)

No one appeared at this time.



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Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Brown, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-095 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement Sec. 17-9.3(a)(3)a.

26. AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE to Reconfigure Design Development Review Commission – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-096 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Article 2: Administration Sec. 17-2.3 Advisory and Decision-Making Bodies and Persons (e.) Design Development Review Commission, Section 17-2.5 Application-Specific Review Procedures and Decision Standards, Article 3: Zoning Districts, Sec. 17-3.7 Overlay Districts, Article 5: Development Standards, Sec. 17-5.10 Signs, Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement, Sec. 17-9.4 Definitions as related to the reconfiguration of the Design Development Review Commission (DDRC) – Approved on first reading.

Proposal: Amend the Unified Development Ordinance, Chapter 17- Article 2: Administration, Sec. 17-2.3 Advisory and Decision-Making Bodies and Persons (e.) Design Development Review Commission; Section 17-2.5 Application-Specific Review Procedures and Decision Standards, Article 3: Zoning Districts, Sec. 17-3.7 Overlay Districts; Article 5: Development Standards, Sec. 17-5.10 Signs; Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement, Sec. 17-9.4 Definitions as related to the reconfiguration of the Design Development Review Commission (DDRC).

Applicant: Andrew Livengood, Zoning Administrator

Staff Recommendation: Staff Sponsored

PC Recommendation: 10/09/2025; Approval (7-0)

Endorsed by the Administrative Policy Committee on October 28, 2025.

No one appeared at this time.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Brown, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-096 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Article 2: Administration Sec. 17-2.3 Advisory and Decision-Making Bodies and Persons (e.) Design Development Review Commission, Section 17-2.5 Application-Specific Review Procedures and Decision Standards, Article 3: Zoning Districts, Sec. 17-3.7 Overlay Districts, Article 5: Development Standards, Sec. 17-5.10 Signs, Article 9: Definitions and Rules of Measurement, Sec. 17-9.4 Definitions as related to the reconfiguration of the Design Development Review Commission (DDRC).

27. AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE to Add Short Term Rentals as a Principal Use Subject to Standards – *Approved on first reading.*

Mr. Andrew Livengood, Zoning Administrator / Planning and Development Services shared the proposed updates to the definition of short-term rentals, largely retaining the existing standards in Chapter 5 while modifying them to align with the zoning ordinance. The changes would allow short-term rentals in commercial, mixed-use, and employment campus districts, and conditionally in residential districts if located on designated arterial or collector streets with four through lanes. He also noted that legally established short-term rentals would be allowed to continue as nonconforming uses under the existing Unified Development Ordinance provisions.

Ms. Katie Grubbs, 504 Tyler Street thanked Dr. Bussells and Ms. Benjamin for their service to the city and expressed concern that the proposed short-term rental changes would reduce flexibility for responsible, owner-occupied homeowners. She noted the role of short-term rentals in supporting visitors and urged City Council to slow the process, consider middle-ground solutions, and balance neighborhood protections with homeowner flexibility.

Mr. Gustavo Bueno, 2229 Park Street urged City Council to reinstate the pre-moratorium short-term rental ordinance with proper enforcement, noting that safety and neighborhood quality are shared goals. He stated that there is no citywide data showing that short-term rentals are a systemic issue. He asked City Council to enforce existing rules, address problem properties directly, and rely on data rather than assumptions when shaping future policy.



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Mr. JD Hollifield, 2479 Bratton Street shared that the existing short-term rental ordinance appeared fair and straightforward. He shared that short-term rentals are often used by families as a practical alternative to hotels, not for parties. He noted that many investors rehabilitate distressed properties and rely on short-term rental options to justify higher-quality renovations.

Ms. Laurel Pinkley, 1106 Darlington Street described her experience during the November 15 shooting incident. She urged City Council to keep short-term rentals capped, strengthen enforcement, and eliminate single-night rentals to prioritize neighborhood safety and community stability.

Mr. Ethan Mathis, 6503 Davidson Street urged City Council to consider the principles of life, liberty, and property. He shared that the proposed ordinance infringes on individuals' ability to use their property to improve their livelihoods. He encouraged City Council to reflect on whom government serves when considering the ordinance.

Mr. David Bergmann, 2300 Wayne Street urged City Council to reject the proposed zoning-based short-term rental restrictions, stating that existing regulations are sufficient and enforcement is the primary issue. He said the four-lane road requirement is arbitrary and would remove needed income flexibility for homeowners. He encouraged Council to consider alternative approaches, to protect neighborhoods while preserving homeowner options.

Mr. Matt Carroll, South Carolina Realtors Association spoke in opposition to the amendment, stating it would unnecessarily reduce property rights and create unequal treatment based on street classification rather than zoning. He expressed concern that lawful rentals could become nonconforming uses, negatively affecting property values, financing, and investment stability.

Ms. Anna Herron, 123 Oak Grove Drive spoke in opposition to the proposed short-term rental changes. She expressed concern that the ordinance would limit temporary housing options and suggested neighborhood issues could be addressed through voluntary measures such as homeowner associations. She urged City Council to recognize and support responsible hospitality and property sharing rather than imposing additional regulatory and financial burdens on residents.



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Mr. Jim Prater, 3422 Keenan Drive thanked City Council for the time and effort devoted to addressing short-term rental issues. He suggested developing a strategy to phase out short-term rentals at a faster rate than currently outlined in the ordinance. He also recommended that the City seek assistance from South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson in addressing compliance by platforms such as Airbnb.

Ms. Whitney Denton thanked City Council and acknowledged valid concerns on both sides of the short-term rental issue. She stressed residents' right to quiet enjoyment and noted that poorly managed short-term and long-term rentals can create safety, noise, and tax concerns. She urged City Council to pursue a balanced approach that protects neighborhoods while allowing responsible investment.

Ms. Meg Southern Sims, President of the Earlewood Community Citizens Organization thanked Dr. Bussells for her service and support following the November 15 shooting. She reported that Earlewood has at least 68 short-term rentals, most of which are non-owner occupied. She shared survey results showing a majority of residents believe STRs negatively impact the neighborhood. She urged City Council to approve the amendment to protect neighborhood character and stability.

Ms. Denise Wellman, President of the Cottontown Neighborhood Association thanked City Council and staff for their work and stressed that short-term rentals are transitory visitor accommodations that impact neighborhood culture. She supported limiting their growth while allowing legally established units to remain. She urged City Council to adopt proactive measures to protect neighborhood character.

Mr. Brent Dees, 3225 Gadsen Street shared that he lives next door to two short-term rentals and is in opposition to non-owner-occupied units. He noted that while short-term rentals can meet temporary needs, unoccupied units weaken neighborhood cohesion. He emphasized the need for housing policies that support owner-occupied short-term rentals and suggested taxing short-term rentals more like hotels.

Dr. Bussells left the meeting at 6:23 p.m.



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Mr. Ed Fleshman, 3504 Monroe Street spoke in opposition to the ordinance changes, calling them government overreach and a broad response to isolated incidents. He emphasized the City's failure to enforce existing rental regulations and urged City Council to focus on enforcement rather than adopting new restrictions.

Ms. Cathy Brookshire, 2200 Lincoln Street spoke in support of maintaining the short-term rental moratorium, noting recent downtown investments such as new hotels and the upcoming USC School of Medicine that will provide appropriate accommodations for visitors. Hotels are better equipped to handle safety and operational issues, while neighborhoods thrive on long-term residents who look out for one another. She urged City Council to protect neighborhood character by limiting additional short-term rentals.

Ms. Lynne Leach, 85 Dinwood Circle shared that she and her husband operate twelve short-term rentals and expressed support for the current ordinance. She emphasized the importance of transparency with neighbors to ensure short-term rentals are operated responsibly. Many guests are individuals and families relocating to the area.

Mr. Nilanke Seneviratne, 1115 Darlington Street spoke as a concerned citizen following the November shooting in the Earlewood community. While supporting property rights, he urged City Council to strengthen enforcement and penalties for illegal short-term rentals.

Mr. Brad Swensen, 7716 Leitner Road, spoke in opposition to the moratorium, stating it was based on emotion rather than data. He noted that a homicide occurred on Thanksgiving night at a residence in the 29203-zip code, approximately one mile from the Earlewood Park neighborhood. He questioned why similar concern was not raised in that instance. He urged City Council to adopt targeted, evidence-based regulations instead of broad restrictions.

Councilor Bailey extended well wishes and condolences to the family of the man killed on Thanksgiving, noting that the deceased was a volunteer baseball coach for his son's team, the King Park Dodgers.

Ms. Carol Wright, 2801 Clark Street described her experience as a short-term rental owner and explained that the supplemental income helps support her properties and enables her to offer affordable housing. She expressed concern that the proposed zoning changes would eliminate this flexibility and urged City Council to oppose the restrictions.



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Ms. Briana McDowell, 2213 Bob White Lane explained that while she and her husband do not currently own short-term rentals, they have used them for hosting out-of-town family and temporary housing needs that the hotels cannot accommodate. She supported reasonable regulation but expressed concern that the proposed changes are a knee-jerk reaction that would limit flexible housing options for individuals and families facing short-term transitions.

Ms. Amanda Peluso, 117 New Port Hall Lane had her statement read into the record. She stated that short-term rentals are a matter of property rights and economic sustainability, noting that many local owners rely on them to meet mortgage, tax, and insurance obligations. She urged City Council to pursue a balanced approach that protects neighborhoods without imposing undue financial strain.

Mr. Lynn Shirley, 303 South Saluda Avenue compared the issue to food deserts, expressing concern that neighborhoods near downtown and the university are reaching a tipping point where single-family residential living is no longer sustainable. He noted that a combination of short-term rentals, long-term rentals, university growth, traffic, and entertainment districts are eroding neighborhood desirability for families. He urged City Council to consider long-term policy impacts.

Mr. Jason Brinkus addressed short-term rentals within the broader context of zoning and central planning. He stated that government bodies lack the information needed to determine optimal land use. Land use decisions are best guided by market forces and risk-taking by property owners rather than centralized regulation. He urged City Council to rely on price signals and private investment.

Ms. Leah Griffin shared her experience with short-term rentals, noting that guests such as exchange students and travel nurses regularly engage with and contribute to the community. She emphasized the importance of safety and supported having clear rules and enforcement for short-term rentals. She said that the proposed response was overly strong in reaction to a recent tragedy.

Ms. Cam Franklin, 3123 Bratton Street urged City Council to vote against the proposal. The ordinance is not the best solution for the City's growth or its communities.



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Mr. Matt Varner, 619 Blakely Street spoke about the different views among neighbors on how best to balance community needs. He explained that short-term rentals can help manage transitional neighborhoods and provide supplemental income. He urged City Council to reconsider the proposal, describing it as overly extreme in its current form and encouraging a more balanced solution.

Mr. Paul Micho, 3101 Gadsen Street shared his personal experience with short-term rentals. He expressed support for the proposed ordinance, stating it aligns with policies in cities such as Savannah and addresses the commercialization of residential neighborhoods. While acknowledging the value of existing owners, the speaker emphasized the need to preserve neighborhood character.

Ms. Kay Moore offered alternative approaches to addressing short-term housing needs, such as suggesting the development of single-suite or extended-stay accommodations. She noted concerns about homelessness, housing displacement, and the strain on existing resources. She encouraged broader evaluation of homelessness strategies and housing options within the community.

Ms. Robin Spaniel expressed opposition to the ordinance changes and agrees with the sentiment that the changes are a knee jerk reaction. She expressed concern that the proposed restrictions would limit homeowners' future ability to rent their properties and could ultimately push short-term rentals out of neighborhoods and into less appropriate areas. She urged City Council to further review the proposal and consider its long-term impacts before moving forward.

Mayor Rickenmann stated that the issue is complex and not a knee-jerk reaction. City Council has been working on short-term rental regulations for an extended period. He acknowledged the need for short-term rentals, the presence of responsible operators, challenges caused by bad actors, and national platforms that do not enforce local requirements. The ordinance is not solely a response to recent incidents but part of a broader effort to balance neighborhood impacts, enforcement limitations, and housing needs. He expressed support for moving the ordinance forward with the intent to revise provisions related to owner-occupied rentals. He directed legal and planning staff to address those concerns before final adoption.

Council closed the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-107 – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17 (Unified Development Ordinance), Article 4: Use Regulations Sec. 17-4.2 Principal Uses and Sec. 17-9.3 Use Classification and Interpretation. Mr. Brennan abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest.

ZONING / PLANNING MATTERS - FIRST READING

28. ANNEXATION, INTERIM FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT, AND INTERIM ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 1227 and 1235 Bakersfield Road, 106, 112, 118, 119, 130, 131 and 140 Diamond Lane, and 1049, 1057, and 1065 Statler Road, TMS# 07402-04-16, 07402-04-10, 07401-06-01, and 07401-06-02 – *Approved on first reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2025-106 - Annexing 1227 and 1235 Bakersfield Road, 106, 112, 118, 119, 130, 131 and 140 Diamond Lane, and 1049, 1057, and 1065 Statler Road, Richland County TMS# 07402-04-16, 07402-04-10, 07401-06-01, and 07401-06-02 – Approved on first reading.

Proposal: Request to annex the property, assign the interim land use classification of Urban Core Community Activity Center (UCAC-2) and Urban Edge Residential Large Lot (UER-2) and assign interim zoning of Community Activity Center/Corridor District (CAC) and Residential Single Family Large Lot District (RSF-1) for a pending annexation. The property is currently classified as Mixed-Use Corridor and Mixed Residential (High Density) in a Priority Investment Area and Community Activity Center with a portion in a Neighborhood Activity Center and zoned General Commercial (GC) and Residential 2 (R2) by Richland County.

Council District: 2

Applicant: Word of God Church and Ministries

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 11/13/2025; Approval (8-0)



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Brown, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to the Annexation, Interim Future Land Use Map Amendment, and Interim Zoning Map Amendment for 1227 and 1235 Bakersfield Road, 106, 112, 118, 119, 130, 131 and 140 Diamond Lane, and 1049, 1057, and 1065 Statler Road, TMS# 07402-04-16, 07402-04-10, 07401-06-01, and 07401-06-02 **and** Ordinance No.: 2025-106 - Annexing 1227 and 1235 Bakersfield Road, 106, 112, 118, 119, 130, 131 and 140 Diamond Lane, and 1049, 1057, and 1065 Statler Road, Richland County TMS# 07402-04-16, 07402-04-10, 07401-06-01, and 07401-06-02.

Mayor Rickenmann left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

29. Ordinance No.: 2025-101 - Granting an encroachment to Shawn Eubanks for the use of the right of way area of the 6100 block of Hampton Leas Lane for the installation and maintenance of a wooden fence adjacent to 1 Copperfield Court, Richland County TMS# 13713-02-41 – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Bailey, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-101 - Granting an encroachment to Shawn Eubanks for the use of the right of way area of the 6100 block of Hampton Leas Lane for the installation and maintenance of a wooden fence adjacent to 1 Copperfield Court, Richland County TMS# 13713-02-41. Mayor Rickenmann was not present for the vote.

30. Ordinance No.: 2025-108 - Approval for Granting an Easement to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. along a Portion of City-Owned Property Located at 191 Calhoun Street and Identified as Richland County TMS#09006-08-02 & 03 and TMS#07314-02-05 for Installation of Electric Lines for the new water pumps at the Columbia Canal Water Treatment Plant; CF#250-679 – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-108 - Approval for Granting an Easement to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. along a Portion of City-Owned Property Located at 191 Calhoun Street and Identified as Richland County TMS#09006-08-02 & 03 and TMS#07314-02-05 for Installation of Electric Lines for the new water pumps at the Columbia Canal Water Treatment Plant; CF#250-679. Mayor Rickenmann was not present for the vote.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Mayor Rickenmann returned at 7:12 p.m.

31. Ordinance No.: 2025-109 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City of Columbia and The Kessler Enterprise, Inc., and any necessary deeds, assignments, bills of sales and other closing documents for the sale of Washington Square Office Building, 1136 Washington Street, Richland County TMS #09013-05-02, Washington Plaza Parking Garage, 1112 Washington Street, TMS #09013-05-01, and Washington Plaza Retail Shops, TMS #09013-05-18 – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Brown, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2025-109 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City of Columbia and The Kessler Enterprise, Inc., and any necessary deeds, assignments, bills of sales and other closing documents for the sale of Washington Square Office Building, 1136 Washington Street, Richland County TMS #09013-05-02, Washington Plaza Parking Garage, 1112 Washington Street, TMS #09013-05-01, and Washington Plaza Retail Shops, TMS #09013-05-18.

EVENT RESOLUTIONS

32. Resolution No.: R-2025-084 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only at First Thursday on Main Street (February to December 2026) – *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mayor Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2025-084 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only at First Thursday on Main Street (February to December 2026).

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REFERRALS, REPORTS AND NEW BUSINESS

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to approve **Items 33** through **35**.

33. Council is asked to refer the development of a comprehensive artificial intelligence strategy and policy to the City Manager and Executive Leadership Team, as requested by the Honorable Tyler Bailey. – *Approved*



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Councilor Bailey referred the development of a comprehensive Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy and policy framework for the City of Columbia to the City Manager and Executive Leadership Team. This assessment should include: (1) an inventory and evaluation of current AI technologies and systems in use across city departments; (2) identification of opportunities to leverage AI to improve operational efficiency, enhance service delivery, and support data-driven decision-making; (3) establishment of ethical guidelines and governance structures to ensure responsible, transparent, and equitable AI deployment that protects privacy, mitigates bias, and maintains public trust; and (4) recommendations for employee training and public engagement on AI adoption.

34. Council is asked to refer the development of an incentive package to attract an urgent care facility to North Columbia to the Community Development Committee, as requested by the Honorable Tyler Bailey. – *Approved*

Councilor Bailey referred an assessment of healthcare access gaps in North Columbia and the development of potential incentives to attract an urgent care medical facility to serve this area to the Community Development Committee. The committee should explore available incentive mechanisms including but not limited to expedited permitting processes, fee waivers, zoning flexibility for medical uses, and potential tax considerations, while reviewing best practices from other municipalities that have successfully attracted urgent care facilities to underserved areas. The committee should consult with the Planning Department, Economic Development staff, and healthcare providers to return with recommendations.

35. Council is asked to refer the development of a flag display policy for city government property and public facing facilities to the Administrative Policy Committee, as requested by the Honorable Tyler Bailey – *Approved*

Councilor Bailey referred the development of a policy governing the display of flags on City of Columbia government property and in public-facing spaces within municipal facilities to the Administrative Policy Committee. This policy should establish clear guidelines for official flag displays on government grounds, building exteriors, and shared public spaces, while respecting employees' First Amendment rights in personal workspaces. The committee should review best practices from other municipalities and return with recommendations for development of a resolution governing flag display.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Councilor McDowell reported that the Administrative Policy Committee met to review honorary street naming applications and endorsed them both for City Council's consideration. The first application honors Mr. Curtis Elkins by recognizing his leadership and lasting impact in the Golden Acres community, where he was known as "Mr. Golden Acres." The second application honors Rosewood Elementary School at 3200 Rosewood Drive and 200 South Ravenel Street by recognizing its 100 years of service to the community.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mayor Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to endorse the honorary naming applications for Mr. Curtis Elkins and Rosewood Elementary School.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Bailey, Council voted unanimously to approve the referral of a food pantry app (NeedNoMore) pilot program to the Community Development Committee.

PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Diane Wiley, 4036 Webb Street spoke about a newly established business on Bronx Street, citing the placement of trash bins near homes, a church, and apartments without prior neighborhood notification. She expressed concerns about sanitation, pests, and zoning communication. She requested that the city engage with residents and stakeholders. A meeting with the business owner is expected next month.

Mr. Michael Dalton spoke about an incident in which he was removed by police while busking downtown despite holding a valid busker permit and complying with city ordinance requirements. He requested that the city review enforcement practices and clarify guidance to ensure lawful street performances are permitted.

Ms. Kay Moore stated that Columbia's primary challenge is a drug and housing instability crisis rather than homelessness. She described children relying on school meals and families being displaced to hotels due to rising rents and inflation. She presented a proposed initiative which would provide tiered housing solutions ranging from immediate capsule-style shelter units to transitional and family housing.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025

Ms. Jessica Thomas questioned Item 31 and the bidding process based on an article she read. She expressed concern that a higher offer was reportedly submitted while the selected agreement involved a lower purchase price, additional taxpayer costs, and the loss of parking.

Mayor Rickenmann clarified that there were multiple unsolicited proposals that were submitted.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager added that the process for the Washington Square property was not a bid-based procurement but a publicly discussed redevelopment effort focused on achieving the highest and best use of City-owned property. She stated that the City engaged a commercial broker to solicit and evaluate letters of interest in alignment with established policy goals for the corridor. Decisions were based on long-term redevelopment objectives rather than just the purchase price. She also expressed concern that recent media coverage mischaracterized the process without consulting City staff involved in its development.

There was discussion about accepting a lower purchase price; the inclusion of a \$400,000 tenant upfit allowance; the transfer of parking access; and how these elements support a large-scale redevelopment, with staff emphasizing the selected developer's capacity to deliver a transformative mixed-use project with long-term economic, cultural, and tax benefits.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, MMC, CPM
City Clerk