



City Planning Commission 2024 Report to City Council

Planning Commission

Kim Sudderth, Chair

Scott Bateman, Vice-Chair

Larry Pendleton

Lelia Vann

Jeffrey Wells

Jake Young

Approved: February 27, 2025
Department of City Planning

Chair's Message

February 27, 2025

To the Honorable Mayor and Council
City of Norfolk, Virginia

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the City Planning Commission (CPC), it is my pleasure to share with you a summary of the Commission's activities from the previous year. The Commission navigated a dynamic and productive year, tackling a significant volume of planning and zoning matters while laying the groundwork for the city's future.

In total, the Commission reviewed 181 planning and zoning items, along with 20 design review items forwarded by the Architectural Review Board. It was also a year of lively discussion and debate, particularly around the topics of conditional use permits, short-term rentals, and process improvements.

Progress on the City's new Comprehensive Plan, NFK2050 continued in 2024. It was a pivotal year for the project and encompassed the majority of public engagement for the entire process. The project team completed Phase 1 (Listening), where residents told us they want housing for all income levels and family needs, multimodal transportation options, better opportunities for well-paying jobs, a celebration of Norfolk's rich history, art and culture and preparedness for sea level rise and flooding, to name a few. This feedback helped build the foundation for Phase 2 (Visioning) engagement which was completed in 2024 and included a wealth of public engagement opportunities and tools. The consultant team is currently drafting the Plan and will be bringing it for review in the spring.

We're thankful for your trust and confidence in the City Planning Commission. We look forward to working together to shape a vibrant and thriving Norfolk for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Suddreth', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Suddreth
Chair

CC: Patrick Roberts, City Manager
Robert J. Tajan, AICP, Planning Director

Norfolk City Planning Commission

The Norfolk City Planning Commission (henceforth referred to as the “Planning Commission” or “CPC”) is a seven-member body, appointed by City Council, responsible for the review of land use and zoning matters for the City of Norfolk. The Planning Commission makes recommendations on various matters to City Council, which is ultimately responsible for making a final decision on those matters. The Planning Commission is also responsible for the development and implementation of the City’s General Plan, *plaNorfolk2030*.

Planning Commission members in 2024 were: Kevin Murphy, Chair; Kim Sudderth, Vice-Chair; Scott Bateman; Jeremy McGee; Charlie Parker (January-July); Larry Pendleton; Lelia Vann; and Jeffrey Wells (September-December). Robert J. Tajan, Planning Director, served as Executive Secretary.

The CPC met on 23 separate occasions in 2024, convening the second and fourth Thursday of each month except November and December, where only one meeting was held each month due to the holidays. In addition to these, the Commission also met for an all-day retreat in October. The table below illustrates each member’s attendance for the year.

Member Name	Meetings in Attendance	Meetings Absent
Kevin Murphy, Chair	22	1
Kim Sudderth, Vice-Chair	21	2
Scott Bateman	21	2
Jeremy McGee	23	0
Charlie Parker**	2	10
Larry Pendleton	19	4
Lelia Vann	22	1
Jeffrey Wells*	6	0

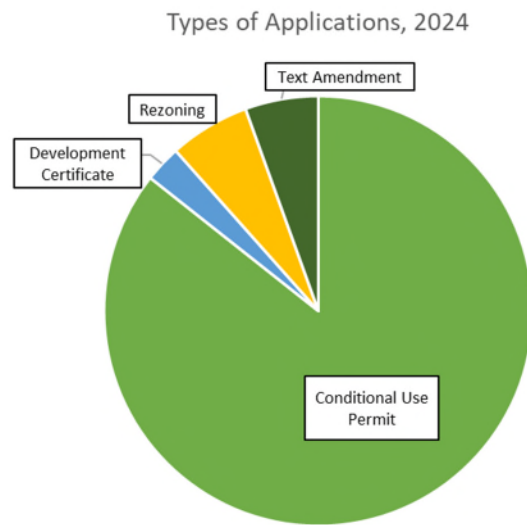
* Joined the commission during 2024 calendar year.

** Left the commission during 2024 calendar year.

In 2024, the Planning Commission processed 181 planning and zoning applications along with 20 design review items from the Architectural Review Board. Additionally, the Planning Commission considered presentations on many other topics throughout the year, including the St Paul’s Blue/Greenway, *NFK2050* Existing Conditions Assessment, Historic Surveys update, Norfolk’s casino project, and the Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) Project.

Applications Reviewed

Of the 181 planning and zoning applications submitted to the Planning Commission in 2024, Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) once again represent the lion's share. 155 of the 181 applications were CUPs, which is 85.6% of all applications. Rezoning represents the second largest percentage, followed, in order, by Text Amendments and Development Certificates. 2024 saw the lowest number of ROW Vacations on record in at least the last 18 years, with zero applications. The following table illustrates the disposition of all applications processed in 2024.

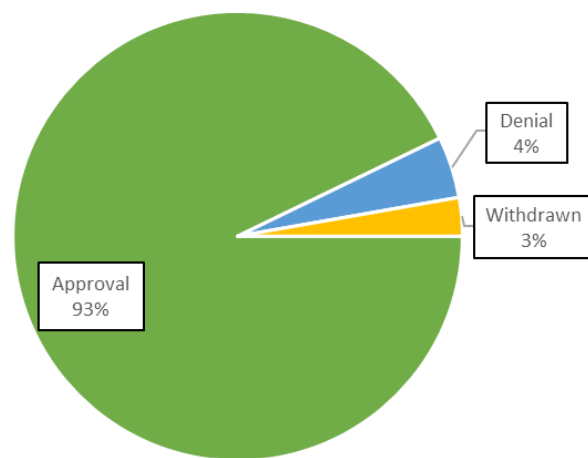


CPC Items & Recommendations, 2024

Application Type	Number	%	Approval	Denial	Withdrawn	% Approved
Conditional Use Permit	155	85.6%	144	7	4	92.9%
Development Certificate	5	2.8%	5	0	0	100.0%
Rezoning	11	6.1%	10	1	0	90.9%
Text Amendment	10	5.5%	9	0	1	90.0%
Totals	181	100%	168	8	5	92.8%

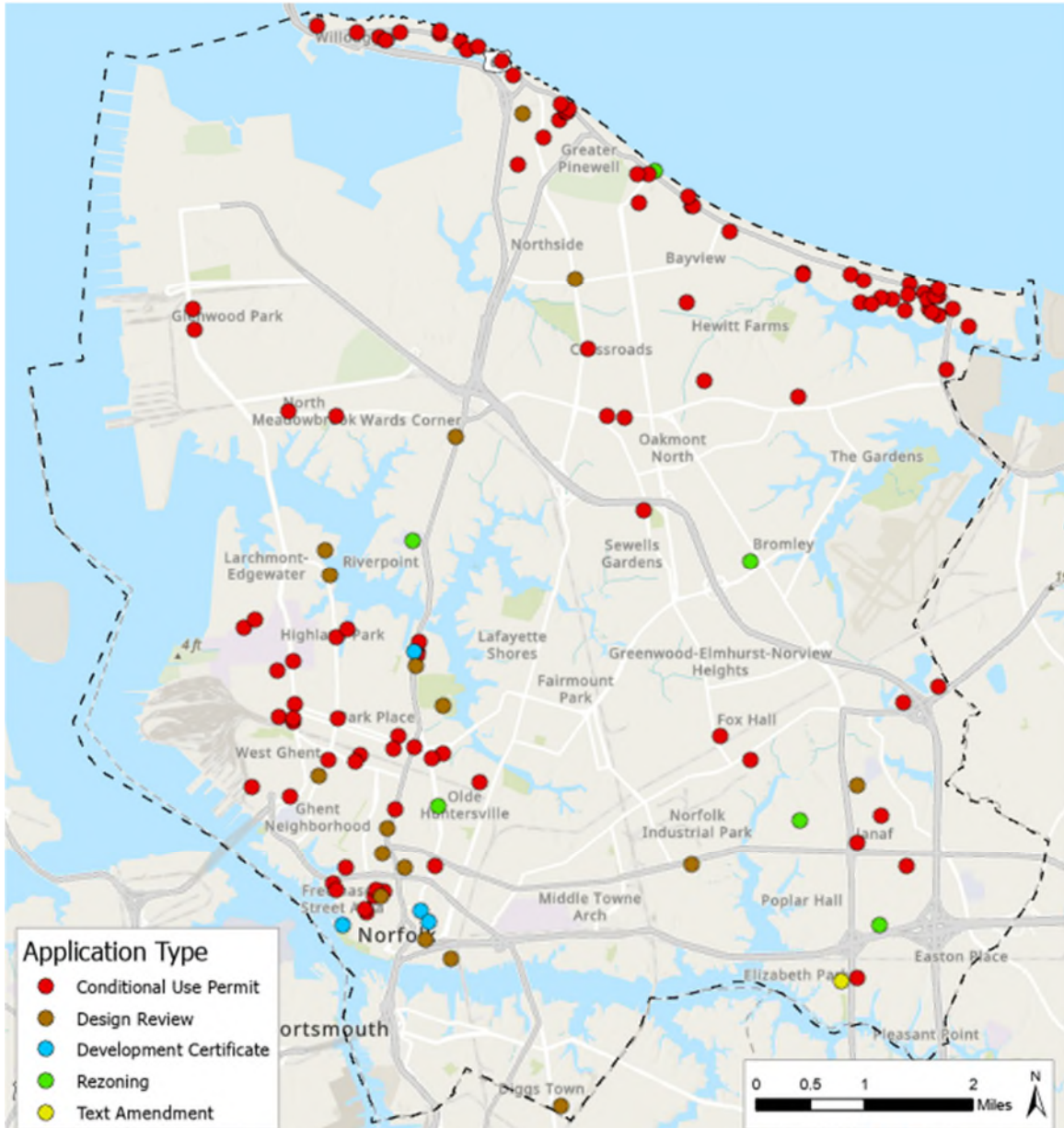
The Planning Commission recommended approval on 168 items, while voting to recommend denial of eight (8). Five (5) items were withdrawn before the Commission vote. The high approval rating from both the Planning Commission and the City Council (covered later) is due in large part to the efforts of staff to advise and guide applicants through the pre-approval process, assisting applicants in making improvements to their applications.

Recommended Actions, 2024



Applications Reviewed

The map below illustrates the geographic distribution of the types of applications reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2024. Each dot on the map represents one item or application reviewed by the Planning Commission in the year 2024.



Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Not reflected on this map are items reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2024 that are not specific to one location, but instead impact the entire city (Ex. Text amendments).

Conditional Use Permits Reviewed

CUPs are the most common type of application considered by the Planning Commission, representing 85.6% of all agenda items in 2024. This is slightly lower than in 2023, in which 87.4% of agenda items were CUPs but much higher than in 2022 in which 72.3% of agenda items were CUP applications. Of the 155 CUPs reviewed in total by the CPC in 2024, the single most reviewed item was short-term rental CUPs at 47 applications or 25.9% of all applications. This is slightly higher than the 45 applications reviewed in 2023 but a significant increase from 2022 and 2021, when only 32 and 20, respectively, short-term applications were considered.

In total, 92.9% of conditional use permit applications were recommended for approval which is up from 90.8% last year. This is also slightly higher than the 10-year average of 92.4%.

CUPs by Type & CPC Recommendations, 2024

CUP Type	Number	Percent	Approved	Denied	Withdrawn	% Approved
ABC Off-Premises	18	11.6%	17	0	1	94.4%
ABC On-Premises	29	18.7%	28	0	1	96.6%
Alternative Signage	3	1.9%	3	0	0	100.0%
Auto Related *	4	2.6%	4	0	0	100.0%
Banquet Hall	6	3.9%	6	0	0	100.0%
Billboard	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Commercial Recreation Center	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Communication Tower	1	0.6%	0	0	1	0.0%
Continuation of a Legally Established Nonconforming Use	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Convenience Store	4	2.6%	4	0	0	100.0%
Drive-through Facility	1	0.6%	0	1	0	0.0%
Extended Hours	4	2.6%	4	0	0	100.0%
Live Entertainment	14	9.0%	14	0	0	100.0%
Marina	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Modify the intensity and Dimensional Standards	2	1.3%	1	1	0	50.0%
Multifamily	3	1.9%	2	1	0	66.7%
More than 50% of 1st Floor to be Utilized for Res. Uses	1	0.6%	0	1	0	0.0%
Production of Craft Beverages	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Reduce required parking	2	1.3%	1	1	0	50.0%
Religious Institution	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Retails Good Establishment	1	0.6%	1	0	0	100.0%
Short-Term Rental	47	30.3%	44	2	1	93.6%
Smoke or Vape Products	4	2.6%	4	0	0	100.0%
Tattoo Parlor	3	1.9%	3	0	0	100.0%
Used Merchandise Sales	2	1.3%	2	0	0	100.0%
Total	155	100.0%	144	7	4	92.9%

* The "Auto Related" field represents several different CUP types: Auto Storage; Auto Sales; Auto Repairs; Boat Sales, Rental, Service, or Repair; Car Wash; Electric Vehicle Charging Station; Recreational Vehicle Sale, Rental, and Maintenance; and Tire Sales and Repair.

In August 2022, City Council adopted a new zoning text amendment, allowing for an expedited CUP process in certain circumstances. The new process allows restaurants with a CUP to change managers, nightclubs or banquet halls with a CUP to change managers if they convert to restaurant uses, and allows for restaurants to change or add outdoor dining. The expedited process eliminates the requirement for applicants to attend a Civic League meeting or appear before the City Planning Commission and reduces and in some cases eliminates the application fee.

City Council granted one (1) CUP through this expedited process in 2024.

Norfolk City Council Disposition of CPC Items

The following table reflects Norfolk City Council's actions relative to the CPC's recommendations, by application type. Of the 181 items reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2024 (excluding withdrawn items), 92.8% were recommended for approval. 98.1% of the items considered by City Council were approved, though the specific items approved and denied differed slightly from Planning Commission recommendations.

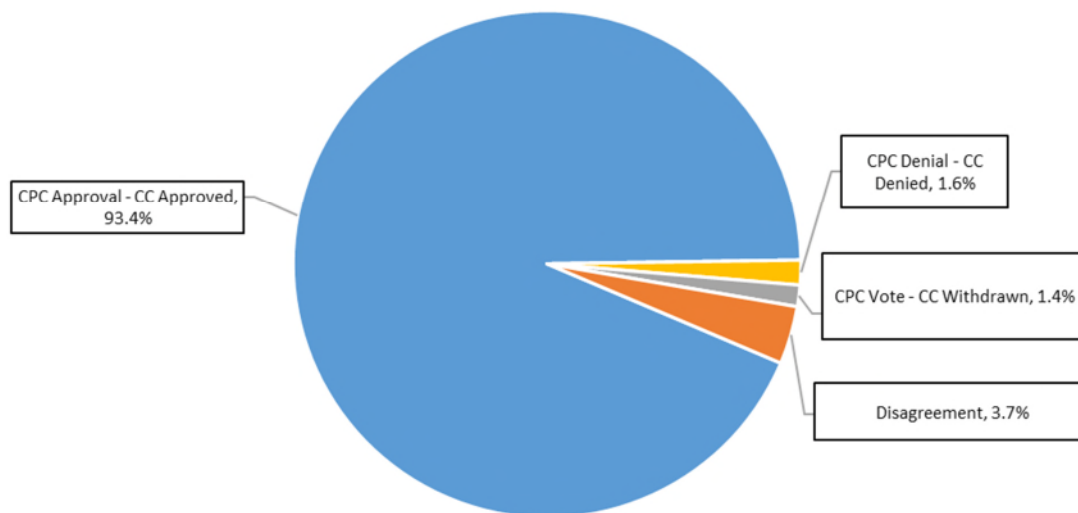
Planning Commission and City Council Actions, 2024

Application Types	CPC		City Council Resolution				
	Approval	Denial	Approved	Denied	Withdrawn	% App. by CC	Pending*
Rezoning	10	1	10	0	1	100.0%	0
Cond. Use Permit	144	7	132	11	6	92.3%	2
Text Amendment	9	0	8	0	0	100.0%	1
Dev. Certificate**	5	0	2	0	0	100.0%	0
Total	168	8	152	11	7	98.1%	3

* Pending: Items that were voted on by CPC but have not been reviewed by City Council.

** Three Dev. Certificates did not request waivers from the standards of the district, meaning they only required Planning Commission approval and are therefore not included in these figures.

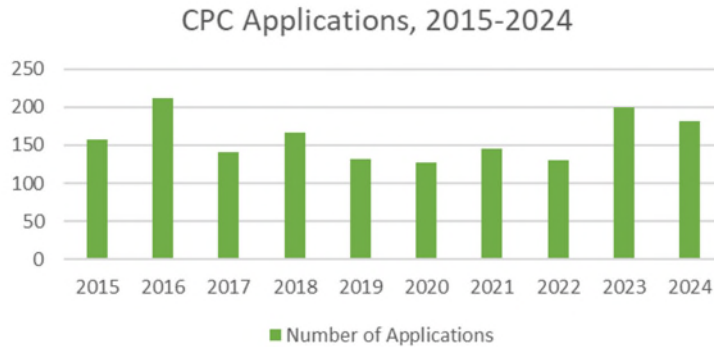
Planning Commission and City Council Actions, 2015-2024



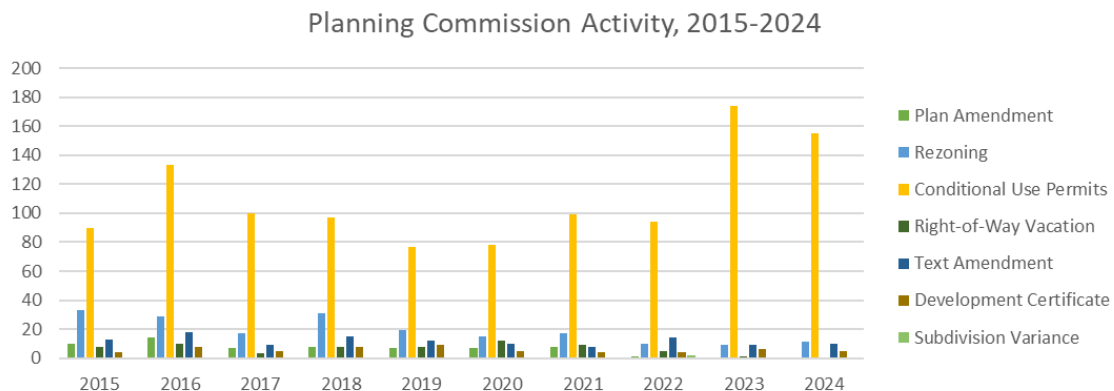
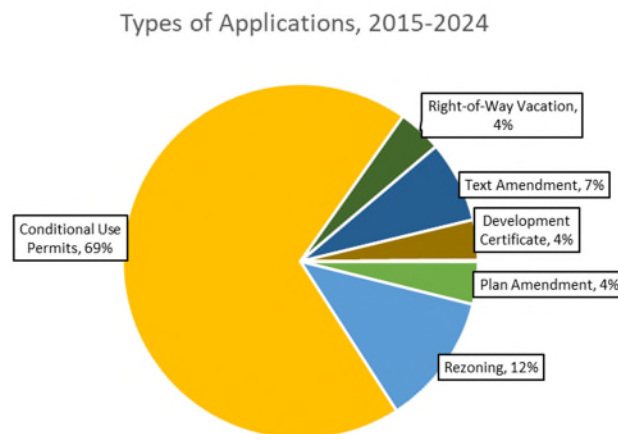
City Council generally agrees with the recommendations of the Planning Commission. Since 2015, City Council has agreed with Planning Commission's recommendation – for either approval or denial – 95% of the time. An additional 1.4% of items were withdrawn prior to a vote from City Council. This means that the two bodies have disagreed on only 3.7% – 54 out of 1,464 – of all items reviewed by both bodies in 10 years.

Planning & Zoning Applications Reviewed – Ten Year Review

The number of applications to the Planning Commission had been falling since the adoption of the new Zoning Ordinance in 2018. In the past few years however, the number of applications has started to rise again. 2024 had the third highest number of applications reviewed in the last 10 years and about 16% more than the 10 year average of 159.2 applications. A total of 1,592 applications have been submitted to the Planning Commission since 2015.

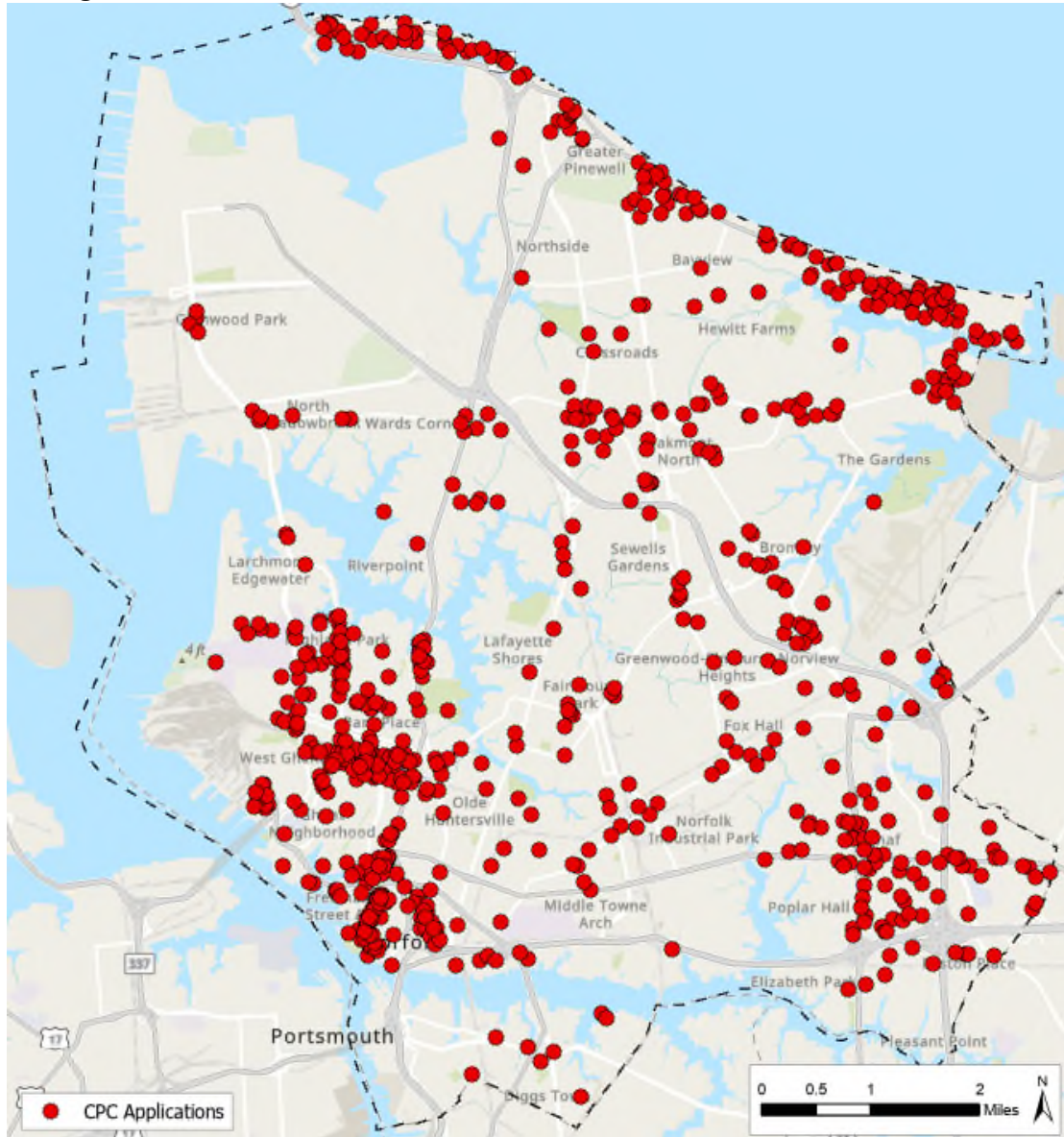


The conditional use permit has remained the most common application type for the entire 10-year period, consistently making up well over half of all applications each year. All other types of applications vary greatly from year-to-year. There appear to be few obvious trends in the data, though there was a reduction in CUPs with the adoption of the 2018 Zoning Ordinance and an uptick in CUP activity since 2020 with the addition of CUPs for some short-term rentals and ABC uses.



Planning & Zoning Applications Reviewed – Ten Year Review

The map below illustrates the geographic distribution of applications reviewed by the Planning Commission between 2015 and 2024.

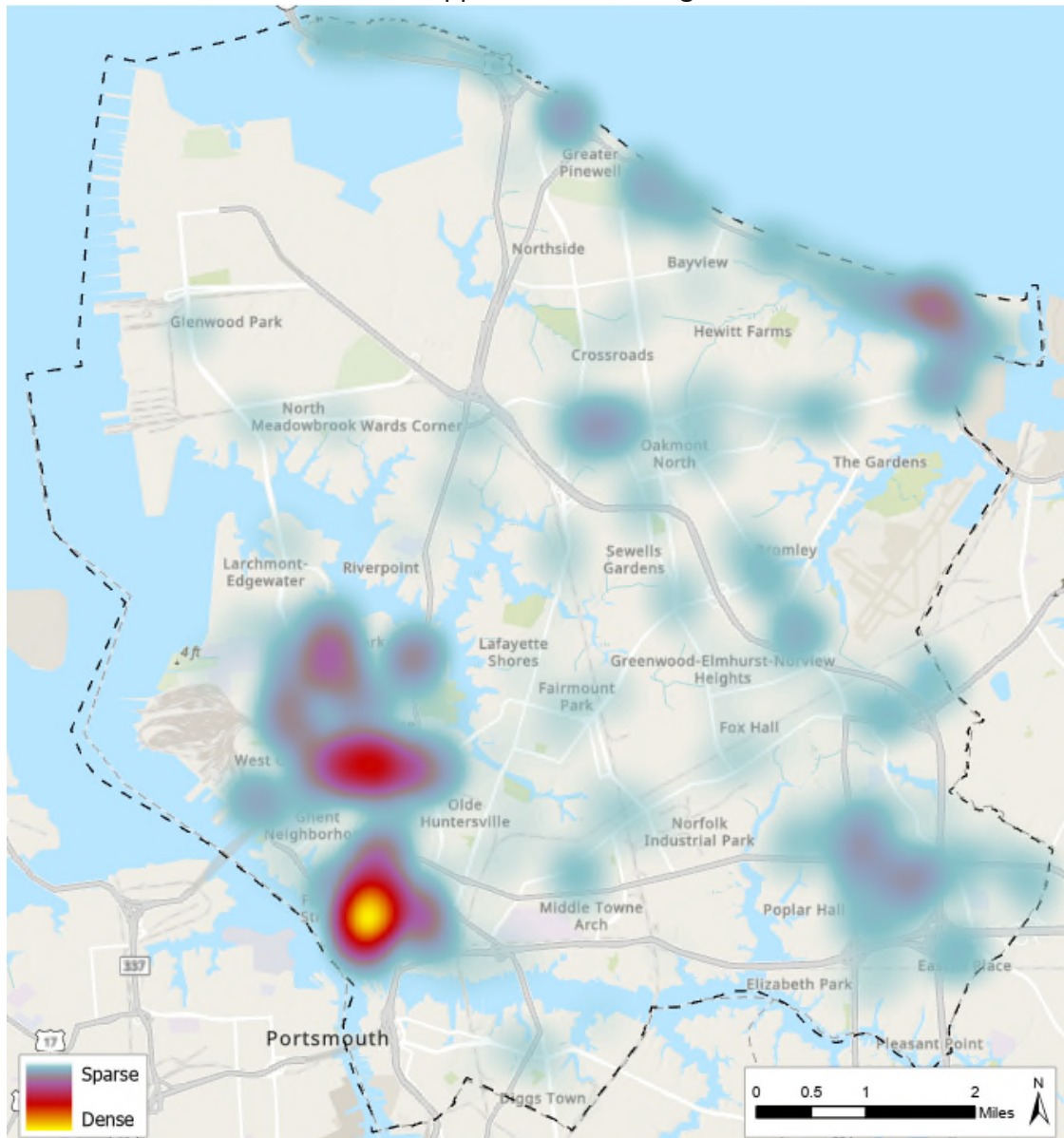


Disclaimer: The above map only accounts for applications with a specific location. Applications with a city-wide reach are not found within the data for this map.

As was the case for the map found in the “Applications Reviewed” section of this report, the dots in the above map represent applications with a specific location. These dots do not represent applications that affect the entire city.

Planning & Zoning Applications Reviewed – Ten Year Review

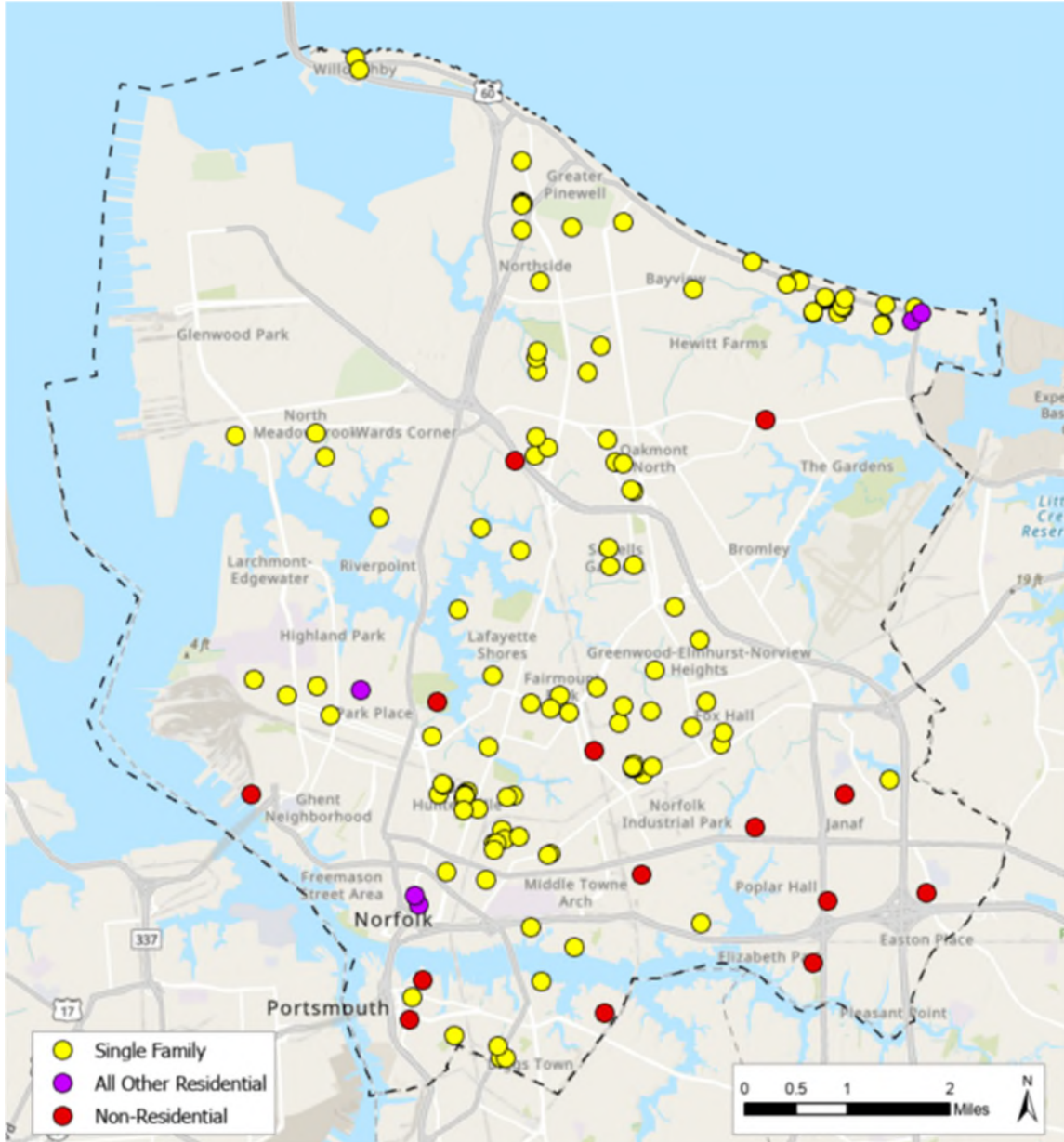
Like the map found on the previous page, the map below illustrates the geographic distribution of applications reviewed by the Planning Commission between 2015 and 2024. The map below, however, highlights where a greater concentration of the applications reviewed by the Planning Commission over the last 10 years are located. The yellow areas are where the highest concentration of applications is found. The areas with no color are where little to no application clustering is found.



Disclaimer: The above map only accounts for applications with a specific location. Applications with a city-wide reach are not found within the data for this map.

Building Permits

Many of the applications brought forth to Planning Commission result in new construction projects, reaching every part of Norfolk. The map below shows the location of building permits issued in 2024 for new construction. Single family home locations are shown in yellow; all other residential new construction is shown in purple; and non-residential new construction is shown in red. The highest concentrations of new construction were in Olde Huntersville, Bruces Park, and East Ocean View.



Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Building Permits

Impact on Planning Staff Workload

Each dot on the map from the previous page shows new construction building permits issued in 2024. Along with a building permit, each project requires a host of reviews and inspections. Each one of these building types reflects a significant workload on City Planning staff.

Below is a list of requirements for new construction:

Single-family home	Other Residential	Non-Residential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Review • Zoning Review • Permits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 minimum • Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 17 minimum • Certificate of Occupancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Plan Review • Plan Review • Zoning Review • Permits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 minimum • Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 17 minimum • Certificate of Occupancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Plan Review • Plan Review • Zoning Review • Permits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 minimum • Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 17 minimum ○ Add 12+ for sprinklered buildings • Certificate of Occupancy

Other possible reviews: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area, erosion & sediment control, stormwater, landscaping, fire protection, floodplain, design review, ROW (driveway), Utilities (water & sewer taps)

By the Numbers

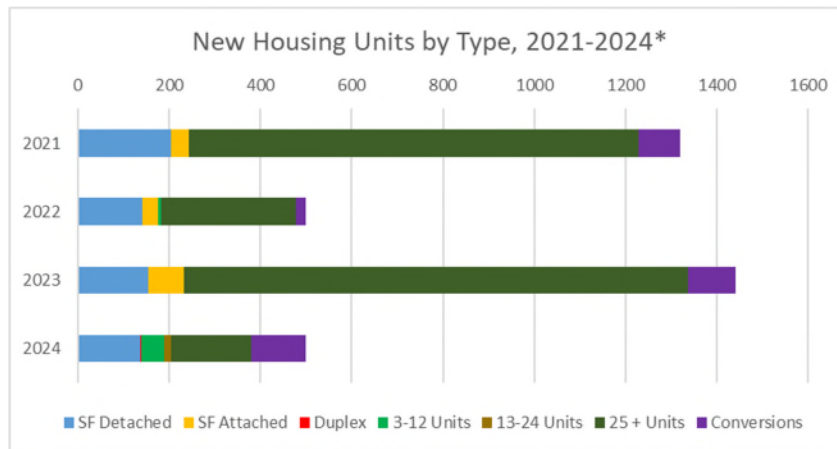
Below are some quantitative analysis of the efforts tied to support new development and business activity in Norfolk:

- Reviewed **2,698** building plans
- Issued **10,058** permits (amusement, building, demolition, electrical, elevator, fire protection, mechanical, occupancy, plumbing, sign, and zoning permits)
- Completed **24,572** permit inspections
- Completed **1,108** zoning inspections
- Reviewed **2,037** business license requests
- Issued **630** zoning violation notices
- Approved **108** site plan review projects
- Completed **2,421** site plan review environmental inspections on **128** site plans
- Completed **2,958** single-family home environmental inspections on **135** new single-family homes

New Housing Units

The City of Norfolk is seeking opportunities to support and create a diversity of housing options, including “missing middle” housing. Following are data to begin to better track these development types, typically between 2 and 24 housing units each.

2024 saw a reduced number of building permits for new housing from the 2023 levels. There were 138 single-family detached units, zero (0) single-family attached units (typically townhomes), two (2) duplex units, 50 3-12 units, 15 13-24 units, 175 25 or more-unit dwellings, and 120 residential conversions permitted in 2024.



Year	SF Detached	SF Attached	Duplex	3-12 Units	13-24 Units	25 + Units	Conversions
2021	205	39	0	0	0	985	90
2022	142	34	0	6	0	296	21
2023	155	77	0	0	0	1,104	105
2024	138	0	2	50	15	174	120

*Building permit data are subject to change over time as projects are cancelled or re-permitted. The data reflect the latest permit issuance date.

Major residential developments that moved into the permitting stage during 2024 are shown in the table below.

Multifamily Building Permits Valued Over \$1 million (2024)

First Permits Issued	Project Name	Project Location
July	Newport Manor - 50 units	601 35th Street
December	Block 16, Kindred - 9 units	985 E Freemason Street
December	Block 10, Kindred - 9 units	980 Mariner Street
December	Block 10, Kindred - 9 units	950 Mariner Street
December	Block 9, Kindred - 75 units	801 E Freemason Street
December	Block 16, Kindred - 49 units	430 Church Street
December	Block 10, kindred - 7 units	440 Chapel Street
December	Block 10, Kindred - 15 units	901 E Freemason Street

Completed Projects

2024 once again saw the completion of multiple major projects and the opening of several new or relocated businesses. Most of these projects received some form of Planning Commission approval over the past few years and, as major construction projects often take some time to finish, finally opened during the past year. Below are several projects that were completed in 2024.



Reunion Senior Living at Kindred – 501 Wood Street



Panera Bread – 7701 Tidewater Drive



Office/Warehouse – 2551 Alameda Avenue



Chicken Salad Chick – 1200 W 26th Street



The Arch at Park Place – 500 34th Street



Chenman Yards – 601 W 24th Street



Gravity on 400 – 400 Waterside Drive



Aspire at Church Street – 645 Church Street



Origin Circle at Kindred – 451 Church Street

Plans and Other Projects

2024 was a pivotal year for NFK2050 and encompassed the majority of public engagement for the entire process. The project team completed Phase 1 (Listening), where residents told us they want housing for all income levels and family needs, multimodal transportation options, better opportunities for well-paying jobs, a celebration of Norfolk's rich history, art and culture and preparedness for sea



level rise and flooding, to name a few. This feedback helped build the foundation for Phase 2 (Visioning) engagement which was completed in 2024 and included a wealth of public engagement opportunities and tools:

- A series of interactive open houses around the city, and subsequent online survey where participants provided ideas to improve the city's housing, economic development, parks, resiliency, transportation, placemaking and more.
- Pop-Up Office Hours across the city by City Planning staff to meet Norfolk residents and stakeholders where they are and give them a direct, easy line to connect with NFK2050.
- Meetings-in-a-Box for community groups, organizations, and businesses to allow them to host conversations about NFK2050, continuing to meet people where they are.
- NFK2050 On-the-Go, or updates on the NFK2050 process, to civic leagues, organizations, and others, to keep them up to date with the planning process and the conversations that were happening city-wide.
- NFK2050 Champions program where Champions served as community ambassadors responsible for connecting with members of the local community, interacting and recording information shared during community engagement events, and reporting back to the NFK2050 project team with their findings and feedback from these events.

In October, the NFK2050 team hosted in-person conversations around some emerging "Big Ideas" on the Comprehensive Plan at Granby High School. At the workshop, which marked the conclusion of Phase 2, participants helped the team test and refine the ideas to ensure their applicability to Norfolk from now through 2050. The consultant team will be taking that nuanced and helpful feedback to the drafting board, bringing a citywide Comprehensive Plan to the public for review in Spring 2025.

Review of 2024 Work Program

The 2024 work program is included below, along with an indication of each project's status. Those projects shaded green are considered complete. Those shaded yellow are not complete but are underway and are on track for completion. Work has not begun on those shaded red.

Project	Status
NFK2050 – multiyear project with plan completed in 2025	
2024 Action Items	
• Existing Conditions Assessment	Complete
• Public Workshop Series, Phase 2	Complete
• Citywide Public Engagement Survey	Complete
Zoning Ordinance updates	
• Accessory Dwelling Units	In process
• Short-Term Rentals	In process
• Site Plan Review	Complete
• Development Definitions and Applicability	In Process
• Billboards	Complete
• Zoning Text Clean Up	Complete
• Shipping Containers	Complete
• Minimum Lot Sizes	Complete
• Nonconforming Setbacks	Complete
• Reuse of Large-Scale Commercial Buildings	Complete
Broad Creek Refresh Plan implementation	
• Complete brownfields reports and closeout grants	Complete
• Find funds to remediate Globe Iron sites*	In process
Historic Resources survey for Anna Street and Lindenwood (Phase 1)	Complete
Community Rating System (CRS)	
• Program for Public Information (PPI) annual report	Complete
• 2023 Flood Insurance Assessment (FIA) update	Complete
• 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan annual report	Complete
• Close Community Assistance Visit	In Process
Update zoning regulations for industrial uses (with Economic Development)	In process
Update zoning regulations for Downtown first floor active use requirements	In process
23 rd Street / Railroad District Plan*	In process
Acquire ArcGIS Urban, train staff, and incorporate into workflows	In process
Development Showcase featuring Ward 3	Complete
Opened the Development Services Center	Complete
ISO Review (Building Permitting and Inspections)	Complete

Staff Speaking Engagements	
• APA Virginia	Complete
• Governor’s Housing Conference	Complete
Resilience Quotient Analysis and Updates	
• Preliminary findings of program impact / best practices / etc. (two-year program that commenced in Summer 2021)	In process
• Resilience quotient code revisions based on results of evaluation	In process

* Transitioned to an infrastructure project

2025 Work Program

As the Planning Commission transitions into another year, there are many projects currently underway or planned for initiation in 2025. Below is a list of projects Planning Department staff and the Planning Commission should be working on over the coming year. While this may not represent all projects and tasks, it is intended to be a snapshot at the beginning of the year of what activities are anticipated.

Project	Projected Project Timeframe
<i>NFK2050</i> – multiyear project with plan completed in 2025 2025 Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Plan Public Workshop Series, Phase 3 Plan Adoption 	Early 2025 Mid 2025 Late 2025
Zoning Ordinance updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove vacation rental as a permitted use in HC-WF1 and HC-WF2 Tattoo Parlors, Convenience Stores, Artisanal Production, and Electric Vehicle Charging Stations by-right in certain districts Home Occupations CUP for structures over 30,000 square feet in C-C or C-R Short-Term Rentals Development Standards Definitions and Applicability Statements Evaluate off-street parking minimums CBPA updates Accessory Dwelling Units ASO/AICUZ Overlay Update STR process to reflect City Council policy Update zoning regulations for industrial uses Update zoning regulations for Downtown first floor active use requirements 	Early 2025 Early 2025 Early 2025 Early 2025 Mid 2025 Mid 2025 Late 2025 Late 2025 Late 2025 Late 2025 Late 2025
Historic Resources survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Resources survey for Lindenwood (Phase 2) Additional survey work – pending funding 	Mid 2025 Late 2025
Community Rating System (CRS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete CRS Verification Program for Public Information (PPI) update and Flood Hazard Assessment (FIA) update Hazard Mitigation Plan annual report Close Community Assistance Visit 	Early 2025 Mid 2025 Late 2025 Late 2025

Project	Projected Project Timeframe
Broad Creek Refresh Plan implementation – revisions to zoning regulations	Late 2025
Department Communications Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department webpage audit• “How to Communicate with Planning” outreach	Mid 2025 Late 2025
Migrate City Planning Commission applications to online portal	Late 2025
ArcGIS Urban - train staff and incorporate into workflows	Late 2025
Staff Support for APA VA Conference (Portsmouth)	Mid 2025
Update STR process to reflect City Council policy	Late 2025