



PLANNING, PRESERVATION & SUSTAINABILITY

2021

YEAR-END REPORT

CITY OF CHARLESTON

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DEPARTMENT MISSION

To improve the built environment and quality of life for all people in the City of Charleston.

CORE FUNCTIONS

To accomplish our mission, we will always perform our core functions at the highest level.

- Use the Comprehensive Plan as a guiding document for a more resilient and equitable future
- Facilitate construction of new neighborhoods that are compact and include a mix of uses
- Facilitate projects, programs, and policies that create affordability in housing and transportation options
- Restore, protect, and preserve historic neighborhoods
- Cultivate healthy and diverse commercial districts
- Advocate for excellence in design
- Consider environmental quality in all of our actions
- Collaborate across departments to solve complex problems
- Offer excellent, courteous, and professional service

ORGANIZATION

DIVISIONS (# staff):

Administration (4)
Business & Neighborhood Services (5)
Civic Design Center (2)
Planning (5)
Preservation & Urban Design (5)
Zoning (9)

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

Board of Architectural Review - Large (BAR-L)
Board of Architectural Review - Small (BAR-S)
Board of Zoning Appeals - Site Design (BZA-SD)
Board of Zoning Appeals - Zoning (BZA-Z)
Design Review Board (DRB)
Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Board
Planning Commission (PC)
Technical Review Committee (TRC)
West Ashey Revitalization Commission (WARC)

2021 FOCUS AREAS

*To address the current needs of our rapidly changing city,
the department will focus on three areas of improvement for Charleston:*

WATERPROOF

CHALLENGE: Increasing frequency and severity of flood events

VISION: A waterproof city that can grow and adapt to changing climate conditions

INCLUSIVE

CHALLENGE: Declining demographic diversity of the city

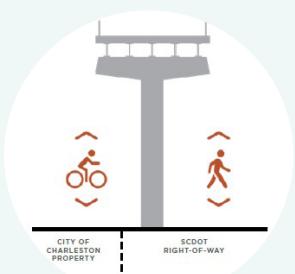
VISION: An inclusive and equitable city open to people of varied backgrounds and incomes

BALANCED

CHALLENGE: Separated uses, disconnected neighborhoods and commercial centers

VISION: A balanced city of compact neighborhoods with a mix of workplaces, services and residences, connected together with a range of transportation options

2021 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



WATERPROOF

- Adopted Comprehensive Plan (City Plan) data driven recommendations related to watersheds, topography, flooding, and sea level rise in order to direct future sustainable growth to places which minimize flooding impacts
- Adopted the conservation subdivision ordinance
- Extensively evaluated and documented community conversations around the USACE 3x3 Peninsula Flood Risk Management Study

INCLUSIVE

- Adopted City Plan data driven recommendations related to housing supply and needs in order to shape policies and opportunities for housing at all income levels
- Evaluated and updated "Fee In Lieu Of" option for MU/WH zoning districts to encourage more affordable units on site and raise adequate funds to build lost units
- Established M&WBE Business Development Lab webinars and secured a location for a future M&WBE Entrepreneurial Resource Center
- Conducted design studies and identify opportunities to improve public housing

BALANCED

- Worked with stakeholders to present the King Street Business Improvement District plan to City Council for approval
- Created the Johns Island Municipal Improvement District
- Developed design guidelines for the Lowcountry Lowline
- Adopted the historic cemeteries and unmarked burial grounds protection ordinance
- Led TIF funding prioritization for Cooper River Bridge Area

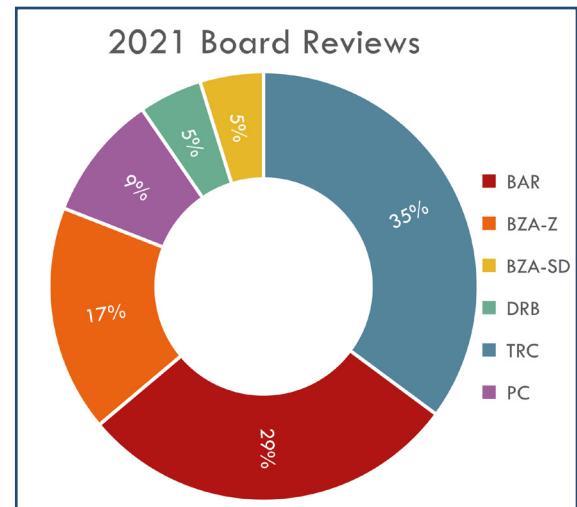
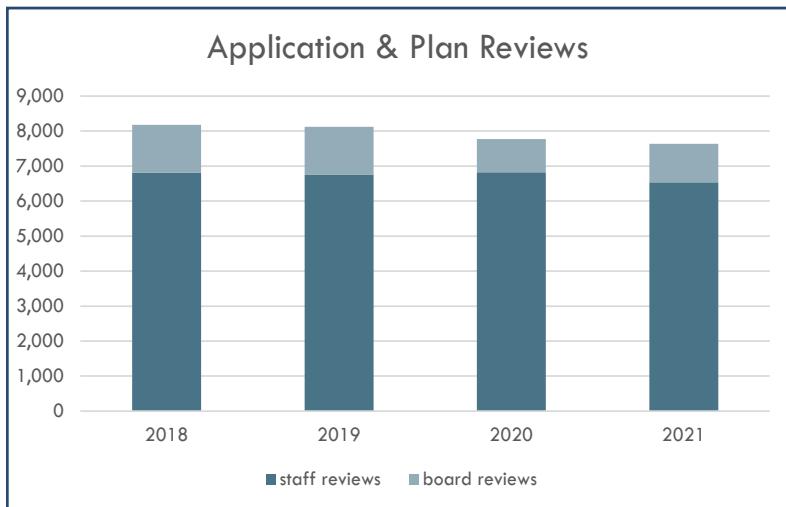
TRANSPARENT

- Created new outreach strategies to update citizens on City Plan implementation
- Improved M&WBE procurement process and programming
- Wrote policies and standards for solar panels in the historic district
- Implemented FOIA management improvements
- Improved information and resources available on department webpages

EFFICIENT

- Conducted legal training sessions for Boards and Commissions
- Eliminated minimum parking requirements in the Central Business District
- Led cross sector collaboration that implemented and improved street sweeping program
- Updated the TRC manual, checklists, and reduce review times
- Transitioned restaurants from COVID-19 emergency measures by updating sidewalk cafe dining ordinances and facilitated review process

BY THE NUMBERS



	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change
Application & Plan Reviews					
staff reviews	6,811	6,762	6,827	6,533	-
board reviews	1,371	1,360	948	1,107	+
Board Reviews					
BAR	424	438	283	318	+
BZA-Z	212	181	131	189	+
BZA-SD	85	84	47	53	+
DRB	104	134	62	53	-
TRC	403	411	337	389	+
PC	143	112	88	105	+
Growth					
single-family lots created	963	550	351	425	+
single-family/duplex house plans approved	1,202	974	1,082	1,083	+
multi-family units approved at TRC	1,325	521	1,953	1,305	-
properties annexed (comm & res)	39	29	26	49	+
Outreach & Engagement					
engagement events	80	88	105	107	+
workshop attendees	109	556	246	1,372	+
MWBE certifications (new)	64	78	102	100	-
newsletter subscribers	4,353	6,374	6,653	7,927	+
Design Projects					
city design projects	28	13	22	29	+

