Columbia, SC — #3 of 8: Construction Establishments

Columbia leads SC in construction activity

Columbia, SC · U.S. Census Bureau 2022

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THE DATA

1,609

Construction Establishments (2022)

Columbia ranks #3 among South Carolina metros in active construction businesses.

This figure reflects a robust pipeline of new residential and commercial development. The concentration of construction establishments signals sustained demand for housing and infrastructure across Richland and Lexington counties. It also indicates that the local economy is actively expanding beyond service and administrative roles.



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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2022, NAICS 23 (Construction) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-16-columbia-sc-istand-23-msa

01

Builders are betting on Columbia’s future

The fact that Columbia ranks third in South Carolina for construction establishments—behind only Charleston and Greenville—reveals a deep, durable confidence in the Midlands’ long-term growth trajectory. This is not a speculative spike but a structural shift: developers are establishing permanent operations, not just one-off projects. The presence of 1,609 active construction firms suggests a mature ecosystem of subcontractors, suppliers, and project management firms embedded in the region’s economic fabric.

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02

Infrastructure lags behind development

While construction activity is surging, recent reports of indefinite closures—like the Lexington intersection shut down for sewer repairs—highlight a critical mismatch. The pace of development is outstripping the upgrade of essential public infrastructure. This creates a long-term risk: new homes and businesses may face delays, increased costs, or reduced accessibility if municipal systems aren't modernized in parallel. The real estate value of new developments could be undermined by unresolved municipal bottlenecks.

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