



## SC Leading Index Reflects Mixed Outcomes

The South Carolina Leading Index (SCLI) fell 0.44 points last month, ending with a value of 101.53. A strong performance by the stock market was largely offset by weaker results for housing starts and initial unemployment claims. The Dow Jones Composite Average rose 5.8 percent in October and the Bloomberg South Carolina Stock Index rose 7.6 percent. However, residential construction permitting dropped 26.6 percent last month. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance rose by more than half, also countering the stock market gains. Last month, the Conference Board's national Leading Economic Index bumped upward 0.6 percent to reach a value of 124.1.

- Brandon Wilkerson

South Carolina Leading Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Commerce

## Housing Market Slows its Rapid Pace

The South Carolina housing market cooled off somewhat in October. The number of residential real estate closings fell 14.2 percent month-over-month to 5,540 homes sold. The median home sales price also fell 0.8 percent for the month to \$173,000, and residential building permits fell as well, by 26.6 percent. At the MSA level, median sales prices in Columbia rose 4.0 percent in Columbia and 4.7 percent in Florence in October, although other areas of the state experienced declines. However, the state's real estate indicators are still up when looked at year-to-date. Versus the same point in 2014, closings are up 13.2 percent, median sales price is up 6.3 percent, and foreclosures are down 1.9 percent. Construction employment mirrored these year-to-date figures, jumping 7.5 percent from October 2014.

The Research Division at the South Carolina Department of Commerce is a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary team of professionals dedicated to the economic development of South Carolina and the collection, analysis and dissemination of information to support that mission. The Research Division publishes reports and analyses for statewide constituents and proposals for companies considering South Carolina for investment. If you would like to receive Commerce's monthly Economic Outlook, e-mail [bwilkerson@SCcommerce.com](mailto:bwilkerson@SCcommerce.com).

## KEY S.C. INDICATORS

### Income

+1.1%

#### State Personal Income

increased to \$184.3 billion in the second quarter of 2015.

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

+7.6%

#### South Carolina Stock Index

rose 7.3 points in October, closing at 103.45 on the last trading day of the month.

Bloomberg

### Employment

+0.7%

#### Nonfarm Employment

increased by 13,300 non-seasonally adjusted jobs from the prior month.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+0.2%

#### Labor Force

increased by 5,491 to 2,255,471, seasonally-adjusted, in October.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-0.1%

#### Unemployment Rate

decreased 0.1 percentage points to 5.6 percent, seasonally-adjusted, for October.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-2.4%

#### Manufacturing Weekly Hours

decreased by 1.0 hours to 41.1 hours in October from 42.1 hours in September.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+3.8%

#### Available Online Job Postings

increased by 2,500 positions in October to a seasonally-adjusted 68,000 job postings.

The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index

### Real Estate

-0.8%

#### Single-Family Home Sales Price

decreased by \$1,460 to \$173,000 in October.

South Carolina Association of Realtors

-26.6%

#### Residential Building Permits

decreased by 820 permits from the previous month to 2,264 permits issued in October.

U.S. Census Bureau



## South Carolina Employment

*Non-Seasonally Adjusted Wage and Salary Employment*

South Carolina's total non-seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment grew by 13,300 net jobs to 2,030,100 in October, representing a 0.7 percent rise from September, and a better than 2.9 percent gain from one year ago. The Professional and Business Services sector, at +6,900, led all other sectors in monthly net gains.

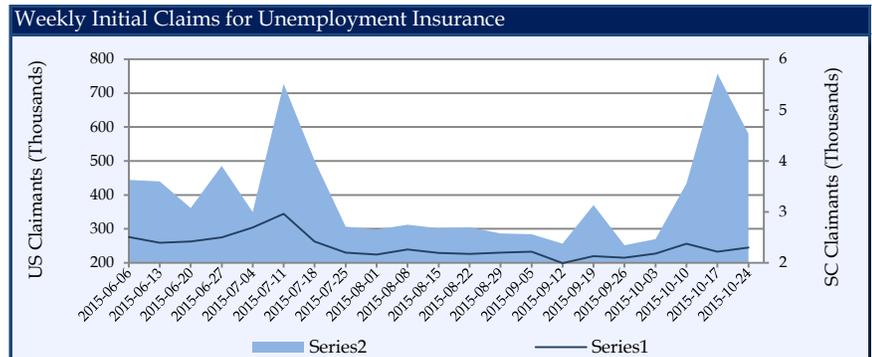
The month's highest losses came from the Leisure and Hospitality sector, which dropped 4,200 jobs as the tourism cycle waned. Construction saw modest growth, with +700 jobs in October. Year-over-year, the biggest gains went to Professional and Business Services (+16,400) and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+11,300).

Industry Sector	October 2015	Previous Month	Previous Year	% Change Month Ago	% Change Year Ago
<b>Goods Producing</b>	<b>324,900</b>	<b>323,200</b>	<b>319,600</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>1.66</b>
Natural Resources and Mining	3,700	3,700	3,900	0.00	-5.13
Construction	90,200	89,500	83,900	0.78	7.51
Manufacturing	231,000	230,000	231,800	0.43	-0.35
<b>Service Providing</b>	<b>1,705,200</b>	<b>1,693,600</b>	<b>1,653,100</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>3.15</b>
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	388,700	385,900	377,400	0.73	2.99
Information	26,500	26,400	26,500	0.38	0.00
Finance	94,300	95,400	96,700	-1.15	-2.48
Professional and Business Services	276,700	269,800	260,300	2.56	6.30
Educational and Health Services	240,000	235,900	229,200	1.74	4.71
Leisure and Hospitality	240,200	244,400	229,100	-1.72	4.85
Other Services	72,700	73,400	71,500	-0.95	1.68
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>1,664,000</b>	<b>1,654,400</b>	<b>1,610,300</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>3.33</b>
Government	366,100	362,400	362,400	1.02	1.02
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>2,030,100</b>	<b>2,016,800</b>	<b>1,972,700</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>2.91</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Weekly Unemployment Claims

The number of initial claims for Unemployment Insurance rose sharply in mid-October to 5,714, but began to level off to less than 4,000 by the final week. The average for the month was 4,046 weekly initial claims in South Carolina, a 55 percent jump from September and 31 percent higher than one year ago. All MSAs in the state reported an increase in claimants for October, with Columbia more than doubling its number (+139.5 percent). Continuing claims, however, rose only 0.9 percent on average, suggesting employee churn rather than large-scale attrition.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Average Hourly Earnings

These charts present the average hourly earnings of all employees in private industry, based on a monthly national survey of businesses. The data are not seasonally adjusted.



Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics



# South Carolina Real Estate

Last month, the number of building permits issued in South Carolina for new residential construction decreased 26.6 percent, but remained up 13.5 percent year-to-date compared to 2014. The median home sales price was similarly down 0.8 percent compared to September, but up 6.3 percent year-to-date versus 2014. Foreclosure activity rose 9.1 percent over the last 12 months, but shows a 1.9 percent reduction against the same period for 2014.

	Month	Current	Previous Year	% Change Year Ago	2015 YTD	2014 YTD	% Change YTD
Closings	October	5,540	5,863	-5.5%	61,424	54,238	13.2%
Median Sales Price*	October	\$173.0	\$160.5	7.8%	\$172.0	\$161.8	6.3%
Foreclosures	October	2,848	2,610	9.1%	23,054	23,500	-1.9%
Residential Building Permits -Total	October	2,264	2,606	-13.1%	26,414	23,263	13.5%
Residential Building Permits -Valuation*	October	\$471,695	\$505,879	-6.8%	\$5,195,370	\$4,496,813	15.5%

\*Thousands of US dollars. Source: S.C. Association of Realtors, RealtyTrac, U.S. Census

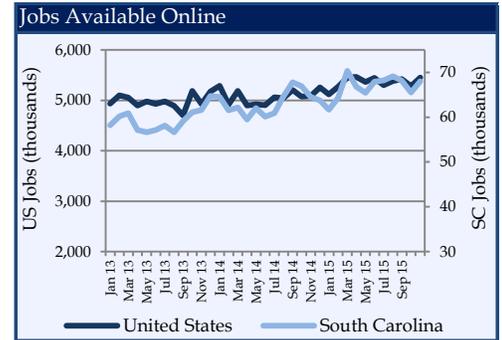
## Business Activity



Source: U.S. Census



Source: U.S. Department of Labor



Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue



\*Represents publicly-traded companies headquartered in SC.  
Source: Bloomberg

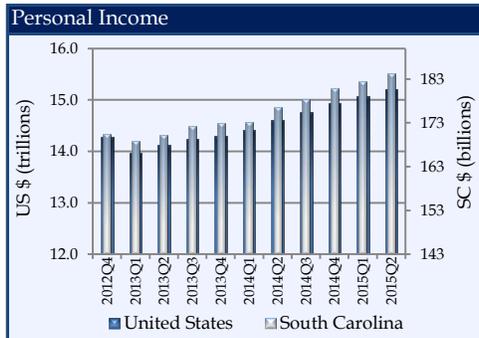


Source: U.S. Department of Labor

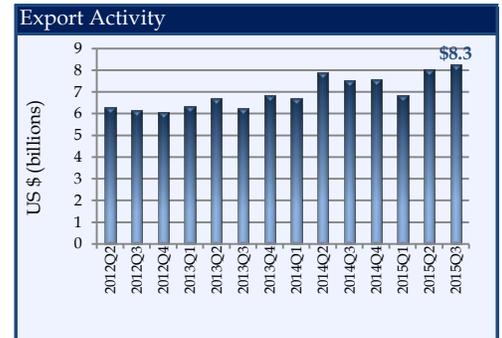
## Income and Output



\*Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units. Source: SC Ports Authority



Source: U.S. Census



Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census



# South Carolina Regional Update

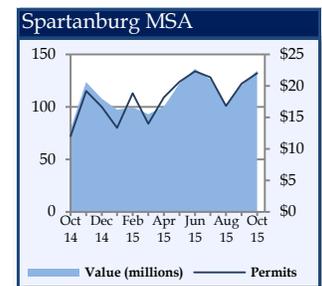
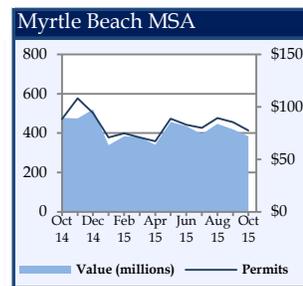
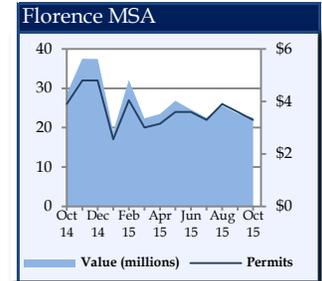
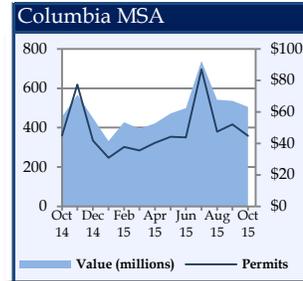
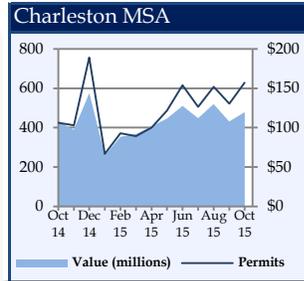
The South Carolina Regional Update provides a snapshot of the most recent economic figures for the six largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the state.

## Home Sales

MSA	Indicator	Oct 14	Oct 15
Charleston	Sales Volume	1,225	1,230
	Median Price (000's)	\$215	\$225
Columbia	Sales Volume	914	805
	Median Price (000's)	\$146	\$156
Florence	Sales Volume	157	146
	Median Price (000's)	\$123	\$135
Greenville	Sales Volume	982	930
	Median Price (000's)	\$162	\$168
Myrtle Beach	Sales Volume	926	964
	Median Price (000's)	\$158	\$163
Spartanburg	Sales Volume	381	321
	Median Price (000's)	\$121	\$133
South Carolina	Sales Volume	5,863	5,540
	Median Price (000's)	\$160.5	\$173.0

Source: S.C. Association of Realtors

## Building Permits



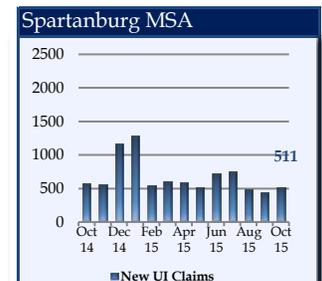
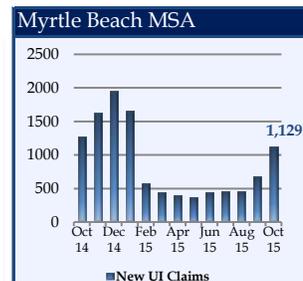
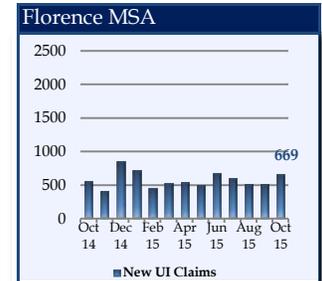
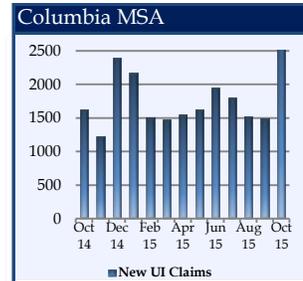
Source: U.S. Census

## Employment

MSA	Indicator	Sep 15	Oct 15
Charleston	Employment (000's)	339.5	339.9
	Unemployment Rate	5.1	5.0
Columbia	Employment (000's)	371.1	373.3
	Unemployment Rate	5.5	5.5
Florence	Employment (000's)	87.7	87.4
	Unemployment Rate	6.6	6.8
Greenville	Employment (000's)	391.4	394.7
	Unemployment Rate	5.2	5.0
Myrtle Beach	Employment (000's)	174.8	170.8
	Unemployment Rate	6.2	6.5
Spartanburg	Employment (000's)	141.5	142.3
	Unemployment Rate	5.7	5.5
South Carolina	Employment (000's)	2,121.0	2,128.9
	Unemployment Rate	5.7	5.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (MSA figures not seasonally adjusted)

## Unemployment Insurance Claims



Source: SCDOC analysis of SCDEW data

## Policom Corporation 2015 Economic Strength Rankings of 381 Metropolitan Areas



Source: Policom Corporation, November 2015