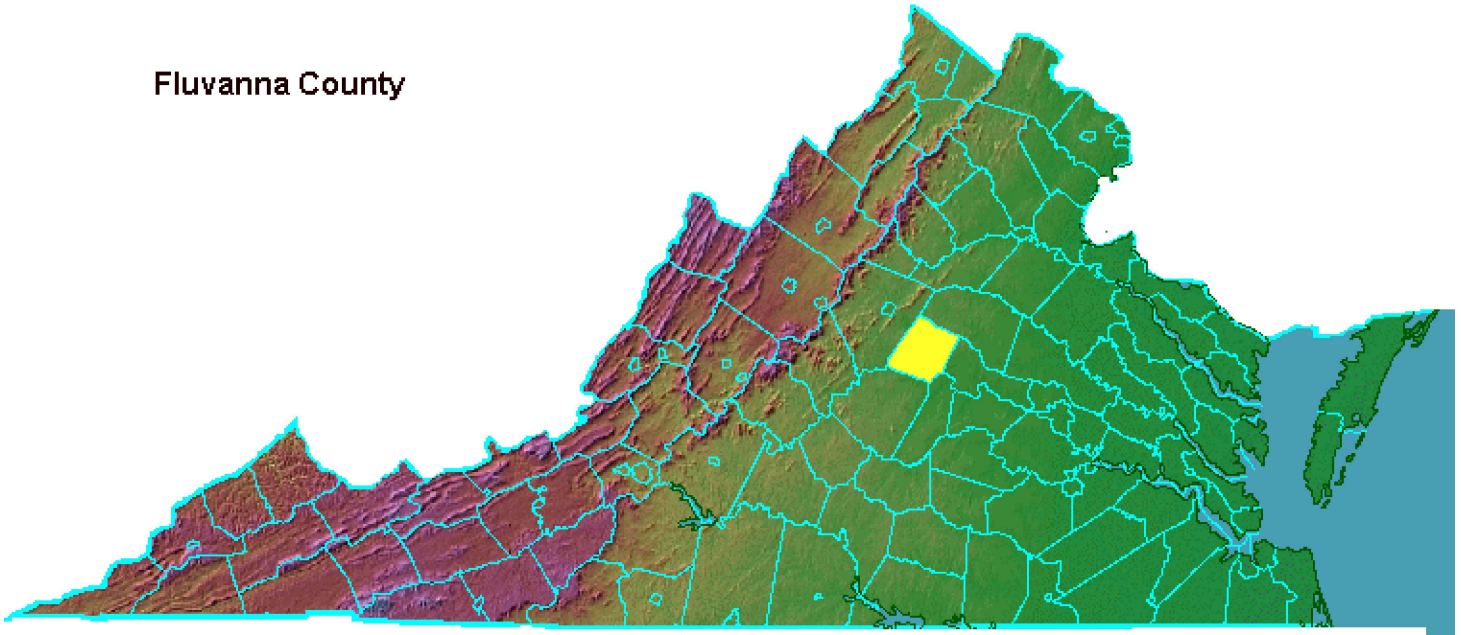


## Fluvanna County

### Fluvanna County



Columbia was established as a town in Fluvanna County in 1788, benefiting from its location at the confluence of the Rivanna and James rivers. Business grew when the James River and Kanawha Canal was built on the north side of the river through the town.

The replacement of the canal with the railroad after the Civil War triggered a steady decline in commerce through Columbia. Three "hundred year floods" in 1969 (Hurricane Camille), 1972 (Hurricane Agnes), and 1985 (Hurricane Juan) wiped out or damaged much of the town. The tax base disappeared, and by 2014 there was only one commercial store left within the town boundaries. The few people that bought a home in the town joked that they were still unpacking the moving boxes when asked if they wanted to serve as mayor.

In 2015, the 34 residents eligible to vote chose to abolish the town government and become an unincorporated part of the county. 18 voted to abandon the status as a town; only one opposed that choice. Since there were six members on the town council plus a mayor, current town officials were a high percentage of the population that voted to abolish those seven jobs.

If Columbia had chosen to remain a separate jurisdiction, residents would have continued to pay an extra tax. The town budget at the time of dissolution was only \$4,000/year, primarily to pay for street lights and insurance on the town hall; no town officials received a salary. Costs were expected to increase to fund an update of town ordinances and to ensure compliance with separate town zoning. Converting Columbia from a town to an unincorporated place transferred all planning and zoning responsibilities to Fluvanna County.<sup>1</sup>



the Town of Columbia was located at the southeastern corner of Fluvanna County

Source: ESRI, [ArcGIS Online](https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/online)





by 2016, several structures in Columbia were dilapidated



by 2016, several structures in Columbia were dilapidated





St. John's Episcopal Church in Columbia





the stone wall of St. John's Episcopal Church in Columbia was constructed in 1912, using stones moved from the James River and Kanawha Canal and the turntable of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad



Memorial Baptist Church in Columbia





Memorial Baptist Church in Columbia





St. Joseph's Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel, in Columbia





Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel, in Columbia





Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel, in Columbia





US Post Office in Columbia



housing in Columbia





Columbia



James River, looking upstream from bridge at Columbia





James River, looking downstream from bridge at Columbia





the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development sought to revitalize Columbia

## Links

- [Fluvanna County](#)
- [Census Bureau Profile - Fluvanna County](#)
- [Charlottesville Area Community Foundation](#)
- Economic development partnership: [Thomas Jefferson Partnership - Greater Charlottesville](#)
- [Fluvanna County Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Fluvanna Heritage](#)
- [Fluvanna Online](#)
- [Fork Union Village Project](#)
- [Land Trust of Virginia](#)
  - [agriculture and the county](#)
- Media
  - [Daily Progress](#)
  - [Fluvanna Review](#)
- Parks/Forests/Lakes/Refuges
  - [Fluvanna Ruritan](#)
  - [Hardware River Wildlife Management Area](#)



- Planning District Commission: [Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission](#)
- [Rivanna Conservation Society](#)
- Soil and Water Conservation District: [Thomas Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District](#)
- Towns:
  - Columbia
  - [Scottsville](#) (also a "child" of Albemarle County, according to the [Commission on Local Government](#))
- [VAGenWeb - Fluvanna County](#) (genealogy/history)
- [Virginia Department of Forestry - Fluvanna County](#)
- [Virginia Economic Development - Fluvanna County](#)
- [Virginia Employment Commission - Fluvanna County](#)
- [Virginia Tourism Corporation - Central Virginia](#)

## References

1. "Columbia residents vote 18-1 to do away with town," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, March 17, 2015, [http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/article\\_3db2ebfa-fdbe-571d-9a87-9df333fe5449.html](http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/article_3db2ebfa-fdbe-571d-9a87-9df333fe5449.html); "Fluvanna town may give up the ghost," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, July 31, 2014, [http://www.richmond.com/news/local/central-virginia/article\\_2b2918c3-1721-50dc-9842-95c123e487a2.html](http://www.richmond.com/news/local/central-virginia/article_2b2918c3-1721-50dc-9842-95c123e487a2.html) (last checked March 18, 2015)

---

[Existing Virginia Counties](#)  
[Virginia Places](#)