



State of the County Address

February 15, 2011

Charleston County Council

Since I was elected the Charleston County Council Chairman in January of 2009, I have enjoyed the opportunity to hold a leadership position on Council in order to serve the citizens of this great County.

All nine of your County Council members are elected with the responsibility of providing quality services to citizens, and we, like the rest of the country, continue to be challenged to do so with fewer and fewer available dollars.

Entering into 2011, we have reflected upon our accomplishments in 2010, are looking for areas where we can make improvements, and are going forward with the attitude that we are a team that can make it through these extremely tough economic times. We did this in 2010, and we will strive to do this again in 2011.

I think it's important to share with you just a few of Charleston County Government's major highlights from 2010:

- Charleston County became a world-class economic destination when Boeing selected us for their 787 assembly production line.
- Several major road projects funded by the Transportation Sales Tax were either started or finished during 2010, such as the Folly Road and Maybank Highway Intersection Improvements Project, the Glenn McConnell Parkway/I-526 Improvement Project, the Bee Street and Courtenay Drive Improvement Project, and the Johnnie Dodds Boulevard Improvements Project.
- The Charleston County Detention Center expansion was completed in the spring of 2010, increasing inmate capacity. A ceremony was held in November 2010 renaming the facility the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center.
- The County also maintained its strong triple-A bond rating in 2010. Our rainy day funds, adopted fund balance policies, and five-year financial forecasts were, and still are, all signs of solid fiscal management.

The economy continues to present challenges for everyone. In the midst of these economic challenges, the County prepared the Fiscal Year 2011 budget (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). Planned expenditures for all funds total \$356.8 million. This is a \$17.3 million decrease from the previous year, reflecting Council's decision to terminate the waste-to-energy facility, commonly known as the incinerator, contract in January of 2010. In addition, the County phased out some less critical services and reduced the frequency of others. A total of 36 positions were eliminated through attrition, however, there were no mandatory furloughs or layoffs affecting our staff, which helps the overall prosperity of the Lowcountry.

As citizens continue to feel the effects of the national recession, Charleston County Council was diligent in their efforts to limit the financial impact on taxpayers by approving the Fiscal Year 2011 budget without raising the millage rate. In addition, Council was able to give homeowners a break on their 2010 tax bills by providing a one-time \$25 credit that was subtracted from the annual \$99 solid waste fee.

The financial challenges will continue throughout 2011 and as we begin working on our Fiscal Year 2012 budget this spring. But, we will continue to work with County staff and our elected and appointed officials to do everything possible to streamline our efforts and ensure that County services are maintained and our financial standings hold strong. This is the promise we make to the citizens of Charleston County.

Teddie E. Pryor, Sr., Charleston County Council Chairman