

Charleston County, SC

A Citizens Financial Report
FY 2019



The Holy City

“Best City in the
World”

- Travel + Leisure
2016

“Best City in the
U.S.”

- Travel + Leisure
2013-2019

“Number One Small
City in the U.S.”

- Conde Nast
Traveler eight
consecutive years.

Charleston County

To the Citizens of Charleston County

As management of Charleston County, South Carolina, we offer Charleston County’s Popular Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. This report is written to communicate to its readers an understanding of the County’s financial condition in a simple, transparent manner. The information is derived from the County’s CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report) that was audited by Scott & Company LLC.

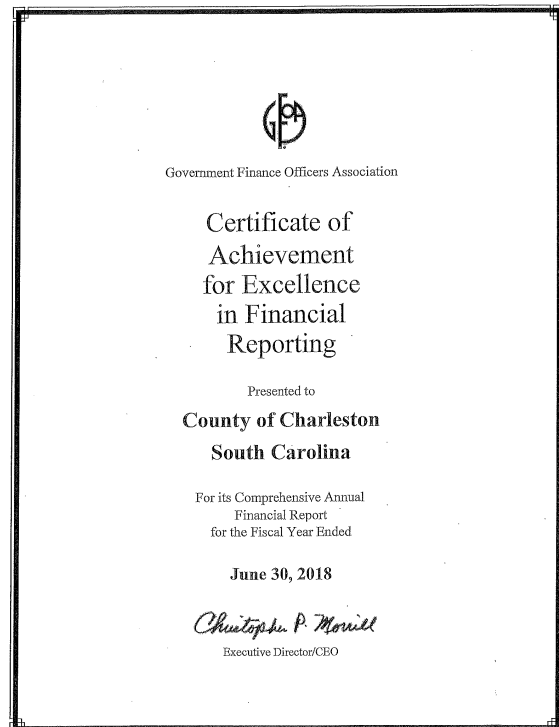
We are pleased to inform citizens that Charleston County has received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Excellence in Financial Reporting and the Distinguished Budget Presentation award for 30 and 29 years consecutively. Charleston County through hard work and financial discipline maintains the highest bond rating (AAA) with all three financial rating agencies. This consistency in financial discipline benefits the citizens of Charleston County in lower taxes and the government in better interest rates when borrowing money for capital projects.

This report includes the highlights of the County’s finances over the past fiscal year 2019. This report displays where the money comes from for operations and where the money goes when carrying out the mission of the County. Demographic, economic, and performance information is included with the financial highlights to be helpful and informative to our citizens. For the full CAFR and other financial reports, please visit the County’s website at <https://www.charlestoncounty.org/financial-reports.php>

Sincerely,
Corine Altenhein, Chief Financial Officer

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Charleston County at Glance



Charleston County is located on the southeastern coast of South Carolina. It encompasses approximately 1,358 square miles of land, marshes, rivers and wetlands with a coastline that stretches nearly 100 miles along the Atlantic Coast.

The Government comprises 45 departments and offices. A full-time staff of approximately 2,600 serves the citizens of Charleston County. Charleston County also includes the

municipalities of the City of Charleston, City of Folly Beach, City of Isle of Palms, City of North Charleston, Town of Awendaw, Town of Hollywood, Town of James Island, Town of Kiawah Island, Town of Lincolnville, Town of Mt. Pleasant, Town of Seabrook Island, and Town of Sullivan's Island. Charleston County has a wide range of industry including shipping tourism and manufacturing.

Charleston's flat coastline, vast tidal areas and natural oyster reefs, combined with a lengthy spawning season, make the perfect habitat for growing abundant clusters of oysters.

- Discover South Carolina

Charleston's Tourism

7.3 Million Visitors in 2018

6% Increase since 2017



The Angel Oak Tree is thought to be one of the oldest living things in the Country. It's estimated to be 400-500 years old, stands 66.5 feet tall, and measures nearly 29 feet in circumference. The tree and land around it is now protected, thanks in part the more than five million dollars in Charleston County Greenbelt funds. Angel Oak is free to visitors and a must see local and tourist attraction.

Charleston County at Glance

Population	405,905
Median Age	37.2
High School Graduate +	89.60%
Bachelor's Degree +	33.40%
Unemployment	2.9%

Numbers are from the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

Built in 1767 at the southern entrance to Charleston, the original Morris Island Lighthouse was destroyed during the Civil War. The new tower, built in 1876, stands 161 ft. with 201 steps leading to its top. The beacon was extinguished in 1962.

- Discover South Carolina



<u>Top 10 Employers</u>	<u>Employees</u>
1. Joint Base Charleston	20,000
2. Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)	13,000
3. Boeing Charleston	7,000
4. Charleston Co. School District	6,500
5. Roper St. Francis Healthcare	5,500
6. Charleston County Government	2,600
7. Walmart	2,300
8. College of Charleston	2,000
9. City of Charleston	1,700
10. Kiawah Island Golf Resort	1,500

Charleston County Council

Charleston County Council serves as the legislative, policy-making body of county government through the adoption of ordinances and resolutions. Council members represent nine single member districts, and each January, the members elect a chairman and vice chairman to represent Council for that calendar year. Council annually approves budgets for the County's general fund, environmental management fund and several special revenue funds. Council also has the budgetary oversight of several special purpose

districts that provide services within Charleston County. Charleston County Operates under the Council-Administrator form of government. The administrator is hired by Council to serve as the County's chief administrator officer. In addition to carrying out the directives and policies of Council, the administrator oversees the day-to-day operations of county government.



Top: A. Victor Rawl, District 6, Jenny Costa Honeycutt, District 9, Teddie E. Pryor, Sr., District 5, Dickie Schweers, District 2, Henry Darby, District 4, Herbert Ravenel Sass III, Vice-Chairman District 1, Brantley Moody, District 7

Bottom: Joe Dawson, Attorney, Kristen Salisbury, Clerk of Council, J. Elliott Summey, Chairman District 3, Jennifer Miller, Administrator

Elected Officials



Treasurer
Mary Tinkler



Auditor
Peter J.
Tecklenberg



Register of
Deeds
Michael Miller



Clerk of Court
Julie
Armstrong



Solicitor
Scarlett Wilson



Sheriff
Al Cannon



Probate Judge
Irvin Condon



Coroner
Rae Wooten



Charleston County's Historic Courthouse was first built in 1753 as the provincial capitol for the colony of South Carolina. The Statehouse was part of the original Civic Square planned for in the Grand Modell of Charles Town, now known as "Four Corners of the Law," at the central intersection of Broad and Meeting Streets.

- National Park Service

Appointed Officials



Board of
Elections
Joe Debney



Director of
Veterans Affairs
David LeBlanc



Master-In-
Equity
Mikell
Scarborough



Chief Magistrate
Leroy Linen



Library
Director
Angela Craig

Charleston County Services

Emergency Medical Services

59,637

Calls for service

8:53 Minutes

Average Response Time



Consolidated 9-1-1 Center

1,006,661

Calls for service

Environmental Management

Residential recycling, landfill management, nine staffed convenience center drop off locations. Public outreach and education.



Mosquito Control

Public outreach and education



Procurement

Small Business Enterprise Programs



Charleston County's Budget

Highlights

- Total Operating Budget: \$244 Million
- \$88,000 Net Position Increase
- 9.5% Decrease in Expenses
- No Net Increase in Taxes for Homeowners



9

Number of years Charleston County has maintained the highest financial rating a government can achieve from the financial rating agencies.

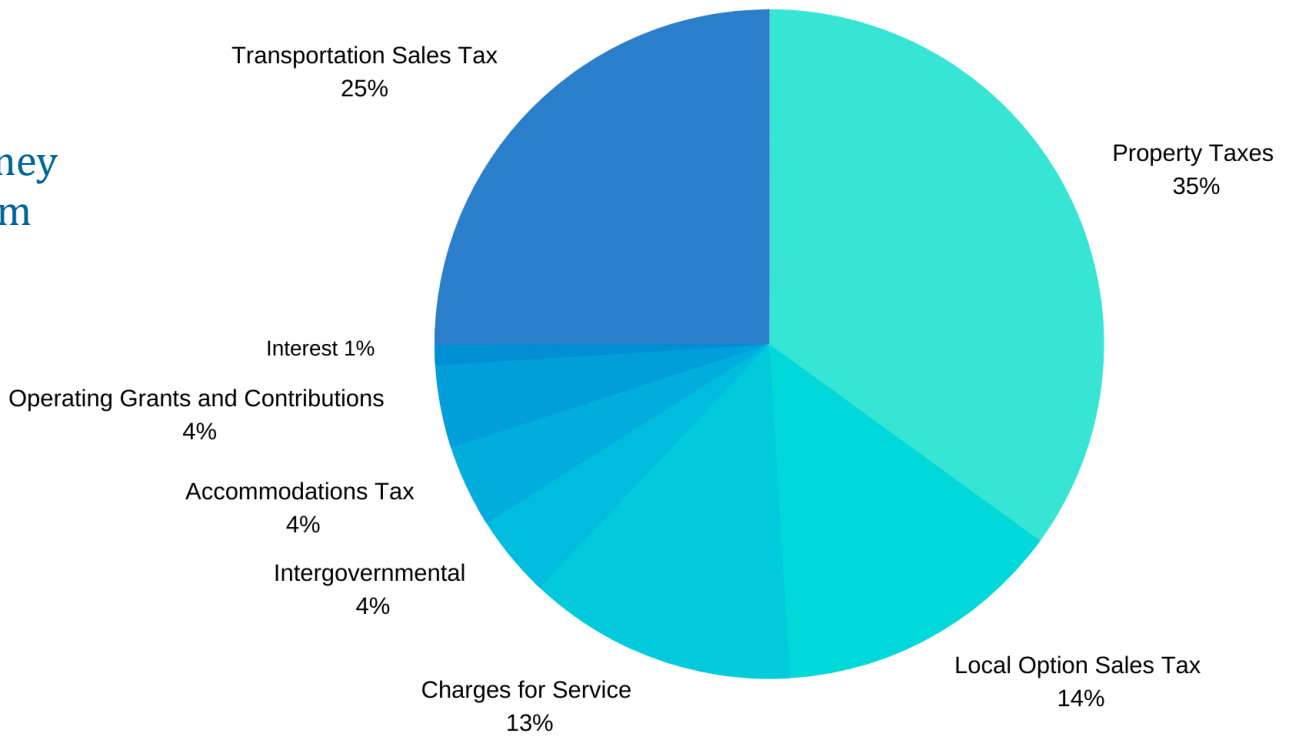
Charleston County Government is committed to maintaining an excellent level of service while ensuring financial health. The budget follows policy which includes keeping up with the rainy day fund and prudent fund balance levels, matching recurring costs with recurring revenue, and performing five-year financial forecasts for the County's major funds.



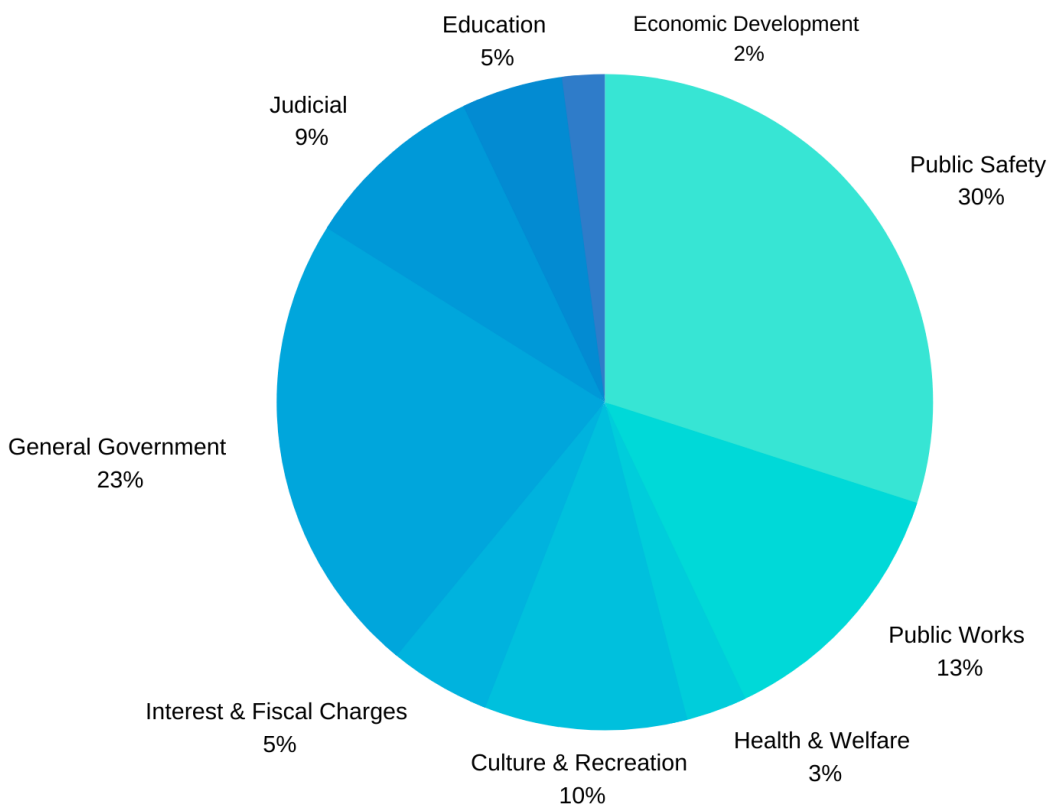
Waterfront Park is an eight-acre park along approximately one-half mile of the Cooper River. The park received the 2007 Landmark Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Actual 2019 Results / Governmental Activities

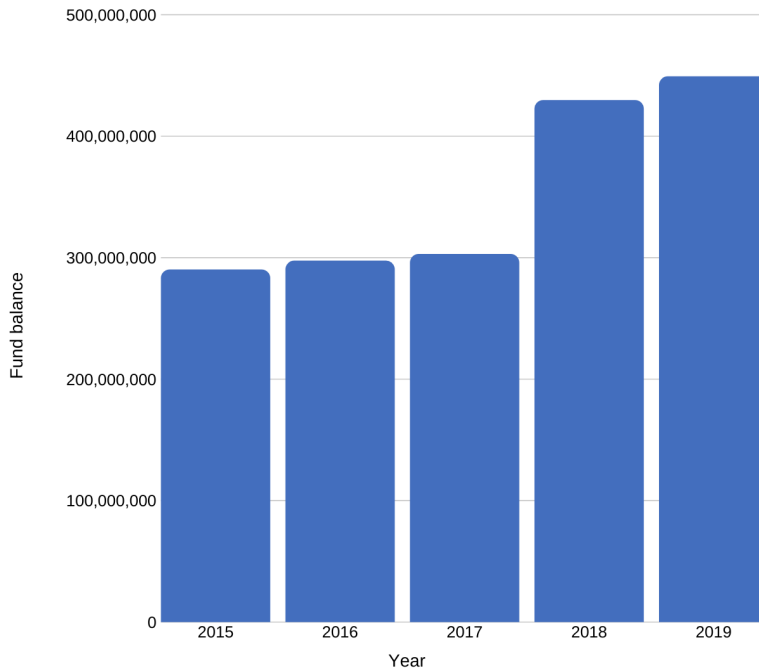
Where Money Comes From



Where Taxpayer Dollars Go



Charleston County's Fund Balances



Charleston County's Advance Property Tax Installment Plan

In 2019, Charleston County Council approved a tax installment plan allowing taxpayers who do not hold a mortgage in escrow to pay property in bimonthly installments instead of one lump sum at the end of the year. The goal of this program is to lessen the burden of paying taxes, especially for those on a fixed income. 965 Charleston County taxpayers took advantage of this program.

For more than 300 years, people in Charleston have been weaving baskets using locally-harvested bulrush, a strong yet supple marshgrass that thrives in the sandy soil of Lowcountry. Originally used as winnowing fans to separate the rice seed from its chaff, sweetgrass baskets are regarded among the nation's most prized cultural souvenirs.



Awards and Initiatives

Charleston County signed a contract with Citibot, becoming the first county in the nation to launch the interactive text messaging and customer service system for civic engagement with government. Citibot allows citizens to report a problem, ask a question, or send a message. Citibot then responds in real time.



Charleston County Emergency Management became the only County in the state to earn accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program.

Charleston County EMS has received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifetime EMS Gold Plus Award for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks.



The "Launch with NASA" Program won the South Carolina Association of Counties Barrett Lawrimore Award, NACo Achievement Award for innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for citizens.

Charleston County Economic Development won a Gold Excellence in Economic Development Award for its Business Concierge Program. The program was recognized in the category of Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program of 3 Years or more of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).



American Public Works Association Project of the Year award: Folly and Camp Road Intersection Improvement Project.

Capital Improvements Projects



New Libraries

- In June, Charleston County opened one of five new libraries
- Construction has begun on three of four additional new libraries
- Funding came from a \$108.5 million referendum approved by voters 2012.

New Fire Station

- \$2.4 million facility in Awendaw
- 2.5 acres and 3,983 sq. ft. building
- \$2,388,770 million project



Major Transportation Projects

Transportation

Maybank Highway
phase II Widening

Folly and Camp
Road Widening

Six Transportation
Sales Tax Projects

Eight County
Transportation
Committee
Projects

177 Miles of roads
resurfaced



Folly at Camp Road



Maybank Highway



When the Arthur Ravenel Bridge opened in 2005, it became the longest cable-stayed bridge in North America and the tallest structure in South Carolina. The bridge connects downtown Charleston to Mt. Pleasant.



Charleston County Mission

Charleston County Government is proud to promote and protect the quality of life in Charleston County by delivering services of value to the community.

Charleston County Citizens can find us on:



10,180 Followers



1,576 Followers



18,700 Followers



Charlestoncounty.org