

**BLACK LIBERATION FUND AND
ACLU SOUTH CAROLINA PRESENT:**

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT



ACLU
South Carolina

Overview

Introduction: Who We Are

Section 1: How does City Government Work?

- Mayor, City Council, Committees, Commissions & Boards
- Policy Making Process
 - How do cities make laws?
 - Ordinance vs. Resolution
- Budgeting Process
 - Where does the money come from? Where does it go?
 - Who holds the power?
 - Step by Step

Section 2: Engaging with City Government

- When and where are meetings?
 - Public comments
- Contact your locally elected officials

Section 3: Zooming Out

- State Government
 - Branches, Law Enforcement , Attorney General & Solicitors
- County Government
 - Council, Committees, Sheriff

Introduction

ACLU of South Carolina

The ACLU of South Carolina was founded more than 50 years ago to advance civil liberties in communities across our state through public education, legislative advocacy, litigation, and community organizing.

Black Liberation Fund

Black Liberation Fund serves as caregivers to those seeking liberation after an arrest. They support protesters in Charleston and surrounding areas by bailing out protesters, connecting to legal support + resources.

Civic Engagement Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide the tools to effectively engage with our various levels of government because we all deserve to be heard.

The first iteration of this toolkit focuses on policy and budget priorities at the city level. Our hope is that residents in the City of Charleston, and beyond, will be heard and considered when elected city leaders decide on future budgets and public policies.

City Government

City government is also known as local or municipal government and is the smallest form of government in our state. The laws created by city government, in most cases by the mayor and city council, shape our day to day lives. City-level policy making is a space where residents can have great impact. There are 271 cities and towns in South Carolina with Columbia and Charleston as the two largest cities.

1

There are a few different forms of local government such as Council and City Manager, Mayor-Council, Council, and Town Meeting. Mayor-Council is the most popular form of government and what we typically see in South Carolina.

2

Charleston has a mayor-council form of government, which means that the mayor and city council are separately elected. The mayor is seen as the “executive office” and has major administrative and budgetary powers. Councilmembers serve as a legislative branch and represent residents of specific districts within city limits. The mayor and city council members are not affiliated with political parties, but their approaches to city government can still differ greatly.

2

City Government

Charleston City Mayor John Tecklenburg ³

City Council Members ⁴

District 1: Marie Delcioppo

District 2: Kevin Shealy

District 3: Jason Sakran

District 4: Robert M. Mitchell

District 5: Karl L. Brady, Jr.

District 6: William Dudley Gregorie

District 7: Perry K. Waring

District 8: Michael S. Seekings

District 9: A. Peter Shahid, Jr.

District 10: arry Griffin

District 11- Ross A. Appel

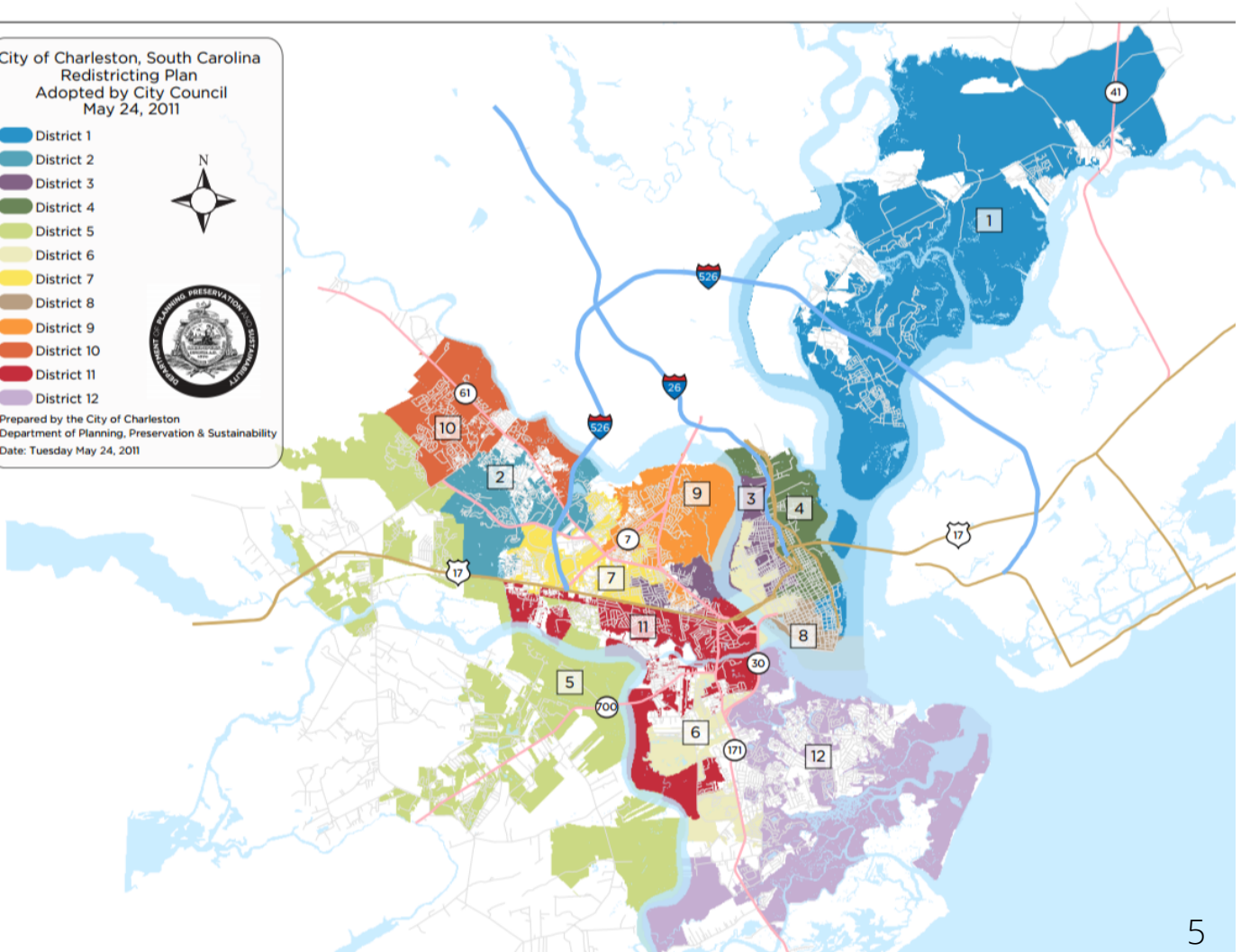
District 12 - Carol Jackson

City of Charleston, South Carolina
Redistricting Plan
Adopted by City Council
May 24, 2011

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5
- District 6
- District 7
- District 8
- District 9
- District 10
- District 11
- District 12



Prepared by the City of Charleston
Department of Planning, Preservation & Sustainability
Date: Tuesday May 24, 2011



Committees, Commissions & Boards

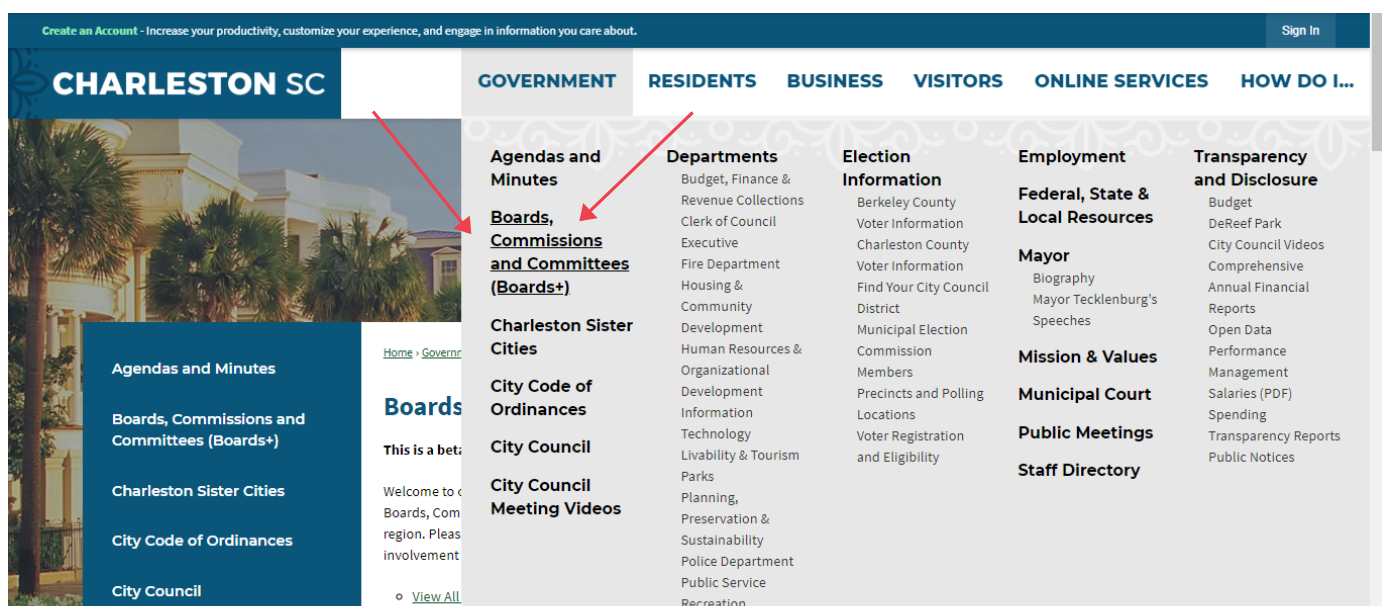
Similar to state and county government, there are select groups of people who work on specific projects, initiatives, and issues that affect the quality of life in Charleston.

Committees and subcommittees consist of members of city council and are more of an internal working group.

Subcommittees will be created to work on very specific issues. It's important to see what committees your council member serves. This can give insight to what issues they are focusing on and how you can effectively engage them with your advocacy.

Below, we've highlighted a few committees that are especially important to pay attention to. A full list of committees, commissions, boards and their vacancies is linked [here](#).

6



What to pay attention to:

Ways and Means Committee: This committee exercises general oversight over how the city continues to collect revenue and spend money. Every project, ordinance, program or initiative moves through this committee for approval.

Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee: This committee is composed of a select group of council members during the budgeting season. They hear from and work with city departments and divisions on what their fiscal needs are for the upcoming year. This committee holds public hearings on the budget to hear from residents of Charleston. For more information on continuing the “Budgeting Process.”

Public Safety Committee: This committee is made of the mayor and four council members. The focus of this committee is on different aspects of public safety such as the fire department, the police department, crime, municipal court, public health, and more.

Citizen Police Advisory Council: This is a council composed of residents from various backgrounds and serves as a conduit between the public and the Charleston Police Department. The purpose is to “foster communication and improve relations and communication.” This council does not have any procedural power over the police department beyond providing recommendations.

Special Commission on Equity, Inclusion, and Racial Reconciliation: The purpose of this commission is to review the city's policies, practices, budget and other matters that relate to racism and racial inequities. Members will work on creating recommendations on how the city can promote racial justice and equity. ⁶

Policy Making Process

How do cities make laws?

While we typically think of the creation of laws in federal and state government, local governments create laws as well. Counties and cities both create laws, also known as ordinances and resolutions for their jurisdictions. These laws can cover a wide range of issues from building regulations to storm water management to local gun laws.

Below is the general process to create a local ordinance:

- 1) Every policy begins with an idea
 - a) Ideas can come from a number of sources
 - i) A politicians initiatives
 - ii) Private citizen concerns
 - iii) In response to federal or state responses
 - iv) Previous council or committee meetings
- 2) An idea is then drafted into either an ordinance or resolution. This proposed ordinance or resolution can be introduced to the council either by a council member, a committee, commission or board.
- 3) The proposed law will then go to a special committee, commission or board based on the subject matter. This entity will research, discuss, possibly take in public comment, and vote on the proposed ordinance or resolution.

4) If the proposal passes through the specialized committee process it then heads to full city council and will be read to city council. Depending on the legislation, the council can have public hearings on specific issues. This is especially common throughout the budgeting process.

5) Once all public comment has been heard and the council members have exhausted discussion there will be a vote on legislation. If the ordinance is approved, it will be sent to the Mayor for final signature and will be adopted to the city code of laws. Implementation of the ordinance depends on specifics of the legislation and which department it falls under.

Resolution vs. Ordinance- What's the difference?

A local ordinance is the strongest form of policy at the municipal level. Ordinances can also be used when adopting a rule or policy with broad applicability, significant impact and an extended duration. An example of a policy passed as an ordinance that is not permanently codified into law is a mask requirement during COVID-19. Ordinances are enforceable and can create or amend current city law. In Charleston, ordinances can be recommended by boards, commissions, committees, and residents, but they can only be passed by the city council. The procedure for passing an ordinance in SC requires that it be introduced in writing in the format required for final adoption and that it have at least two readings on two separate days with at least six days between each reading.

A resolution is a non-binding expression of opinion, will, or intent of a municipal council. Resolutions are NOT laws. Resolutions can be adopted through a single vote by a city council.

Click [here](#) for more information about South Carolina rules and procedures for ordinances and resolutions.

The Budget Process

What is a city budget?

A budget is a management and planning tool that weighs policy priorities against available public resources. The city will speculate how much they will spend on expenditures and what revenue will come in. This is an annual process. Throughout the year, the city monitors the budget and how they are spending their revenues.

What is the process?

The Mayor, City Council, City staff and the public are involved in the budgeting process. This process begins in May with initial planning and ends in December when the Mayor and City Council have voted to approve a version of the budget.

Where does the money come from?

The General Fund is a term used throughout the city budget and is the main revenue fund of the city. The General Fund's primary revenue comes from various city taxes, with property taxes making up the largest line item.

There are additional funds that feed into the city called Enterprise funds and Special Revenue funds. Enterprise funds are services provided by the city government that are maintained by the fees collected. Special Revenue funds are broken down into: Hospitality Fee Fund, Municipal Accommodations Tax Fund, State Accommodations Tax Fund, and Stormwater Utility Fee Fund. Special Revenue funds also have a specific revenue source and can only be spent on certain projects that are decided on by state law and city ordinances. For example, the stormwater fund can only spend money on services related to stormwater management.

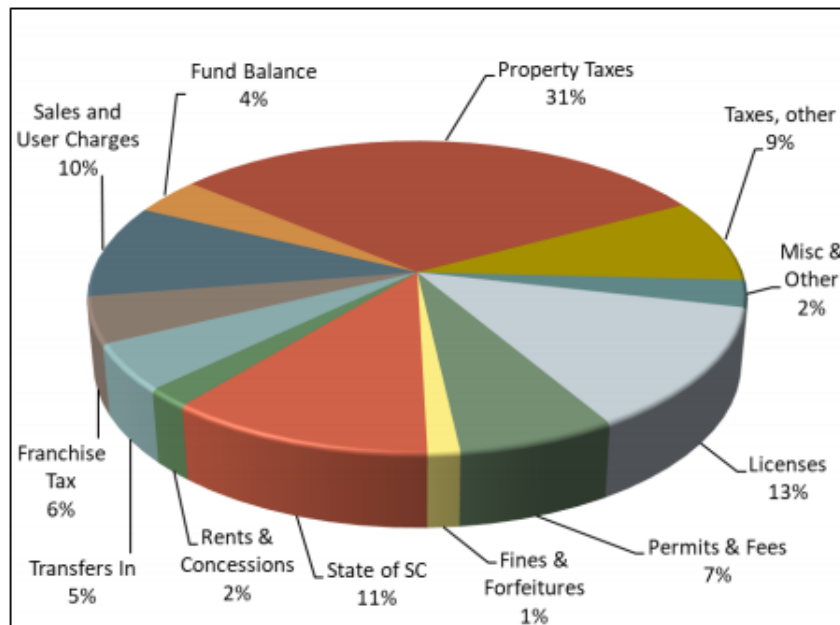
The Budget Process

9

Total revenue estimate for FY 2020: \$289,917,200*

*With COVID-19 impacting many different facets of society, the City of Charleston is estimating a budget shortfall of \$42 million with \$12 million lost in parking revenue and \$19.2 million from the lack of tourism.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM...



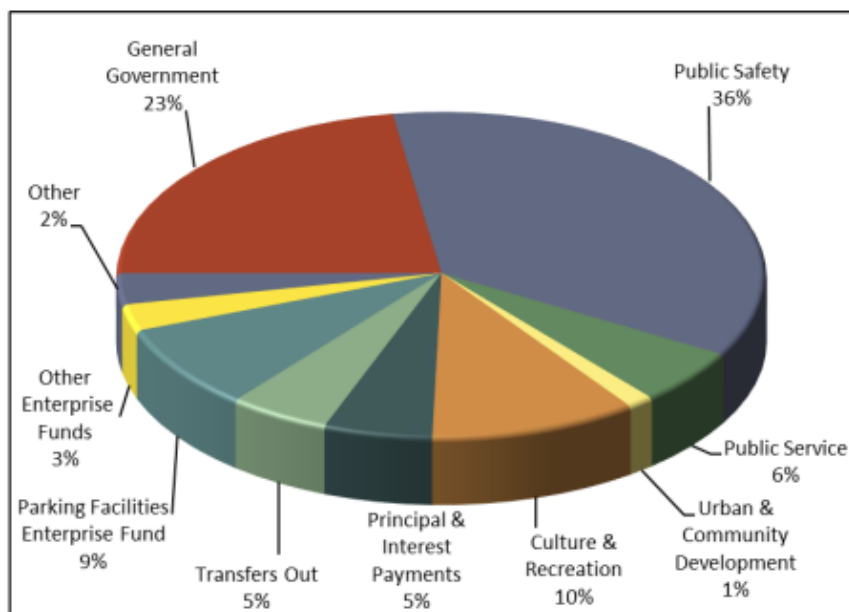
2020 Revenue Summary - All Funds	
Property Taxes	89,856,210
Taxes, other	25,200,000
Miscellaneous & Other	8,141,107
Licenses	37,231,900
Permits & Fees	19,612,036
Fines & Forfeitures	3,970,000
State of SC	32,950,865
Rents & Concessions	5,700,947
Transfers In	14,008,382
Franchise Tax	13,947,000
Sales and User Charges	27,986,343
Fund Balance	11,312,410
Total Revenues & Other Fin Sources	289,917,200

The Budget Process

Where does the money go?

The city budget is more than just a place where we can see how money flows in and out of our local government. It is inherently tied with the city's policy priorities, it is a plan that shapes both the short term and long term investments (or lack thereof) in our community.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES...



2020 Expenditure Summary - All Funds	
General Government	65,417,935
Public Safety	103,637,388
Public Service	15,948,931
Urban & Community Development	3,844,927
Culture & Recreation	29,888,623
Principal & Interest Payments	15,651,022
Transfers Out	14,625,885
Parking Facilities Enterprise Fund	24,266,389
Other Enterprise Funds	7,620,897
Other	9,015,203
Total Expenditures & Expenses	289,917,200

Who are the players?

Mayor's Role: The Mayor is the top executive of city government. Here is how the mayor is involved in the budgeting process:

- The Mayor works with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), City Council, and city department staff, to review policy priorities, goals, areas for success and potential challenges in the upcoming fiscal year. Together they come up with a proposed budget or a first draft.
- The Mayor approves the first draft of the budget before it is sent to City Council and to the public.
- The Mayor's office works with other city departments to implement the adopted annual budget. They can add modifications and adjustments to the budget throughout the fiscal year.

City Council's Role: The City Council is the legislative body of City Government and has a lot of power within the budgeting process. The City Council is responsible for:

- Participating in workshops during the first stage of the budgeting process where they review the future landscape, trends and goals of the upcoming fiscal year.
- The Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee is a smaller group consisting of the Mayor and five Council members. The city departments and divisions submit their requests to the Budget and Management Division, which in turn passes the requests to the committee.
 - Members for FY 2021: Dudley Gregorie, Carol Jackson, Ross Appel, Peter Shade, and Keith Waring.
- Voting on the proposed budget in late fall. Each councilmember and the mayor has one vote.

Who are the players?

Chief Financial Officer: The CFO works with the Mayor and City Council to review the budget of the previous year and the upcoming fiscal year. They consolidate the requests from different city departments to present to and work with the Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee.

The CFO works within the Department of Budget, Finance, and Revenue Collection. This department is responsible for the internal administration of the following: budget and management, finance and accounting, management of the city's properties, process and service improvements city wide, procurement, revenue forecasting and collections, and safety management citywide.

9

Department Heads: The city has 15 different departments that serve a variety of functions. Everything from Housing & Community Development to Livability & Tourism to Police.

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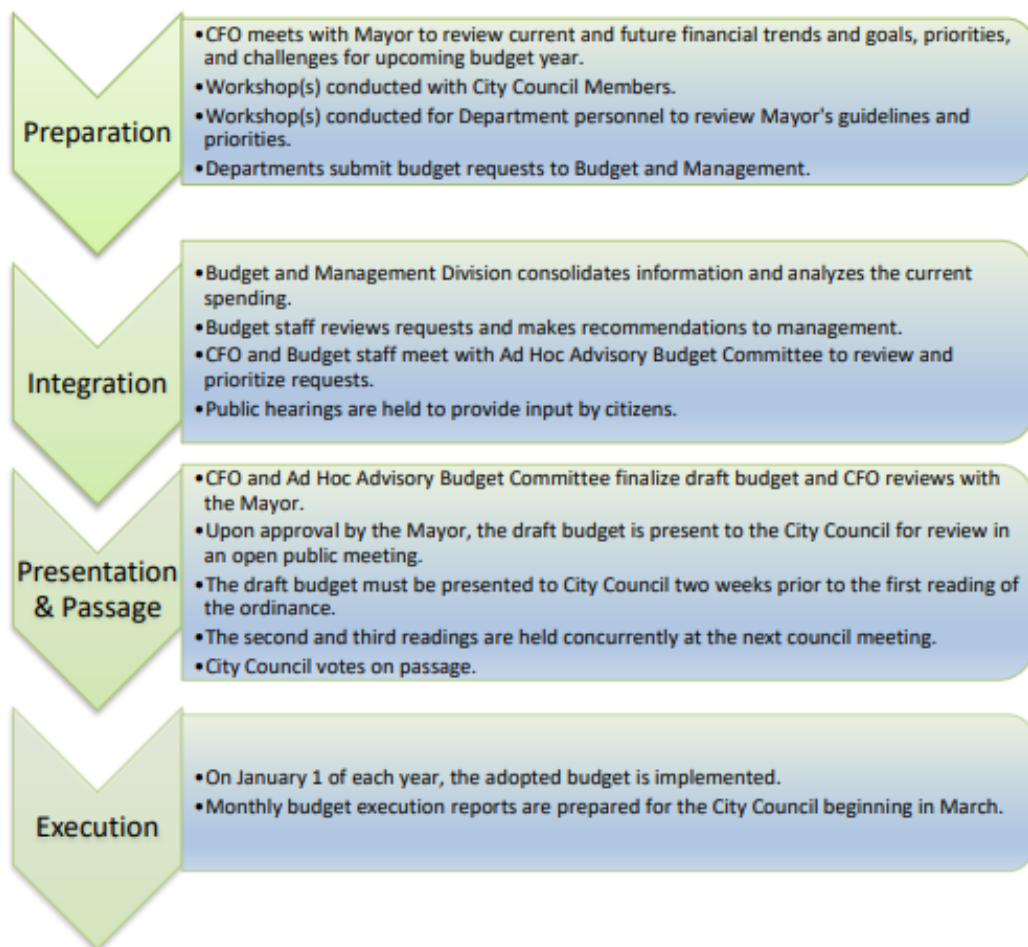
Residents of Charleston City: Residents of Charleston have an important role to play when shaping the policy priorities that will fit into the city budget. The Mayor and City Council Member work for the citizens and it is their responsibility to take our concerns into account with every piece of legislation but especially the city budget. However, this can be a mysterious and confusing process. Our hope with this toolkit is to synthesize where and how you can be involved in this system.

9

Step by Step

There are four main steps in the budgeting process: preparation, integration, presentation and passage, and execution. See below for a general outline and timeline of this process.

Continue to the next page to see how this process is broken down over the year and opportunities to raise your voice.



Step by Step

What's happening?

What can you do?

May-June Preparation

The CFO and Mayor meet to discuss the many factors that influenced revenue and spending of the previous and upcoming fiscal year. Next, City Council and city departments attend workshops covering the Mayor's priorities.

City departments will submit their asks for funding to the Budget and Management Department.

Contact your City Council Member to find out about their priorities. Explain what you would like to see happen in your neighborhood, what projects need funding, and generally where you believe the city should be investing in. The City of Charleston Budget of the previous year is always a great place to start formulating ideas of how to shift funds.

Aug.-Sept. Integration

In August and September, The Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee will meet to discuss requests from different departments/divisions. They will work with the CFO to review and prioritize requests depending on the city's priorities.

When interacting with the Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee, the first step is to see if your council member is apart of this committee. Even if they are not apart of the committee, you have the right to speak with the members deciding on where the money in the city will go.

October Presentation & Passage

The budget is finalized and presented to the Mayor. Public hearings are held through the Adhoc Budget Advisory Committee and there is opportunity for public comment!* Subscribe to alerts by visiting the [Agenda Center](#) on the City of Charleston website.

During this time, outreach directly to the Mayor's office can be effective. Subscribe to alerts by visiting the [Agenda Center](#) on the City of Charleston website to receive notifications of budget committee meetings. When a notification comes through, click to see the agenda. There should be [a link](#) to share a public comment either through email or during the meeting.

Step by Step

What's happening?

What can you do?

Nov. Preparation

In November, the draft budget is presented to the Mayor and Council. During this first council meeting, there will be a “budget question period” where council members can ask in depth questions of the budget.⁹

30 days after the public hearing, the budget will be presented to City Council. The time between the public hearing and the city council meeting is peak moment to contact your councilmember about your specific concerns and hopes of the budget. If there are questions you would like your councilmember to ask during the question period of the council meeting highlight those as well!

December Passage

In December, a “first reading” of the city budget will be conducted at a city council meeting. This means that the council will choose to approve or not approve specific parts of the budget.

At the next council meeting, a “second and third reading” is conducted. Council considers and potentially approves the rest of the budget.

The first reading and the second/third readings will happen in two separate meetings. This allows for more time to organize around what you do or do not want your councilmember to approve. By looking through the budget, ask yourself: Where is most of the money going? Who benefits? How would more funding in X department help my community?

January & Beyond Execution

The budget that was approved by the mayor and city council will be formalized and implemented. The previous fiscal year will be closed out. There are monthly budget reports from each department that are shared with the Mayor’s office and adjustments can still be made throughout the year.⁹

In the new fiscal year, the advocacy doesn’t stop. If the budget doesn’t reflect your community's needs- how can you and your community work to influence the next year's budget? How active was your councilmember in the budgeting process? Do they have an election coming up? Elections are an advantageous time to engage candidates so they better reflect the needs of the community.

Budget: Main Takeaways

- 1) This is your budget, it is our budget. Although this process may seem confusing and elected officials may seem out of reach-remember that you have the power! Government is for the people and should be created by the people.
- 2) Learn about your council member and build a relationship with them. This will be very beneficial through the budgeting process and beyond.
- 3) Use the tools and don't go at it alone! Bring your social networks and community into this process. Don't be afraid to ask for information or advice from local organizations (like ACLU of SC, BLF, or People's Budget). We're here for you.



Engaging with City Council & the Mayor

When and where are the meetings?

- To find out when a meeting is happening, visit <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/>.
- Scroll over How Do I... at the top.
- Under View, select Event Calendar. There will be a list of upcoming committee meetings and city events. Click on any meeting that interests you in to see how to call into the meeting. All city meetings are also live streamed and recorded on the City of Charleston YouTube channel.
 - In the time of COVID-19, all city council meetings are held virtually through Zoom.

Where is the agenda?

- Scroll over Government at the top and select Agendas + Minutes.
- From there you will see a list of all committees, councils and boards. Click on the dropdown arrow to see upcoming and previous agendas. This is sorted by the year.
- By clicking on the agenda of an upcoming meeting, a new tab will open with a PDF view and show what is on the agenda. Typically the Citizen Participation Period is listed as part of the agenda and highlighted in red.
 - The top of the document will show the phone number and access code to call and listen in to the meeting.

Engaging with City Council & the Mayor

How do you sign up for alerts?

- To sign up for alerts of various city meetings, visit <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/>.
- Scroll over Government, click on Agendas and Minutes.
- In the upper right corner, underneath “Tools,” click on the small envelope titled Notify Me.
- Click on the meetings you would like to get notifications for! This is an incredible tool that allows residents to stay more tapped into what our city government is doing.
 - Refer back to “Important Committees, Councils and Commissions” in Section 3 for our recommendations on what city meetings to stay up to date with.

COVID-19 UPDATES View the City of Charleston's Latest Updates [Read On...](#)

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[▶ Audit Committee](#) [2019](#) [2018](#) [2017](#) [View More](#)

[▶ Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#) [2020](#) [2019](#) [2018](#) [Select Language](#)

Submitting a Comment & Speaking at City Meetings

Raising your voice on issues that are important to our community is incredibly important if we want to drive and create local policy change. Staying up to date with our local government is important but we don't have to stop there! Submitting public comments onto record and signing up to speak at upcoming city council meetings is effective in centering our thoughts, voices and experiences in the context surrounding proposed policies.

- 1) Visit <http://innovate.charleston-sc.gov/comments/> to submit a comment or sign up to speak at an upcoming city council meeting.
- 2) Select the meeting you are interested in.
- 3) The gray box below will show when and where the meeting will be held. It will also detail what phone number and meeting code to use to call in to the meeting.
- 4) Below you can choose to submit a public comment or sign up to speak.
 - a) Participants can both sign up to speak and can submit a comment. If you'd like to do both, simply click the link above to reload the options.
- 5) If you choose to sign up to speak, you must put down the phone number you plan to call in with. During the meeting they will take the attendance of speakers by what phone numbers signed up and what numbers have called in. Call in a few minutes early to the meeting to ensure the opportunity to speak!

Best Practices to Make your Comment Effective

- Ensure that your comment is accurate, direct, and unique.
- State who you are and what you want up front: In the first sentence, explain that you are a constituent and identify the issue about which you are writing or speaking.
- Comments can be both factual and emotional! It is important to move both the hearts and minds of our elected leaders.
- If you have one, include a personal story that shows how this issue affects you and your family. A constituent's personal stories can be very persuasive as your legislator shapes their position.
- Hit your three most important points: Choose the three strongest points that will be most effective in persuading councilmember to support your position and flesh them out.
- You are the expert: Remember that your councilmember's job is to represent you. You should be courteous and to the point, but don't be afraid to take a firm position. Remember that often your councilmember may know no more about a given issue than you do.

How to Identify and Contact your Councilmembers

Contacting your councilmember and the mayor is an important action in being civically engaged with our government. The most important time to be in contact with an elected official is after they win an election to hold them accountable to what they said they would or would not do. If you're unsure of what your council member's focus is, check out their social media or previous campaign pages to learn about their priorities.

1. Visit <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/> and select Government near the top of the website.
2. Select City Council from the list, it will show all of the twelve council members that represent Charleston.
 - a. Find Your Councilmember.
 - i. Below the councilmembers and under Interactive District Map, select City's Mapnet Service. This will open a new tab to an interactive map where you can input your address, to identify your city council district.
 - ii. In the top right corner, input your address in the box. Information about your council district and the name of your council member will appear in a column on the left.
3. Select your councilmember from the list, and you will then see a picture, biographical information, committees that they serve, memberships, etc. Underneath their picture you will find a linked email address and their phone number.

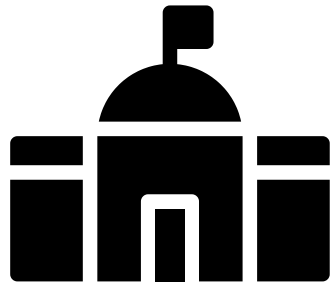
How to Contact the Mayor

The Mayor

The mayor, currently John Tecklenburg, represents everyone in the City of Charleston and is elected by residents within city limits. The mayor has four year terms and does not align with any registered political party.

1. Visit <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/> and select Government near the top of the website.
2. Select Mayor from the list.
3. Here you'll find information about the current mayor and their priorities. On the left, near their picture, you'll find the email and phone number to reach the Mayor's office.
4. When calling the Mayor, also known as the Executive Department, you will most likely speak with the staff of the office. It is their responsibility to take in resident concerns and pass them along to the Mayor!

Section 3: Zooming Out



Every level of government has a range of departments that control different government programs and initiatives. There is a hierarchy within the overall structure of government, within each level, each branch and each department. When we're engaging with our government, it's important for us to contact, target, or put pressure on the right department and officials. In this section, we'll lay out what level of government is responsible for what so we can effectively engage the right people! This toolkit will introduce city, county and state government but will primarily focus on civic engagement at the city level. The follow sections briefly explain county and state level government.

County Government

There are 46 counties in South Carolina. The overall functioning of county government can take a few different forms. Most in South Carolina use a Council-Administrator system.

Council-Administrator System: The majority of counties have a “council-administrator” system, this means that the majority of administrative responsibility rests with a main administrator or manager and they report to the County council. See below for an organizational chart.

County Administrator: This person executes the directives of the county council and they oversee the day to day operations of the county government. Learn more about the Charleston County Administrator [here](#).

County Council: There are between 3 and 12 members on the county council, they are elected in staggered terms of 4 years. Charleston County has 9 council members. County council serves as a conduit between the county departments and programs and the citizens. They create and set policy as well as a budget for the county.

County Government

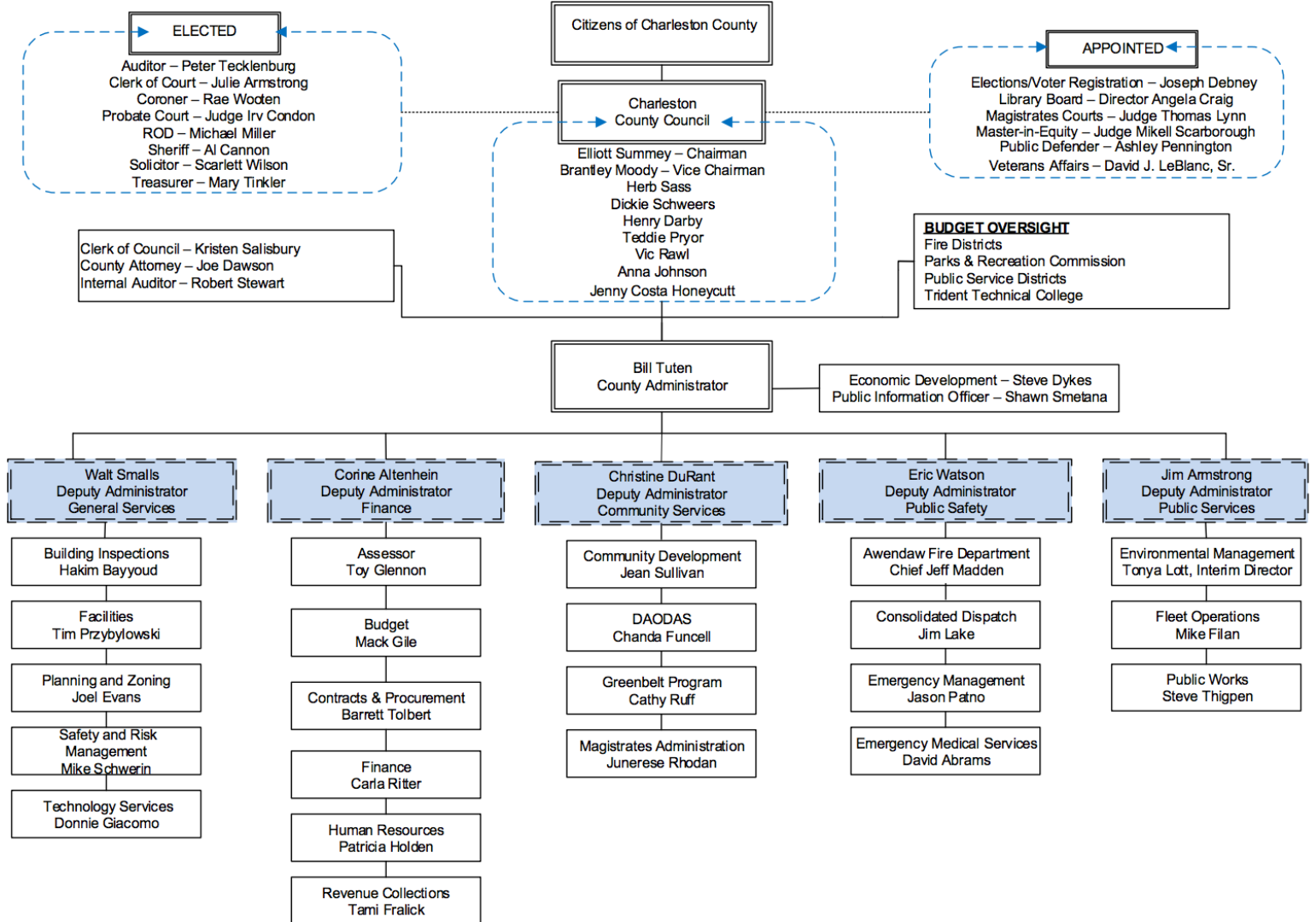
Committees in County Government: Committees are smaller groups of county council members and/or residents who focus on specific issues. When advocating for any issue, legislation or to comment on current work by the county, tracking the committees and their meetings is the first place to go. When there is a specific issue that the council is addressing, they can create subcommittees or task forces. Being involved in the committee process can give people power to determine what a policy or initiative looks like and how it moves.

Current standing committees in Charleston County:

11

- Administration Policy/Rules Committee
- Audit Committee
- Capital Projects Special Committee
- Economic Development Committee
- Environmental Management Committee
- Finance Committee Planning/Public Works Committee
- Public Safety Committee
- Special Housing Committee

CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA Organizational Chart Updated July 15, 2020



Charleston County Organizational Chart, 2020

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff's Office: In South Carolina, sheriffs are the top law enforcement officers in their counties and oversee their county's sheriff's department. Sheriff is an elected position, and sheriffs' powers are restricted to the geographical boundaries of the county they are elected to serve. In many South Carolina counties, sheriffs serve as the top jail administrator of their county detention center. Learn more about Charleston County Sheriff Al Cannon [here](#).

13

What is the difference between the local Sheriff and the police? The sheriff's office is an agency created and defined by the state constitution. It is an office that has jurisdiction throughout the county. Comparatively, a local police department only has jurisdiction within the limits of its city or town.

14

Sheriff elections

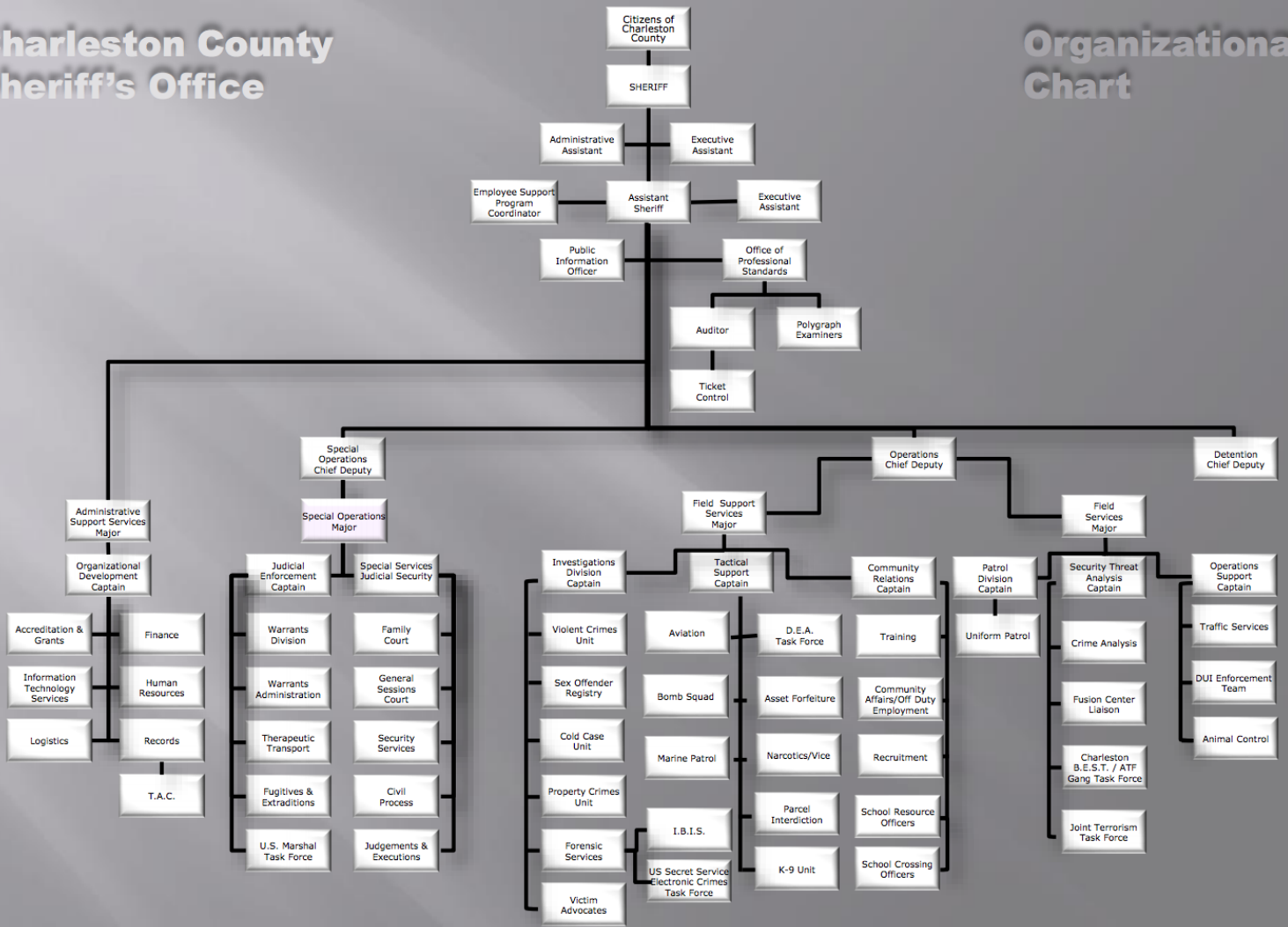
Sheriff's are elected into office every four years in a partisan county-wide election. It's important to learn about your local sheriff and their stance on issues such as

13

- Investment in communities and people
- Marijuana possession
- Immigration and the 287(g) program
- Racial bias
- Use of Force policies
- Sheriff deputies in schools

Charleston County Sheriff's Office

Organizational Chart



Charleston County, Sheriff's Office Organizational Chart

State Government

The South Carolina state government is broken up into three main branches, similar to the federal government: the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch. These branches can work together, against each other, and hold power in different ways.

15

The Executive Branch consists of our Governor and 9 executive officers, they are recommended by the governor and appointed by the Senate.

16

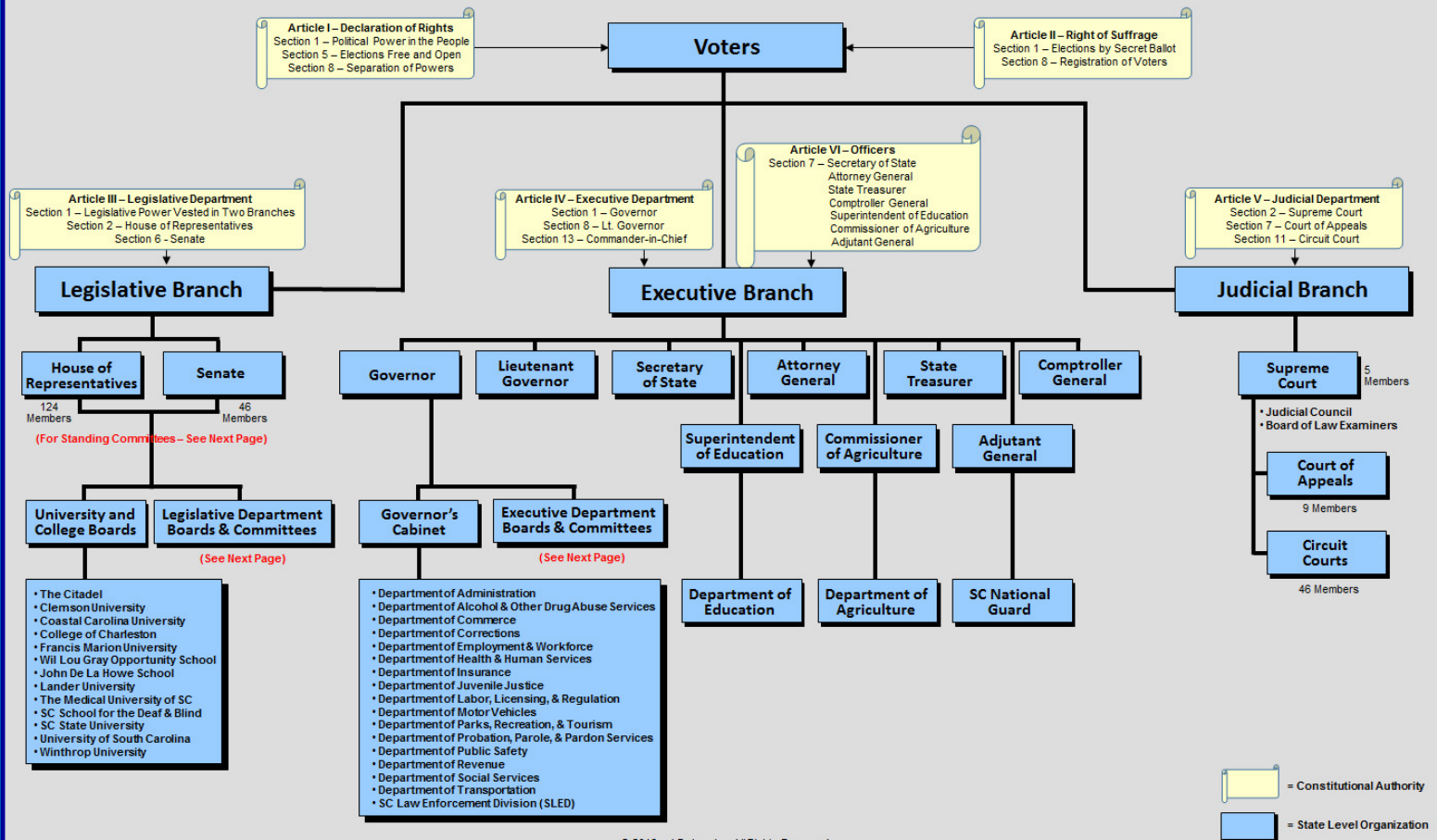
The Legislative Branch is a bicameral legislature consisting of two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The legislature is also known as the General Assembly.

17

The Judicial Branch is a system of courts that deal with a variety of issues. The Circuit Courts are trial courts that have both a civil and criminal division. The 46 counties in South Carolina are divided into 16 different judicial districts. The Court of Appeals hears all appeals to Family and Circuit Court decisions. The State Supreme Court is the highest state court in the judiciary system. Judges on the Circuit Court, Court of Appeals, and State Supreme Court are all selected by the General Assembly.

18

South Carolina Government Organization at the State Level (1 of 2)



South Carolina Government Organization at the State Level (2 of 2)

Legislative Department Boards, Commissions, & Committees

- Code Commissioner
- Commission on Prosecution Coordination
- Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award Advisory Committee
- Joint Bond Review Committee
- Joint Committee on Municipal Incorporation
- Joint Legislative Committee on Special License Plates
- Judicial Merit Selection Commission
- Public Utilities Review Committee
- S.C. Housing Commission
- S.C. Public Service Commission
- S.C. State House Commission
- The Hunley Commission

Senate Standing Committees

- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Banking & Insurance
- Corrections & Penology
- Education
- Ethics
- Finance
- Fish, Game, & Forestry
- General
- Interstate Cooperation
- Investigations
- Judiciary
- Labor, Commerce, & Industry
- Medical Affairs
- Rules
- Transportation

House Standing Committees

- Agriculture, Natural Resources, & Environmental Affairs
- Education & Public Works
- Ethics
- Interstate Cooperation
- Investigations & Memorial Resolutions
- Judiciary
- Labor, Commerce, & Industry
- Medical, Military, Public, & Municipal Affairs
- Operations & Management
- Rules
- Ways & Means

Executive Department Boards, Commissions, & Committees

- S.C. Board of Barber Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Chiropractic Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Cosmetology (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Dentistry (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, Marriage & Family Therapists, and Psycho-Educational Specialists (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Examiners in Opticianry (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Examiners in Optometry (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Examiners in Psychology (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Funeral Service (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Juvenile Parole
- S.C. Board of Landscape Architectural Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Medical Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Occupational Therapy (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Podiatry Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Pyrotechnic Safety (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Registration for Foresters (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Registration for Geologists (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Registration for Professional Engineers & Surveyors (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Social Work Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (DLLR)
- S.C. Commercial Mobile Radio Services Advisory Committee
- S.C. Commission for Minority Affairs
- S.C. Commission for the Blind
- S.C. Commission on Higher Education
- S.C. Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum
- S.C. Conservation Bank
- S.C. Council on the Holocaust
- S.C. Criminal Justice Academy
- S.C. Department of Archives & History
- S.C. Department of Natural Resources
- S.C. Dietetics Panel (DLLR)
- S.C. Educational Council
- S.C. Education Lottery Commission
- S.C. Education Lottery Oversight Committee
- S.C. Educational Television Commission
- S.C. Environmental Certification Board (DLLR)
- S.C. Forestry Commission
- S.C. Human Affairs Commission – Governing Board
- S.C. Institute of Archeology & Anthropology
- S.C. Interstate Cooperation Commission
- S.C. Jobs-Economic Development Authority
- S.C. Manufactured Housing Board (DLLR)
- S.C. Maritime Security Commission
- S.C. Mining Council
- S.C. Museum Commission
- S.C. Office of the Inspector General
- S.C. Office of the State Auditor
- S.C. Perpetual Care Cemetery Board (DLLR)
- S.C. Public Charter School District – Board of Trustees
- S.C. Public Employee Benefit Authority – Board of Directors
- S.C. Public Service Authority (Santee Cooper)
- S.C. Real Estate Commission (DLLR)

- S.C. Research Authority
- S.C. Residential Builders Commission (DLLR)
- S.C. Resources Authority
- S.C. Retirement and Pre-Retirement Advisory Board
- S.C. Retirement System Investment Commission
- S.C. Sea Grant Consortium
- S.C. Small Business Regulatory Review Committee
- S.C. Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board
- S.C. State Accident Fund
- S.C. State Athletic Commission (DLLR)
- S.C. State Board for Technical & Comprehensive Education
- S.C. State Election Commission
- S.C. State Employee Grievance Committee
- S.C. State Ethics Commission
- S.C. State Housing, Finance, & Development Authority
- S.C. State Library
- S.C. State Office of Victim Assistance
- S.C. State Ports Authority – Board of Directors
- S.C. State Ports Authority Review & Oversight Commission
- S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank
- S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Board
- S.C. Workers' Compensation (WC) Commission
- Advisory Committee for Improvements of the Workers' Compensation Laws
- Southeastern Interstate Forest Fire Compact Advisory Committee
- Southern Regional Education Board
- Southern States Energy Board
- The Francis Marion Trail Commission
- The Old Exchange Building Commission
- The War Between the States Heritage Trust Commission
- Tobacco Community Development Board

NOTE 1:

Many of the Boards and Commissions listed herein require some appointees to be approved by the Senate or all of the General Assembly.

NOTE 2:

All of the Boards, Commissions, and Committees herein are sometimes referred to as the S.C. State XXXX, or just the State XXXX. The names shown herein are the names used in the current S.C. Legislative Manual (2015).

NOTE 3:

(DLLR) = Under the Department of Labor, Licensing, & Regulation

State vs. Local Government

State agencies are very important when we look critically at different issues such as education, healthcare, the environment, etc. For example, the Department of Education sets the state standards for our education systems, even though individual counties are in charge of their school districts. The Department of Health and Environmental Control impacts how local governments regulate air, water, waste disposal, pollution and public health.

Home Rule is the principle that local governments have the power to do anything as long as it is not specifically forbidden by the state. The state can interfere in three ways with local government (county and city): through the judicial system, administratively, or through the legislature. Home Rule is important to understand if groups are advocating for an ordinance or directive from the county or city government.

2

By and large, the state has significant control over local operations, which has been solidified by numerous Supreme Court cases such as Hunter v. City of Pittsburg. The state has numerous mandates that control what local governments can or cannot do.

20

State Law Enforcement

State Law Enforcement Division (SLED): SLED operates far beyond its original purpose of enforcing liquor laws from 1935. SLED's authority is to assist any law enforcement officer within the State of South Carolina. SLED can interject jurisdiction on officer-involved shootings and investigations ordered by the Governor or Attorney General (AG). They typically serve backup roles unless at the direction of the local, city, or county law enforcement agency or on authority from the Governor or the AG, being appointed primarily on said investigations.²¹

SC Highway Patrol: The jurisdiction of this agency is limited to highways, roads, and streets. Often, they will cede jurisdiction over an arrest or investigation to the city or county authorities. The Highway Patrol shares jurisdictions with local, city and county law enforcement over the highways so if these authorities are present, Highway Patrol will be more mobile or take position in another area. Out of all law enforcement agencies, the Highway Patrol is the most flexible of all because their jurisdiction is shared by everyone.²²

State Department of Corrections

The original correctional system in South Carolina was established in 1866 when the South Carolina Legislature passed an act that created the first state-level prison for felons that were housed in county facilities. This can be thought of as a direct result of the Black Codes in 1865, which led to formerly enslaved Black people signing labor contracts after being charged by the state for vagrancy (being without work) and other crimes. In 1960, the Governor Fritz Hollings decided to end the abuses of the correctional system and therefore created a new state agency, the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Today, SCDC is still a state agency, reporting directly to the Governor.

The Department of Corrections currently has around 4,700 employees, just under 19,000 inmates and operates 21 institutions. Under Governor McMaster and SCDC Director Bryan P. Sterling, SCDC claims to protect the citizens by confining offenders in controlled facilities and by providing rehabilitative, self-improvement opportunities to prepare inmates for their re-integration into society. Under their purview, the employees of the SCDC will be seen as a progressive force that works together to ensure the safety of each other, to improve the lives and meet the legitimate needs of the inmates, and prepare them for re-entry into society. As of today, SCDC continues to not meet its mission with continued human rights violations and lacking reentry programs for the citizens of South Carolina.

Attorney General & Solicitors

The South Carolina Constitution defines the Attorney General's role as "chief prosecuting officer of the State with authority to supervise the prosecution of all criminal cases in courts of record." As the Chief Legal Officer, the Attorney General represents and advises the State, its agencies, political subdivision, and its officials in legal matters when the State is a party to a legal action, either as plaintiff or defendant. Find all responsibilities of the AG at www.scag.gov.

27

Solicitors

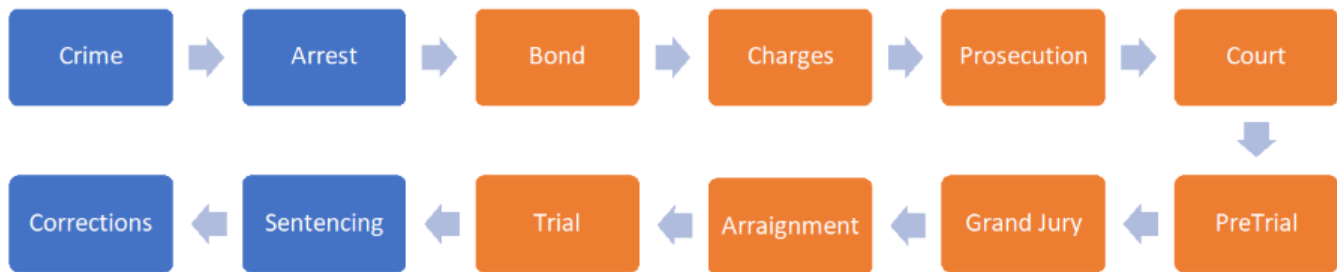
In South Carolina, prosecutors are known as Solicitors. There are sixteen (16) elected Circuit Solicitors in South Carolina. The Attorney General serves as the "Chief Prosecutor" and is ultimately responsible for employing and supervising all solicitors in South Carolina. Solicitors are in charge of 2-5 counties and are elected every four years. For example, Solicitor Scarlett Wilson is in charge of prosecutions in Charleston and Berkeley counties.

A solicitor is the legal party responsible for presenting the case in a criminal trial against an individual accused of breaking the law.* The solicitor represents the government in the case brought against the accused person. They have broad discretion and arguably the most power of all criminal justice actors to affect the trajectory and outcome of criminal cases.

28

*See the next page for how a Solicitor is involved in the legal process.

SOLICITOR'S INFLUENCE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESS



Law Enforcement (LE)	1 Crime Observed Reported Investigated	Solicitor	7 PreTrial Initial Appearance Preliminary Hearing Diversion Program
	2 Arrest Warrant Issued Defendant Served Defendant Jailed		8 Grand Jury Indictment Refusal to Indict
Judge	3 Bond Bond Set or Denied Bond Paid & Defendant Released Bond Not Paid & Defendant Held		9 Arraignment Charges Dismissed Charges Reduced Guilty Plea
Solicitor	4 Charges Dismissed Filed	Judge	10 Trial Acquitted Convicted Appeal
	5 Prosecution Juvenile Misdemeanor Felony		11 Sentencing Prison Probation Death Penalty
	6 Court Civil Juvenile Criminal	LE	12 Corrections Release Revocation

Additional Resources

City Government

- [City of Charleston](#)
- [Ordinance vs. Resolution](#)
- [City of Charleston Budget](#)

County Government

- [Handbook for County Governments](#)
- [Charleston County Budget User's Guide](#)
- [2020 Directory of County Officials](#)

State Government

- [Governor's Office](#)
- [State Legislature](#)
- [State Law Enforcement Division \(SLED\)](#)
- [SC Highway Patrol](#)
- [SC Department of Corrections](#)
- [Solicitor's Office](#)

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Get Involved

Thank you for taking time to educate yourself about how to civically engage with local government.

Please follow, volunteer, and reach out to learn how to stay engaged!

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