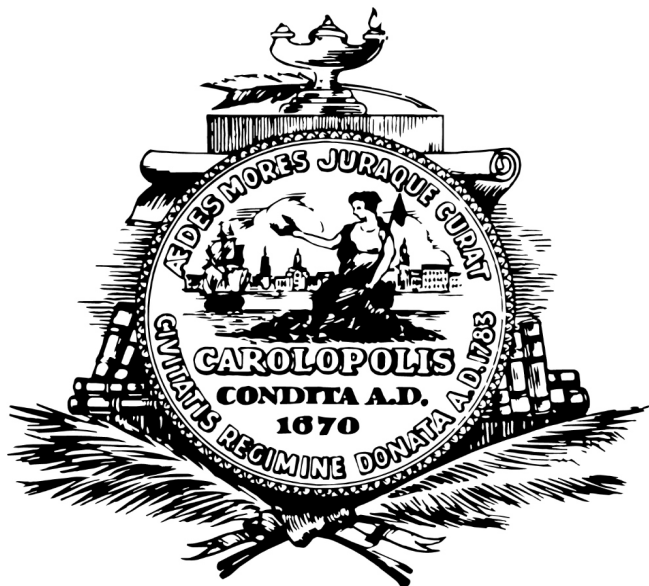




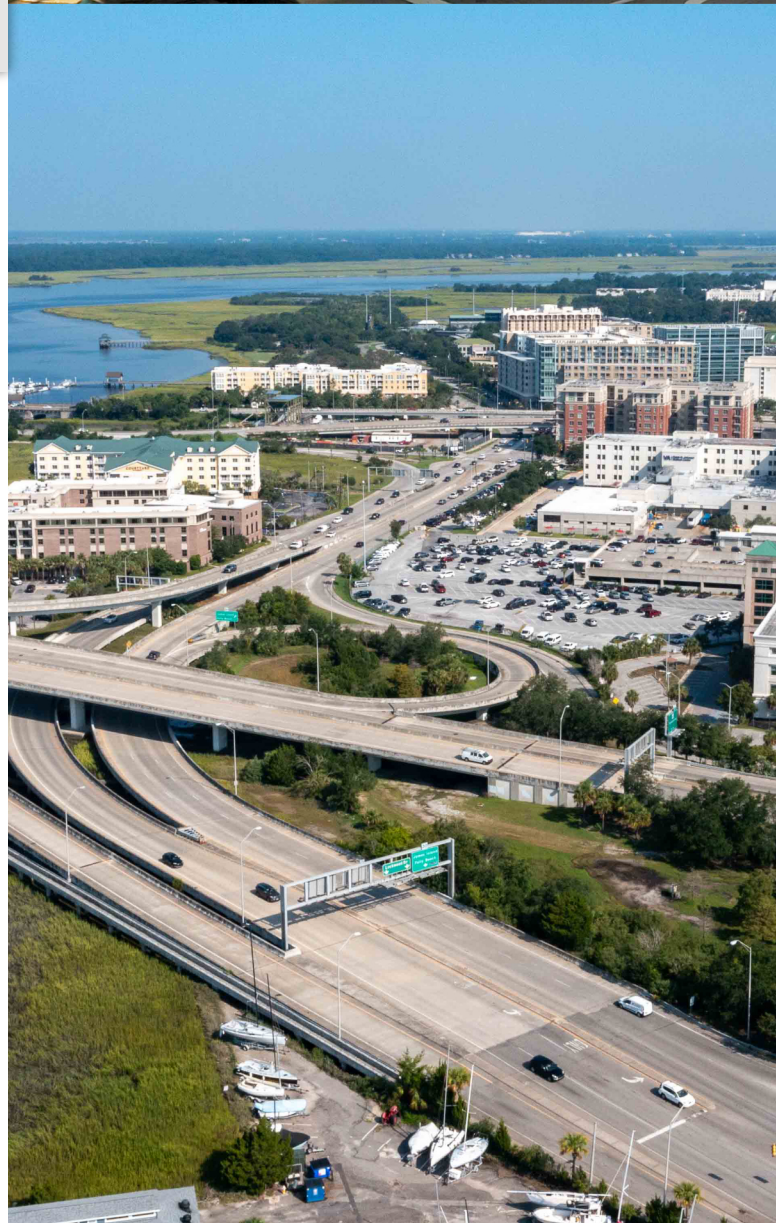
— POSITION AVAILABLE —

## SECTION CHIEF FOR PARKS & RECREATION

Apply ASAP but no later than September 4, 2026

Charleston unfolds like a living postcard – graceful, storied, and endlessly inviting. Set along the Atlantic coast and nearly centered between South Carolina’s northern and southern borders, the City stands at a symbolic crossroads where America’s past and future meet. Its charm comes from this balance: breathtaking ocean views and world-class golf, centuries-old architecture and vibrant modern districts, a deep commitment to preservation paired with a clear drive toward innovation. Visitors are drawn to its waterfront promenades, culinary excellence, and warm, walkable neighborhoods, while residents treasure its sense of community and forward-looking energy. In every way, Charleston embodies the best of American heritage and possibility.

With an average of 209 days of sun per year and a subtropical climate, the Charleston area offers a great way to get in touch with nature’s wonders. Many love the region’s easy access to the Atlantic Ocean and surrounding waterways. The region has several beautiful beaches, such as Folly Beach (11 miles south) and Isle of Palms (15 miles east). Favorite pastimes include sunbathing, surfing, boating, and deep-sea fishing. Shrimping is also a popular activity, typically during the fall.





Biking and walking are among Charleston's most beloved ways to enjoy the outdoors, and the iconic Cooper River Bridge Run, now celebrating five decades of tradition, remains a bucket-list experience for many. For those seeking even more options, the City maintains an impressive network of 120 parks, seven recreation facilities, and four pools spanning roughly 1,800 acres of green space and activity areas. Charleston also offers numerous tennis facilities and racquet courts, along with a municipal golf course that welcomes players of all ages and features a dedicated junior golfers program.

As the oldest city in South Carolina, Charleston is known for several iconic locations. A stroll through the City's downtown district (often referred to as "the Peninsula") is like stepping into a history textbook. A trip to the Charleston Museum, the Dock Street Theatre, the Rainbow Row homes, and the recently repaired Charleston Battery seawall can quickly acquaint visitors with just a few of America's oldest structures. In fact, Charleston's historic theaters and churches provide the awe-inspiring ambience for the annual Spoleto Festival USA, the nation's preeminent performing arts festival held each spring. Anyone seeking a more modern experience can enjoy a daytrip to the South Carolina Aquarium or an evening out at the Charleston Gaillard Center.

Charleston distinguishes itself as a small city with big-city advantages, offering residents an exceptional quality of life. The area is served by three major, highly rated medical centers, and its well-regarded schools are primarily part of the Charleston County School District. Crime rates remain below state averages and continue to trend downward, reinforcing the City's reputation for safety. Its neighborhoods are known for their warmth and neighborly spirit, where people genuinely look out for one another. This remarkable blend of livability, charm, and community pride has earned Charleston national acclaim—most notably its repeated recognition as Cond. Nast Traveler's #1 "Best Small City in the United States," a distinction it has received 14 times in the past 15 years.

As of March 2026, median home price in Charleston is \$650,000, with a median sold home price of \$621,750. According to Realtor, a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home of approximately 1,600 square feet may be priced at \$487,000.

Depending on the location and proximity to the Peninsula however, a home may be listed as low as \$355,000 or as high as \$1.3 million.

For those seeking higher education, several campuses can be found along the Peninsula. These include College of Charleston, The Citadel, Trident Technical College, American College of the Building Arts, and the Medical University of South Carolina. Just outside the City is Charleston Southern University. Further northwest are the campuses of South Carolina State University (Orangeburg, 77 miles), University of South Carolina (Columbia, 112 miles), Furman University (Greenville, 218 miles), and Clemson University (Clemson, 241 miles).

Although South Carolina is not home to any major league professional franchises, some North Carolina professional teams represent both Carolinas: Charlotte Hornets (NBA), Carolina Hurricanes (NHL), and Carolina Panthers (NFL). Residents also enjoy supporting other minor league and collegiate teams in the area, such as the Charleston RiverDogs (MiLB) and Charleston Battery (the oldest continuously operating professional soccer club in the United States).

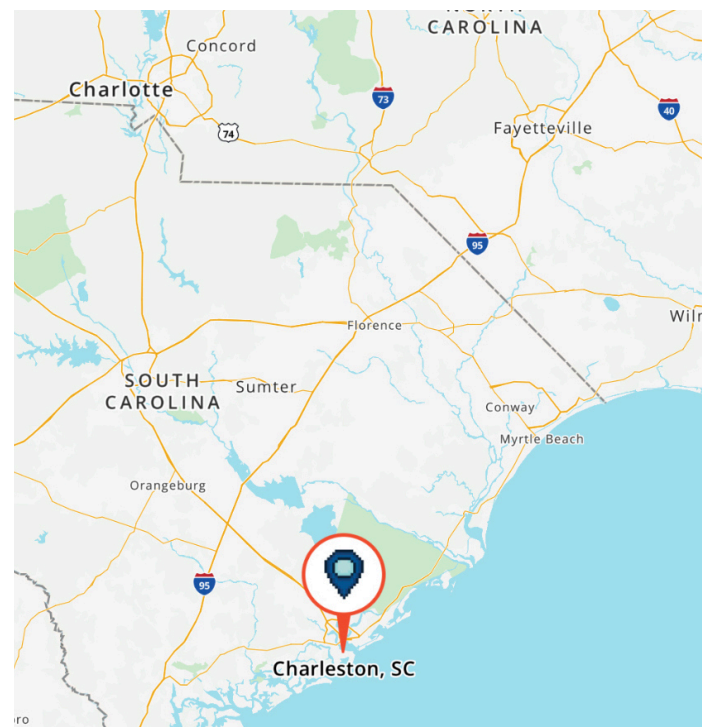


Figure 1: Location of Charleston, SC

Table 1: Charleston Demographics

| Distribution by Race               |        | Distribution by Age |       |
|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------|-------|
| White                              | 73.5%  | 0 to 15             | 14.0% |
| Black                              | 17.0%  | 15 to 25            | 15.4% |
| Asian                              | 2.2%   | 25 to 45            | 33.0% |
| Native American                    | 0.3%   | 45 to 65            | 21.6% |
| Other                              | 7.0%   | 65 to 85            | 14.6% |
| Total                              | 100.0% | Over 85             | 1.4%  |
| Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)     | 4.5%   |                     |       |
| 2023 Estimated Population: 159,011 |        |                     |       |

| Educational Achievements (25 & Over) and Other Statistics |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| High School or Higher                                     | 97.8%    |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher                               | 60.5%    |
| Median Age—Charleston                                     | 36.3     |
| Median Age—U.S.                                           | 39.1     |
| Median Household Income—Charleston                        | \$98,085 |
| Median Household Income—U.S.                              | \$83,730 |
| Poverty Rate                                              | 13.5%    |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Charleston is known as a commercial hub due to the multitude of major roadways crossing through and around the City. Those needing to catch a flight can do so at the Charleston International Airport just 12 miles northwest of the City. Other airports include Myrtle Beach International Airport (93 miles northeast), Hilton Head Island Airport (103 miles southwest), and Columbia Metropolitan Airport (111 miles northwest). The City is also home to the Port of Charleston, one of the busiest ports on the Eastern Seaboard.

Charleston thrives on a deep sense of community and a genuine respect for its rich heritage, creating a place where tradition and progress feel perfectly at home together. Its neighborhoods are welcoming, its cultural identity is strong, and its residents take

pride in preserving the City’s character while embracing thoughtful growth. For exceptional professionals seeking a place to live with purpose, work with impact, and raise a family in a supportive, inspiring environment, Charleston offers an unmatched opportunity. If you are ready to bring your talents to a city that values both its people and its future, we invite you to apply.

DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table I for the City’s demographic profile.

COMMERCE

Since its early years, the area now known as Charleston has been an important location for commerce due to its strategic location in Charleston Harbor between the Ashley and Cooper Rivers. It was known as a port city, even attracting pirates during the 1600s and 1700s.

The City supports several growing industries. Some examples are aerospace, automotive, life sciences, defense, higher education, energy, and information systems. The Port of Charleston also provides ample growth under the South Carolina Ports Authority. With the completion of the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project in 2022, mega container ships can now dock safely at any time. In 2024, The South Carolina Port handled over 210,00 vehicles and 845,147 breakbulk tonnage.

Presently, the City of Charleston experiences a booming tourist economy via the nearby Charleston International Airport. The Airport alone served 2.9 million passengers in 2024, as well as handled 9.4 million pounds of freight.

See Table II for the City’s principal employers.

THE GOVERNMENT

Charleston uses a strong Mayor-Council form of city government.. City Council is comprised of 12 Councilmembers, who each represent one of the City’s 12 districts. Each Councilmember must be a resident of the district he or she represents. The Mayor and Councilmembers may serve an unlimited number of four year terms, with Councilmembers

selected in district-wide elections and the Mayor elected at large. Every January, City Council selects amongst itself a Mayor Pro Tempore.

Elections are staggered and held during November in odd numbered years. Even-numbered districts are up for vote during one election cycle, whereas odd-numbered districts and the mayoral seat is on the ballot for the following election cycle. In 2027, the mayoral seat and odd-numbered district seats will be open for election.

City Council contains a vast wealth of experience. Presently, six councilmembers are serving their first term (with one individual having served an extra two years due to a special election), three councilmembers are serving their second term, one is serving his third term, another is serving his fourth term, and another councilmember is serving his fifth term.

The City Council appoints the Municipal Clerk, Municipal Judge, and Municipal Attorney. The Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer; he or she is responsible to City Council for the administration of all City affairs and the execution of all laws and ordinances. The Mayor also oversees the administration of all municipal departments, offices, and agencies as granted by law. With approval of City Council, the Mayor has the final say in hiring the Corporation Counsel, the Clerk of Council, the Chief Financial Officer, the Fire and Police Chiefs, and other department directors.

For fiscal year 2025, the City of Charleston had a budget of \$426,262,234, with a general fund of \$293,822,573. The City also employed 2,118 full-time employees. For fiscal year 2026, the City has an adopted budget of \$457,231,929, with a general fund of \$320,634,309. This same year, the City employed 1,968 personnel consisting of 1,809 full-time and 159 part-time employees.

THE SECTION OF PARKS & RECREATION

The City of Charleston is embarking on an exciting new chapter with the creation of its inaugural Section Chief for Parks & Recreation—a newly established executive leadership role that reflects the City's commitment to strategic innovation, operational excellence, and exceptional public service.

Recognizing the natural alignment between Parks and Recreation, the City has thoughtfully unified these two highly respected organizations into a single section dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. This strategic organizational evolution creates new opportunities to strengthen collaboration, improve operational efficiencies, and deliver an even greater impact through parks, recreational programs, public spaces, and community engagement.

This transformation comes at an ideal moment in the City's history. Following the retirement of the Recreation Director after more than three decades of distinguished service and the departure of the Parks Section Chief to pursue an outstanding professional opportunity right in Charleston, the City saw the opportunity not simply to fill two leadership positions—but to

Table 2: Principal Employers, Charleston, SC

| Employer                          | Industry                                       | Employees |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Joint Base Charleston             | Military, Defense, and Federal Logistics       | 24,900    |
| Medical University of SC          | Healthcare, Education, and Biomedical Research | 17,000    |
| The Boeing Company                | Aerospace and Defense                          | 8,253     |
| Charleston County School District | Education                                      | 7,100     |
| Roper St. Francis Healthcare      | Healthcare                                     | 6,100     |
| Walmart, Inc.                     | Retail                                         | 3,900     |
| RH Johnson VA Medical Center      | Healthcare and Research                        | 3,250     |
| Trident Health Systems            | Healthcare                                     | 3,100     |
| Charleston County Government      | Government                                     | 2,800     |
| US Postal Service                 | Transportation and Warehousing                 | 2,500     |

Source: Charleston, SC 2024 ACFR



reimagine how these essential services can best serve Charleston for decades to come.

The inaugural Section Chief will have the rare opportunity to establish the vision, culture, and strategic direction for this newly unified organization. Leading talented teams across parks, recreation, athletics, urban forestry, horticulture, aquatics, municipal golf, community centers, and youth programming, this executive will shape an organization that touches the lives of residents every day while preserving and enhancing the places that make Charleston one of America's most celebrated cities.

The Section Chief reports directly to the Chief of Staff, who reports to the Mayor. The Section Chief oversees 330 full-time employees and 120 part-time or seasonal employees. For fiscal year 2025, the Parks (Grounds Maintenance) budget was \$11,509,255, while Recreation operated with \$18,425,136. Combined, that's a total of \$29,934,391.

For a collaborative, visionary leader who is passionate about public service and community impact, this is more than a career opportunity—it is a chance to build something lasting and leave a meaningful legacy for generations to come.

Figure 2: Section- Organization Chart for Parks & Recreation

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Charleston is navigating a period of rapid growth and transformation, and the Section Chief for Parks and Recreation will play a pivotal role in shaping what comes next. The challenges ahead are well within reach, yet they call for a leader with exceptional finesse — someone highly organized, strategically minded, and ready to deliver innovative solutions in a fast-evolving environment.

The first challenge is also the City's greatest opportunity for success. In 2024, Mayor William Cogswell launched a major organizational realignment that consolidated City operations into key sections, creating a more streamlined and strategically focused structure. These sections, and the departments within them, continue to evolve and advance as Charleston adapts to growing community needs. The redesign strengthens internal coordination, enhances process efficiency, and elevates the

customer experience for residents. As Administration deepens communication and collaboration across these sections, the Section Chief for Parks and Recreation will serve as a critical leader. This role will ensure that Parks and Recreation remains a high-performing, responsive partner in achieving the City's vision for the future.

The second challenge involves the way Parks & Recreation have historically operated in Charleston. In many cities, these functions are combined into one department, but that hasn't been the case here. Until recently, Parks & Recreation were housed in separate departments with different directors. With recent organizational changes and retirements, the City determined it was the right moment to bring these operations together under one new section. The incoming Section Chief will step into a unique situation: staff from both areas have never worked within a single Section before. Building cohesion, aligning priorities, and shaping a shared vision will be key to helping the newly combined team operate smoothly and effectively.

As a related challenge, the next Section Chief will need to prioritize the well-being of their employees. Beyond building unity, helping staff feel appreciated and supported will be essential. Parks & Recreation employees often work with frustrated residents, handle responsibilities outside traditional hours, and navigate a municipal pay scale that isn't always competitive. Retention and recruitment are ongoing hurdles, and the right Section Chief will be skilled at addressing these realities: strengthening team morale, fostering a positive work environment, and attracting high-quality talent to the Section.

Third, this Section is one of the most public-facing areas of the City. As a result, the Section Chief will regularly hear concerns and complaints from residents and members of City Council. A skilled leader will be able to sort through these issues, recognize which concerns are well-founded, and identify those that may not be practical to address. Because public feedback can sometimes be blunt or abrasive, the Chief will need to maintain composure, stay resilient, and not take comments personally. Strong customer service skills are essential; listening carefully, following up with residents and visitors, and responding to concerns are key markers of a successful Section Chief.

FIGURE 2: CITY OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA PARKS & RECREATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



The fourth challenge involves budgeting, knowing how to request funding and making smart, strategic use of those dollars. While the City has made meaningful improvements to parks and recreational facilities, there is still room to elevate fields and amenities to modern standards. Some locations are operating with outdated systems, including no phones, time clocks, or internet access. Bringing the entire Section up to date will strengthen revenue opportunities, improve staff's ability to do their jobs, and enhance the overall experience for residents. A successful Section Chief will understand how to prioritize these needs and invest resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Finally, the next Section Chief will continue to navigate the everyday responsibilities that come with leading a large, multifaceted operation. These include issuing permits for sporting events, promoting youth and adult programs, recruiting coaches and on-field officials, addressing aging infrastructure and

deferred maintenance, and managing weather-related impacts on facilities and programming. These routine challenges require a steady, organized leader who can balance day-to-day demands while keeping the Section moving forward.

Additionally, the importance of communication is essential to this position. Communication can always be improved upon and includes discourse with other Sections and departments, the County, residents, tourists, and social media.

As a benefit, the Communications department is working to elevate the Parks & Recreation Section. This effort includes updating branding and marketing materials to reflect a more cohesive, modern identity. As part of this effort, the City is constructing a Recreation Center on Johns Island that will feature an indoor pool, gym and basketball courts, fitness rooms, classrooms, and pickleball courts. The City is also renovating a Recreation Center in the West Ashley area with similar amenities.





These large-scale projects are two of the many upfits occurring citywide.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Charleston's next Section Chief for Parks and Recreation will have a full and exciting portfolio, so the City is seeking a strong, energetic, and effective leader—someone dynamic, motivated, and experienced in all facets of athletics, recreation, and parks maintenance. There is plenty of meaningful work ahead, and this role is best suited for a highly driven professional with a true “can-do” attitude.

The ideal candidate will be highly experienced, hands on, well organized, forward-thinking, honest, and adaptable. This leader won't simply accept the status quo; they will consistently look for new and better ways to achieve the Section's goals, deliver programs, and improve operations. Innovation is valued in Charleston, and while the City appreciates established practices, the next Section Chief will bring an analytical mindset, examining processes with a critical eye to determine where improvements can be made. They will move past the mindset of “This is how we've always done it” and won't hesitate to explore new ideas and approaches.

The next Chief will be a strategic planner and thinker. They will not be consumed by the everyday operations but will spend time looking over the horizon, anticipating the future and planning for it. As a result, the individual will be excellent at problem avoidance.

Although most of this Section consists of employees who work in the outside elements, this individual will understand when it's appropriate to show up in a t-shirt and shorts



and when a more polished, professional look is expected. They'll be comfortable moving between hands-on fieldwork and formal settings, adjusting their attire to match the moment.

Customer service will begin at the top for the next Section Chief. This leader will set the tone for the entire Section, serving as a role model for employees and a positive example for the community. While customers can sometimes be challenging, they deserve respect, patience, and clear explanations from staff. The ideal candidate will be positive, openminded, and comfortable engaging with a diverse community, ensuring every interaction reflects the City's commitment to excellent service.

The next Section Chief will be technologically confident and a data-driven decision-maker with strong writing and speaking skills. The ideal candidate will have extensive experience engaging with community groups and neighborhood associations and will be comfortable presenting and answering questions at City Council meetings.

Expertise in program development, recreation management, staff leadership, budgeting, facility and park operations, community engagement, strategic planning, marketing, and communications is highly valued. The successful candidate will bring the judgment and technical skill needed to navigate these areas while positioning Charleston's Parks and Recreation Section for longterm success.

The position requires a bachelor's degree in Parks and Recreation Administration, Public Administration, Landscape Architecture, Recreation Management, Sports Management, Environmental Science, Urban Forestry, Horticulture, Natural Resource Management, Community Development, Business Administration, or a closely related field, with 15–19 years of progressively responsible experience in local government; or a master's degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Parks and Recreation Administration, Recreation Management, Environmental Management, Landscape Architecture, Sports Management, or a closely related field with 9–12 years of progressively responsible experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

The City plans to make a commitment to the candidate and hopes the selected individual will make a long-term

commitment to the City. By working together, the new Section Chief for Parks and Recreation and the Mayor's Office can maximize what can be accomplished for the City of Charleston.

## COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$130,000 to \$175,050. The salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The Section Chief for parks & Recreation will be part of the South Carolina Retirement System.

## RESIDENCY

The Section Chief for Parks & Recreation is not required to live within the Charleston City limits.

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [apply@cb-asso.com](mailto:apply@cb-asso.com) by September 4th. Please apply ASAP as resumes will be screened as they arrive. Questions should be first directed to Scott Krim at (801) 628-8364, then to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Candidate names will not be released without receiving prior permission from the candidate. In South Carolina, the process can be conducted with total confidentiality until the municipality selects three or fewer finalists.

## THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between August 15th and September 27th. Finalists will be selected on September 28th. Interviews will be held on or around October 7th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Charleston is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It strongly encourages women, minorities, and veterans to apply. As per South Carolina law, honorably discharged veterans will be given preference for appointment and employment.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the City, visit:

[www.charleston-sc.gov/](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/)

[www.charleston-sc.gov/361/Parks-Facilities](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/361/Parks-Facilities)

[www.charleston-sc.gov/357/Recreation](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/357/Recreation)

[www.charlestonchamber.org/](http://www.charlestonchamber.org/)

[www.charlestoncvb.com/](http://www.charlestoncvb.com/)

[www.charleston.com/](http://www.charleston.com/)

City Budget (2026)

[www.charleston-sc.gov/799/General-Operating-Budget-](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/799/General-Operating-Budget-Documents#docaccess-)  
[Documents#docaccess-](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/799/General-Operating-Budget-Documents#docaccess-)

[c3c1231a543966fb6f832c437b0ba88f2559e87b4327026031e](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/799/General-Operating-Budget-Documents#docaccess-c3c1231a543966fb6f832c437b0ba88f2559e87b4327026031ebd8829fbb617f)  
[bd8829fbb617f](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/799/General-Operating-Budget-Documents#docaccess-c3c1231a543966fb6f832c437b0ba88f2559e87b4327026031ebd8829fbb617f)

Annual Comprehensive Financial Plan (2024)

[www.charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40270/City-](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40270/City-of-Charleston-ACFR-123124)  
[of-Charleston-ACFR-123124](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40270/City-of-Charleston-ACFR-123124)

Charleston City Plan

[www.charleston-sc.gov/2394/Charleston-City-Plan](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/2394/Charleston-City-Plan)

