

Morning News



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Florence plans more stormwater upgrades

North Church, Oakland areas to benefit

GENE ZALESKI
Staff Writer

The City of Florence is planning to upgrade its stormwater system for the North Church Street and Oakland Avenue areas. The city will receive a \$3.5 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant to fund the upgrade.

The upgrade will include the improvement of stormwater infrastructure, including pipes, inlets and junction boxes. Its aim is to improve drainage and upgrade failing infrastructure throughout the watershed. The grant is being distributed through the S.C. Office of Resilience’s Disaster Recovery Division. “There is a significant lack of existing infrastructure as well as the infrastruc-



ture currently located there is insufficient,” Florence Assistant City Manager Clint Moore said. “Once we receive DOT encroachment permits we will start work on Oakland Avenue,” he said. City Council unanimously agreed last week to let City Manager Scotty Davis execute an agreement with the state Office of Resilience to accept the grant. The current resolution increases a previous award amount for the project by about \$399,529.

Moore said the increase is due to the increased cost for the project as determined through the project’s engineering and design process. Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily said the catch basin in the area frequently fills up during heavy rains, causing flooding along the Oakland Avenue corridor. “It was a catch basin to nowhere,” Jebaily said. “Now we are going to have a catch basin to somewhere.”

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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



CONTRIBUTED

Heritage Digital held its second annual Feed Hope Food Drive, a campaign designed to combat food insecurity among students at Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC). The 2025 drive saw remarkable growth, with over 44 businesses across the Carolinas joining forces to stock FDTC’s “Stinger’s Nest” food pantry with essential grab-and-go items for students.

Businesses support FDTC students

SPECIAL TO THE MORNING NEWS

FLORENCE — Heritage Digital held its second annual Feed Hope Food Drive, a campaign designed to combat food insecurity among students at Florence-Darlington Technical College. The 2025 drive saw remarkable growth, with over 44 businesses across the Carolinas joining forces to stock FDTC’s “Stinger’s Nest” food pantry with essential grab-and-go items for students. Each participating business hosted a collection box, and together they filled the pan-

try with much-needed non-perishable food and hygiene products. “What began as a student-led campus initiative [Thanksgiving Box of Blessings] has become a multi-state network of organizations and people who believe that when we lift up students, we lift up our entire region,” said Letia James, Heritage Digital brand strategy director and FDTC alumna. The donation event, held Sept. 9 at FDTC, brought together community leaders,

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McLeod Foundation gets \$1M in grants

Money for pediatrics, sex assault exams

SPECIAL TO THE MORNING NEWS

FLORENCE — The McLeod Health Foundation has received two grants from The Duke Endowment totaling \$1,145,000 to expand the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program and to support staffing costs for the new Pediatric Behavioral Health Crisis Stabilization Unit. The first grant for \$565,000 will expand the current Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program to serve victims presenting to McLeod Health’s rural hospitals. By training Emergency Department staff to facilitate forensic medical examinations and utilizing high quality equipment, McLeod SANE staff members will ensure remote exams and evidence collection processes are of the same caliber as in-person exams at McLeod Regional Medical Center and McLeod Health Carolina Forest. This initiative will be the first of its kind in the Carolinas and one of a small handful across the nation. The second grant for \$580,000 will support staffing costs at the new Pediatric Behavioral Health Crisis Stabilization Unit in the McLeod Children’s Hospital for its first two years. The EmpATH (Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment, and Healing) model is an innovative form of health-care delivery centered on stabilization and rapid improvement. Everything about the unit, from the furniture to the open floorplan and favorable staff-to-patient ratios, is designed to lower anxiety and promote decompression. The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SC DHHS) recently funded the construction of EmpATH units across the state, but the unit at McLeod is one of the very few exclusively pediatric units. “We are grateful for The Duke Endowment’s trust and continued support of our initiatives at McLeod Health,” says Elizabeth Jones, Executive

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Charlie Kirk killing adds to roll call of violence

LISA MASCARO AND ALI SWENSON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the tragic roll call of violence in American public life, Charlie Kirk’s name joins what has fast become a long list. The 31-year old commentator, who cast his professional life rousing other young people to embrace or debate his brand

of conservatism, was slain doing what he does best: holding a provocative question-and-answer session on a college campus. Kirk was sparring with a questioner at Utah Valley University over who commits gun violence when the shot rang out. President Donald Trump, a survivor of assassination at-

tempts including at a 2024 campaign rally, announced on social media: Kirk was dead. “It has to stop,” House Speaker Mike Johnson pleaded from the U.S. Capitol. “This is not who we are.” Condemnation of the violence came quickly, from all corners and across the political divide, and it was universal — but it has

never been enough. Within minutes a shouting match erupted during a moment of silence in the House. One Republican lawmaker wanted an actual prayer for Kirk; Democrats called for changes in gun laws. Online, certain far-right figures responded with anger

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Weather

Sunny and pleasant
High 83
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