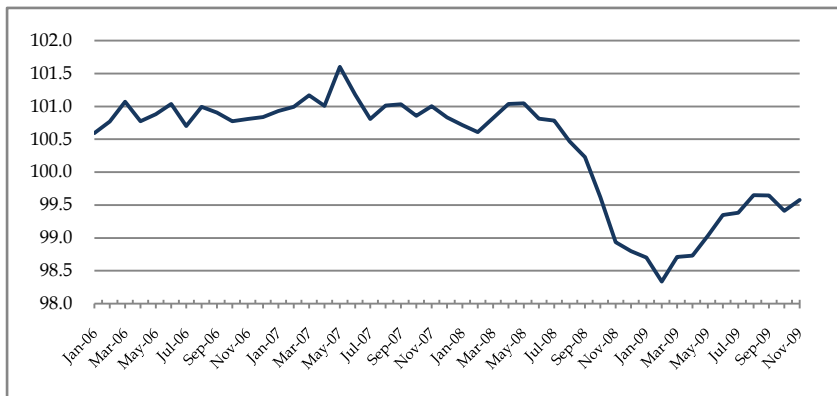


S.C. Leading Index Recovers in November

Following two months of modest declines, the South Carolina Leading Index (SCLI) moved higher in November, increasing 0.11 points (from an upwardly revised October figure) to a value of 99.58. The index, which provides a forward look at the state's economy for the upcoming three-to-six months, increased 1.06 percent. The index was largely weighed down by the month-over-month weakness in permitting for residential construction, which declined 21.5 percent since October. Other SCLI components improved in November. Weekly initial claims for Unemployment Insurance decreased, while weekly manufacturing hours grew 2.4 percent. Jobs available online remained stable at 44,100 unduplicated positions statewide, and the South Carolina stock index rose 1.8 percent during November.

-Rebecca M. Gunnlaugsson, Ph.D.



Source: South Carolina Department of Commerce

Residential Home Sales Continue Rise

The volume of home sales throughout the state experienced its second consecutive month of year-over-year growth, rising 18.3 percent October over October followed by a 63.0 percent increase for the November over November period. Overall sales activity for the month was down 7.4 percent compared to November 2007. After reaching a recent peak in the summer of 2008, the median homes sales price dropped 21.8 percent to its low in January 2009. Prices have regained ground since then, in part due to record low interest rates as well as the federal tax credit for first time home buyers. Meanwhile, the Conference Board's index of consumer confidence rose to 52.9 in December from 50.6 the previous month. Consumer expectations, along with the strength of the labor market, the reduced impact of federal tax credits, and the impact of foreclosures will largely shape the path of the housing market in 2010.

The South Carolina Department of Commerce's Research Division is a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary group of professionals dedicated to the collection, analysis and dissemination of precise, timely data. The team of 13 individuals—including two Ph.D.s and seven Master's degrees—has experience ranging from economics and business to statistics, information technology, and more. The group integrates workforce and economic development research through the incorporation of federally-funded Labor Market Information directives and state-funded workforce and economic development initiatives. If you would like to receive Commerce's monthly Economic Outlook, e-mail EconomicOutlook@SCcommerce.com.

KEY S.C. INDICATORS

Income

-21.2%

Retail Sales

fell \$2.58 billion in November over October and were down \$0.19 billion compared to November 2008.

South Carolina Department of Revenue

+1.8%

South Carolina Stock Index

increased 1.35 index points to close at 76.06 the last day in November.

Bloomberg

Employment

-0.1%

Nonfarm Employment

fell by 1,500 jobs in November, propelled by seasonal declines in the tourism industry.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+0.1%

Labor Force

increased by a seasonally-adjusted 2,079 people in November.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+0.3%

Unemployment Rate

rose 0.3 points in November, from a downwardly revised October figure, to a seasonally adjusted rate of 12.3 percent.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+2.4%

Manufacturing Weekly Hours

increased one hour from an upwardly revised October figure to 42.2 hours.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

0%

Available Online Job Postings

remained stable statewide in November at 44,100 online job postings.

The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index

Real Estate

-9.4%

Single-Family Home Sales Price

fell to \$138,000 in November. Closings fell 2.6 percent over October but increased 63.0 percent over November 2008.

South Carolina Association of Realtors

-21.5%

Building Permits

decreased 21.5 percent over last month but increased 19.5 percent over last year.

U.S. Census

South Carolina Employment

Non-Seasonally Adjusted Wage and Salary Employment

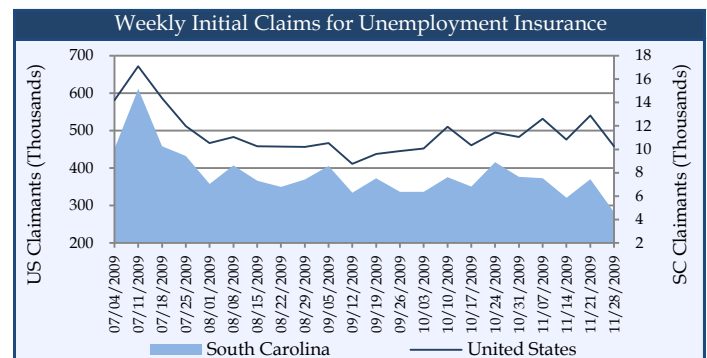
Employment statewide fell in November by approximately 1,500 non-seasonally adjusted workers. Government added 1,900 positions, primarily driven by the local government sector. 1,100 new positions were added in Retail Trade, 1,400 in Educational and Health Services, 900 in Professional and Scientific, and 600 in the Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing sector. 2,000 positions were added in Administrative Support Services, a sector largely dominated by temporary staffing firms. Leisure and Hospitality continued to eliminate seasonal positions in November, releasing an additional 6,600 workers. Finally, the Construction industry shed 1,700 workers.

Industry Sector	November 2009	Previous Month	Previous Year	% Change Month Ago	% Change Year Ago
Goods Producing	312,000	313,100	351,300	-0.35	-11.19
Natural Resources and Mining	4,100	4,100	4,200	0.00	-2.38
Construction	96,000	97,700	110,700	-1.74	-13.28
Construction of Buildings	23,600	24,300	26,900	-2.88	-12.27
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	13,500	13,500	14,800	0.00	-8.78
Specialty Trade Contractors	58,900	59,900	69,000	-1.67	-14.64
Manufacturing	211,900	211,300	236,400	0.28	-10.36
Durable Goods	115,700	115,700	132,900	0.00	-12.94
Nondurable Goods	96,200	95,600	103,500	0.63	-7.05
Service Providing	1,541,400	1,541,800	1,552,900	-0.03	-0.74
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	357,600	356,500	369,900	0.31	-3.33
Wholesale Trade	67,900	68,100	70,500	-0.29	-3.69
Retail Trade	227,700	226,600	235,100	0.49	-3.15
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	62,000	61,800	64,300	0.32	-3.58
Information	29,700	29,600	29,100	0.34	2.06
Finance	102,100	101,900	104,600	0.20	-2.39
Finance and Insurance	74,200	73,700	75,800	0.68	-2.11
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	27,900	28,200	28,800	-1.06	-3.13
Professional and Business Services	224,500	221,900	216,100	1.17	3.89
Professional, Scientific, and Technical	80,300	79,400	74,100	1.13	8.37
Management of Companies and Enterprises	15,300	15,600	15,500	-1.92	-1.29
Administrative Support and Waste Management	128,900	126,900	126,500	1.58	1.90
Educational and Health Services	211,000	209,600	210,000	0.67	0.48
Leisure and Hospitality	195,600	202,200	201,400	-3.26	-2.88
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	26,000	28,200	26,700	-7.80	-2.62
Accommodation and Food Services	169,600	174,000	174,700	-2.53	-2.92
Other Services	70,100	71,200	71,000	-1.54	-1.27
Total Private	1,502,600	1,506,000	1,553,400	-0.23	-3.27
Government	350,800	348,900	350,800	0.54	0.00
Federal Government	32,400	32,700	30,700	-0.92	5.54
State Government	100,300	99,800	102,200	0.50	-1.86
Local Government	218,100	216,400	217,900	0.79	0.09
Total Nonfarm	1,853,400	1,854,900	1,904,200	-0.08	-2.67

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Initial UI Claims Lower in November

Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance (UI) declined slightly during the month of November, reaching a two-year low of 4,621 claims the week ending November 28th. Average weekly initial claim volume for November is 52.0 percent below levels of the same period of 2008. Nationally, continued claims reversed their declining movement, in part due to new extensions to the federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program. U.S. continued claims attained levels of 5.4 million for the last week of November. At the same time, continued claims in South Carolina declined further to 78,933 the final week of the month. Future increases could be expected, however, as the full effect of the federal benefit extension reaches the state.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor



South Carolina Real Estate

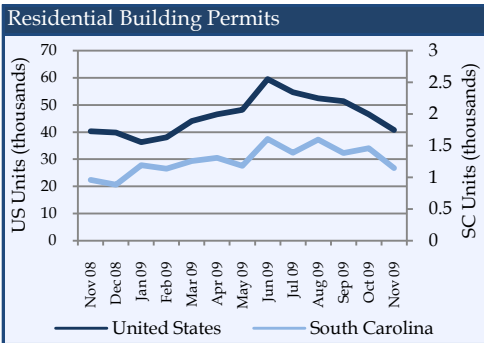
Residential home sales witnessed another year-over-year increase in November, increasing 63.0 percent over November of 2008. The median sales price fell to \$138,000, representing a 9.4 percent month-over-month decrease and a 5.8 percent year-over-year decrease. Home units in various stages of foreclosure decreased 23.2 percent (670 units) over October but increased 9.8 percent (198 units) over the period one year ago. Permits

for residential building across the state increased by 147 units in November, a 19.5 percent increase over November 2008. This figure represents a month-over-month decline of 21.5 percent. Year-over-year permit valuation also increased, rising \$36.1 million over November 2008, or 23.1 percent. This figure also represents a 14.3 percent decline over October.

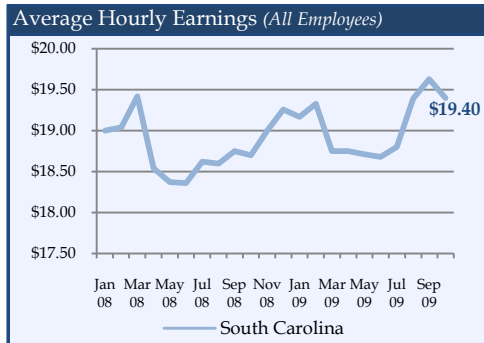
	Month	Current	Previous Year	% Change Year Ago	2009 YTD	2008 YTD	% Change Year Ago
Closings	November	3,997	2,452	63.0%	39,178	43,623	-10.2%
Median Sales Price*	November	138.0	146.5	-5.8%	142.0	155.0	-8.4%
Foreclosures	November	2,219	2,021	9.8%	27,644	14,323	93.0%
Residential Building Permits-Total	November	1,146	959	19.5%	14,645	24,391	-40.0%
Residential Building Permits-Valuation*	November	192,381	156,324	23.1%	2,403,081	3,929,500	-38.8%

* Thousands of US dollars. Source: S.C. Association of Realtors, RealtyTrac, U.S. Census

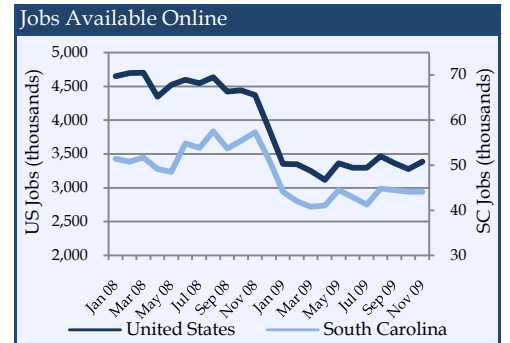
Business Activity



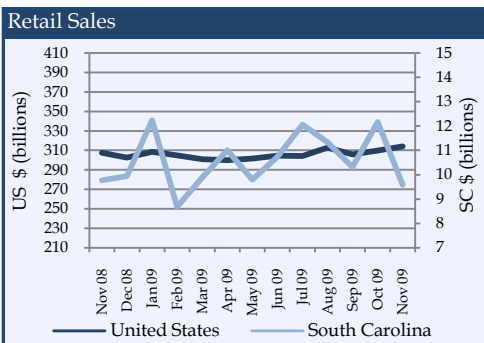
Source: U.S. Census



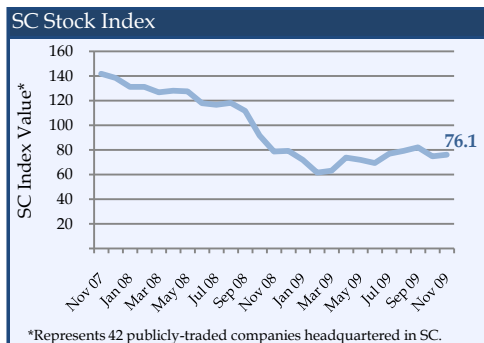
Source: U.S. Department of Labor



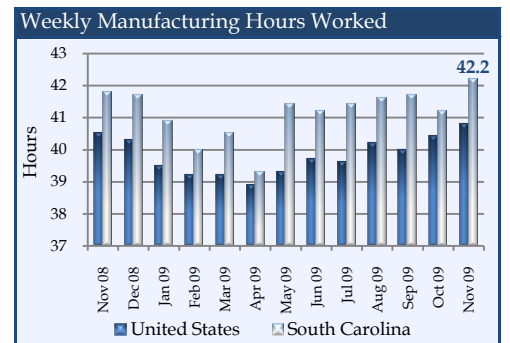
Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue

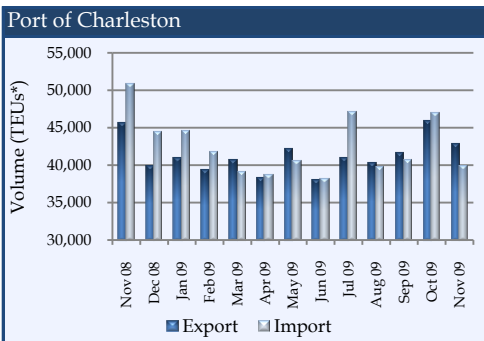


Source: Bloomberg

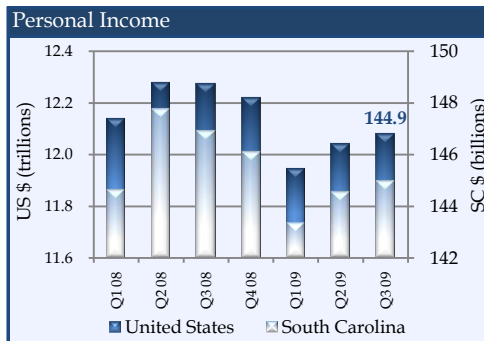


Source: U.S. Department of Labor

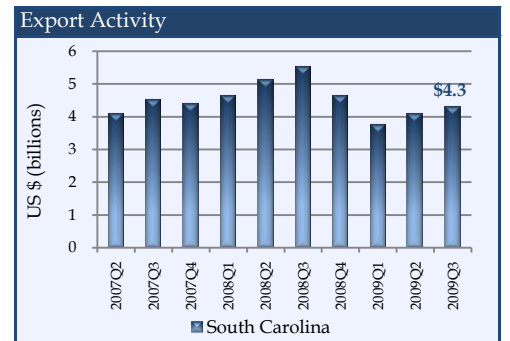
Income and Output



*Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units. Source: SC Ports Authority



Source: U.S. Census



Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census

South Carolina Regional Update

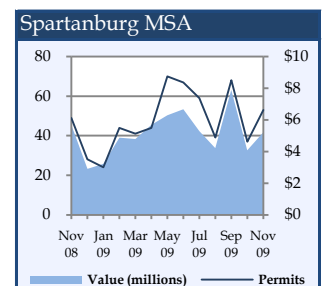
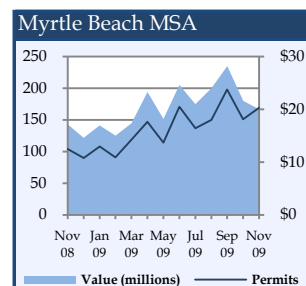
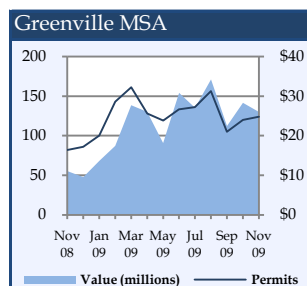
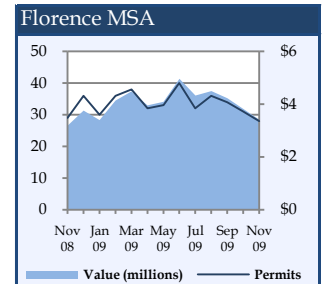
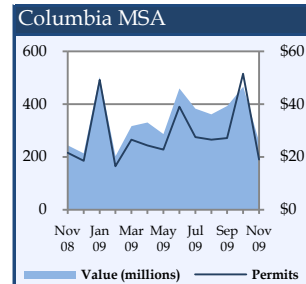
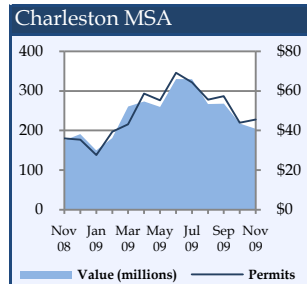
The South Carolina Regional Update provides a snapshot of the most recent economic figures for the six largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in the state. The Brookings Institution MetroMonitor ranks Columbia as the fourth strongest metropolitan area in economic recovery during the third quarter of 2009.

Home Sales

MSA	Indicator	Nov 08	Nov 09
Charleston	Sales Volume	435	783
	Median Price (000's)	\$186	\$173
Columbia	Sales Volume	403	682
	Median Price (000's)	\$136	\$136
Florence	Sales Volume	92	152
	Median Price (000's)	\$123	\$114
Greenville	Sales Volume	414	581
	Median Price (000's)	\$155	\$133
Myrtle Beach	Sales Volume	309	573
	Median Price (000's)	\$167	\$146
Spartanburg	Sales Volume	182	229
	Median Price (000's)	\$120	\$119
South Carolina	Sales Volume	2,452	3,997
	Median Price (000's)	\$146.5	\$138.0

Source: S.C. Association of Realtors

Building Permits



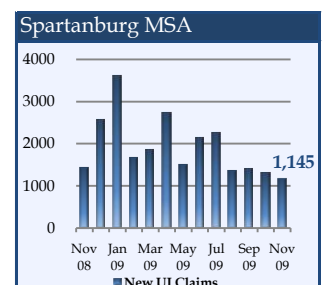
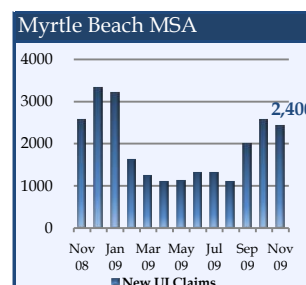
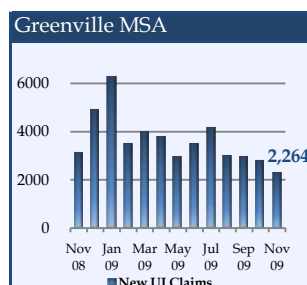
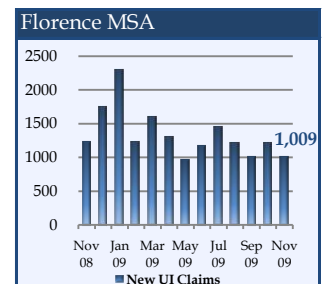
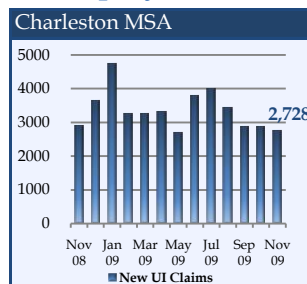
Source: U.S. Census

Employment

MSA	Indicator	Oct 09	Nov 09
Charleston	Employment (000's)	289.7	289.8
	Unemployment Rate	9.9	10.1
Columbia	Employment (000's)	341.9	339.8
	Unemployment Rate	9.5	9.8
Florence	Employment (000's)	85.6	85.1
	Unemployment Rate	12.3	12.3
Greenville	Employment (000's)	285.9	286.0
	Unemployment Rate	10.7	10.7
Myrtle Beach	Employment (000's)	113.2	110.7
	Unemployment Rate	12.1	13.3
Spartanburg	Employment (000's)	122.3	121.9
	Unemployment Rate	12.4	12.5
South Carolina	Employment (000's)	1,907.4	1,896.4
	Unemployment Rate	12.0	12.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (MSA figures not seasonally adjusted)

Unemployment Insurance Claims



Source: SCDOC analysis of SCESC data

US Metropolitan Economic Recovery Rank

4 th	23 rd	28 th	45 th	64 th	Represents performance of the largest 100 US Metropolitan Statistical Areas across four indicators: 1. Employment 2. Real Housing Price 3. Unemployment Rate 4. Gross Metropolitan Output
Columbia	Augusta (GA-SC)	Greenville	Charleston	Charlotte (NC-SC)	

Source: Brookings Institute 3rd Quarter 2009 MetroMonitor.