



**Media Contact:**  
Anna Frances Gardner  
Marketing Coordinator  
[ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org)  
770-813-3388

## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:**

Thursday, April 2, 2026

### **Chairwoman Carlotta Harrell Delivers 2026 State of Henry County Address** *Record-Breaking Crowd of 400+ Attended Council for Quality Growth's Annual Event*

HENRY COUNTY, GA – On Thursday morning, April 2, 2026, the [Council for Quality Growth](https://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org), in partnership with Henry County, hosted a record-breaking crowd for the 2026 State of Henry County Address at Stockbridge Community Church. Presented by [Geosam Capital Group](https://www.geosam.com), [Piedmont Henry Hospital](https://www.piedmont-henry.com), and [Truist](https://www.truist.com), the breakfast and program featured the annual address from the Chairwoman of Henry County's Board of Commissioners, Carlotta Harrell. More than 400 Council and Chamber members, elected officials, businesses, residents, county staff, and partners of Henry County attended.

Chairwoman Carlotta Harrell delivered her 6<sup>th</sup> State of the County address by reflecting on the resilience Henry County demonstrated throughout 2025. "If there is one word that defined Henry County last year, it is resilience," she said, noting that economic challenges and national instability tested local governments across the country. Despite these pressures, Harrell emphasized that Henry County remained strong by maximizing resources, relying on partnerships, and continuing to move forward with innovation. "Local leadership matters most when systems above us fall short," she said.



*[Henry County Chairwoman Carlotta Harrell delivers the 2026 State of Henry County Address]*

The Chairwoman first addressed transportation and infrastructure, highlighting roadway improvements underway across the county, including projects on Henry and McDonough Parkway, Burg and Dutchtown Roads, and Mill and Rock Quarry Roads, along with new sidewalks on Fairview and Flippen Roads. In addition, 200

-more-



**Media Contact:**  
Anna Frances Gardner  
Marketing Coordinator  
[ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org)  
770-813-3388

county roads will be resurfaced between now and next spring as part of a \$43.8 million investment. Harrell credited the county's progress to voter support of SPLOST and announced plans to pursue T-SPLOST 2 this November to continue funding mobility improvements. She also highlighted Henry County's use of connected vehicle technology that synchronizes traffic signals with emergency vehicles to improve response times.

Public safety remained a major focus of the address. Harrell reported that proactive enforcement led to a 17% increase in DUI and drug arrests, while key crime categories such as vehicle theft and home burglaries declined by as much as 30%. She also highlighted investments in emergency services, including renovations to the county jail, expanded accountability court referrals, new telehealth partnerships for non-emergency 911 calls, and the reconstruction of Fire Station 5. In 2025 alone, Henry County Fire Rescue responded to more than 41,000 calls for service.

Turning to economic development, Harrell reported that the Henry County Development Authority helped bring 920 new jobs and \$883 million in capital investment to the county in 2025. Major projects included Nexus Circular's \$300 million plastics recycling facility, Brava Roofing Tiles' \$40 million investment, and United States Cold Storage's \$115 million facility. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Henry County also led Georgia's 12 largest counties in year-over-year employment growth. Harrell emphasized that workforce development partnerships with Henry County Schools and Southern Crescent Technical College are helping prepare residents for jobs in these growing industries. She also highlighted the ongoing expansion of Piedmont Henry Hospital, which will add 100 beds and three new operating rooms.

Harrell also highlighted quality of life investments across the county, including a new recreation center and e-sports lab at North Mount Carmel Park, new amenities at Bud Kelley Park and Butler's Bridge Park, and a new playground at Cochran Park. Construction is also nearing completion on the Henry County Aquatic Center and Outdoor Water Park, expected to open this summer. Altogether, the county has invested \$53 million in park improvements and amenities while continuing to expand programs serving seniors and residents across the community.

Several individuals and organizations were recognized during the address for their service to Henry County. Sam Baker and Kaiser Permanente received Henry Hero Awards, Officer Robert Adams was presented with the Desai Award for his life-saving actions during a tornado response, members of Henry County Fire Rescue from Stations 7 and 16 received the Shannon Pope Tough Guy Award, and Capital Projects Director Lynn Planchon received the Gary Barham Leadership Award for her leadership overseeing major county projects.

Chairwoman Harrell concluded by emphasizing the importance of thoughtful planning as Henry County continues to grow, highlighting the county's Unified Land Development Initiative and regional mobility investments. "Growth without structure is a risk, but growth with strategy is an opportunity," she said.

The Council for Quality Growth works with Chairwoman Harrell, Henry County, and its local municipalities year-round to advocate for our members doing business in those areas. "Chairwoman Harrell continues to lead Henry County with a clear vision for growth and long-term opportunity," said Michael E. Paris, President & CEO of the Council. "Even in a challenging environment, Henry County is advancing major infrastructure investments, strengthening its workforce pipeline, and creating the conditions for businesses and communities to thrive. The

-more-



**Media Contact:**  
Anna Frances Gardner  
Marketing Coordinator  
[ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org)  
770-813-3388

Council is proud to partner with the county and looks forward to the continued progress ahead.” Gerald McDowell, 2026 Chairman of the Council for Quality Growth and Executive Director of the ATL Airport Community Improvement Districts, added, “Henry County continues to demonstrate the kind of thoughtful planning and regional collaboration that strengthens our entire metro area. We are proud to support the county’s growth and success.”

The 2026 State of Henry also featured remarks from Mike Alexander, Chief Operating Officer at the Atlanta Regional Commission, who delivered an update on behalf of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, and Chief Judge Holly Veal, Superior Court of Henry County. Presenting sponsor remarks were provided by Patrick Brooks, Vice President of Geosam Capital Group, David Kent, CEO of Piedmont Henry Hospital, and Fadzai Konteh, Senior Vice President of Hospitals, Higher Education, & Government, at Truist. The Council for Quality Growth’s State of Henry County is the fifth of eight State of the County events held in 2026 and annually convenes the county’s business community with its local government bodies, as well as with other local leaders from across the region.

A photo gallery and the recording of the full event will be made in the coming days at <https://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org/news-press/>.



*[From left: Gerald McDowell, Patrick Brooks, Fadzai Konteh, Chairwoman Carlotta Harrell, David Kent, Pastor Jeff Daws, Michael Paris]*

-more-



**Media Contact:**  
Anna Frances Gardner  
Marketing Coordinator  
[ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ag@councilforqualitygrowth.org)  
770-813-3388

### **About the State of the County/Agency Series**

The Council for Quality Growth hosts 10 'State of' events across the region, including 8 counties and 2 agencies. We work in close collaboration with the office of the County Chairs in Cherokee, Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale, as well as with leadership at MARTA and the Atlanta Beltline, to provide a platform for our counties and agency partners deliver an update on achievements, projects, and the future that is specifically geared toward the business community and the Council's membership. A full calendar of the Council's 2026 Signature Events, including the State of the County/Agency series, can be viewed and downloaded here: [2026 Programs Calendar](#)

### **About the Council for Quality Growth**

The Council for Quality Growth is a trade organization that works to ensure continued growth and economic success for generations to come by providing advocacy, information, and education to its members. In its 41<sup>st</sup> year, the Council is committed to the mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth and is proactively involved in the formulation of policy and legislation critical to the growth and development industry. The Council addresses, head-on, strategic economic planning, infrastructure needs, and tough quality-of-life issues throughout the metro Atlanta region and state. For more information, please visit <http://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org>.

###