



LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

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I-526 Lowcountry Corridor **WEST & EAST**

Two Projects under development along the exiting I-526 Corridor:

West: *Paul Cantrell to Virginia Ave, includes reconstruction of the I-26 and I-526 System to System Interchange*

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

East: *Virginia Ave to US 17 in Mount Pleasant*
PLANNING PHASE of WORK

**Planning & Environmental Linkages
PEL STUDY**

A Challenging Corridor



82

Bridges
(existing)



14

Interchanges



20

Interstate
(miles)



80

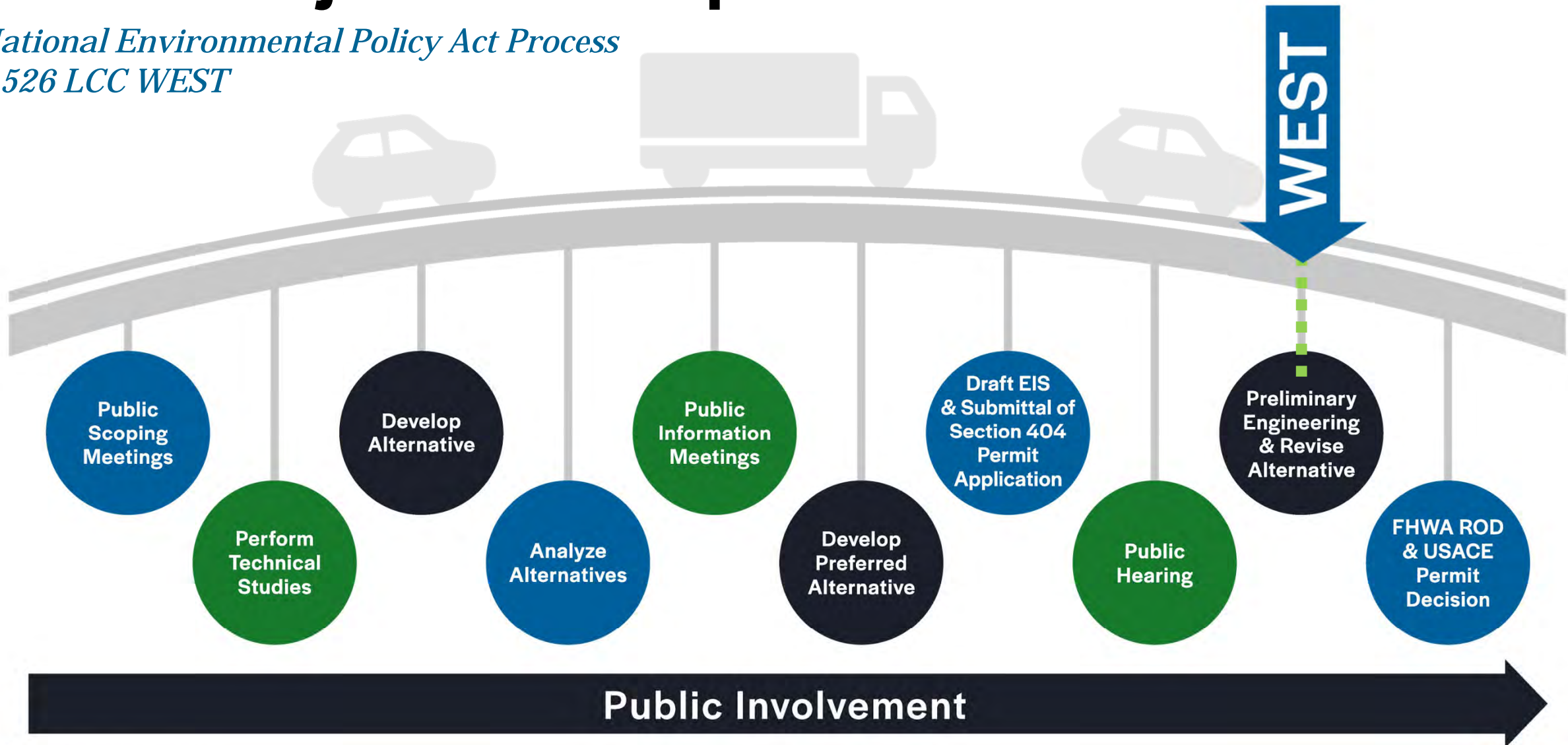
Roadway
(lane miles)

Unique Considerations

- 3 Major River Crossings
- 3 Major Ports
- International Airport / JBC
- Evacuation Lifeline
- High Seismic Risk / Critical Access Pathway

NEPA Project Development Process

*National Environmental Policy Act Process
I-526 LCC WEST*



Public Hearing Information

Public Hearing 2020

Project Website

9,000+ Pageviews; 24 Live Chats

526LowcountryCorridor.com/WESTPH

Community Office

13 Visits for Public Hearing Appts.

5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square



Official Public Hearing one-on-one appointments took place on:

Thurs., November 19 | 10 am - 7 pm

Sat., December 5 | 9 am - 4 pm

Tues., December 8 | 9 am - 6 pm

Wed., December 9 | 10 am - 7 pm

Live Virtual Comment Session

Tuesday, December 15, 2020 | 6:00 – 8:00 PM

40 Viewers



Comments Received

Public Hearing 2020

234 Total Comments

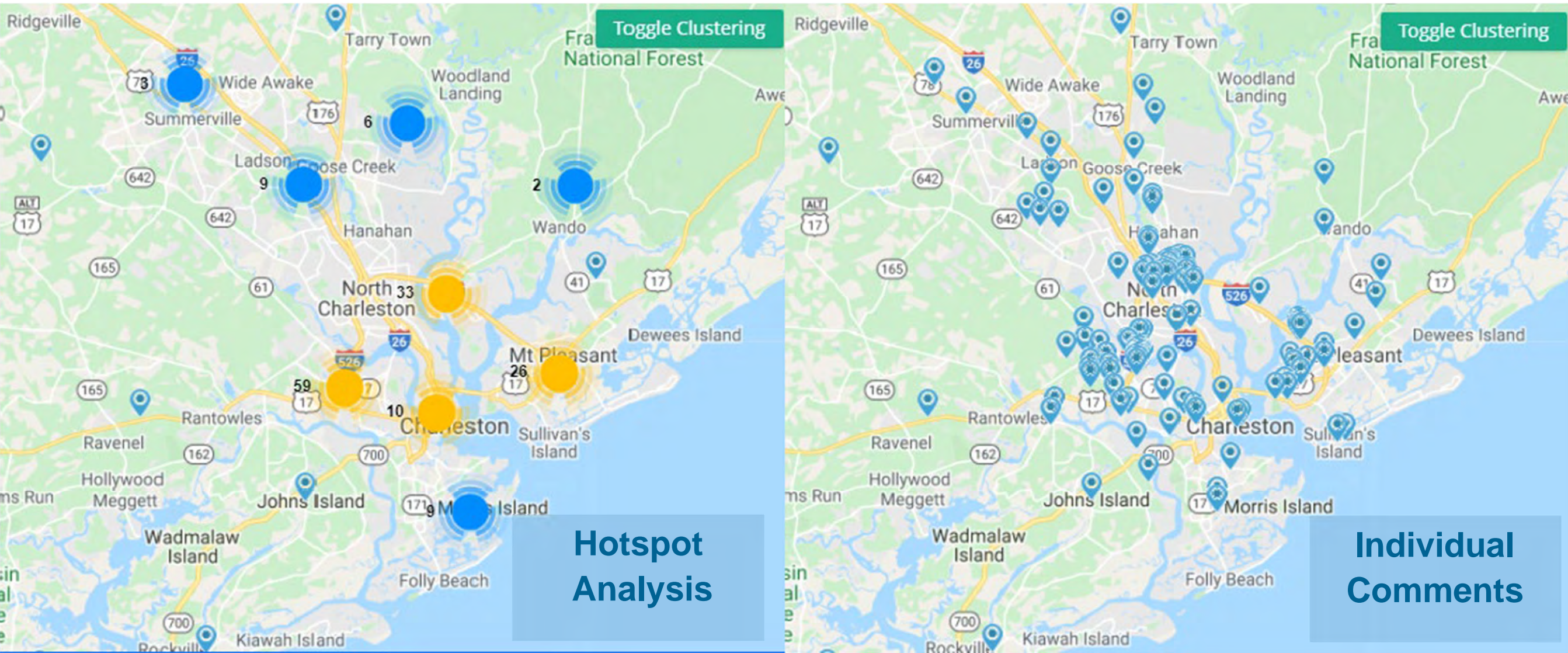


Project Website 104	Project Hotline 5	Live Virtual Comment Session 2
Email 51	Mail/Paper 48 (Includes EJ Surveys)	Live Chat 24

Public Hearing Comments Mapped

Public Hearing 2020

Note: Not all comments are shown within map extent; map focus is on the Study Area



What We Heard!

Public Hearing 2020

234 Total Comments

Note: Numbers below will not equal 100%

26%

Concerned with
Right-of-Way



12%

Concerned with
Interchanges



11%

In Favor of
Transit/BRT



7%

Environmental
Concerns



17%

Mention Noise
Impacts



10%

In Favor of Bike/
Ped Lanes



24%

Concerned with
Affordable Housing/
Community Mitigation



14%

Supportive of the
Project



41% of the noise comments
were positive (Ashley Harbor)

The Recommended Preferred Alternative

Full Fly-Through Video



**View the
Recommended
Preferred Alternative
in Action!**

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3CUxl-odgY



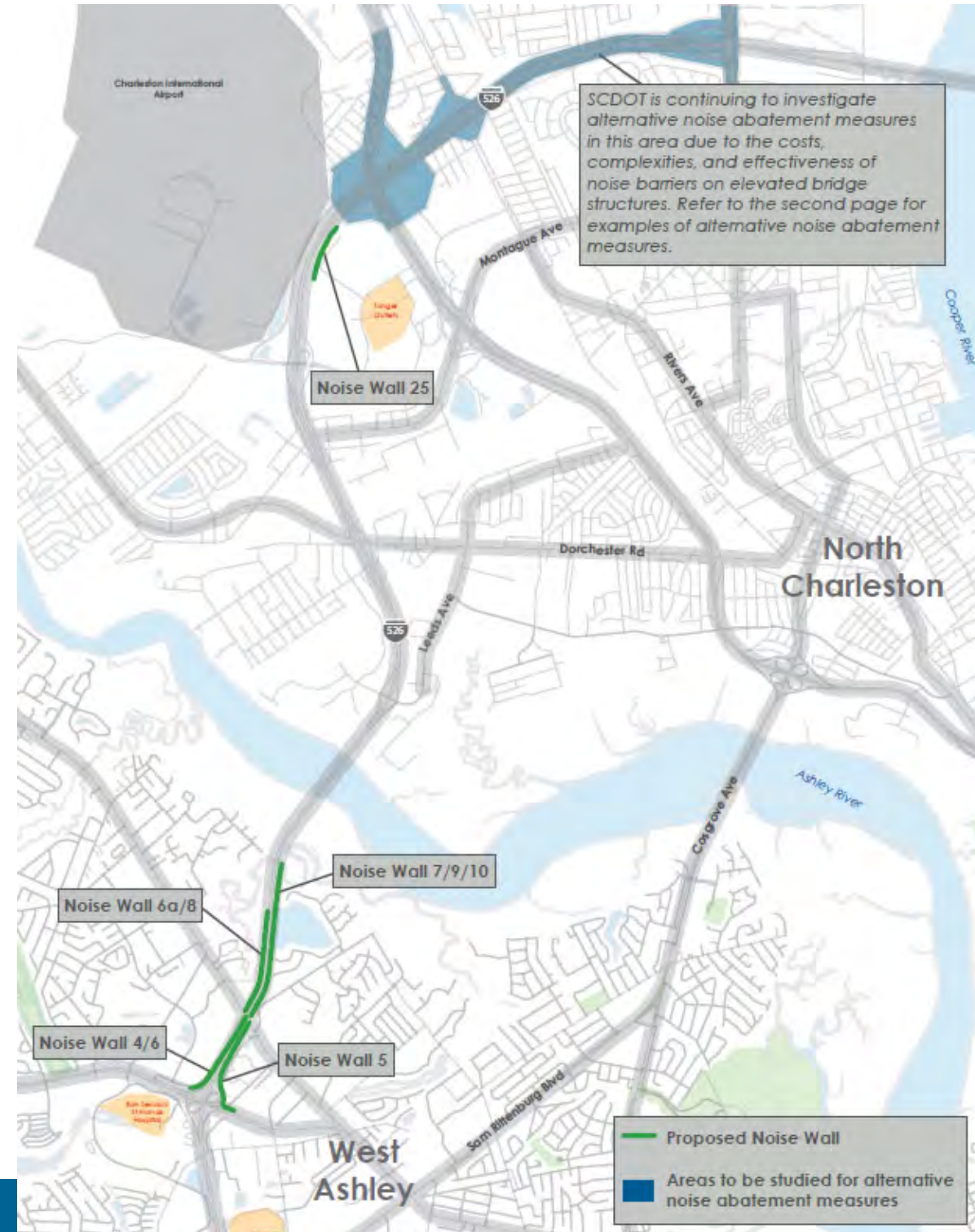
**Your voice
MATTERS**





We Heard You Noise Mitigation

- Noise Barrier proposed between Ashley River to Paul Cantrell
- Noise barrier @ Centre Pointe Apartments
- Renderings at public hearing
- Evaluating other noise mitigation measures such as **quiet bridge joints** or **quiet pavements** on the elevated roadway between Rivers & North Rhett Avenue

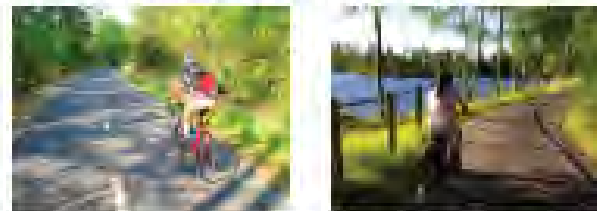


We Heard You Bicycle & Pedestrian Needs

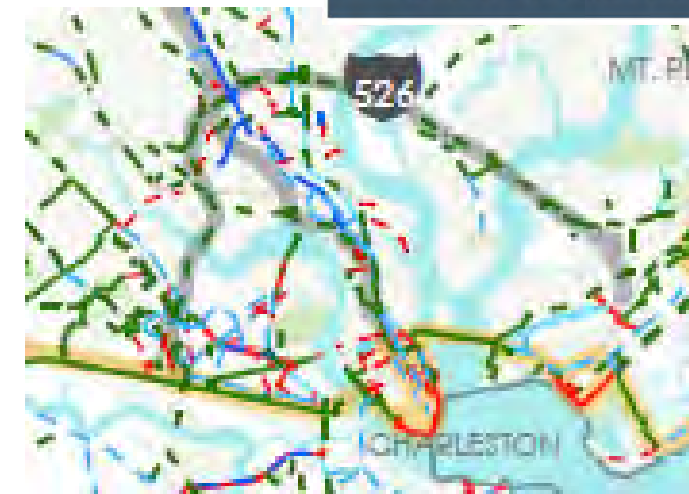
- Shared Use Pathway (SUP) prescribed for I-526 corridor in regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
- FHWA will allow SUP along an interstate corridor when positioned behind the controlled Access Fence
- SUP may transition up to interstate structures on Major River Crossings (*shoulder & barrier separation required*)



SHARED USE PATH



Shared use paths are facilities used by bicyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized modes of transportation.



SCDOT's Commitment to You

Bicycle & Pedestrian Needs

- Additional width is being proposed on the Ashley River bridge in the Preferred Alternative in order to allow the addition of a Shared Use Pathway in the future
- SCDOT will look for opportunities to identify surplus Rights of Way during the Acquisitions that could be used for a SUP along the interstate corridor



Example of Possible SUP Retrofit

We Heard You

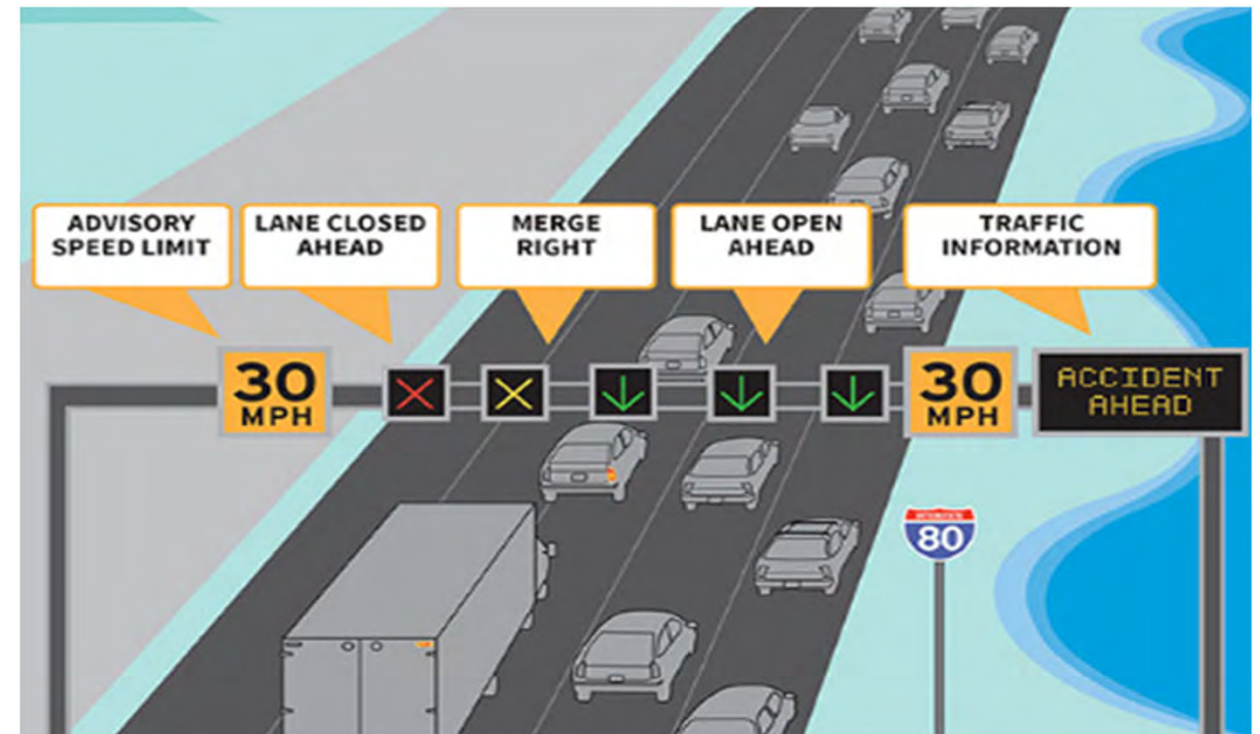
Future Congestion Management Considerations

Infrastructure improvements with the future operations of the Corridor in mind...

GOAL – *Sustainability of operations / congestion management of future corridor*

Proposed 12 ft shoulders allow flexibility for future traffic operations technologies to be implemented for congestion, such as:

- ✓ Active Traffic Management
- ✓ Hard Shoulder Running
- ✓ Managed Lanes
- ✓ Transit - Bus on Shoulder
- ✓ Variable Speed Limits
- ✓ Weather Advisories / Incident Management



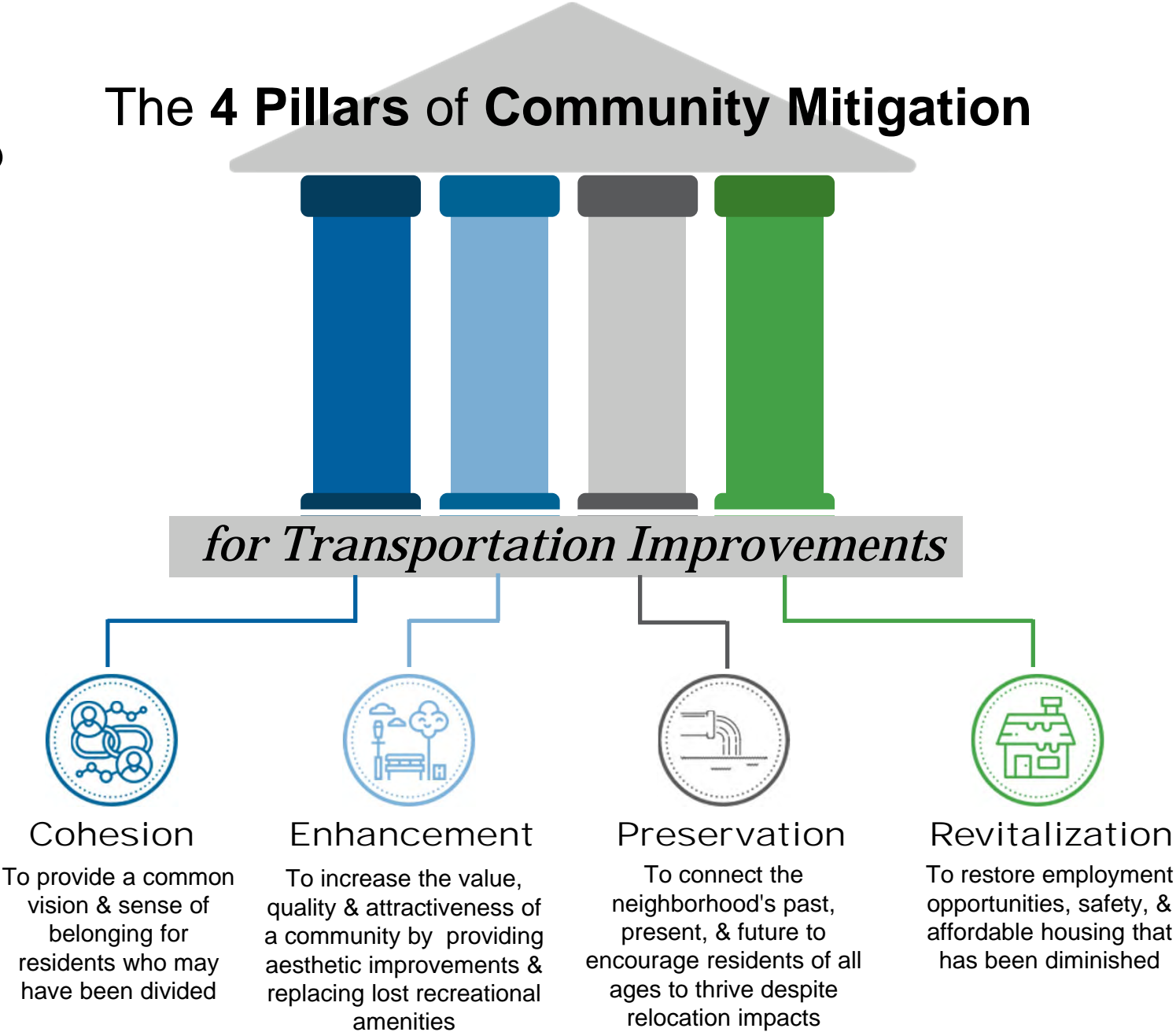


Community Mitigation



What is Mitigation?

The 4 Pillars of Community Mitigation



What is a Community Mitigation Plan?

The overarching goal of the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST Community Mitigation Plan is to effectively mitigate project impacts in partnership with residents of the Ferndale, Russelldale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park neighborhoods.

How is the I-526 LCC WEST Community Mitigation Plan Developed?

By identifying & considering the social needs & priorities of neighborhood residents.

Community Office

In November 2019, a Community Office was opened in close proximity to the potentially impacted communities. Located in Gas Light Square at 5627 Rivers Avenue (CARTA Route 10), the Community Office is where you can meet one-on-one with the project team and connect with resource specialists such as right-of-way relocation experts.



Community Advisory Council (CAC)

A Community Advisory Council (CAC) was formed as a resident-led group to facilitate meaningful engagement between residents and SCDOT.



Social Needs Assessment

The CAC and residents of the potentially impacted neighborhoods completed a Social Needs Assessment survey to provide insight into the daily operations, needs, and desires of the community.



WHAT IS PROPOSED TO BENEFIT MY COMMUNITY? *And When?*

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

PUBLIC HEARING

FINAL DESIGN
2021-2023

RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION
2023-2027

CONSTRUCTION
2027-2032

Mitigation Schedule is based on approval of environmental documentation without legal challenge; subject to change



Community History Preservation Study



Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan



Community Centers & Parks



Community Programs & Activities



**Connectivity;
Bike & Pedestrian Safety**



Affordable Housing



**Financial Literacy/
First-time Home Buyer Counseling**



School-to-Work Program



Pre-Employment Training



College Scholarships

We Heard You

ROW Impacts & Affordable Housing

- 88% of residential displacements are likely rental units
- SCDOT is partnering with SC Housing to leverage gap funding and Financing/Tax Credit programs to identify a qualified developer to create 100 affordable rental units near the impacted communities
- Displaced families that qualify for the affordable units will receive priority placement in new units



Rental Affordability

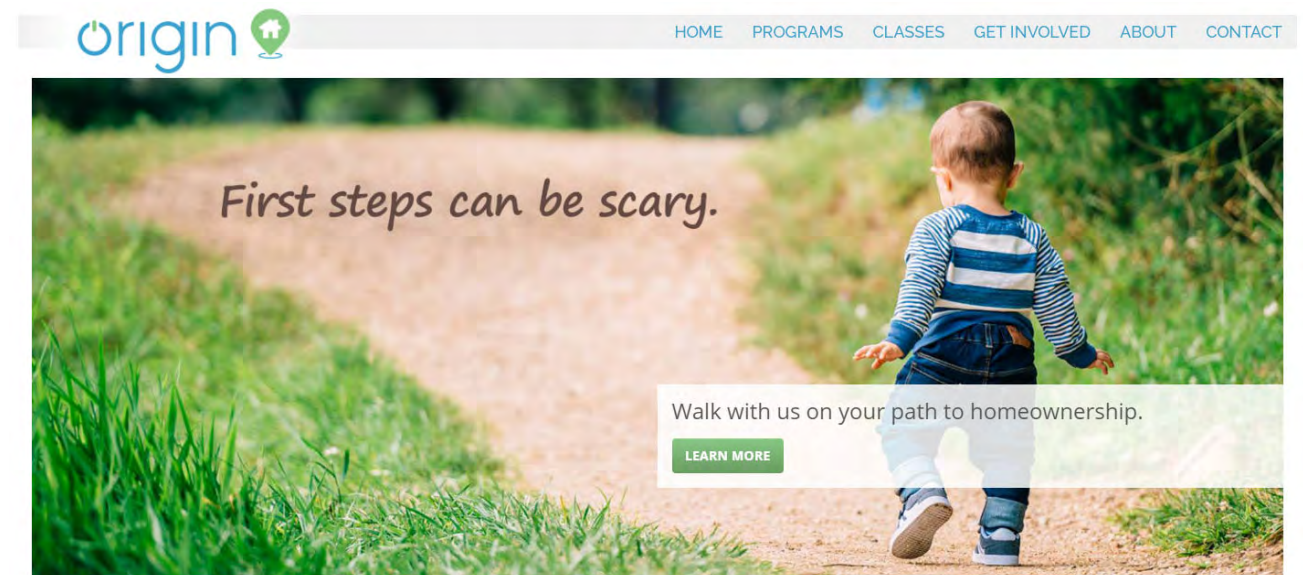
In 41 of 46 counties statewide, average South Carolina renters cannot afford a basic two-bed apartment without overextending their budget. Only five counties (Darlington, Fairfield, Hampton, Marlboro and Oconee) are considered to be affordable.



We Heard You

ROW Impacts & Affordable Home Ownership

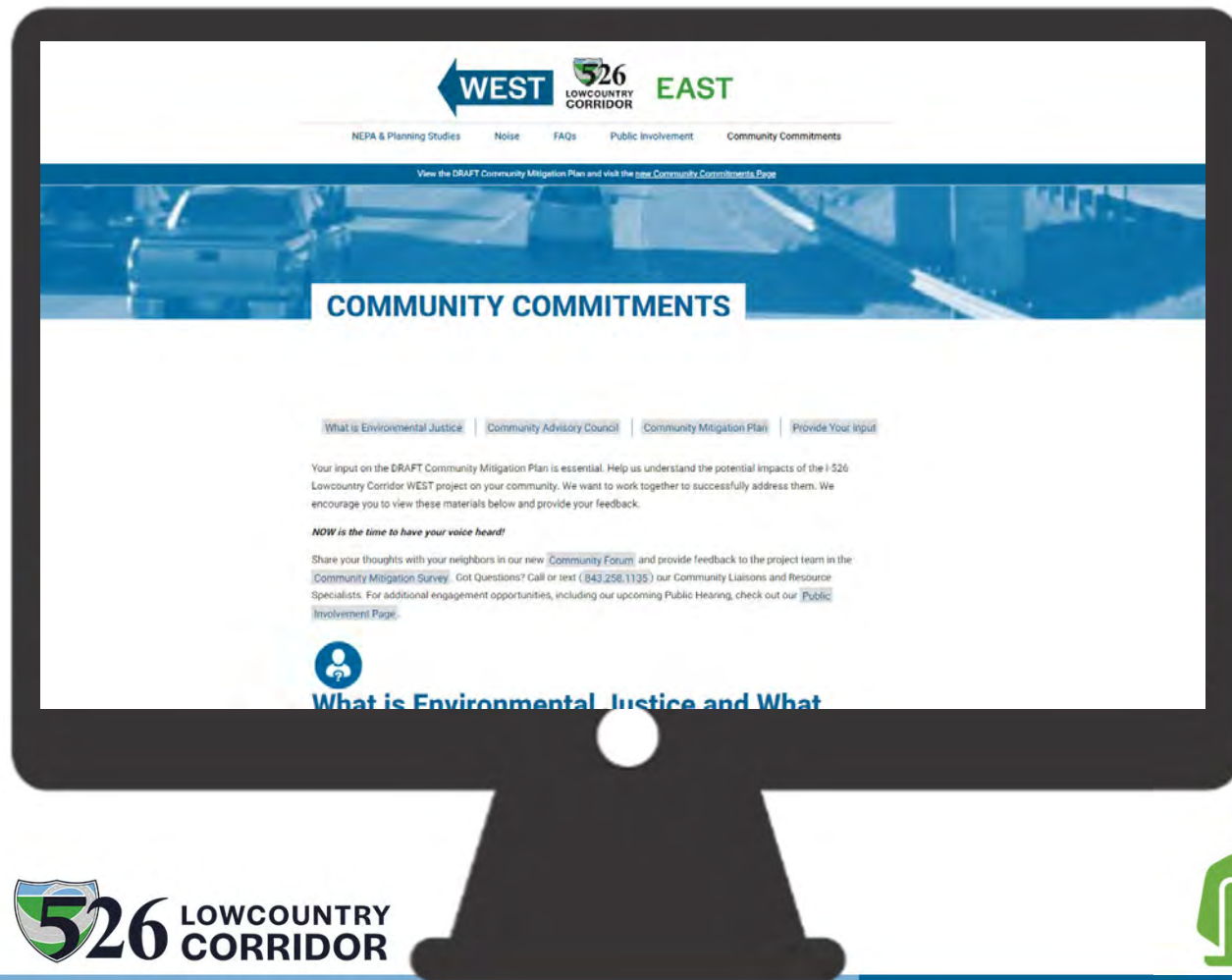
- SCDOT strives to work with displaced families to move into home ownership if desired
- SCDOT is partnering other agencies and organizations to bring together resources and workshops for impacted families
- SCDOT is actively purchasing vacant lots within the impacted communities for potential development into new homes



Input from the Impacted Communities

Community Commitments

526LowcountryCorridor.com/Community-Commitments



Community Commitment Webpage & Community Forum

NOW LIVE! Learn more about:

- What is Environmental Justice
- Community Advisory Council (CAC)
- DRAFT Environmental Justice Community Mitigation Plan
- Open House held on March 6th





Community Mitigation Plan

Total= \$43 M

Community Office, Workshops & Outreach
\$ 540,000 /yr
\$2.7 M total

Community Office
\$45,000/month

First Time Homebuyers & Financial Literacy

ROW workshops & Liaisons

Community Advisory Council / Project Oversight Committee

Local University or SC Works (over 5 years)
\$600,000

Scholarship Program
\$100,000

School to Work
\$250,000

Summer Transportation Institute Program
\$250,000

SC Housing Multi Family Rental Housing
\$1.5 M

Affordable Housing initiative through low income tax credit program; \$1.5M Gap funding through IGA

100 units for low income renters in the North Charleston Community

Families displaced by Project get priority placement; must meet Section 8 program criteria

Non-Profit Affordable Single Family Housing
\$1.5 M

Utilize lots purchased by SCDOT in impacted communities (valued at \$500K)

RFI to identify and select interested non-profits

Construction of Single Family Homes for displaced families wishing to be homeowners with non profits (such as Habitat for Humanity or Palmetto Community Land Trust)

City of North Charleston
\$15 M

Replacement Community Center along Filbin Creek

Community Pocket Parks in Russelldale & Highland Terrace

Multi-Use Pathway along Filbin Creek & Pedestrian Bridges over Filbin & RR

Enhanced Community Center Program Commitments outlined in IGA to ensure access

SCDOT Community Enhancements
\$16 M

Sidewalk & Pedestrian Improvements for safe connections to Community Centers & Transit Stops

Wayfinding Signs
Traffic Calming

Stormwater Improvements & Maintenance

Fund addition of bus shelters at Transit Stops bordering communities
\$175,000

I-26 Noise Walls
\$5.4 M

CAC Request for construction of Noise Walls along I-26 bordering the EJ neighborhoods

Community History Preservation
\$300,000

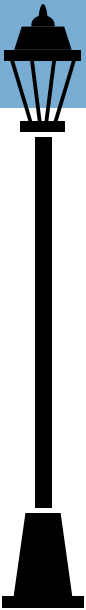
Dr. Fordham with College of Charleston to conduct history study

Cultural Displays to be included in Community Center

History Project report made available to community members in print and electronic media formats

Potential Lighting Improvements

Please show us where improvements are needed!



Potential Lighting

Things to Consider:

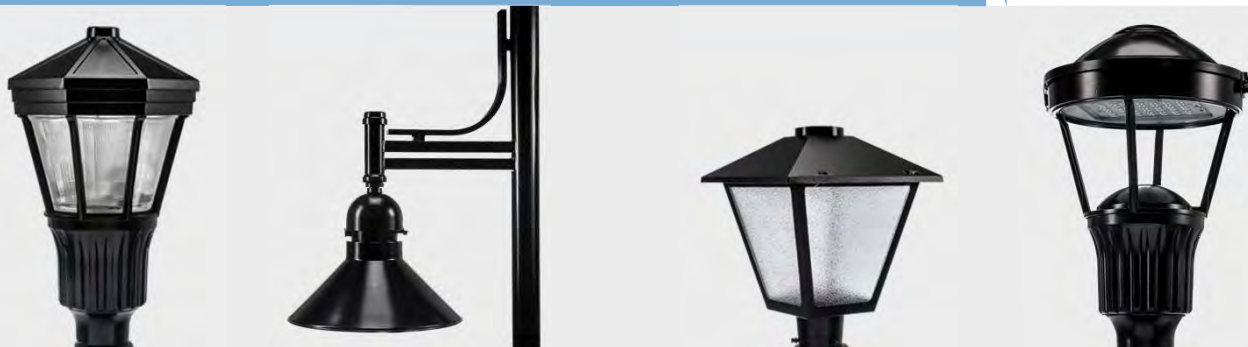
Does your neighborhood need additional lighting?

Where is it especially dark at night?

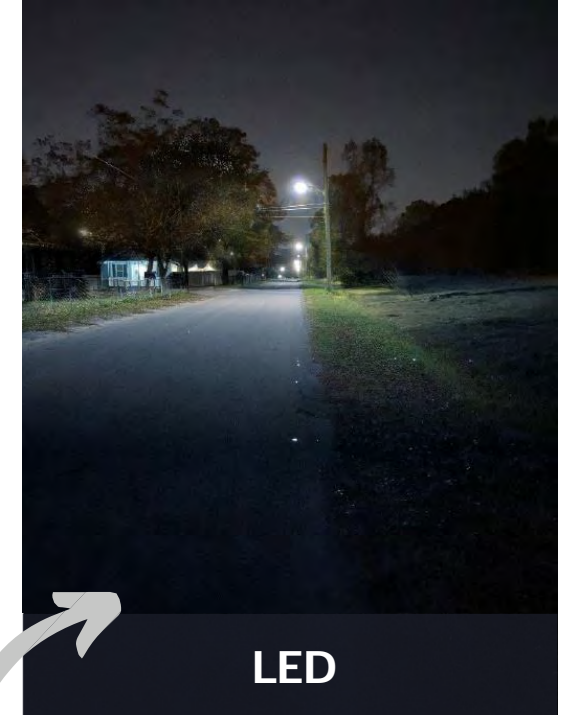
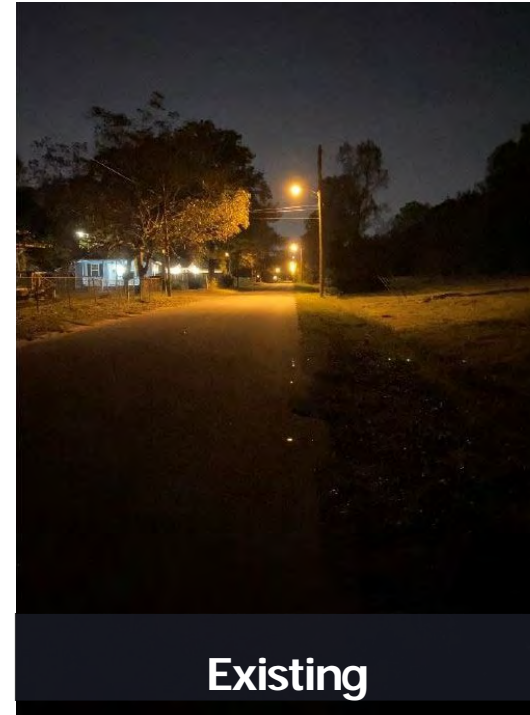
Do you want security cameras installed at community centers and small parks?

Is there such a thing as too much lighting?

Pedestrian Light Fixture Options



Existing Lighting vs LED Lighting



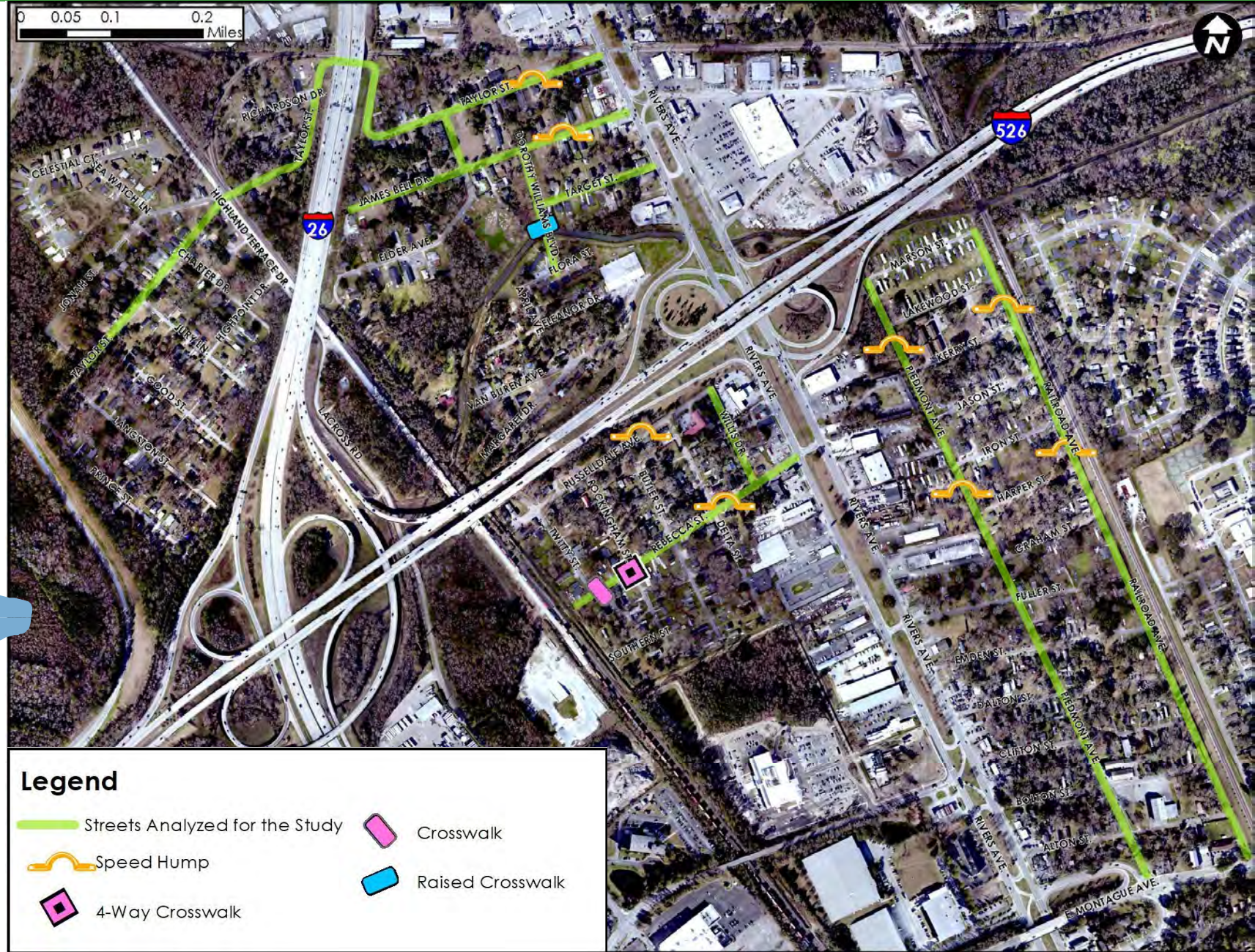
The City of North Charleston plans to install LED upgrades to existing streetlights in the Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, Russelldale, and Ferndale neighborhoods. These upgrades could occur as early as 2021.

The new LED fixtures are more energy efficient and have a naturally higher color rendering index (CRI), which is the measure of the fixture's ability to mimic natural daylight.

Potential Traffic Calming Infrastructure



Please show us where improvements are needed!



Potential Traffic Calming

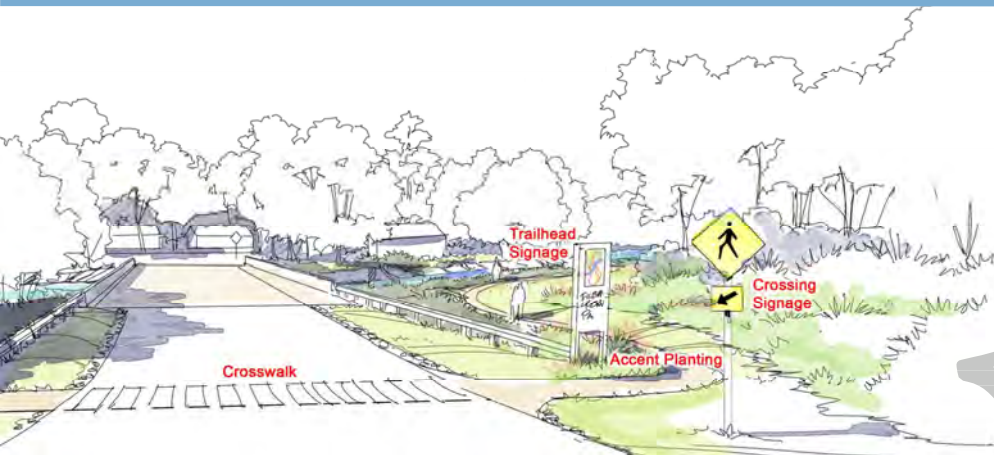
Things to Consider:

Have you noticed speeding in your neighborhood?

On which streets is speeding most problematic?

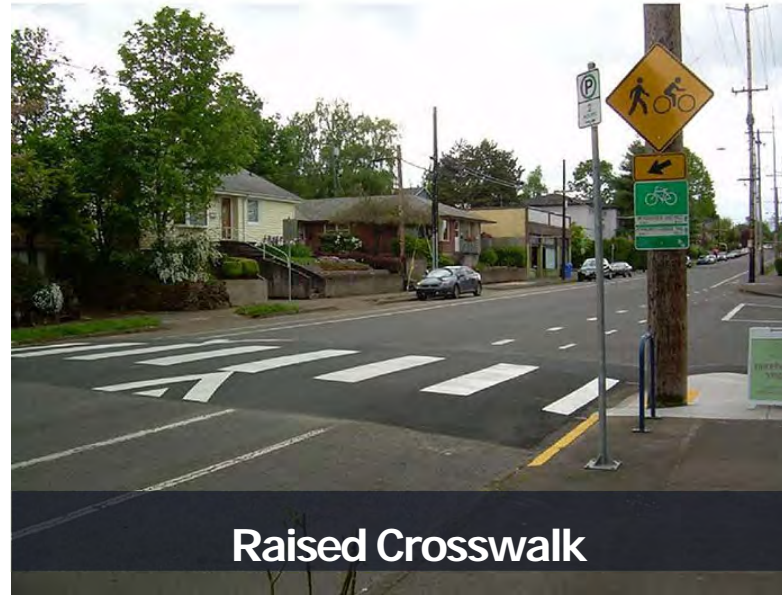
Do you advocate for speed-reducing amenities?

Conceptual Trail Crossing at Dorothy Williams Blvd.



This potential Shared Use Path would be built along with the replacement Community Center.

Which traffic calming option do you prefer?



Raised Crosswalk



Speed Humps



Median

Aesthetics & Landscaping Improvements

Potential Entrance Improvements:

- Ferndale - Piedmont Avenue
- Ferndale - Fuller Street
- Highland Terrace/Liberty Park - Taylor Street
- Russelldale - Rebecca Street

Which type of entrance landscaping do you prefer?



Do you support any of the following public art opportunities?



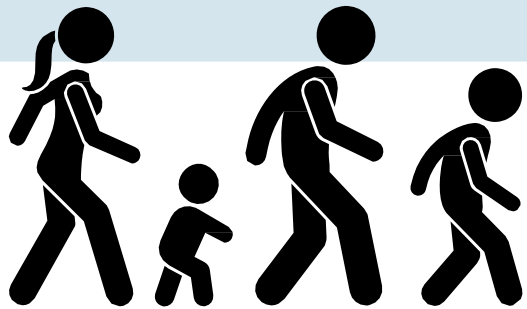
Pedestrian Amenity

Things to Consider:

Can you think of specific streets that need new or improved sidewalks?

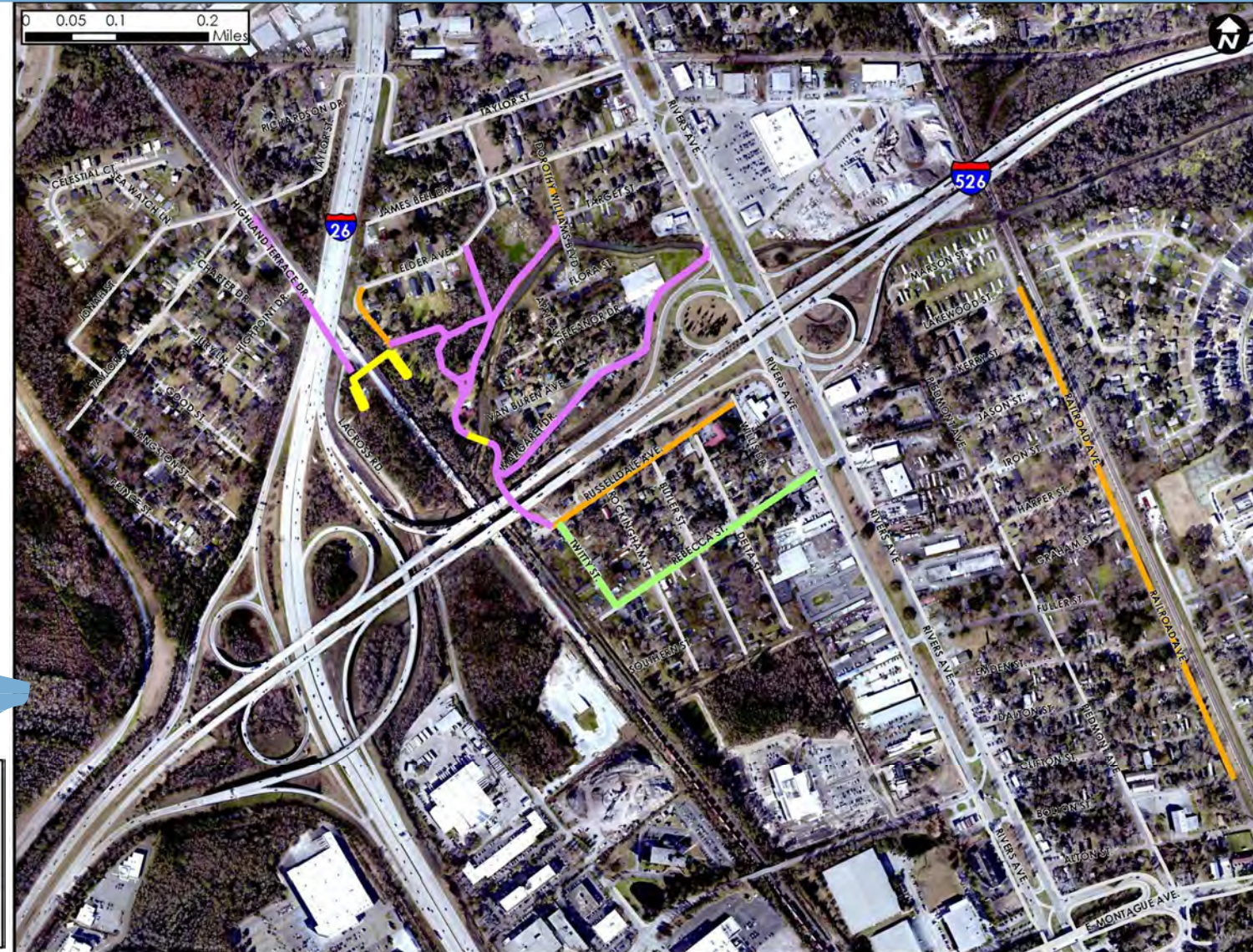
Where should SCDOT consider adding crosswalks?

Please show us where improvements are needed!



Legend			
	Existing Sidewalk		Potential New Sidewalk
	Potential Shared Use Pathway		Potential Sidewalk Improvements
	Potential Pedestrian Bridge		

Potential Pedestrian Amenities



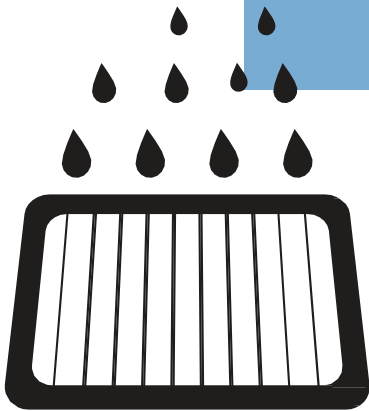
Potential Stormwater

Things to Consider:

Have you noticed excessive standing water after average rainstorms?

Where is standing water an issue?

Please show us where improvements are needed!



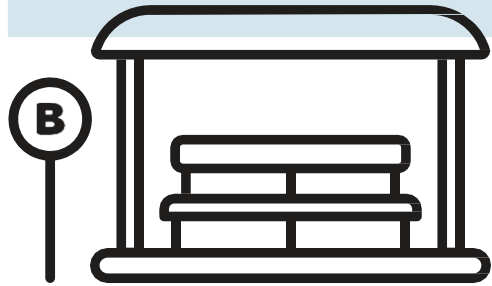
Stormwater Drainage Improvement Areas



Potential Bus Stop Improvements

What is Proposed?

SCDOT is proposing bus shelters to be installed at all stops between Taylor Street and Mall Drive that border the Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, and Russelldale neighborhoods.



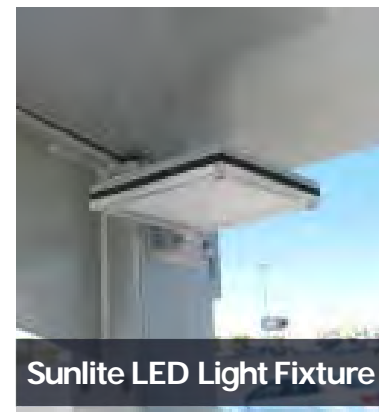
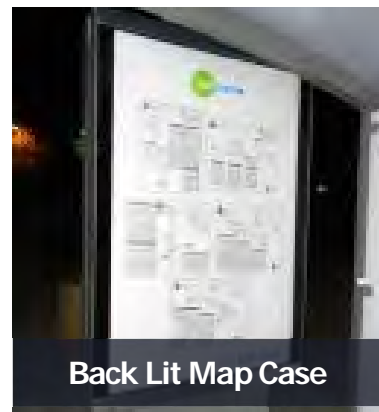
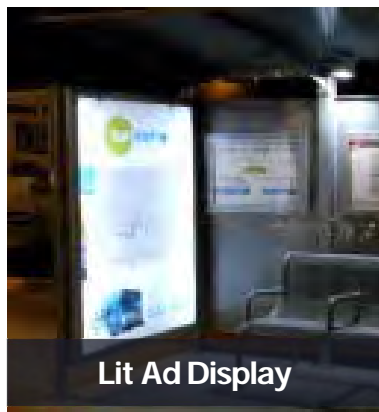
Picture a bus shelter like this!

CARTA Bus Stop Locations



CARTA Stops in Vicinity of I-526

- Basic Stop
- ▲ Stop with Shelter
- Stop with Bench
- Stop with Advertising Bench
- Proposed Improvements
- CARTA Routes



Personal & Professional Skills Training

What kind of skill-building classes might you be interested in?



Community History



Share your Stories:

What are some fun memories you have of your community?

What was one of your favorite community events (i.e. festival, gathering, parade)?

Who are some interesting people you have met in your community?

Why do we need a community history preservation program?

The communities of Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, and Russelldale have a rich cultural history. The development of transportation infrastructure in North Charleston has continually impacted these communities, shaping episodes of growth and decline. The Community History Preservation Program will document their rich history by including:

- Interviews with current and past residents,
- Historic photographs of the communities prior to the construction of I-26, I-526, and other recent developments, and
- Recent images of the communities. This study is set to begin later this year (2021).

We encourage you to stay engaged— participate in interviews, share historic images, and provide information to document the unique historic and cultural elements of your community. Based on community feedback, this study will also gather design concepts to be incorporated in the appearance of the new community center. Upon completion, a final report will be available at the new community center, the public library, and online.

History Preservation Program Contact

Professor Damon Fordham

843.258.1135

historyproject@526lowcountrycorridor.com



Community Office

5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square



Figure 5.6
Advertisement for North Charleston, April 12, 1915



EAST Updates

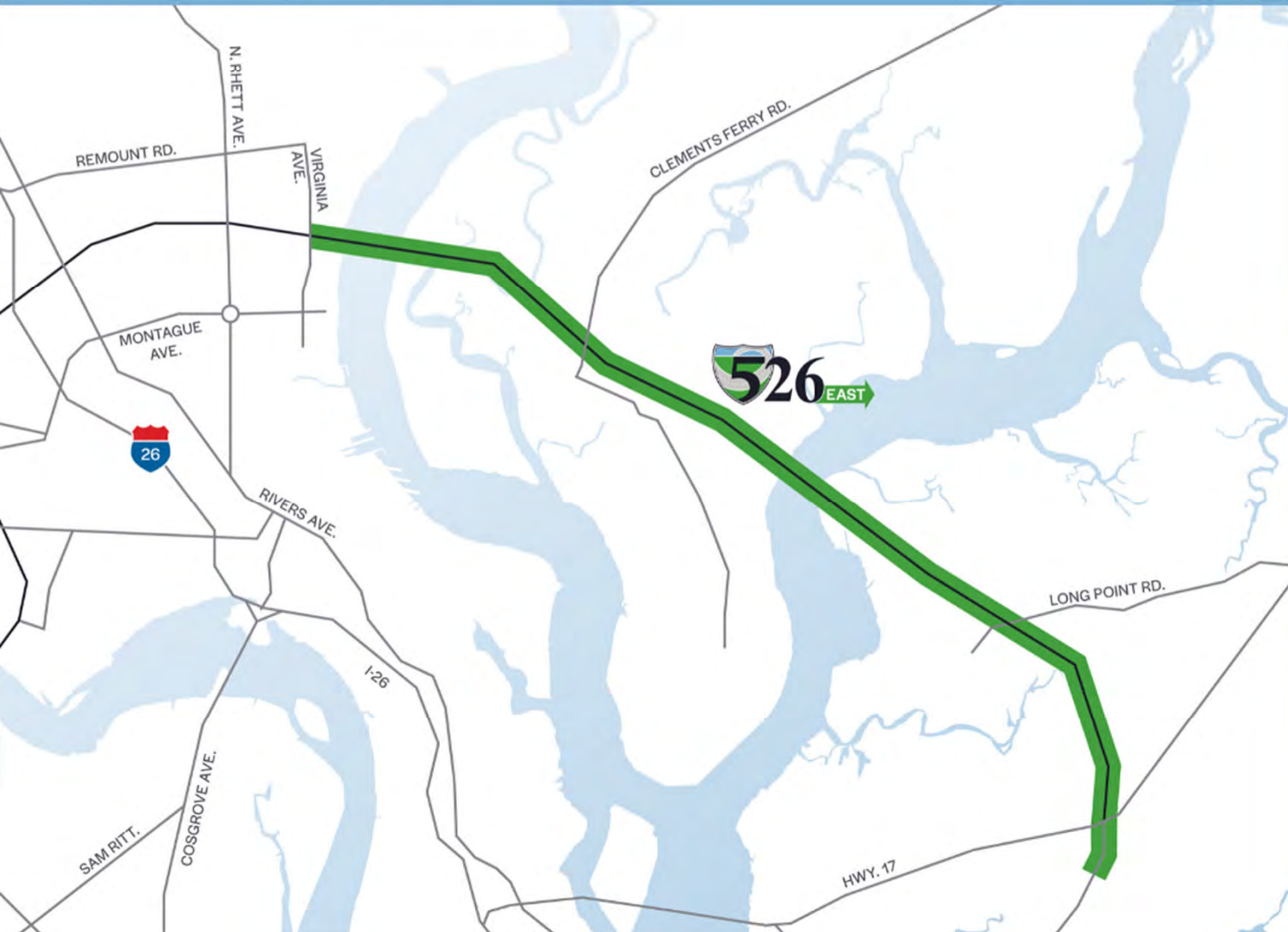
Planning & Environmental Linkages Study



526 EAST LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR



EAST PROJECT



I-526 Lowcountry Corridor East

Project Termini

**Virginia Avenue
North Charleston**



**US 17
Mount Pleasant**

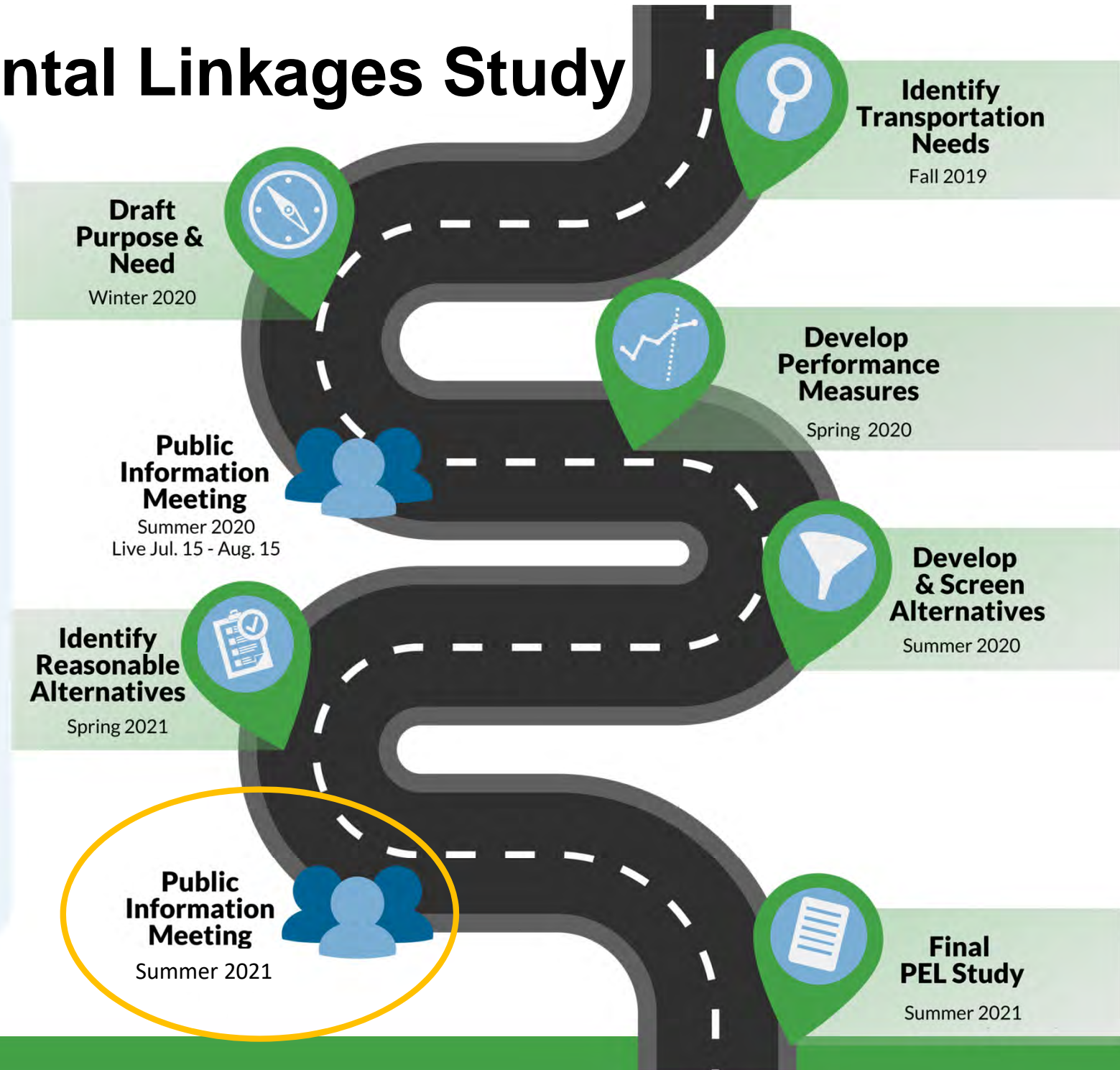
Planning & Environmental Linkages Study

- 1 Tool for **creating efficiency** in transportation development
- 2 Considers **environment, community & economy**
- 3 **Collaborative & integrated** approach to decision-making

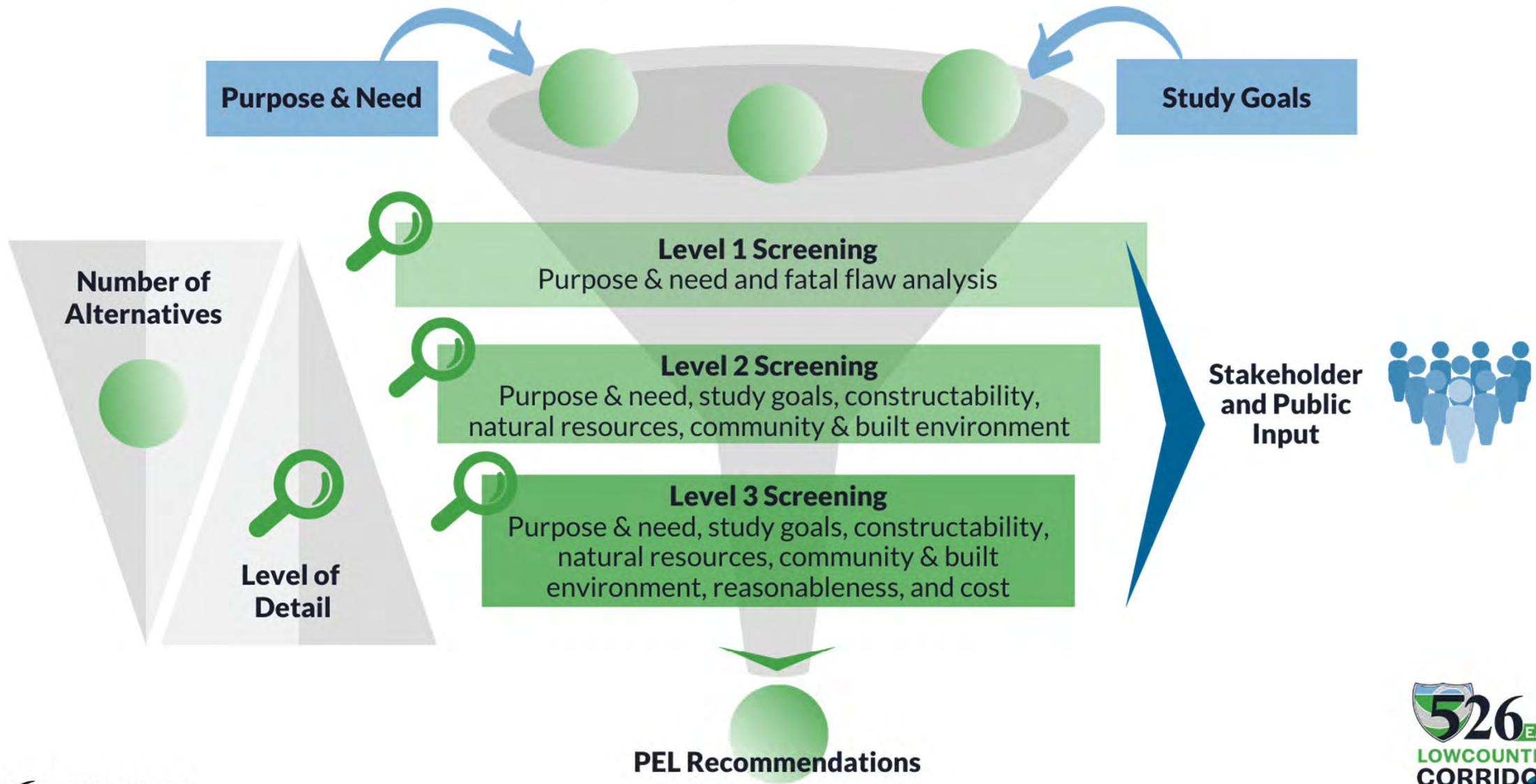
What are the Benefits of including a PEL Study in the project development process?



Who Participates?



Alternative Concept Screening Process



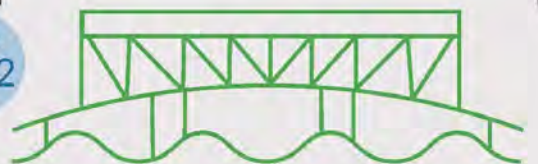
Major Bridges: Cost vs. Benefit

Did you know over 65% of I-526 LCC EAST is elevated roadway & bridges?

Don H. Holt Bridge
Cooper River

~27,100 FT

Built 1992



Current Conditions

- ▶ Single structure, 88 ft. wide
- ▶ 155 ft. high
- ▶ 2 lanes each direction with truck climbing lane
- ▶ 73,400 vehicles per day (2017 avg.)


Needs

- ▶ Improved traffic capacity
- ▶ Improved shoulders
- ▶ Increased seismic resilience
- ▶ Upgraded lighting & electrical system

James B. Edwards Bridge
Wando River

~7,900 FT

Built 1989



Current Conditions

- ▶ Twin parallel structures, 44 ft. wide
- ▶ 138 ft. high
- ▶ 2 lanes each direction with truck climbing lane
- ▶ 70,100 vehicles per day (2017 avg.)


Needs

- ▶ Improved traffic capacity
- ▶ Improved shoulders
- ▶ Increased seismic resilience
- ▶ Improved Service Life

Other Typical Bridges

Various Lengths

Built late 1980s & Early 1990s



Current Conditions

- ▶ 4 overpass bridges; 6 marsh bridges
- ▶ Lengths range from 150 ft. - 1300 ft.
- ▶ 2 lanes each direction
- ▶ 58,500 - 73,400 vehicles per day (2017 avg.)

Needs

- ▶ Improved traffic capacity
- ▶ Improved shoulders
- ▶ Increased seismic resilience

Preliminary Findings for Don Holt / Cooper:

- Steel Truss - main Span 1600 ft
- Approach Spans ~10,000 feet on each side of main span
- Don Holt controls Vertical Navigational Clearance on the Cooper River at 155 feet (700 ft horizontal)
- Electrical & Fog Lighting Systems in Poor condition
- Substandard 4 ft shoulders & barriers
- Structurally in Good Condition (~45 yr life remaining)
- No major maintenance issues
- Moderate Seismic vulnerability



GOAL – *Vertical Clearance restricts Port traffic - increase of 31 feet (Ravenel 186' Vertical /1000' Horizontal)*

Preliminary Findings for Wando Bridge:

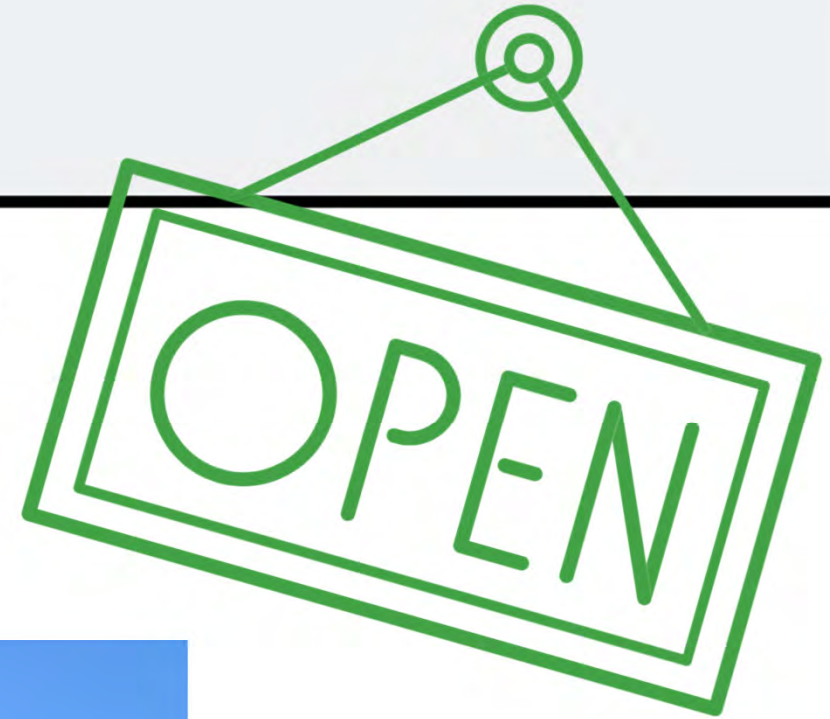


- Post Tensioned Box Girder Twin Bridges – 7900 ft
- Critical Service Life - Maintenance Issues
- Poor Candidate for Widening
- 25-30 years of useful life remaining
- No critical navigational vertical clearance needs (65 ft minimum required – existing is 138' vert / 350' horiz)
- Moderate Seismic Vulnerability
- Potentially Significant ROW impacts on Daniel Island and in Mount Pleasant

Community Office

**Meet one-on-one with the project team on
YOUR schedule in YOUR community**

- Informal, no pressure environment
- Review project info with community liaisons
- Talk with right-of-way specialists
- Hours designed to fit the community's schedule



Gas Lite Square

5627 Rivers Avenue
North Charleston

Contact Information



www.526LowcountryCorridor.com



www.facebook.com/526Corridor



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Project Manager

