

Appendix Q

Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation





DRAFT SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION

INTERSTATE 526 (I-526)

FROM PAUL CANTRELL BOULEVARD TO VIRGINIA AVENUE
NORTH CHARLESTON AND CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law as 49 U.S.C. 303, declares, “It is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” Section 4(f) also states, “The Secretary [of Transportation] may approve a transportation program or project... requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if:

- (1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and
- (2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.”

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared for the proposed action.

Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development in developing transportation projects and programs which use lands protected by Section 4(f).

2.0 PROPOSED ACTION

2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project consists of 3.5 miles of work on I-26 and 9.2 miles of work on I-526 for a total of 12.7 miles. The boundaries of the study area, shown in Figure 2.1, generally follows the section of I-526 from Paul Cantrell Boulevard to Virginia Avenue including the I-26/I-526 interchange. This segment of I-526 is currently identified as, and without action is forecasted to continue to be, one of South Carolina’s top ten most congested corridors. This is due to the high number of vehicles moving between I-26 and I-526, closely spaced interchanges with ramps that have steep grades and tight curves, and limited distances for vehicles to merge onto and off of I-526. The I-26/I-526 interchange is an important junction for local and regional transit as it links downtown Charleston, Summerville, West Ashley, and Mount Pleasant. The project location can be seen in Figure 2.1.

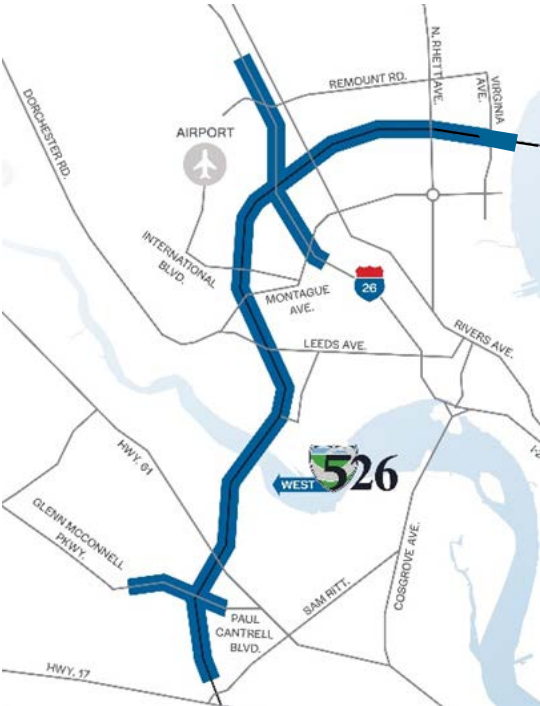


Figure 2.1: I-526 LCC WEST Project Corridor

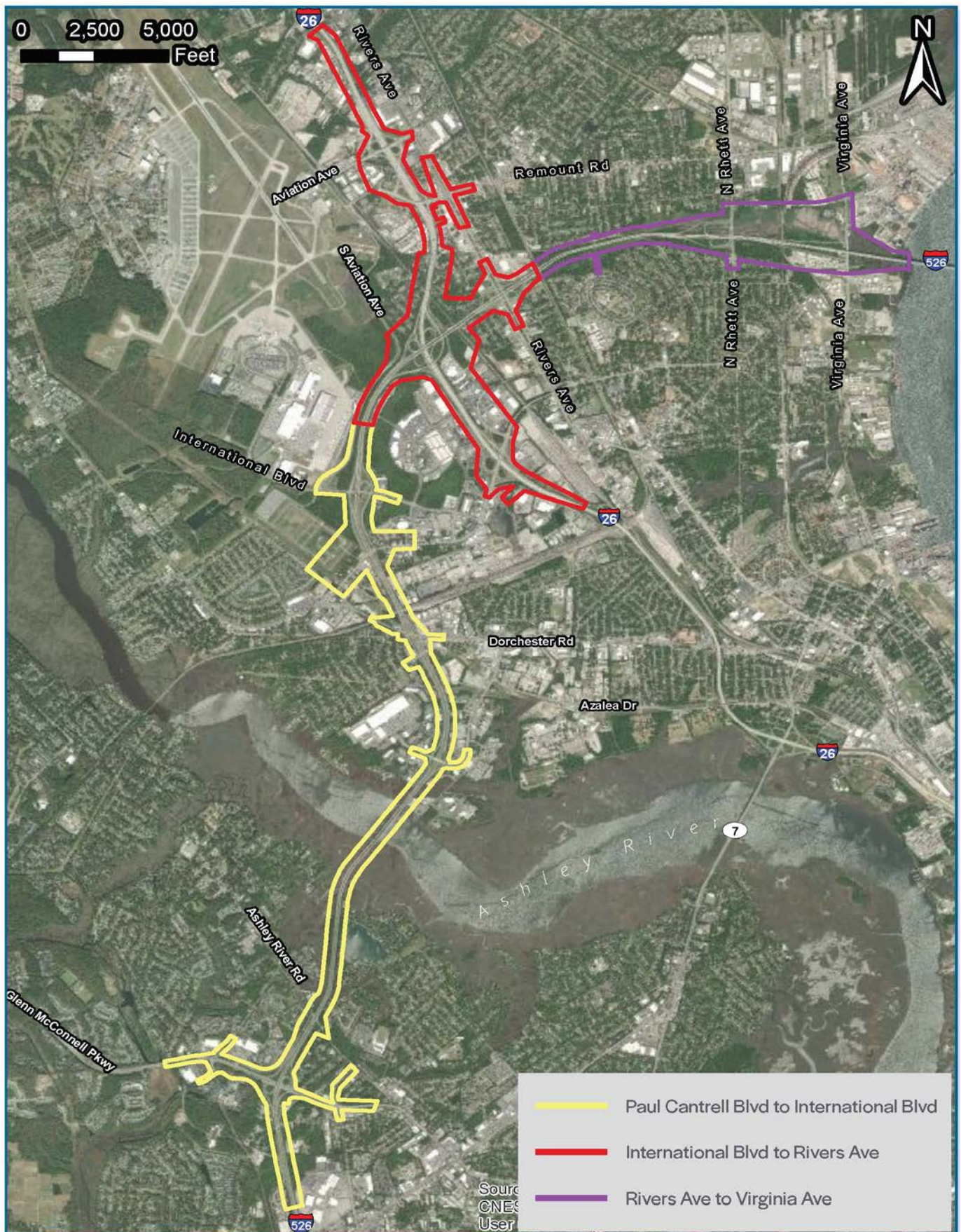


Figure 2.2: Proposed Reasonable Alternatives Sections of I-526 LCC WEST

The project was examined in several parts in order to provide unique alternatives for individual sections. These sections are shown in Figure 2.2. This Section 4(f) Evaluation focuses on impacts associated with the section of the project from International Boulevard to Rivers Avenue that includes the interchanges of I-526 at I-26 and Rivers Avenue, shown in red below. Neither of the other two sections would affect Section 4(f) resources.

2.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this project is to increase capacity and improve operations at the I-26/I-526 interchange and along the I-526 mainline from Paul Cantrell Boulevard to Virginia Avenue. The need for this project was identified in several different documents. The I-26/I-526 interchange is listed as the #2 project in the 2035 CHATS Long Range Transportation Plan Ranked List of Candidate Transportation Projects, the #6 project on South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)'s ACT 114 Interstate Capacity List, and it is listed in SCDOT's State Transportation Improvement Plan 2017-2022. Congestion was detailed in SCDOT's Corridor Analysis for I-526 Between North Charleston and West Ashley, and in the Interstate Plan portion of SCDOT's 2014 Multimodal Transportation Plan, where four segments within this project corridor are listed in the top 20 most congested interstate segments. Detailed information on the purpose of and need for the proposed project is contained in DEIS Chapter 2.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF SECTION 4(F) PROPERTIES

3.1 HIGHLAND TERRACE-LIBERTY PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Type of Property: The Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center is a publicly owned recreation area.

Ownership: The Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center is owned and managed by the City of North Charleston.

Applicable Clauses Affecting the Ownership: None

Primary Functions: The center serves as an outlet for the neighborhood and provides the main source of entertainment for children in the community. It offers a safe place for children to be active after school and in the summer while providing quality supervision and guidance. Programs at the community center focus on academic enrichment and recreational activities designed to teach children valuable leadership and life skills to use in decision-making processes. The center provides a place for youth development, as well as a place where citizens can hold events and community gatherings. The City of North Charleston hosts after school programs for up to 30 children and a summer camp for up to 30 children. All children that attend these programs are from the Highland Terrace and Liberty Park communities and they often walk to this facility from their homes. A variety of groups, such as Boeing, M.A.D. (Men Against Domestic Violence), and the Charleston Center come to the afterschool program and summer camp to host educational, enrichment, and cultural activities. A few of these activities include a reptile program, library activities, and an anti-bullying program. It also serves as a Charleston County voting center. Community members use the center for social events, such as birthday parties, family reunions, and baby showers. The indoor community center is available to rent from 9:00am to 10:00pm, with a maximum capacity of 30 people.

Center usage varies throughout the year but increases during large events such as graduation. The center is not available for rent during summer months when summer camp is in session. According to the North Charleston Parks and Recreation Department Director, the facility's basketball courts are often utilized by community members on both weeknights and weekends, with approximately 150 people using the park per month.

Description of Property and Facilities: Facilities on the 0.87-acre property include a full-size basketball court, half-size basketball court, a playground, and a 1,947 square foot community center (see Photograph 1). There are several picnic tables and benches outdoors, as well as a picnic shelter. The center is staffed part-time and outdoor recreation areas are open dawn to dusk. Additional site photos can be found in Appendix A.



Photograph 1: Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center (Google Street View)

Location: The Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center is located at 2401 Richardson Drive and is directly west of I-26 adjacent to the Highland Terrace and Liberty Park neighborhoods, as shown in Figure 3.1. A rail corridor is located directly to the north of the property.

Access: The property is accessible from Richardson Drive and Taylor Street. There is a small parking lot adjacent to the community center at the corner of Richardson Drive and Taylor Street. A sidewalk runs along the eastern side of Taylor Street near the community center, providing access for pedestrians. Access points can be seen in Figure 3.1.

Relationship to Other Similarly Used Lands in the Vicinity: The property is adjacent to the Highland Terrace and Liberty Park neighborhoods. A rail corridor is located directly to the north and an overpass for I-26 is located east of the community center. There are no other similarly used lands in the nearby vicinity.

Unusual Characteristics Reducing or Enhancing the Value of the Property: The community center and associated recreational facilities are located within close proximity to I-26 and are bordered to the north by a rail corridor, both of which contribute to air quality effects and noise that detract from the overall intrinsic value of the property based on its location rather than any physical characteristics of the property itself. The property is located in a moderate flood hazard zone.

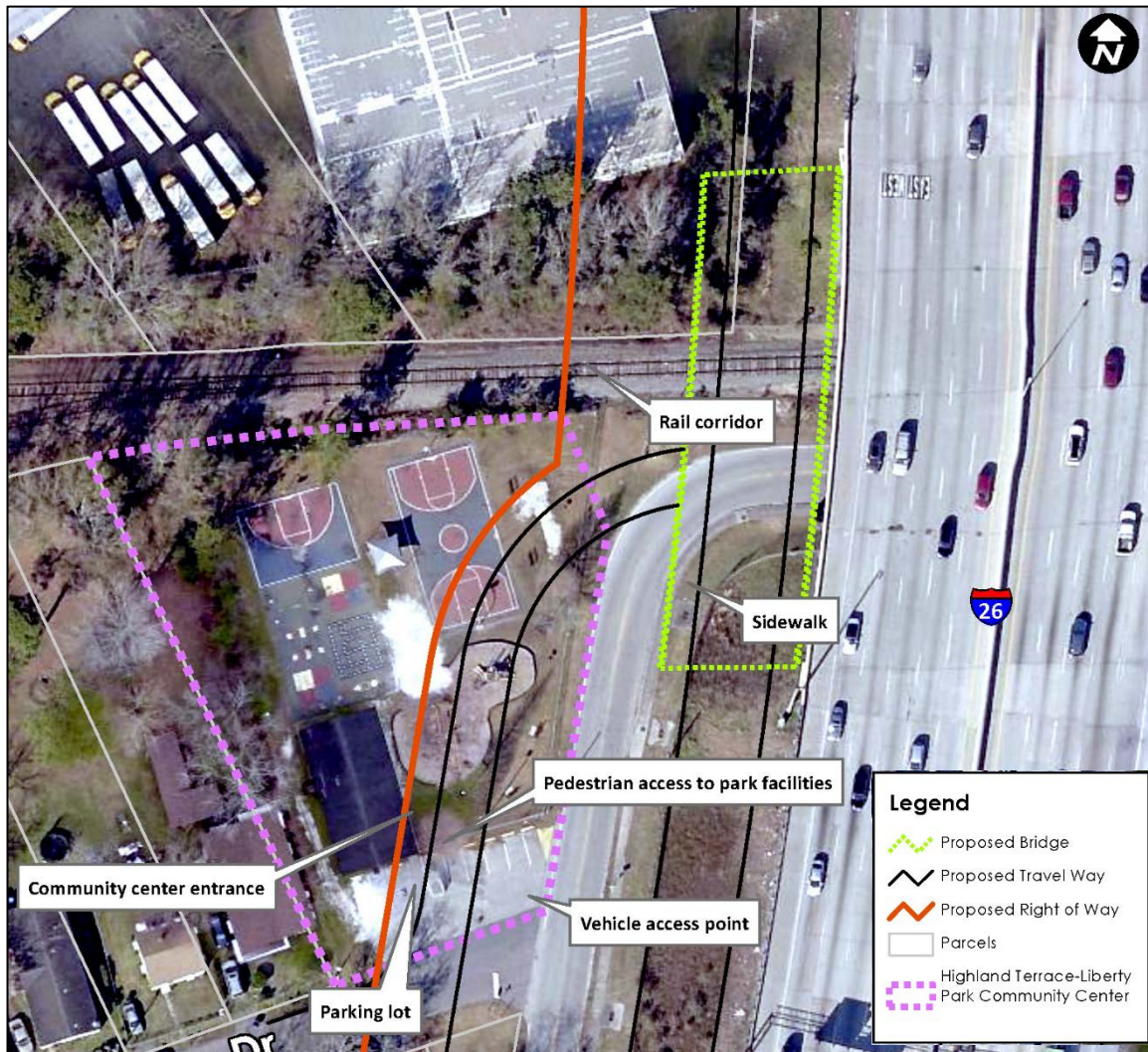


Figure 3.1: Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center Site Layout (Charleston County GIS)

3.2 RUSSELLDALE COMMUNITY CENTER

Type of Property: The Russelldale Community Center is a publicly owned recreation area.

Ownership: The Russelldale Community Center is owned and managed by the City of North Charleston.

Applicable Clauses Affecting the Ownership: None

Primary Functions: The center serves as an outlet for the neighborhood and provides the main source of entertainment for children in the community. It offers a safe place for children to be active after school and in the summer while providing quality supervision and guidance. Programs at the community center focus on academic enrichment and recreational activities designed to teach children valuable leadership and life skills to use in decision-making processes. The center provides a place for youth development, as well as a place where citizens can hold events and community gatherings.

The City of North Charleston hosts a yearly afterschool program for up to 30 children and a summer camp for up to 30 children at the Russelldale Community Center. All children that attend these programs are

from the Russelldale community. A variety of groups, such as Boeing, M.A.D. (Men Against Domestic Violence), and the Charleston Center come to the afterschool program and summer camp to host educational, enrichment, and cultural activities. A few of these activities include a reptile program, library activities, and an anti-bullying program. When active, the Community Council would meet once a month at the center. The outdoor facilities are open to the public from dawn to dusk, with approximately 150 people using them per month, while the indoor event center is available to rent from 9:00am to 10:00pm, with a maximum capacity of 15 people per event. Community members use the center for social events, such as birthday parties, family reunions, and baby showers. Center usage varies throughout the year, but increases during large events, such as graduation. The center is not available for rent during summer months when summer camp is in session.

Description of Property and Facilities: Facilities on the combined 0.58-acre property include a full-size basketball court, a playground, and an approximately 1,500 square foot community center (see Photograph 2). The center is staffed part-time and outdoor recreation areas are open dawn to dusk.



Photograph 2: Russelldale Community Center (Google Street View)

Additional site photos can be found in Appendix A.

Location: The Russelldale Community Center and its associated recreational facilities are located at 2248 Russelldale Avenue. The facility is at the north end of the Russelldale neighborhood, directly southeast of I-526, as shown in Figure 3.2. The facility was built on a 0.83-acre property adjacent to I-526 to mitigate impacts from the original construction of I-526 in the 1980s.

Access: As shown in Figure 3.2, the community center has multiple access points for pedestrians and vehicles. The access points allow residents to easily use the facilities when approaching from either the east or west on Russelldale Avenue.

Relationship to Other Similarly Used Lands in the Vicinity: The property is at the north end of the Russelldale neighborhood. An overpass for I-526 is located directly to the northwest and rail corridor is located approximately 370 feet southwest of the center. There are no other similarly used lands in the nearby vicinity.



Figure 3.2: Russelldale Community Center Site Layout (Charleston County GIS)

Unusual Characteristics Reducing or Enhancing the Value of the Property: The community center and associated recreational facilities are located within close proximity to I-526 and a rail corridor, both of which contribute to air quality effects and ambient noise that detract from the overall intrinsic value of the property based on its location rather than any physical characteristics of the property itself. A portion of the property, including the basketball court and adjacent undeveloped land, is located in a high-risk flood hazard zone.

4.0 USE OF SECTION 4(F) PROPERTY

4.1 HIGHLAND TERRACE-LIBERTY PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Amount of Land to be Used: The proposed I-526 LCC WEST project would displace 0.27-acre of the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and its surrounding recreational facilities. As shown in Figure 4.1, the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center falls within the proposed right-of-way for the preferred alternative and would need to be relocated due to the proposed project.

The Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center would fall within the right-of-way of each reasonable build alternative that was considered. See Figures 5.2 - 5.5 to see both Section 4(f) properties within the right-of-way boundaries for each of the reasonable build alternative.

Facilities, Functions, and/or Activities Affected: Impacted facilities would include one community center, one outdoor basketball court, one half-size basketball court, one multi-use court, playground equipment on a mulch play area, one picnic shelter, multiple benches and picnic tables throughout the park, and a small parking lot. The displacement of the community center would impact local community cohesion because this facility is often used to host events or gather as a group by residents living in the Highland Terrace and Liberty Park neighborhoods.

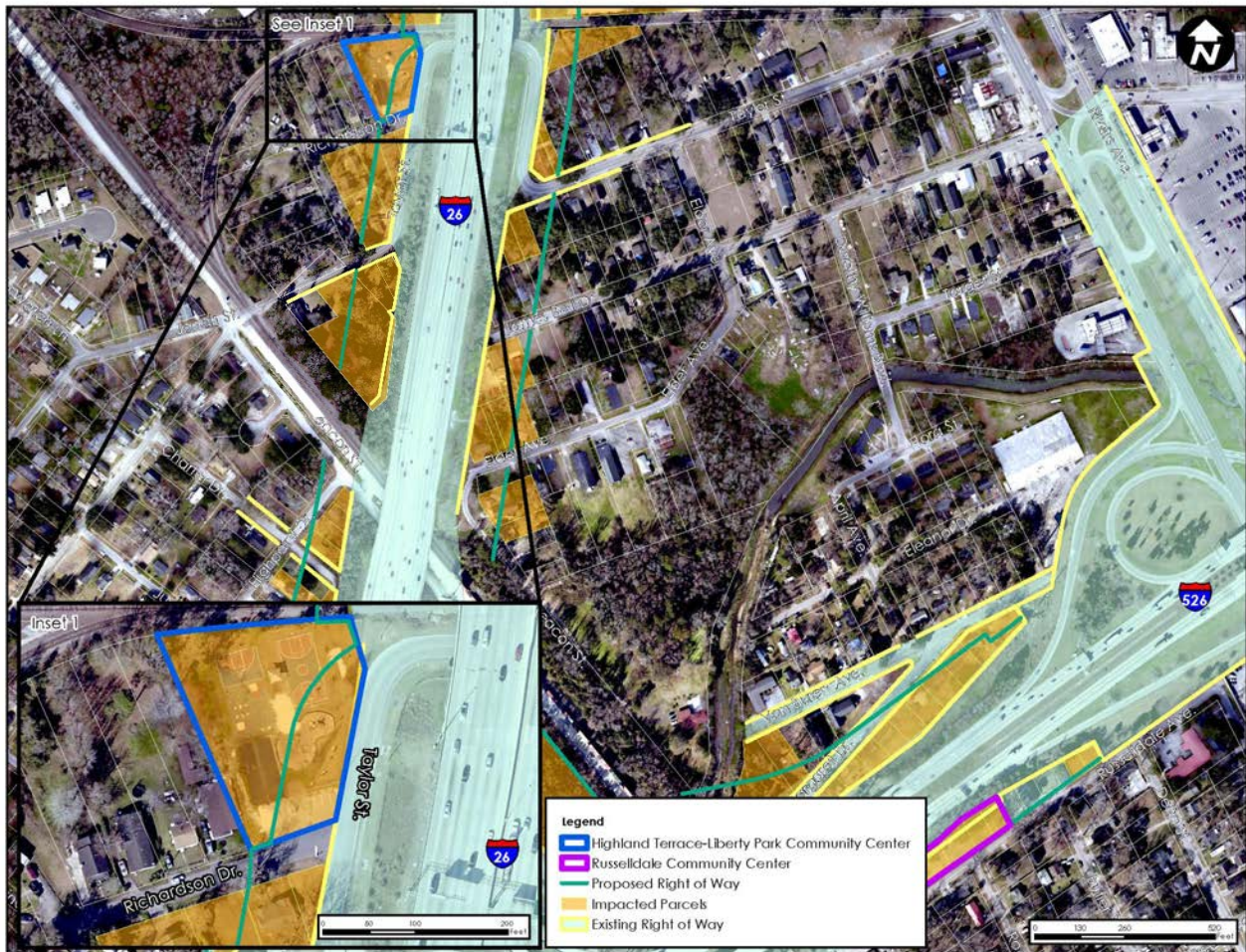


Figure 4.1: Proposed Right-of-Way at Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center (Charleston County GIS)

4.2 RUSSELLDALE COMMUNITY CENTER

Amount of Land to be Used: The proposed I-526 LCC WEST project would displace approximately 0.83 acres or 100 percent of the Russelldale Community Center and its surrounding recreational facilities. The Russelldale Community Center falls within the additional Right-of-Way (ROW) needed for the proposed system-to-system interchange between I-526 and I-26 (shown in Figure 4.2) and would need to be relocated with the preferred alternative.

The Russelldale Community Center would fall within the right-of-way of each reasonable build alternative that was considered. See Figures 5.2 - 5.5 to see both Section 4(f) properties within the right-of-way boundaries for each of the reasonable build alternative.

Facilities, Functions, and/or Activities Affected: The proposed impacts to the Russelldale facilities include the community center building (approximately 50 feet x 30 feet), an outdoor basketball court (84 feet x 50 feet), playground equipment on a mulch play area (approximately 60 feet x 40 feet), a multi-use field (approximately 100 feet x 60 feet), and multiple benches and picnic tables throughout the park.

The displacement of the community center would impact local community cohesion because this facility is often used to host events or gather as a group by residents living in the Russelldale neighborhood. Where the proposed project ROW and the Russelldale Community Center overlap, there is no potential for shared use or practical measures to minimize impact.

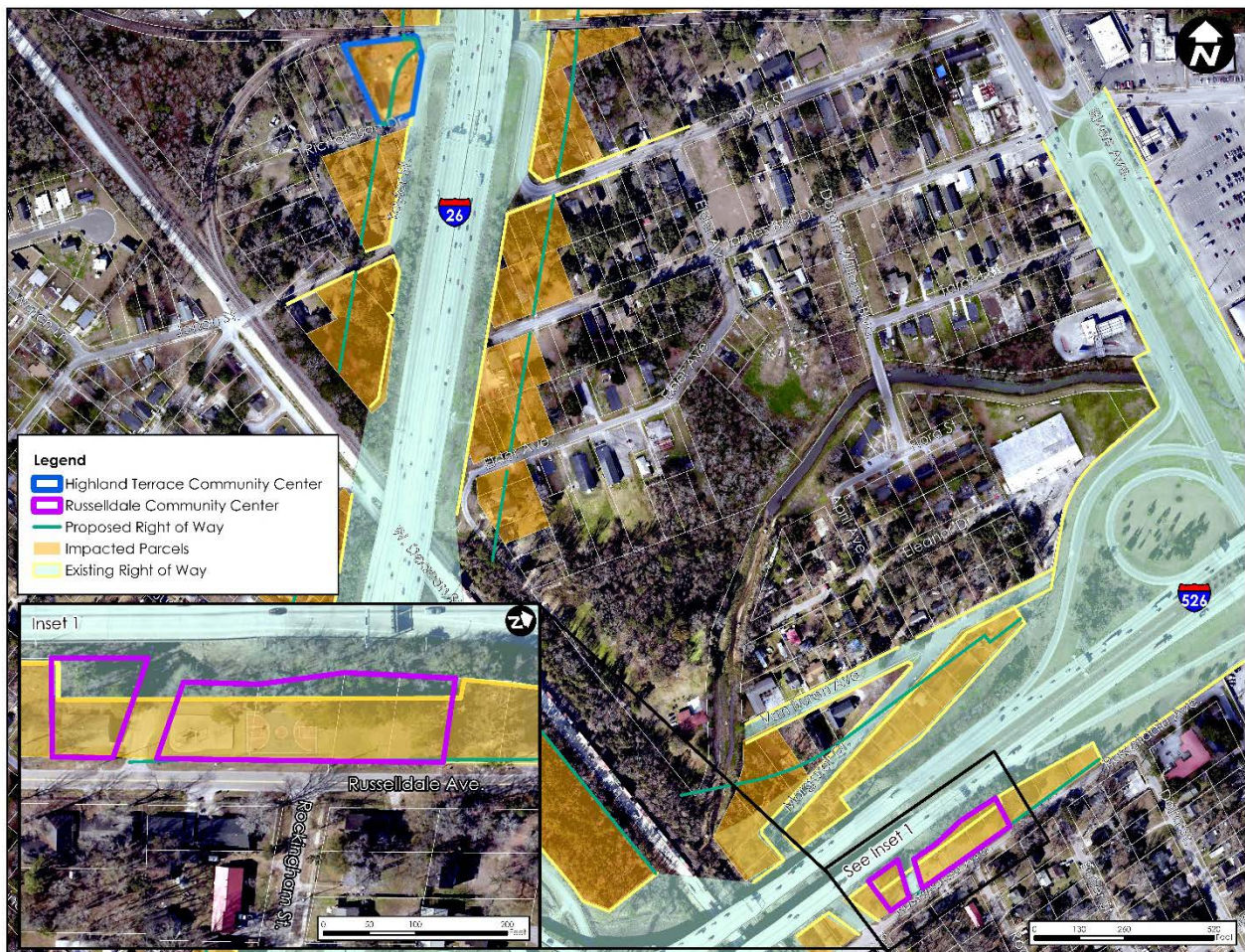


Figure 4.2: Proposed Right-of-Way at Russelldale Community Center (Charleston County GIS)

5.0 AVOIDANCE ALTERNATIVES

Under Section 4(f) evaluation guidance, state transportation agencies must consider alternatives that would avoid impacts to Section 4(f) resources. In some cases, alternatives that avoid impacting Section 4(f) resources may create impacts to other resources or the alternative may not be feasible and prudent.

Federal regulations (23 CFR 774.17) state that a feasible and prudent avoidance alternative:

- Avoids using Section 4(f) property
- Does not cause other severe problems of a magnitude that substantially outweighs the importance of protecting the Section 4(f) property. In assessing the importance of protecting the Section 4(f) property, it is appropriate to consider the relative value of the resource to the preservation purpose of the statute.

An alternative is considered **not feasible** if it cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment.

An alternative is **not prudent** if:

- It compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need;
- It results in unacceptable safety or operational problems;
- After reasonable mitigation, it still causes:
 - Severe social, economic, or environmental impacts;
 - Severe disruption to established communities;
 - Severe disproportionate impacts to minority or low income populations; or
 - Severe impacts to environmental resources protected under other Federal statutes;
- It results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- It causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
- It involves multiple factors listed above, that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

5.1 NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The no-build alternative would serve as a total avoidance alternative; however, it is not prudent or feasible due to traffic implications and localized air quality increase associated with congestion. These outcomes would not be compatible with the purpose and need of the proposed project and therefore the no-build alternative is not considered a prudent avoidance alternative. Further information about the no-build alternative can be found in Section 3.5.1 of the DEIS.

5.2 ALTERNATE CORRIDORS

SCDOT initiated an evaluation of alternate routes that satisfy the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project. The study evaluated the enhancement of existing roadway facilities along with the creation of new alignment corridors, as shown in Figure 5.1. The enhancements include the development of alternate alignments which could be used to decrease interstate traffic volumes. The corridors listed do not include any options which provide an alternate route between I-26 and the Cooper River. Additional details on improvements to existing local corridors can be found in Section 3.5.2 of the DEIS.

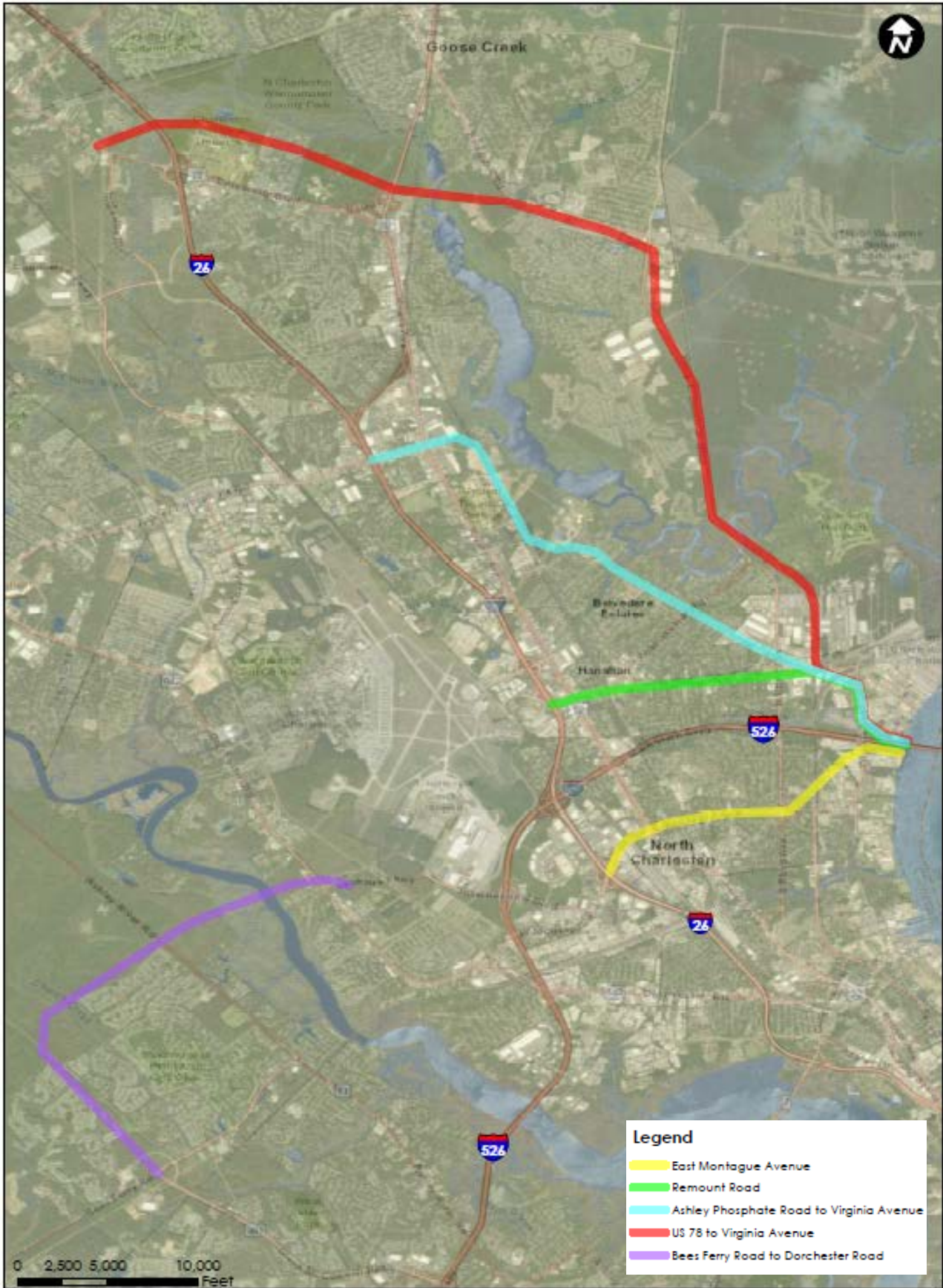


Figure 5.1: Alternate Corridors

5.2.1 Improvements to East Montague Avenue

This existing route runs nearly parallel to I-526 from I-26 to Virginia Avenue, and serves as a minor arterial facility connecting I-26 to the Park Circle area. East Montague Avenue, known as the old “Main Street” weaves through two of the city’s most historic neighborhoods. Liberty Hill stands as the oldest surviving neighborhood within North Charleston, while Park Circle represents one of the earliest concepts of a garden community in the United States. Other features along the route include North Charleston High School, North Charleston United Methodist Church, Royal Baptist Family Life and Banquet Center, and the Felix Pinckney Community Center. Residential development dominates along the western segment of the route from North Boulevard to Rivers Avenue, while commercial development is prevalent on the eastern segment from Jenkins Avenue to Virginia Avenue.

Traffic modeling, including the proposed improvements to the existing East Montague Avenue, indicate a 10-24 percent decrease in traffic volumes along the existing I-526 mainline. Although the 24 percent reduction may be substantial enough to meet the purpose and need if it were along the entire corridor, this decrease in traffic volume would only be applicable to approximately 0.5 miles along I-526 from I-26 to Rivers Avenue. As a result, this reduction in congestion would not be substantial enough to meet the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project, as I-526 would still operate at a level of service (LOS) E/F. Therefore, the improvements to existing East Montague Avenue were eliminated as a potential alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for the I-526 LCC WEST project. Further, there would be large-scale impacts to development flanking the roadway. As such, this alternate corridor is **not a prudent avoidance alternative**.

5.2.2 Improvements to Remount Road

This existing route serves the area just north of the I-526 corridor and connects I-26 to the North Charleston Terminal (NCT) and its associated facilities along the Cooper River. The NCT sits on over 200 acres and handles nearly one-fourth of the Port of Charleston’s total container volume, necessitating a large volume of truck traffic along the roadway. Other features along this route include Matilda Dunston Elementary School, Remount Baptist Church, Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Revive Charleston, First Southern Methodist Church, Victory Missionary Baptist Church, and MWV/Kapstone Park. Residential development exists mainly along the south side of the road from Shelton Street to North Rhett Avenue, and commercial development runs along the entire length of the corridor.

Traffic modeling including the proposed improvements to the existing Remount Road indicate a 1-12 percent decrease in traffic volumes along the existing I-526 mainline; this reduction in congestion would not be substantial enough to meet the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project, as I-526 would still operate at a level of service (LOS) E/F. Therefore, the improvements to existing Remount Road were eliminated as a potential alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for the I-526 LCC WEST project. Further, there would be large-scale impacts to development flanking the roadway. As such, this alternate corridor is **not a prudent avoidance alternative**.

5.3 NEW LOCATION ALTERNATIVES

The development of additional, new routes is restricted by several regional landmarks and environmental features. Impacts to these landmarks and features are detrimental to the community as a whole; and any alternate route containing such impacts are deemed unreasonable for improving congestion along I-526.

Charleston International Airport is South Carolina’s largest airport. It served nearly 4.5 million travelers in 2018 and is operated under a joint-use agreement with Joint Base Charleston. The combined airport area

of civilian facilities and the Charleston Air Force Base extends over 2,000 acres, covering most of the land to the west of the I-26/I-526 interchange between I-26/I-526 and the Ashley River, and extending north to Ashley Phosphate Road. The location and size of the airport prevent alternate route development to the west of I-26 for approximately four miles to the north of the Airport.

The Cooper River defines the easternmost boundary of the North Charleston city limits and remains a vital commercial channel for the region. Currently, the Don Holt Bridge and the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge are the only two structures that provide vehicular access across the river. Any alternate route which involves the construction of a third roadway bridge increases the cost of the project drastically. In addition, many areas east of N Rhett Avenue are comprised of wetlands related to the Cooper River branch that connects to the Goose Creek Reservoir. Alternate routes constructed in this vicinity result in substantial impacts to the surrounding natural environment.

The Goose Creek Reservoir is situated just east of the Rivers Avenue business district near Hanahan and serves as the primary water supply storage for much of the Charleston region. The 600-acre reservoir area is also home to a wide variety of animal species and has become a popular destination for fishers and paddleboaters alike. The reservoir stretches from just northeast of Murray Drive to Goose Creek Road, impeding any new alternate alignment between Rivers Avenue and N Rhett Avenue.

Francis Marion National Forest/Bonneau Ferry Wildlife Management Area prevents new alternate four-lane routes north of I-526 which connect I-26 to US 17. Wildlife management is overseen by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. As discussed in the paragraphs below, **there are no feasible and prudent avoidance new location alternatives.** Additional details on new location alternatives can be found in Section 3.5.3 of the DEIS.

5.3.1 US 78 to Virginia Avenue

The proposed new alignment is established to connect key points along I-26 and I-526 in the vicinity of the existing Cooper River crossing at the Don Holt Bridge. The US 78 to Virginia Avenue route utilizes portions of Red Bank Road and N Rhett Avenue to create a four-lane, controlled access facility with new interchanges. A new location roadway section running north of Charleston Southern University and North Charleston Wannamaker County Park connects US 78 west of I-26 to the Red Bank Road corridor. Upgrading the existing roadway impacts commercial and residential development along Red Bank Road and potentially impacts the North Charleston Terminal facilities.

Traffic modeling, including the proposed new alignment, indicates a 2 to 10 percent decrease in traffic volumes along the existing I-526 mainline; this reduction in congestion is not substantial enough to meet the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project, as I-526 still operates at a level of service (LOS) E/F. Therefore, the US 78 to Virginia Avenue route is eliminated as a potential alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for the I-526 LCC WEST project and is **not considered a prudent avoidance alternative.**

5.3.2 Ashley Phosphate Road to Virginia Avenue

This proposed new alignment is a four-lane, controlled access facility which follows a short section of Ashley Phosphate Road east of I-26, then connects to Railroad Avenue and heads south before traversing on new location to run parallel to Murray Drive along the existing utility easement. A variety of features are impacted by this proposed route, including but not limited to commercial and residential development along Ashley Phosphate Road and Murray Drive, Hanahan Elementary School and Trident Technical

College, and the City of Hanahan Recreation Center and its associated park areas. In addition, major utility relocations are required.

Traffic modeling, based on the proposed new alignment, indicates a 7 to 15 percent decrease in traffic volumes along the existing I-526 mainline; this reduction in congestion does not meet the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project, as I-526 still operates at a LOS E/F. Therefore, the Ashley Phosphate Road to Virginia Avenue route is eliminated as a potential alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for the I-526 LCC WEST project and is **not a prudent avoidance alternative**.

5.3.3 Bees Ferry Road to Dorchester Road

A third new alignment route is being evaluated to the west of I-26 which establishes a new connector across the Ashley River. The proposed roadway is four lanes with controlled access but does not include an interchange at Ashley River Road. The proposed Bees Ferry Road to Dorchester Road alignment requires a new bridge over the Ashley River that could potentially impact the existing Shadowmoss Plantation residential development.

Incorporating this alignment into traffic modeling results in an estimated four percent decrease in traffic volume along I-526 near the Ashley River, while I-526 volumes to the east of I-26 have negligible reduction. Therefore, the proposed connector is also failing to meet the purpose and need of the I-526 LCC WEST project, as I-526 remains at a LOS F. Therefore, the Bees Ferry Road to Dorchester Road new alignment route is eliminated as a potential alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need for the I-526 LCC WEST project and is **not a prudent avoidance alternative**.

5.4 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT (TSM)/TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

5.4.1 Managed Lanes

Managed lanes may be feasible on I-526 if they extended westward on I-26 at least as far as the US 52 Connector near Ashley Phosphate Road. A regional managed lane study suggested improvement from the plan is the implementation of HOT managed lanes from Exit 199 (US 17 Alt – Summerville) to I-26 Terminus at US 17 and along I-526 the entire section. There are currently no programmed improvements to I-26 between I-526 and the US 52 Connector; therefore, managed lanes cannot be justified based on a committed improvement ensuring their functionality upon completion of the I-526 LCC WEST Project. Whereas managed lanes alone do not meet the project's purpose and need and therefore not considered a viable stand-alone alternative, the 12-foot shoulders included in the proposed project could accommodate future managed lane options on I-26 or potential bus-on-shoulder transfers between the two interstates. As such, managed lanes are not **a prudent avoidance alternative**. Additional details on managed lanes can be found in Section 3.5.4 of the DEIS.

5.4.2 Other TSM/TDM Strategies

Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies include lower cost improvements to improve efficiency and safety. A few examples of TSM consist of improving signal timing, adding high occupancy vehicle lanes as well as adding turn lanes. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) focuses on lessening travel demand by reducing the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled on a roadway or redistributing this demand in space or time to decrease system deficiency. TDM regional strategies

may include strategies such as encouraging drivers to carpool or ride the bus, and/or encouraging employers to allow non-standard work hours or telecommuting options for employees.

The following documents were reviewed to evaluate travel demand reduction TSM/TDM: I-526 Corridor Analysis Between North Charleston and West Ashley, SCDOT, 2013; The Public Transportation element of the Charleston Area Transportation Study (CHATS) Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), January 2019; Appendix D of the CHATS LRTP, Transit Needs Assessment, January 2019; Travel Market Analysis element of the BCDCOG Regional Transit Framework Plan, March 2018; Corridor Alternatives Evaluation & Recommendations element of the BCDCOG Regional Transit Framework Plan, March 2018; Congestion Management Process report, BCDCOG, January 2019 . These studies did not reference reductions in travel demand related to single occupancy vehicles.

According to the US Census Bureau American Community Survey, the percentage of commuters driving alone to work has only reduced by 0.4 percent between 2013 and 2019. The percentage of carpoolers and public transit users also declined by an average of less than one percent. This data indicated an increase in telecommuters, but not substantial enough to reduce congestion given the current and future traffic demand for the corridor. I-526 from Mount Pleasant to Savannah Highway was identified in the Regional Transit Framework Plan as a high capacity transit (HCT) corridor. This plan establishes the needs and makes recommendations based on public and stakeholder input, operations, and available funding. However, the plan does not provide forecasts. Based on the American Community Survey data through 2019, and the document review described above, the TSM/TDM recommendations from the 2013 Corridor Study are still applicable.

The TSM/TDM strategies evaluated in the 2013 Corridor Study are listed in Table 1. A total reduction of 5.2% of total overall traffic can be expected with the implementation of all 10 of the TDM programs evaluated in the 2013 Corridor Study.

Table 1: Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) Strategies

| STRATEGY | PERCENT REDUCTION |
|--|-------------------|
| Carpools / Rideshare Matching / Vanpools | 2.0% |
| Transit Pass Incentives / Financial Incentives | 1.5% |
| Telecommuting / Compressed Work Week | 0.1% |
| Work Flex Time / Staggered Work Hours | 0.5% |
| Bike/Walk Enhancements | 0.1% |
| Education, Promotion | 1.0% |
| Total Reduction Potential | 5.2% |

Source: Adapted from *I-526 Corridor Analysis Between North Charleston and West Ashley*, Table ES3

Note: All strategies with the exception of Bike/Walk Enhancements have been funded by FHWA

As a standalone alternative, TSM and TDM improvements do not adequately improve the corridor and meet the purpose and need to increase capacity and reduce congestion given the current and future level of service (LOS). TSM/TDM strategies alone do not meet the project’s purpose and need and are **not a prudent avoidance alternative**. Additional details TSM/TDM strategies can be found in Section 3.5.5 of the DEIS.

5.5 RETAINING WALLS

The use of retaining walls was evaluated as an avoidance measure that would allow a more symmetrical widening of I-26 near the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and could be paired with any of the reasonable alternatives described in Section 5.7. A retaining wall paralleling I-26 was considered along Taylor Street, near the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center, at a length of 550 feet, average height of 26 feet, and total cost of approximately \$715,000.00.

Construction of the retaining walls would avoid displacing the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and four residences; however, there are several issues with this avoidance measure. Eleven homes along Taylor Street were displaced by the initial construction of I-26 and realignment of Taylor Street to its current location. Despite the number of relocations, a minimal amount of right-of-way was obtained for the freeway, leaving a number of remaining residents on Taylor Street within close proximity to I-26.

As discussed in Section 5.4.1, managed lanes were evaluated in the alternatives development process; although there are currently no programmed managed lane projects on I-26, there is still the potential for their implementation in the future. There is also the potential for additional lanes to be added on I-26 in the future.

The proposed improvements include wide shoulders to account for this possibility; however, future improvements could necessitate additional right-of-way, incurring relocations at a future date. The current proposed right-of-way was set in consideration of both past encroachment effects and the potential for future widening; as such, reducing the proposed right-of-way – although it would eliminate displacing the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and several residences – creates the same encroachment effects by constructing new travel lanes closer to properties originally affected by construction of I-26. The community center and four residences that would be avoided by constructing the retaining wall would experience noise impacts from the proposed project, in an area where the addition of a noise wall was determined not to be feasible. In addition, the approximately 26-foot high wall would create visual effects for adjacent residences and preclude any revegetating of the slope in the future.

The use of a retaining wall on I-26 would create a near-term solution by avoiding the relocation of a handful of homes and a community center but these properties would be exposed to new noise and visual effects and would still potentially be in jeopardy from future impacts, which contributes to the overall cumulative effects residents experienced from area transportation projects.

This avoidance measure also has the potential to alter mitigation plans to construct a larger community center to offset impacts to both the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and Russelldale Community Center and mitigate broader disproportionate, adverse effects on Environmental Justice populations as part of a Community Mitigation Plan. It has been noted by residents that the current building at the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center is very small and limits the types of activities and number of participants in the Center's current programs. Under these circumstances, *preserving the Center provides limited benefit when compared to elements of the Community Mitigation Plan.*

Adding retaining walls on I-26 as part of any reasonable alternative was determined **not to be a prudent avoidance alternative** due to the unique problems associated with its construction, primarily the contribution of additional cumulative effects on Environmental Justice populations in the form of additional encroachment and the creation of noise and visual impacts on homes that would not be displaced through the construction of the retaining wall.

There are no similar options to evaluate retaining walls at the Russelldale Community Center.

5.6 MASS TRANSIT

The total potential reduction of these improvement strategies is estimated to be 7.4% with the implementation of short-term transit and freight improvements. Additionally, the addition of mass transit does not enhance safety, nor improve freight mobility. Because mass transit does not meet the purpose and need as a standalone alternative, it is not carried forward as an alternative for the I-526 LCC WEST Corridor project and is **not a prudent avoidance alternative**. Additional details on mass transit can be found in Section 3.5.6 of the DEIS.

5.7 IMPROVE EXISTING ALTERNATIVES: INTERNATIONAL BOULEVARD TO RIVERS AVENUE – REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

Improving the existing I-526 LCC WEST mainline from Virginia Avenue to Paul Cantrell Boulevard is proposed to accommodate the current and future vehicular demands, as well as population and employment increases. While the previously discussed avoidance alternatives did not meet the purpose and need, improving the existing corridor could meet the purpose and need by increasing capacity and thereby reducing congestion.

As shown in Figure 2.2, the affected Section 4(f) resources are located along the section of the project between International Boulevard and Rivers Avenue. Improvements to existing I-526 (Alternatives 1, 1A, 2, and 2A) were developed based on separating movements that create congestion caused by closely spaced ramps and less than desirable weave and merge lane lengths. Alternatives 1, 1A, 2, and 2A are illustrated below and are further described in Section 3.5.7 of the DEIS. **All four build alternatives would impact the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and the Russelldale Community Center, see Table 5.1 for further details on impacts anticipated for each alternative.**

Alternative 1: This alternative adds collector-distributor roads to the north and south sides of I-526 through the Rivers Avenue interchange. The eastbound I-526 to westbound I-26 directional ramp will be moved to cross over I-26 north of I-526. Access between Rivers Avenue and I-26 via I-526 is eliminated because the I-526 eastbound to I-26 westbound directional ramp prevents the slip ramp that leads to it. There is insufficient distance to grade separate all the existing movements. Figure 5.2 depicts the proposed improvements for Alternative 1.

Alternative 1A: This alternative adds collector-distributor roads to the north and south sides of I-526 through the Rivers Avenue interchange. The eastbound I-526 to westbound I-26 directional ramp will be moved to cross over I-26 north of I-526. Access between Rivers Avenue and I-26 via I-526 is maintained. Figure 5.3 depicts the proposed improvements for Alternative 1A.

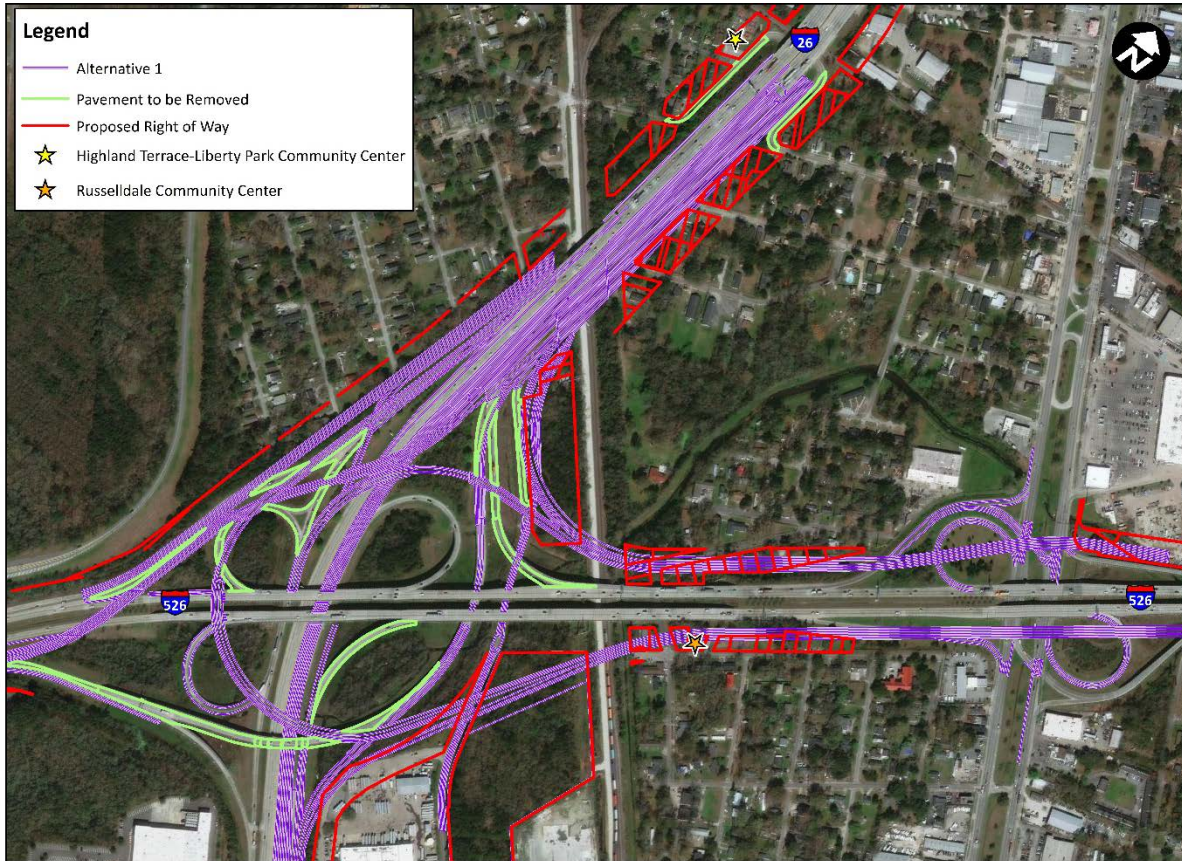


Figure 5.2: I-526 at I-26 and Rivers Ave: Alternative 1

Alternative 2 (Preferred): This alternative adds collector-distributor roads to the north and south sides of I-526 through the Rivers Avenue interchange. Access between Rivers Avenue and I-26 via I-526 is eliminated. This alternative retains the I-26 eastbound to I-526 loop ramp which provides access for traffic entering the eastbound C-D road from Aviation Avenue and Remount Road to reach I-526 eastbound. This loop also serves as a redundant path if there is an incident on the new I-26 eastbound to I-526 eastbound directional ramp and serves to lessen the traffic pressure on Rivers Ave and Remount Road. Figure 5.4 depicts the proposed improvements for Alternative 2.

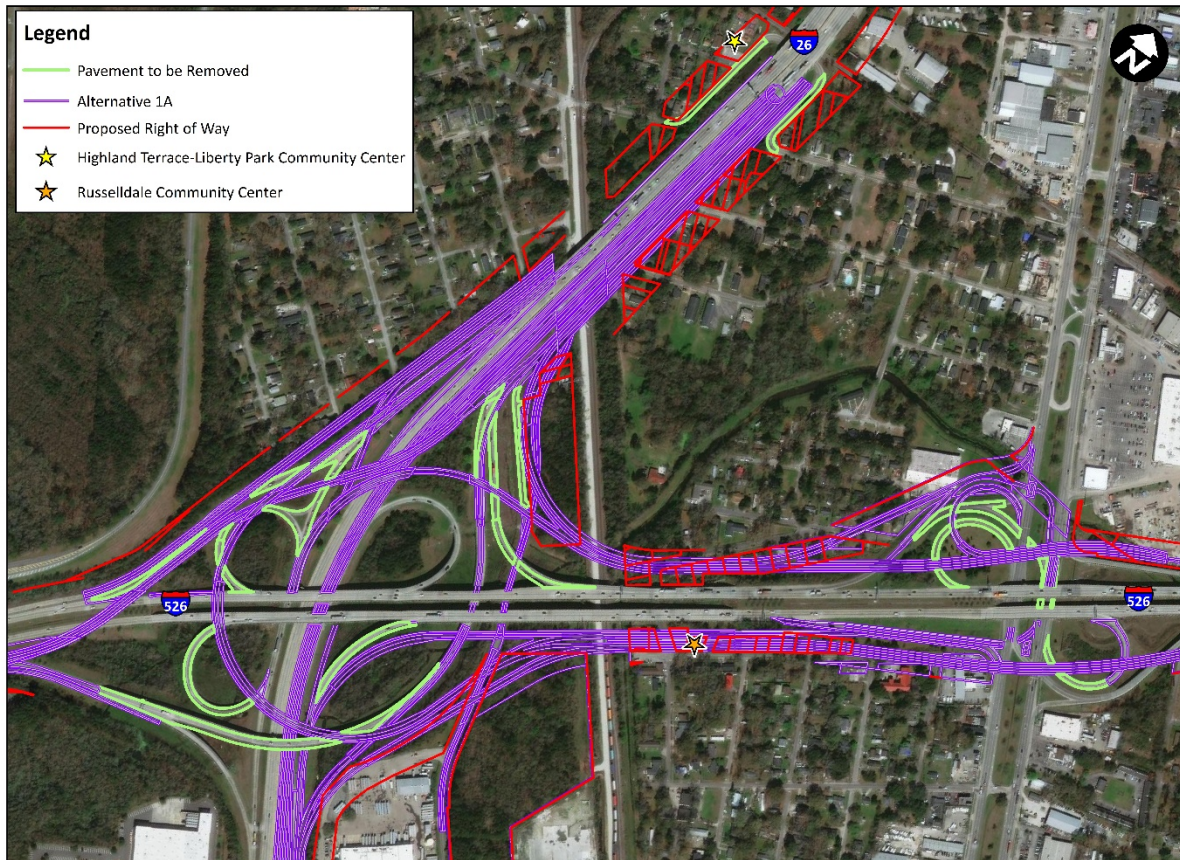


Figure 5.3: I-526 at I-26 and Rivers Ave: Alternative 1A

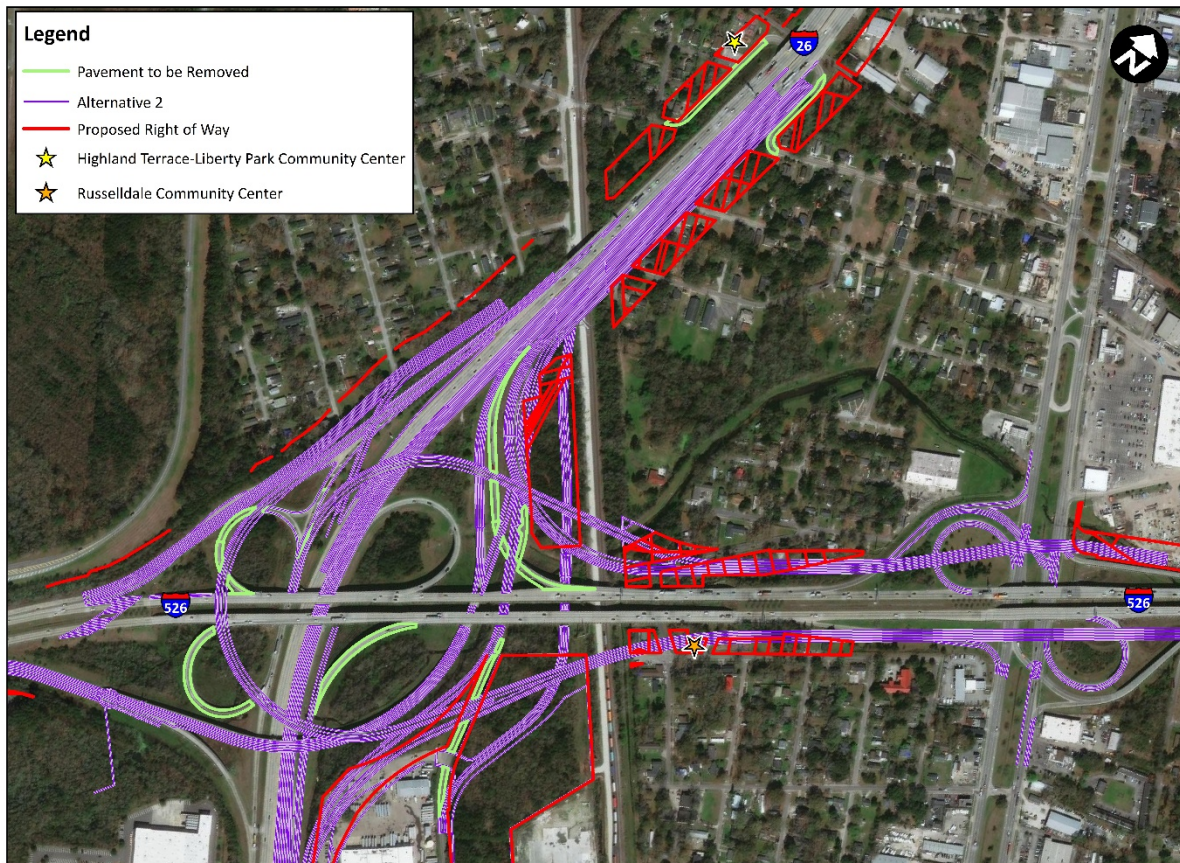


Figure 5.4: I-526 at I-26 and Rivers Ave: Alternative 2

Alternative 2A: This alternative adds collector-distributor roads to the north and south sides of I-526 through the Rivers Avenue interchange. Eastbound I-526 to westbound I-26 will use the existing directional ramp. Access between Rivers Avenue and I-26 via I-526 is maintained. Figure 5.5 depicts the proposed improvements for Alternative 2A.

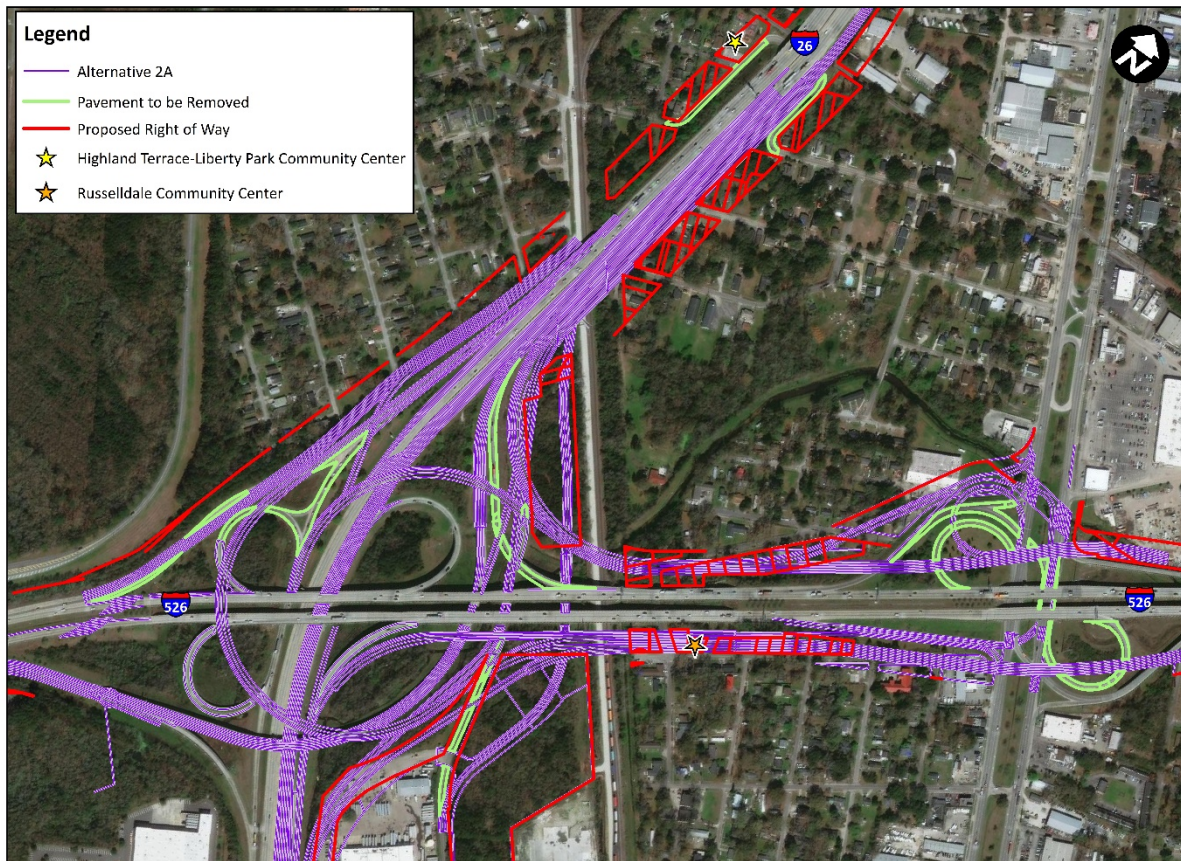


Figure 5.5: I-526 at I-26 and Rivers Ave: Alternative 2A

Alternatives 1, 1A, 2 and 2A each include a combination of the I-26/I-526 system interchange and the adjacent I-526/Rivers Avenue (US 52) service interchange. The two interchanges are combined in each of these four alternatives because they are close together. The distance between the painted gore points of the ramps between these interchanges is 1,600 feet in the eastbound direction and 725 feet in the westbound direction. Table 5.1 summarizes the functional differences between these four alternatives.

Operational Differences – Alternatives 1 and 2 are recommended over Alternatives 1A and 2A. This is because both 1A and 2A include ramps connecting Rivers Avenue to both the existing mainline and the proposed eastbound and westbound I-526 C-D roads. The connections to the new C-D roads present two operational issues. First, the proposed westbound C-D road carries all westbound I-526 traffic that is destined for I-26. Traffic entering from Rivers Avenue onto the westbound C-D must merge with this volume if bound for westbound I-26, or weave through it if bound for eastbound I-26. This weave fails, producing a LOS F, due to the limited weaving distance available between Rivers Avenue and I-26. Another consideration involves the forecast for future traffic queues in the northbound lanes of Rivers Avenue due to the expected growth in intermodal freight rail traffic crossing Rivers Avenue near Taylor Street. Traffic studies associated with Navy Base Intermodal Terminal Environmental Impact Statement indicate that these queues will impact traffic on I-526 near Rivers Avenue. If ramps are also connected to

the proposed C-D roads, these same queues will impact the I-526 to I-26 system traffic due to traffic queueing up these additional ramps.

Table 5.1: Summary of Functional Differences between Reasonable Alternatives

| Design Differences | Alt 1 | Alt 1A | Alt 2 | Alt 2A |
|--|---|--|---|----------------|
| EB I-526 to WB I-26 | Crosses over I-526 in the NW Quadrant of Interchange, then over I-26. | Same as Alt 1 | Crosses over I-26, then under I-526 on Existing Ramp. | Same as Alt 2 |
| Access at I-526/Rivers Avenue Interchange | Maintains connection to I-526 existing mainline. Does not provide access to/from the new I-526 C-D lanes. | Maintains connection to I-526 mainline and adds connections to/from the new I-526 C-D lanes. | Same as Alt 1 | Same as Alt 1A |
| Access from Remount Road and Aviation Avenue on west side of I-26 to EB I-526 | Must cross over I-26 to Rivers Avenue, take Rivers Avenue to I-526. | Same as Alt 1 | May follow same route at Alt 1 and 1A, or use EB I-26 C-D road to loop ramp accessing EB I-526. | Same as Alt 2 |

Alternatives 1 and 2 result in the diversion of traffic that currently accesses eastbound and westbound I-26 from Rivers Avenue via westbound I-526. Approximately 330 vehicles are diverted along Rivers Avenue toward Montague Avenue and 370 toward Remount Road in the AM peak hour to gain access to I-26. In the PM peak hour, approximately 240 vehicles and 320 vehicles are diverted toward Montague Avenue and Remount Road, respectively, to gain access to I-26. A comparison of LOS can be found in Tables 5.2 and 5.3. Table 5.2 shows a moderate increase in delay/reduction in LOS for Alternatives 1 and 2 compared to 1A and 2A due to the additional traffic diverted to the Rivers and Remount intersection. The freeway analysis results in Table 5.3 show the failure in the westbound section of I-526 between Rivers Avenue and I-26 due to the added ramps and short weave for Alternates 1A and 2A. These reports are based on a static analysis, and do not account for the bottleneck effects that this failure will have on the westbound I-526 to I-26 system to system traffic.

Alternative 2 is recommended over Alternative 1 for traffic operations because Alternative 2 includes access to and use of the existing loop ramp that connects eastbound I-26 to eastbound I-526. Dynamic traffic assignment performed by the microsimulation traffic model assigns traffic to routes based on travel distance and time, incorporating congestion into the route choice. The availability of this ramp resulted in approximately 350 vehicles and 320 vehicles using this ramp in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. This reflects the number of vehicles that chose not to use Rivers Avenue due to congestion and delays at the intersections on Rivers Avenue. This existing loop ramp, which becomes inaccessible in Alternative 1 because of a conflicting ramp, also provides a redundant path for eastbound I-26 to eastbound I-526 traffic, in the event that the new directional ramp that carries that movement is obstructed by an incident.

Table 5.2: Intersection LOS for I-26/I-526/Rivers Avenue Alternatives

| Intersection Name | 2050 No Build | | | | 2050 Build – Alt. 1 & 2 (Rivers Avenue Access to I-526 Mainline) | | | | 2050 Build – Alt. 1A & 2A (Rivers Avenue Access to I-526 Mainline and C-D) | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|-----------|---|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
| | LOS | Delay (s) | LOS | Delay (s) | LOS | Delay (s) | LOS | Delay (s) | LOS | Delay (s) | LOS | Delay (s) |
| I-526 at Rivers Ave | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rivers Ave & Harley St | C | 24.5 | E | 75.9 | C | 26.9 | E | 79.7 | C | 26.2 | E | 60.3 |
| Rivers Ave & I-526 WB Ramps | C | 26.4 | B | 12.3 | A | 7.7 | A | 6.3 | B | 18.9 | A | 6.3 |
| Rivers Ave & I-526 EB Ramps | C | 24.5 | C | 20.6 | C | 24.6 | B | 13.0 | C | 23.1 | D | 41.5 |
| Rivers Ave & Mall Dr | B | 11.5 | C | 22.6 | B | 11.5 | C | 23.1 | B | 11.1 | C | 22.8 |
| I-26 at E Montague | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E Montague Ave & I-26 WB Ramps | C | 27.7 | D | 37.2 | D | 38.8 | E | 70.0 | D | 38.8 | E | 70.0 |
| E Montague Ave & Mall Dr | B | 12.9 | B | 19.2 | B | 19.5 | C | 23.9 | C | 22.1 | C | 23.8 |
| Rivers at E Montague | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E Montague Ave & Morningside Dr | A | 6.6 | A | 6.8 | B | 12.3 | A | 7.4 | A | 7.0 | A | 6.4 |
| E Montague Ave & Alton | A | 5.5 | A | 6.5 | C | 23.6 | B | 11.6 | A | 7.9 | A | 7.2 |
| I-26 at Remount | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Remount Road & Rivers Ave | F | 433.3 | F | 214.5 | E | 62.2 | D | 49.8 | D | 49.4 | D | 40.6 |
| Remount Road & I-26 EB Ramps | F | 109.4 | E | 76.5 | E | 56.9 | E | 64.5 | D | 54.9 | E | 66.4 |
| Remount Road & I-26 WB Ramps | D | 35.6 | D | 46.1 | B | 18.0 | D | 51.5 | B | 17.0 | D | 52.6 |
| I-26 at Aviation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aviation Ave & I-26 EB Ramps | C | 20.1 | B | 13.9 | D | 51.9 | C | 21.6 | D | 49.8 | C | 20.6 |
| Aviation Ave & I-26 WB Ramps | B | 18.3 | C | 20.7 | C | 21.6 | B | 17.7 | C | 20.8 | B | 17.9 |
| Aviation Ave & Rivers Ave | F | 138.4 | E | 61.1 | E | 69.9 | D | 47.9 | E | 64.3 | D | 40.2 |

Table 5.3: HCM Freeway LOS for I-26/I-526/Rivers Avenue Alternatives

| Interstate Element | 2050 No Build | | | | 2050 Build – Alt. 1 & 2 (Rivers Avenue Access to I-526 Mainline) | | | | 2050 Build – Alt. 1A & 1B (Rivers Avenue Access to I-526 Mainline and C-D) | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|---|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
| | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) | LOS | Density (pc/mi/ln) |
| I-526 WB | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mainline West of CD Off-Ramp | E | 44.0 | F | 47.6 | C | 20.7 | C | 23.2 | C | 18.2 | C | 22.0 |
| CD Merge from Rhett On-Ramp | NA | NA | NA | NA | D | 31.4 | D | 32.2 | D | 33.9 | D | 33.3 |
| Mainline Merge from Rhett On-Ramp | F | v/c > 1 | F | v/c > 1 | C | 27.9 | D | 32.0 | C | 25.4 | D | 30.9 |
| Mainline between Rhett & Rivers | F | 88.0 | F | 85.8 | C | 24.5 | D | 30.1 | C | 21.7 | D | 28.6 |
| CD between Rhett & Rivers | NA | NA | NA | NA | D | 31.6 | D | 33.7 | E | 36.3 | E | 35.8 |
| Mainline Off-Ramp to Rivers | F | v/c > 1 | F | v/c > 1 | C | 26.9 | D | 31.5 | C | 24.1 | D | 30.4 |
| CD Off-Ramp to Rivers ³ | NA | NA | NA | NA | C | 20.4 | B | 17.4 | E | 35.7 | E | 35.1 |
| CD Weave between Rivers & I-26 | F | v/c > 1 | F | v/c > 1 | D | 31.2 | D | 32.5 | F* | v/c > 1 | F* | v/c > 1 |

Alternative 2 is recommended as the preferred alternative between International Boulevard and Rivers Avenue. Although Alternative 1 and 2 would remove access from Rivers Avenue to I-26 via I-526, both alternatives would result in lower relocations and potential impacts to Environmental Justice populations than Alternative 1A or 2A. Alternative 1 would require a traffic movement or weave that may result in overcapacity and failing LOS in the segment. The over-congestion of this segment in Alternative 1 may cause upstream backups along I-526 eastbound and I-526 westbound. Alternative 2 does not require this traffic movement or weave, which reduces the number of vehicles which must weave compared to Alternative 1. This results in traffic operations which are under capacity and with acceptable LOS C. Alternative 2 is the recommended preferred alternative between International Boulevard and Rivers Avenue. As noted in Table 5.4, all reasonable alternatives including Alternative 2 would impact both Section 4(f) resources.

Table 5.4: Impact Matrix for the Reasonable Alternatives: I-26/I-526 System-to-System & I-526 at Rivers Avenue

| Evaluation Factor | | No-Build | 1 | 2 (Recommended) | 1A | 2A |
|--|--|---|---------------|--|-----------------|------|
| Purpose & Need: 2050 Traffic Analysis | Deficient Movements ¹ | 11 | 3 | 1 | 10 | 8 |
| | Geometric Deficiencies Resolved (#) | 0/30 | 8/11 | | 9/11 | 9/11 |
| | Hurricane Evacuation Route Compatible (Yes/No) | Yes | Yes | | | |
| | Provides Direct Access to/from I-526? (Yes/No) | Yes | Yes | | | |
| | Weighted v/c Ratio ² | N/A | 0.74 | 0.71 | 0.77 | 0.70 |
| Total Relocations | 0 | 106 | | 132 | | |
| Relocations: Residential | 0 | 35 single-family homes 17 mobile homes 16 multi-family complexes, 40 units total | | 39 single-family homes 16 mobile homes 19 multi-family complexes, 55 units total | | |
| Relocations: Businesses | 0 | 12 ³ | | 13 ⁴ | | |
| Relocations: Churches | 0 | 1 - Enoch Chapel Methodist | | 2 - Enoch Chapel Methodist, Life Changers Covenant Ministries | | |
| Relocations: Community Facilities (#) | 0 | 2 - Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and Russelldale Community Center | | | | |
| Environmental Justice (Yes/No) | No | Yes | | | | |
| Section 4(f) & 6(f) (Yes/No) | No | Yes Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center - 4(f) & 6(f); Russelldale Community Center - 4(f) | | | | |
| Freshwater Wetland Impact Based on R/W (acres) | 0 | 28.5 | | | | |
| Freshwater Stream Impact Based on R/W (feet) | 0 | 13,327.1 | | | | |
| FEMA Flood Designation Total Based on R/W (acres) ⁵ | 0 | 419 | | 422 | 424 | |
| AE (acres) | 0 | 37 | | 38 | | |
| X (acres) | 0 | 382 | | 384 | 386 | |
| Threatened & Endangered Species | 0 | May effect, not likely to adversely affect 10 species ⁶ | | | | |
| Cultural Resources – Effects on NR/NR-Eligible Properties | N/A | No Effect: Eligible - Bethune School | | | | |
| Utilities (\$) | \$0 | \$37,082,500 | | \$43,582,500 | | |
| Cost (\$) | \$0 | \$950,000,000 | \$979,000,000 | \$1,068,000,000 | \$1,066,000,000 | |
| Recommended Alternative (Yes/No) | No | No | Yes | No | No | |

NOTES: Impacts associated with the Recommended Alternative are shaded blue. Evaluation factors with zero impacts for all reasonable alternatives in this portion of the project are not included in this impact matrix. A noise analysis was developed only for the Recommended Alternative, contained in DEIS Appendix G, Noise Analysis Technical Memorandum. It is noted that existing conditions approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria (NAC) for residential land use.

1. Defined as movements projected to have LOS E or F. For No Build Conditions, these include movements along I-526 and in the study area of the system-to-system interchange. For Build Conditions, these are movements along I-526, in the system-to-system study area, and in the Rhett Ave/Virginia Ave interchange study area.
2. Weighted v/c ratio taken from supplemental v/c analysis at the I-526 & I-26 and I-526 & Rhett/Virginia interchanges. Ratio is weighted based on volume processed and v/c for select, critical movements throughout the interchange(s), with comparable movements included for each alternative.
3. Staffmark, Warren Fastenings South, Inc., Charleston Dog House, Precision Cycle and Watercraft, Propac (2 buildings), Jones Ford Collision Center, Four Corners Woodworking, Custom Wood Gifts (3 buildings), Sanders Brothers Construction.
4. In addition to the business relocations listed in Footnote 3, Alternatives 1A and 2A would also displace Roper St. Francis Physician Partners - Primary Care.
5. Floodplain impacts based on proposed ROW; actual impacts to floodplains would be lower as much of proposed alignments are on structure which would limit actual earthwork in floodplains.
6. Atlantic sturgeon, Shortnose sturgeon, American wood stork, Bachman's warbler, Eastern Black rail, Piping plover, Northern long-eared bat, West Indian manatee, Canby's dropwort, Pondberry.

6.0 MINIMIZATION AND MITIGATION OF HARM

All four build alternatives would impact the Section 4(f) resources and as discussed in previous sections, there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to avoid impacts to these resources. The recommended preferred alternative (Alternative 2) is identified as the “least overall harm” alternative with efforts to minimize and mitigate impacts. See Table 6.1 for additional details on the screening process to determine the least overall harm alternative.

Minimization – Each reasonable alternative minimizes impacts to the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center, leaving 0.60-acre of the 0.87-acre property available for the redevelopment of recreational facilities. Current plans include the development of a pocket park at the existing site. The pocket park would replace the playground and one basketball court being impacted by the preferred alternative. Due to the location of the Russelldale Community Center and its parallel orientation to the I-526 corridor, there are no opportunities to minimize impacts to the facility for any of the reasonable alternatives.

Mitigation – Measures to mitigate impacts to impacted Section 4(f) resources include the in-kind replacement of impacted facilities as well as the construction of additional recreational amenities. Section 4(f) mitigation measures were developed through extensive coordination with the I-526 LCC WEST Community Advisory Council (CAC), the public, and the City of North Charleston. The CAC is comprised of 20 members from impacted neighborhoods and was developed as a means to gather input and feedback on project actions and proposed mitigation. The CAC was formed to facilitate meaningful engagement as intended under Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice to Minority and Low-Income Populations* and United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Order 5610.2 (a), *Final Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* thereby ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process. A summary of CAC meetings and materials can be reviewed in Appendix U of the DEIS.

Proposed mitigation measures to address impacts to the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park and Russelldale Community Centers are detailed below. Final details related to programs and amenities at the recreational facilities will be included in the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation and the FEIS/ROD. Additional mitigation details can be found in the draft I-526 LCC WEST Community Mitigation Plan (DEIS Appendix H).

Replacement Recreational Facilities:

- Through coordination with the CAC and the City of North Charleston, SCDOT will identify and acquire parcels located within the affected neighborhoods to construct one large, centrally located community center complex (called the “Filbin Creek Community Center” for the purposes of this document), a pocket park in Highland Terrace-Liberty Park, and a pocket park in Russelldale. **Construction of the new centrally located community center and the pocket parks will be completed prior to the start of construction of the I-526 LCC-West improvements.**

- Potential infrastructure related to the replacement recreational facilities could include, but is not limited to:
 - Classrooms designed for flexibility, which include moveable panel divider walls allowing room size to be modified to meet program needs;
 - Basketball courts;
 - Community garden;
 - Maintenance of stormwater detention as an educational wetland;
 - Outdoor facility lighting above minimum requirements;
 - Covered picnic shelters;
 - Grills;
 - Walkways and common spaces will be user-friendly and defined by vegetation or other natural definitions (i.e., fencing should not be first choice);
 - Wayfarer/directional signs to help guide residents to new facilities; and,
 - Solar panels and emergency generators to enable the centers to be used as shelters during emergencies or inclement weather.

Recreational Facility Programs and Activities:

- Prior to the approval of the FEIS/ROD, SCDOT and the City of North Charleston will develop an intergovernmental agreement outlining the programs, services, structural components, and arrangements for long-term operation and maintenance of the replacement community center and pocket parks. The agreement will include language that gives residents of the surrounding neighborhoods priority in areas such as program enrollment/participation, reserving facility space, and volunteer opportunities.
- SCDOT will provide seed money to start agreed-upon programs with the understanding that the City of North Charleston will fund and maintain the programs.
- The City of North Charleston will continue to look for qualified candidates that live in the impacted environmental justice neighborhoods. The City of North Charleston will post job openings within the neighborhoods and encourage the CAC and neighborhood councils to submit qualified applicants.
- Potential programs and amenities could include, but are not be limited to:
 - Senior and youth-focused programs and activities;
 - A monthly programming/activity calendar that prioritizes programs for community seniors and youth such as meeting spaces, youth lunch programs, and tennis associations;
 - A yearly calendar of community center events that focuses on events that foster

community cohesion such as those that highlight/preserve local history, involve meeting with government representatives, and cross-cultural activities;

- Programming that provides access to educational and financial resources for community advocacy and self-advocacy;
- Volunteer opportunities with priority on neighborhood residents;
- Inclusion of a community garden at the recreational facility to serve as both an educational program and effort to mitigate neighborhoods' location in known food desert; and,
- Nature/ecology programs that incorporate site features including educational wetland and community garden.

Connectivity and Bike & Pedestrian Safety:

- SCDOT will continue to work with the CAC and City of North Charleston to identify and construct infrastructure improvements to improve bike and pedestrian connectivity, safety, and mobility between the replacement community center, pocket parks, surrounding EJ neighborhoods, and transit stops along Rivers Avenue. These improvements may include:
 - Replacement community center and pocket park approaches designed with pedestrian facilities, crosswalks, and traffic calming measures such as speed tables or speed bumps;
 - Replacement community center to include a multiuse path to provide recreational opportunities for walking/biking and connectivity to proposed Filbin Creek Greenway system;
 - New sidewalks and improvements to existing neighborhood sidewalks;
 - Lighting under I-526; neighborhood street lighting, traffic-calming measures, stop signs, and crosswalks;
 - Construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks connecting West Deacon Street to the proposed Filbin Creek Community Center;
 - Addition of amenities and improvements at the CARTA bus stops along Rivers Avenue from just north of Taylor Street to just south of Rebecca Street; and,
 - Development of the first phase of the proposed Filbin Creek Greenway in conjunction with the initiation of planning related to the City of North Charleston's Coast Resilience Grant.

Draft renderings for the replacement community centers and recreational facilities are shown in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. These plans are conceptual in nature; the final layout will be included in the final 4(f) evaluation and FEIS/ROD. Section 7.0 describes coordination efforts related to the development of Section 4(f) mitigation.

Table 6.1: Least Overall Harm Matrix for Each Reasonable Alternative at the I-526/26 Interchange

| 23 CFR 774.3(c)(1) Factors | 1 | 2 | 1A | 2A | Conclusion |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| i. The ability to mitigate adverse impacts to each Section 4(f) property. | Project impacts can be mitigated by reconstructing similar and improved recreational facilities on available property in logical locations and can be enhanced further by increasing the number of programs at the replacement facilities and improving bike/pedestrian connectivity and lighting through the affected neighborhoods along routes to and from the proposed replacement facilities. | | | All reasonable alternatives can be mitigated to the same degree necessary to offset impacts to each Section 4(f) property. | |
| ii. The relative severity of the remaining harm, after mitigation, to the protected activities, attributes or features that qualify each Section 4(f) property for protection. | Minor indirect effects would remain simply by moving the facilities from their current locations. Care was taken to identify available land within close proximity to both Section 4(f) resources in an effort to minimize this effect. The proposed Filbin Creek Community Center would be constructed between both existing facilities; approximately 0.4-mile away (via neighborhood roads) from both existing facilities. | | | All reasonable alternatives would result in the same minor indirect effect associated with displacing the existing facilities and necessitating a slightly longer walk (0.4-mile) to each community center compared to their current locations. This effect can be mitigated to the same degree for all reasonable alternatives through the use of improved bike/pedestrian sidewalk and greenway connections. | |
| iii. The relative significance of each Section 4(f) property. | The Section 4(f) community centers serve as an outlet for the communities and provide the main source of entertainment for children in the community. They provide a safe place for children to be active after school and in the summer while providing quality supervision and guidance. Programs at the community center focus on academic enrichment and recreational activities designed to teach children valuable leadership and life skills they can use in their everyday decision-making processes. The centers provide a place for youth development, as well as a place where citizens can hold events and community gatherings. | | | Both Section 4(f) resources provide a high amount of value to the surrounding neighborhoods. Each of the reasonable alternatives would result in the level of impact to each Section 4(f) resource. | |
| iv. The views of the officials with jurisdiction over each Section 4(f) property. | The City of North Charleston Parks and Recreation Department has jurisdiction over the affected Section 4(f) resources. The City understands that all reasonable alternatives would have an adverse effect on the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park and Russelldale community centers. | | | The City of North Charleston Parks and Recreation Department is agreeable to the proposed mitigation measures to offset impacts associated with displacing both Section 4(f) resources. | |
| v. The degree to which each alternative meets the purpose and need for the project. | Provides greater congestion relief than Alternatives 1A and 2A. | | Provides less congestion relief than Alternatives 1 and 2. | | All reasonable alternatives meet the project's purpose and need. |
| vi. After reasonable mitigation, the magnitude of any adverse impacts to resources not protected by Section 4(f). | All alternatives would have similar impacts to floodplains, wetlands, and streams after reasonable mitigation. | | | Each reasonable alternative would result in impacts of similar magnitude to non-Section 4(f) resources. | |
| vii. Substantial differences in cost among the alternatives. | \$29 million less than the Recommended Alternative | \$979 million (Recommended Alternative) | \$89 million more than the Recommended Alternative | \$87 million more than the Recommended Alternative | Alt 1 has the lowest costs of the alternatives presented in the DEIS. |
| Conclusions of the least overall harm analysis | Each reasonable alternative would impact the Section 4(f) resources at Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and Russelldale Community Center to the same extent. According to FHWA's Section 4(f) Policy Paper ¹ , "Pursuant to substantial case law, if the assessment of overall harm finds that two or more alternatives are substantially equal, FHWA can approve any of those alternatives." As such, the Recommended Alternative can be selected as the Least Overall Harm Alternative based on it having the same or less impacts than the other reasonable alternatives, a lower cost estimate than two of the four reasonable alternatives, while best meeting the project purpose and need. | | | | |

¹ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Section 4(f) Policy Paper – Environmental Review Toolkit. US Department of Transportation. <https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/section4f/4fpolicy.aspx#altloh>

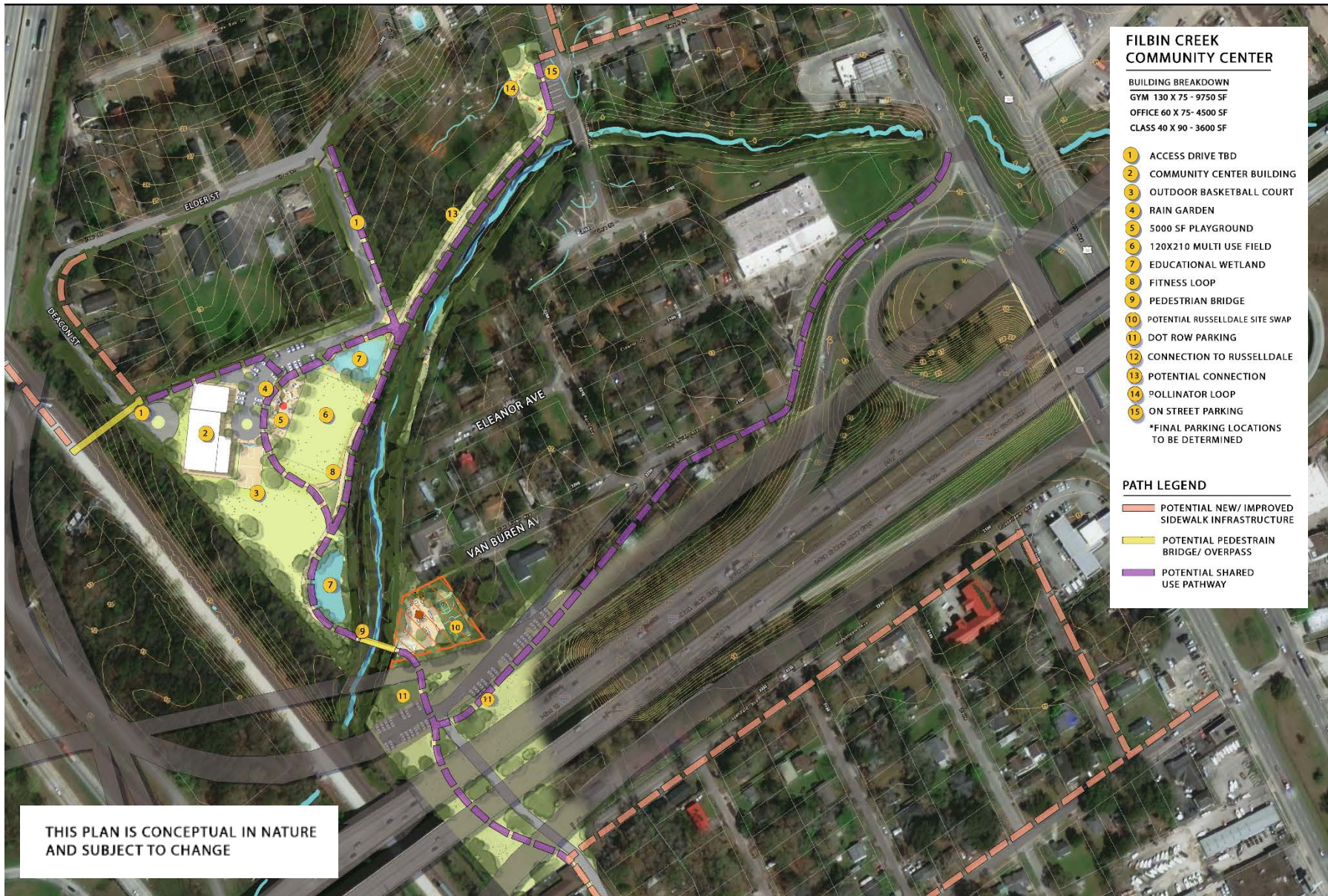


Figure 6.1: Draft rendering of the proposed replacement community center and recreational amenities on Filbin Creek in the Liberty Park neighborhood. Final site layout will be included with the final 4(f) evaluation and FEIS/ROD.



Figure 6.2: Draft rendering of the replacement recreational facilities on the remaining land at the current Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center. Final site layout will be included with the Final 4(f) Evaluation and FEIS/ROD.

Least Overall Harm Alternative – In consideration of the proposed mitigation measures described above, the preferred alternative would create the least overall harm to Section 4(f) resources. After mitigation measures are in place, the replacement facilities would reestablish the infrastructure, programs, and services that originally qualified the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and Russelldale Community Center as Section 4(f) resources.

7.0 COORDINATION

Once impacts were apparent, SCDOT initiated coordination with the City of North Charleston to start identifying potential replacement properties. The project team created an online GIS viewer to share visual representations of the potential properties that could be utilized for facility relocation. The map identifies parcels that are vacant or city-owned, and current listings for sale in the EJ Neighborhoods. The City of North Charleston also provided data of previously identified parcels that were considered underdeveloped along Rivers Avenue.

Once identified, the proposed locations and conceptual renderings were reviewed by the CAC and the City of North Charleston through the Technical Review Committee (TRC). Coordination materials can be found in Appendix B.

8.0 REFERENCES

23 CFR § 774.3 - Section 4(f) approvals (2018).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Section 4(f) Evaluations—Environmental Review Toolkit. US Department of Transportation.

https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/4f_tutorial/default.aspx

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Section 4(f) Policy Paper – Environmental Review Toolkit. US Department of Transportation.

<https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/section4f/4fpolicy.aspx#altloh>



APPENDIX A
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center



Entrance to the community center and park (Google Street View)



Parking lot (Google Street View)



Outdoor courts and adjacent rail corridor (Google Street View)

Russelldale Community Center



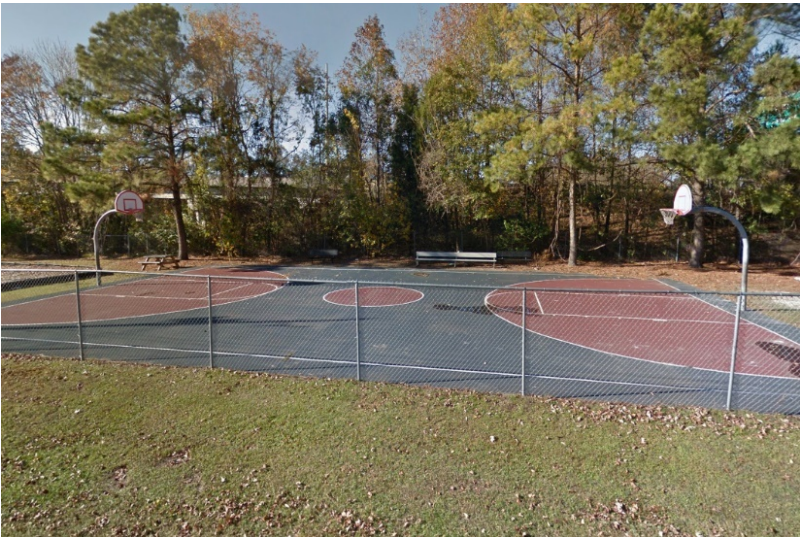
View of the community center facing northwest (Google Street View)



Playground (Google Street View)



View of the community center facing west (Google Street View)



Basketball Court (Google Street View)



APPENDIX B
COORDINATION

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 1

Date: September 30, 2019

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:35 pm

Location: Harvest Pointe Church, 4870 Piedmont Avenue, North Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Henry Jones, SCDOT | Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque |
| Barbara Beagles, SCDOT | Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way |
| Yolonda Jordan, FHWA | Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale |
| Joy Riley, SCDOT | Tony Grasso, Russelldale |
| Chad Long, SCDOT | Larenda Baxley, Ferndale |
| Ryan White, Stantec | David Johnson, Ferndale |
| Jamelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies, LLC | Saint Julian Corey VanHannegeyn IV |
| Amy Sackaroff, Stantec | Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale |
| DeAndre Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque | Ruthie Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace |
| Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park | Michael S. Halls, Sr., Ferndale |
| Charlyne Smith, Ferndale | LaTonya Derrick, Stantec |
| Amy Gregory, Ferndale | Pamela Foster, FHWA |

Meeting Summary:

Jamelle Ellis (Facilitator) began the meeting by having meeting participants introduce themselves. There was a total of 24 participants, 14 of which were Community Advisory Council (CAC) members representing affected residential communities. The importance of transparency and active engagement were emphasized to meeting participants in order to optimize the experience and outcomes of the CAC and mitigation process.

Joy Riley (SCDOT Program Manager) provided a project overview and schedule for the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor West project, providing a map of the geographical footprint of the project, its purpose (increase capacity and improve operations), schedule (thru construction in 2025), outreach components (2019-2020), and the regulatory impetus for project development.

Amy Sackaroff (NEPA/Public Engagement Specialist) explained Environmental Justice, discussed the purpose of the CAC and the roles and responsibilities of its members, and reviewed the CAC handbook which was provided to each CAC member during the meeting. The Newtown Pike Extension (Lexington, KY) video was shown in order to demonstrate a similar project to the I-526 West project with successful outcomes.

Joy encouraged the CAC to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences throughout the process. She stated that the project team is relying on the CAC to help advise them and better inform the process. The

CAC will help the project team answer questions of efficiency and effectiveness such as whether we are disseminating information in a way that is helpful to the community and whether messaging is constructed in a way that is relevant and practical to the community (do they understand/receive information being communicated?). She also stated that the CAC handbook is a living document and the project team's approach will be fluid in order to best meet the needs of the community. The approach will include some level of trial and error, so adjustments will be made if something is not currently working.

CAC Discussions/Comments:

CAC Member Suggestion: There was a concern about holding CAC meetings in the evenings for people with school-age children. The point was made that more people were not in attendance because it was a school night. Joy reassured the CAC member (and council) that the project team would take her feedback into consideration in scheduling future meetings. *[Update: the second CAC meeting is scheduled for a week night due to constraints related to staff and facility availability; however, this suggestion will remain in mind as future CAC meetings are scheduled.]*

CAC Member Concern: There are other community groups that are meeting regarding the I-526 West project. There is a lot of misinformation being distributed as a result of those meetings. For instance, the CAC member referenced rumors about planned efforts in their communities and the existence of physical plans of proposed changes to their communities. Contrary to rumors circulated in his community, he learned during the first CAC meeting that no definitive plans have been prepared. He asked how the CAC should manage rumors. Joy responded that she cannot control rumors, but she has an open-door policy for anyone who has questions. Her phone number is on most of the project flyers. She recommends people call and get their information from the source. She stressed that she takes an upfront, full-disclosure approach, so if someone calls and asks her a question, she is going to tell the truth. She encourages people to have an open mind and come out to listen to what SCDOT says – to hear and gather information and stressed working together to develop solutions.

CAC Member Question: Do you have door hangers with printed facts that we can take back to the community? Stantec responded that they could be produced before the next CAC meeting. The CAC Member indicated door hangers with Q&As would help with questions they have, so that after meetings they could take them back to the community to help answer questions and possibly offset the spread of misinformation. Joy: Door hangers will also be distributed 3 weeks in advance of the November 13th community meeting. *[Update: FAQs related to relocation/right-of-way acquisition will be distributed at CAC Meeting No. 3 in conjunction with an information session on the subject.]*

CAC Member Question: Will you also hold meetings in the areas that will be affected as well? That will allow the residents who are actually going to be affected to come out to hear what we're hearing and give their input based on how they feel regarding how the improvements project is affecting them. Joy indicated that if community members want the project team to present at homeowners association meetings, they will accommodate those requests. Currently, there are meetings scheduled at Biblical House of God (Russelldale). The meeting schedule is outlined in the CAC handbook. The primary, all-day Public Information Meeting is scheduled for November 21st at the Convention Center. If there are additional meetings that need to be scheduled, the project team welcomes those opportunities. The team looked at having a meeting at the Highland Terrace Liberty Park Community Center, but it wasn't

large enough to accommodate the anticipated number of participants. It is important to note that these are advertised meetings so people who live in other communities may also attend.

Jamelle facilitated a brainstorming session to develop a list of rules of engagement to help govern the CAC process for the life of the project. The CAC developed the following list.

Rules of Engagement:

1. Respect others' opinions
2. Address one community at a time
3. Determine how much of each community will be affected
4. Consistent attendance and participation
5. Respect meeting time and agenda
6. Ask questions/active participation
7. Listen with an open mind
8. Silence cell phones
9. Remain solution-oriented and stay on topic
10. Agree to disagree
11. Agree to table topics that need additional research
12. Respect privileged information and maintain confidentiality
13. Give time for community leaders to discuss concerns shared by community members
14. Attack the issues, not the person
15. Engage with the SCDOT team in an honest way to best facilitate the process
16. Be mindful of meeting times (children, work, etc.)

Recommendation that #3 be removed from this list, and noted accordingly, but addressed as a part of strategic project discussions. A printed copy of the Rules of Engagement will be provided to all CAC members to include in their handbooks upon their approval.

Upcoming meeting topics

- The CAC decided that weekday evenings are going to be a challenge for people who work, but if meetings are held on weekdays, we should maintain the 6-8 PM meeting time. Need to determine if Fridays are the most preferable weekday? Saturday mornings 10 AM-12 PM? Thursdays? Should an anonymous vote (ballot) be taken to determine the best day/time?
- Amy: There is an understanding that everyone will not be able to make every meeting, so for any meeting a CAC member misses there will be updates. CAC members will be kept informed. The project team will ensure that meeting times remain flexible in order to accommodate the majority of the CAC.
- Reviewing the Rules of Engagement. Once the CAC finalizes and approves, they will go into CAC binders.
- Next meeting will be the end of October or the beginning of November ahead of the community drop-in on November 21.
- The project team and CAC will review maps and public meeting materials.
- The CAC should familiarize themselves with meeting places and times.

- The project team should bring to the next meeting flyers and door hangers for CAC members to distribute
- The CAC should work to confirm community issues, needs, and priorities
- The CAC and project team will start the conversation about mitigation measures
- When necessary, the project team will bring subject matter experts who are able to answer technical questions regarding specific elements of the project
- Open mic segments of the meetings will allow CAC members to share what they are hearing from their neighbors. A specific amount of time (eg. 30 minutes) should be allotted during each meeting for open mic.
- Brief recap by Amy: The project team does a series of meetings ahead of the drop-in on November 21, 2019. The project team will come back and talk about what they learned. That will involve a few high-level mitigation concepts, reporting back to the CAC, the project team compiling and learning about complex housing regulations and guidelines, and getting the CAC feedback on those topics
- Anticipated that the February 2020 meeting will be spent fine-tuning mitigation concepts
- The March 2020 meeting will be spent reviewing a draft framework with detailed input from the CAC on potential modifications
- Vision statement activity will be conducted during the next meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Jamelle H. Ellis, Ph.D.
President/Managing Director
Empowerment Strategies, LLC

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 2

Date: November 1, 2019

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:05 pm

Location: Harvest Pointe Church, 4870 Piedmont Avenue, North Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Michael S. Halls, Sr., Ferndale | Willie Johnson, THC |
| Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale | Jesse Williams |
| Larenda Baxley, Ferndale | Joy Riley, SCDOT |
| David L. Johnson, Ferndale | David Kelly, SCDOT |
| Beverly “Amy” Gregory, Ferndale | Mark Westbury, SCDOT |
| Cameletia Robertson, Ferndale | Fran Bickley, SCDOT |
| Charlyne Smith, Ferndale | Angela Page-Smith, SCDOT |
| Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale | Henry Jones, SCDOT |
| St. Julian Corey Van Hannegeyn IV, Deacon Hill | Pamela Foster, FHWA |
| Ruthie Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace | Yolonda Jordan, FHWA |
| Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way | Jessica Hekler, FHWA |
| Juanita Porter, Joppa Way | Rick Day, Stantec |
| Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park | Ryan White, Stantec |
| Jeanaris Bannister, Liberty Park | Amy Sackaroff, Stantec |
| Tony Grasso, Russelldale | LaTonya Derrick, Stantec |
| Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque | Jamelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies |
| Annette McCrory, THC | |

Participant Summary

Total participants: 33

Ferndale: 9

Highland Terrace: 1

Liberty Park: 2

Joppa Way: 2

Russelldale participants: 1

Undesignated: 1 (Jesse Williams)

Deacon Hill: 1 (St. Julian Corey Van Hannegeyn IV)

Non-returning CAC participant(s) from Meeting 1: DeAndre Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque

First-time CAC participants: 2 (from THC)

SCDOT: 6

FHWA: 3

Stantec: 4

Facilitator: 1

Meeting Summary:

The meeting was started with participant introductions. Exits and emergency meeting locations were reviewed. Administrative issues were addressed (distribution of CAC Meeting 1 minutes, CAC Meeting 2 agenda and notebook materials, including door hangers and relocation/right-of-way acquisition flyers). The importance of transparency and active engagement was emphasized in order to optimize solutions and outcomes of the CAC and mitigation process.

Rules of Engagement

Rules of Engagement (Rules) developed in CAC Meeting 1 were reviewed. The CAC was reminded that the Rules will serve as ideals and guiding principles that the group will use to work together in a collaborative and productive manner. Bullet 3 (“Determine how much of each community will be affected”) from the original list was removed since it is considered tactical rather than a guiding in nature. There were no objections by the CAC to this modification. The remaining 15 Rules of Engagement were reviewed and approved by the CAC.

Final Rules of Engagement:

1. Respect others’ opinions
2. Address one community at a time
3. Consistent attendance and participation
4. Respect meeting time and agenda
5. Ask questions/active participation
6. Listen with an open mind
7. Silence cell phones
8. Remain solution-oriented and stay on topic
9. Agree to disagree
10. Agree to table topics that need additional research
11. Respect privileged information and maintain confidentiality
12. Give time for community leaders to discuss concerns shared by community members
13. Attack the issues, not the person
14. Engage with the SCDOT team in an honest way to best facilitate the process
15. Be mindful of meeting times (children, work, etc.)

There was a point of emphasis on Bullet 11, stressing that no photos should be taken of the maps scheduled to be reviewed later in the meeting.

The meeting resumed after a brief time to plate meals with a discussion of proper communication for missed meetings. The CAC decided that email is the preferred method of communication. For participants unable to attend a meeting, the project team will send an email with materials distributed during the meeting upon request. The project team will also contact CAC member(s) who are absent from meetings.

Community Office hours of operation were established by the CAC as follows:

Two weeknights (9 AM - 8PM)

Two weekends a month (10 AM – 2PM)

The project team will schedule meetings by appointment in addition to the set times. Community Office hours of operation may be modified at any time, with the approval of the CAC.

Social Needs Assessment

The Social Needs Assessment was explained and administered. The assessment is a survey to identify and prioritize community members' current needs and to understand how to best address them. For future discussions, the CAC was asked to consider their reasons for their responses and reminded that responses to questions will help inform local planning efforts. The survey included 25 two-part questions that focused on "how important is the issue to you?" and "how satisfied are you with the service?" During survey administration, no participants requested clarification or asked questions about the meaning of questions.

Comments/notes during the Social Needs Assessment administration:

- CAC members should keep in mind that they are representing not only themselves, but members of their communities.
- Social Needs Assessment questions should make the CAC think about the broader range of community issues and will serve as a springboard for discussions as the team develops the mitigation plan.
- The project team will review results of the Social Needs Assessment at CAC Meeting 3 to provide a platform for discussing current CAC views and perspectives on services and amenities available in target communities and the Council's vision for these communities through the mitigation process.
- When asked if there were any areas of concern omitted from the survey, CAC members provided the following feedback as concerns that should be included in future social needs discussions:
 - Limited through-way access
 - Neighborhood used as cut-throughs
 - Area/neighborhood crime
 - Lack of ample and consistent police presence

Virtual Public Information Meeting

The project team showed Virtual Public Information meeting video.

Comments/notes during the Virtual Public Information discussion:

- On back of the distributed Community Drop-In flyer, there is a list of 5 community drop-in dates and the public information meeting date and location.
- The video will be presented at each community drop-in and at the Public Information Meeting on November 21, 2019; However, it will also be available online in order to maximize the number of viewers.
- The video is still in the editing stage.

Community Drop-in meeting materials/discussion

Review of maps that will be presented at the community drop-ins and at the Public Information Meeting:

- The project team reiterated that no pictures or videos should be taken during map review. This is critical because the maps shown during Meeting 2 are still being developed and have not been finalized. It is important that incomplete and/or unauthorized documents not be released for public consumption to avoid confusion or transfer of incorrect information to the general public.
- Roll plots, various maps that depict the entire I-526 corridor and the proposed improvements as well as smaller neighborhood were reviewed by the CAC.
- SCDOT expert staff members were present to answer right-of-way and acquisition questions.
- More maps will be available in future meetings.

- CAC members were encouraged to ask questions regarding the presented maps.
- CAC Comments/Suggested revision to maps:
 - Sign by each station/map identifying the location
 - Label more streets
 - Explained to CAC Member that the smaller maps will highlight the local streets better
 - Minimizes busyness of the larger maps
 - Identify on the impacted parcel what is being “lost”
 - Mobile home
 - Vacant parcel
 - Single-family or multi-family dwelling
 - Business/Commercial Lot
 - Include if the parcel is in a flood zone
 - CAC Member asked if something could be added to identify the travel direction on roadway.
 - Like a caret (^) or less-than/greater-than symbol (< >) on top of the new roadway, particularly at the system-to-system interchange

The project team reviewed Community drop-in dates and locations (November 9, 13, 14, 18, 19) and stressed the significance of these meetings as valuable opportunities for community input and feedback. Each community drop-in will be held for a three-hour period.

CAC members were encouraged to visit the Community Project Office and to invite neighbors to visit to view the maps and video.

Planning to Implementation

The project team discussed the duration of the CAC and mitigation process and the importance of CAC commitment. In addition to community and public meetings, there are a number of studies and technical reports (community impacts, environmental impacts, etc.) the project team will develop and release for public comments. These documents are public records and legal documents that must receive approval at various levels. The CAC will partner with the project team throughout the mitigation process as follows (overview):

- The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS summarizes all of the impacts.
- The final environmental document is a Record of Decision that will be developed once alternatives have been agreed upon.
- Right of way acquisition in 2020. Early acquisition in 2020 will be key. The CAC and project team will discuss early acquisition during relocation meeting discussions.
- The target for completion of document review and public comment periods is through Fall of 2021.
- Construction in 2023.

In order maintain the anticipated timeline, the project team and CAC must make significant progress early in the process. It will be critical to transition the CAC team to an oversight committee to ensure decisions made are actually implemented.

There will be a hiatus after completion of environmental documents and during the right of way acquisition, so meetings will be less frequent once construction begins. The intense work will be in the short term (early in the process), then meetings will become less frequent as the team transitions into the implementation phase (under the oversight committee formally the CAC).

The project team strives to ensure the CAC is representative of every community. This group will be comprised of homeowners and tenants of Russelldale, Liberty Park, Ferndale, and Highland Terrace. CAC members were encouraged to identify other residents, particularly from Russelldale to join and participate in the CAC.

Summary and Next Steps

Next steps:

- Public Comment period last until January 4, 2020
- Next meeting scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2019, 10 AM-12 PM (following the November community drop-ins and the Public Information Meeting on November 21)
- At the Public Information Meeting comments may be submitted as written comments or audio-recordings. Comments may also be submitted online or mailed-in.

Upcoming meeting topics (CAC Meeting 3, December 7):

- Social Needs Assessment summary and discussion at the next meeting
- Vision Statement Activity
- Discussion about the appropriate size of the CAC
- Information and FAQ session on Right of Way and Relocation

Respectfully submitted,

Jamelle H. Ellis, Ph.D.
President/Managing Director
Empowerment Strategies, LLC

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 3

Date: December 7, 2019

Time: 10:00 am – 12:17 pm

Location: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office, 5627 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

| | |
|--|--|
| Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale | Amy Sackaroff, Stantec |
| Larenda Baxley, Ferndale | LaTonya Derrick, Stantec |
| David L. Johnson, Ferndale | Fran Bickley, SCDOT ROW |
| Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale | Joy Riley, SCDOT |
| Geneva Swett, Ferndale | Chad Long, SCDOT ESO |
| Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace | Yolonda Jordan, FHWA |
| Nathan Bryant, Highland Terrace | Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison) |
| Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park | Mattese Lecque, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison) |
| Doris Twiggs, Liberty Park | Frank Scott, N. Charleston Housing Authority |
| Tony Grasso, Russelldale | Horrace Tobin, Community Office |
| Saint Julian Corey Van Hannegeyn IV, Deas Hill | Jamelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies |
| Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque | |
| Rick Day, Stantec | |
| Ryan White, Stantec | |

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 25

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Ferndale: 5 | Adjacent/affected communities/agencies: 3 | Community Office: 1 |
| Highland Terrace: 2 | SCDOT: 3 | Stantec: 4 |
| Liberty Park: 2 | FHWA: 1 | Facilitator: 1 |
| Russelldale: 1 | Community Liaisons: 2 | |

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

All meeting participants provided introductions. Restroom location, exit, and external emergency meeting location were reviewed. Administrative issues were addressed:

- Reminder to all participants to provide signatures for attendance and initials for consent to record meeting
- Review and approval of Meeting 1 minutes
- Distribution of CAC Meeting 2 minutes for review
- Confirmation of Community Office hours of operation
- Distribution and review of Meeting 3 agenda
- Outlined the intent and guidelines for open-mic session, including distribution of comment cards during the break for anyone wishing not to ask questions of the project team directly

- Vision Statement exercise will be conducted if there is time. Otherwise, the exercise will be conducted during CAC Meeting 4 in January 2020.
- Community Office flyers available to the CAC to take and distribute to community members and neighbors. CAC Members were also encouraged to take pictures for convenience in sharing with other community members

Rules of Engagement

Reviewed and approved the final Rules of Engagement. A poster board of Rules of Engagement will be printed and displayed in the Community Office during CAC meetings.

The group discussed how to manage interest of residents in areas outside of the potentially impacted neighborhoods of Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, and Russelldale. There will be two Open House meetings scheduled in 2020 during which non-CAC members may present project-related questions and concerns to the project team and CAC members. The project team is still seeking subject matter experts to serve as presenters for informational and educational purposes. The project team also continues to seek CAC members to represent the Russelldale community, but general CAC membership and participation will be finalized and capped in January 2020. In order to preserve the integrity of the CAC meetings and in order to clearly define community representatives serving on the CAC, no new members will be invited to the CAC after that time.

- One CAC member expressed concerns about capping membership in January, stating they would like to leave an opportunity open for people who may express interest later in the process (particularly from one of the lesser represented communities), and citing relatively significant representation of the Ferndale community on the CAC but much lower representation of other communities within the project scope.
- The project team agreed that more representation is needed from underrepresented communities such as Russelldale, as well as tenants. A few people that stopped by the Community Office and attended the community drop-ins were extended invitations to attend CAC meeting 3. It was reiterated that the CAC should be comprised of residents of one of the four affected communities: Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, or Russelldale. However, if CAC members are interested in revisiting or revising criteria for membership, the group should make those changes as desired. Membership criteria (considered by the project team during discussions with potential new members) include: being a resident, a property owner, or a tenant. However, if there are additional criteria the CAC would like the project team to consider for new CAC members, current members are encouraged to provide guidance and feedback to the project team.
- A CAC member requested the names of any contacts made during Community Office visits or community drop-ins so that they could follow up and encourage increased participation and CAC membership.
- A Community Liaison inquired about and encouraged participation by CAC members in civic groups and meetings and indicated these meetings as the best opportunities for identifying new CAC members.
 - In response, a CAC member shared that the challenge in their community is that most people are tenants rather than homeowners. According to this member, attendance at neighborhood association meetings have been a challenge, historically.
- The project team stressed that if there are any resources or support they can provide to improve the process, CAC members should let project team members know. CAC members are not expected to go through the process of identifying new CAC members without the support of the project team.
- Interested candidates should also be directed to the Community Office to talk with community liaisons, Dr. Smith and Ms. Lecque.

- Another CAC member expressed concerns about not capping new CAC memberships.

Recap of November Public Outreach Efforts

Community Office Director provided an update on participant activity (# attendees and # written comments):

- The number of people attending and the number of comment cards completed were reported during the recap. All slides and corresponding data were included in the handout packet for CAC Meeting 3.
- Public Information Meeting had 223 attendees and 29 completed comment cards.
- The number of visits since the Community Office opened on November 1st is 64. There has been a progressive increase in traffic since the office opened.
- Over the past week, there had been an increase of out-of-town visitors stopping by the office with aging relatives who live in one of the four focus communities.
- Visitors are encouraged to invite others in the community to visit the office to learn more about the project.
- A CAC member asked if the CAC will have access to all comments to which the project team responded affirmatively.
 - The project team will compile all comments provide during November meetings as well as throughout the comment period.
 - A summary with major themes from the comments will be made available to the CAC by mid-January 2020.
- Informational workshops will be held at the Community Office in the first quarter of 2020 to address educational needs of the community.

Social Needs Assessment Survey – Results/Discussion

The Social Needs Assessment Survey results represent the survey administered during CAC Meeting 2 (in October 2019) and all additional surveys completed to date (thru early December 2020). The push-button survey was comprised of 25 questions. CAC members were reminded that each topic/service included a 2-part question: “How important the issue is to you?” and “How satisfied you are with the current services?” From the information provided, the project team was able to obtain an aggregate (combined) score. Aggregated data helped the project team to prioritize survey topics. The results of the Social Needs Assessment are important as the group moves towards the mitigation plan because it helps the project team better understand community needs and priorities.

- Some categories are outside of SCDOT’s control and some within. The responsibility of the project team is to inform other relevant agencies of specific needs identified by the community that are outside the scope of the SCDOT project to increase visibility and potential resolution by appropriate groups. This is referred to as Integrated Planning.
- Results were categorized by CAC surveys and Community Meeting surveys. Hard copies of results were made available to all meeting attendees. Surveys will continue to be administered through the next month.
- Results from the Social Needs Assessment will inform the upcoming Community Impact Assessment and Environmental Justice Mitigation Plan.
- Project team provided a detailed review of survey results. The top issues of concern included: Quality of teaching, safety of schools, well-lit streets, stormwater management, available affordable housing, available quality housing, adequate sidewalks/bicycle facilities, appearance of neighbors’ homes, available agencies for senior services, and available agencies for youth services.
- A CAC member expressed concern about a potential lack of understanding of survey takers regarding grocery stores receiving generally satisfactory results. He expressed significant problems associated

with the lack of quality grocery stores in the target communities. He felt the lack of quality grocery stores should be in the top five or six. The project team took note of CAC concerns regarding grocery stores and emphasized it as a key example of a project (building grocery stores) that falls outside the scope of the current project, but that they could work with other key entities such as Fresh Future Farm to identify practical, sustainable solutions for better quality grocery stores.

- Any questions regarding the Social Needs Assessment after CAC Meeting 3 should be directed to the project team.
- A CAC Member asked if the CAC has a “voice” when addressing issues identified during the CAC process, that fall outside of the scope of the project plan, to other entities engaged in the Integrated Planning process.
 - SCDOT’s Project Manager spoke about mitigation plans. SCDOT has done a lot of work with community mitigation. This project is allowing SCDOT to try something different and more proactive because the impacts are so great. In the past, funding has been allocated to issues identified in needs assessments, but spending has been left to local entities to implement mitigation initiatives. Sometimes, those initiatives were unsuccessful if those entities were not fast enough in getting projects implemented, and by the time communities try to spend the funds 10 years later, the funding may no longer be adequate to complete the initial goals. With this project, things like building affordable housing, installing sidewalks, putting in street lights, SCDOT is experienced in accomplishing within the scope of the project. But there may be other things that SCDOT partners with other entities like Trident Technical College for job training so that people who live in the communities can work on part of the project or find employment. SCDOT may be able to partner with the City on initiatives like grocery stores, or to incentivize development. The CAC will be critical in determining what the mitigation plan looks like. As Project Manager, SCDOT is a little less inclined to leave funds for outside/local entities to apply to projects. Results of the Social Needs Assessment have been shared with the City, but the project team will continue to keep the CAC in the loop on other initiatives.
- A Community Liaison emphasized that the CAC can go to any one of these groups (agencies) to advocate for represented communities. The project team further stressed the point that the CAC should advocate for themselves, but that they do not have to do it alone. The Community Office staff and project team will assist with detailed resources and research to support these efforts. The project team also encouraged CAC members to contact each other directly whenever there are meetings of interest to the community that fall outside of the scheduled I-526 LCC meetings.
- The CAC is in the process of collecting data. As the CAC moves into role of oversight when mitigation is determined, the expectation is that the group will take collected information and drive change while working with the project team.

ROW/Relocation Info Session

The Project Manager provided an overview of the Right-of-Way process. The project team is very early in the process, but this is one of the most important steps. ROW was identified as one of the biggest challenges for the project. There was a review of current structures built near the bridge. SCDOT would never design communities that way today. The interstate cannot be shut down and the current configuration makes it difficult to repair damage. SCDOT commissioned a study to understand the level of ROW impacts, what types of housing and businesses we would potentially impacted, the ability of the Charleston real estate market to absorb those types of impacts (was there readily available replacement housing, are there developments within the community that SCDOT could partner with to take advantage of some of the new housing). This study was the first step in identifying issues, challenges, and potential solutions.

- The study identified the four communities within the project scope as those receiving the greatest adverse impact.
- Approximately 75% of the ROW/Relocation impacts are in these communities.
- There are also commercial property impacts further north of these communities on the corridor.
- The potentially impacted communities are losing the first row of homes whereas the homes along some areas of I-526 are primarily losing areas of vegetative buffer.
- SCDOT started with seven alternatives, then narrowed it to the 2-4 alternatives displayed on the walls at the meeting.
- The purpose is to fix the traffic problems on the Interstate. After analyzing alternatives to determine which alternatives actually address the problem, SCDOT began considering the footprint that is going to have the least significant impact on the both the human and natural environment. Throughout the process, SCDOT will work to minimize the impacted footprint.
- Residents who are adamant they want to stay will live next to the interstate without a buffer. SCDOT will respect homeowner's right to stay in their current homes.
- Mitigation of unavoidable impacts was discussed.
- The ROW process focuses on making people "whole."
- Community mitigation – Even if a homeowner isn't directly impacted, the work taking place around them may impact them.
- Laws have changed since the original construction of I-26 and I-526 that are more protective of homeowners.
- The *Highways and You* document is the first material SCDOT provides to impacted homeowners to explain their rights as a homeowner in plain language. There are also a number of additional resources available to residents to help them better understand the ROW process. This information is available to the public at the Community Office. SCDOT is very people-oriented and is transparent throughout the process, including: information on the funds invested in this project, how the money is spent, how the new housing is built, what proposed housing will look like, and how communities are going to look in the future. The goal is to make sure residents who live in the community are the ones who benefit from the process.
- The ROW benefits package is very specific to individuals. The Project Manager encouraged attendees to visit the Community Office to have a ROW Specialist determine the best package for individuals or families. ROW Specialists will also work with renters to facilitate homeownership.
- The ROW process has been expedited compared to the traditional ROW timeline because of the limited Charleston housing market. There is an opportunity in the area on a lot of undeveloped land. SCDOT may have to build some replacement housing for people to move into.
- SCDOT is starting early ROW activity geared toward single family developments, to partner with developers and non-profits, so that when they do start "knocking on doors," there are already homes built or almost completed. For renters to consider home ownership, there is some preliminary work that needs to be done to connect first time homeowners with credit counselors. The Project Manager requested the CAC assist the project team in understanding the needs of the community by asking community members to visit the community office.
- Review of terms such as *eminent domain*, *just compensation*, *condemnation*, *appraisal*, *appraisal waiver valuation*, and *administrative settlement*. Definition of all terms were provided in the handout packet.
 - Most acquisitions on this project will require an appraisal, but SCDOT will make their own estimates on property values below \$20,000. However, the property owner has a right to request an appraisal on any property. Appraisals are required for property values above \$20,000.

- The property owner is allowed to be present during appraisals and can offer any additional information to the appraiser during the process. Once an appraisal is complete and the report has been issued, a homeowner can accept it or negotiate to settle at a higher price. SCDOT prefers administrative settlements rather than going to court.
- A CAC member asked if a jury trial is possible under terms of condemnation. The Project Manager confirmed.
- ROW Acquisition and Relocation Process:
 - Title Research
 - Who owns the property (Clear title, heirs property, multiple owners, estate, etc.)
 - Mortgages or liens on property
 - Initial contact with property owner
 - Usually done by ROW agent
 - Opportunity for homeowner to ask questions
 - Property appraisal completed
 - Must be coordinated with property owner
 - SCDOT provides to property owner:
 - Written report
 - Written offer
 - Benefits package (property purchase and/or relocation)
 - Tenants (renters) are entitled to relocation benefits
 - Property owners are entitled to appraised value to purchase home and property
 - Residence who are also home/property owners will receive appraisal and relocation benefits
 - Negotiations and Settlement with property owner
 - Condemnation
 - Only executed if a settlement agreement cannot be reached with the property owner
- *Understanding the Right-of-Way Process* video; Online @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISDHJxjUqSw>
- Informational Workshops
 - Staffing of the Community Office
 - Workshops will be held during the first quarter of 2020
 - Resources and assistance provided by the Community Office in coordination with the Center for Heirs Property Preservation, Charity Foundation, and SC Community Loan Fund:
 - Heirs property
 - Wills
 - Financial literacy
 - Resume development/interviewing skills
 - Mentoring
 - Available to all community members
 - Suggestions from CAC members for continued improvement of resources offered during the informational workshops are welcome
- Project Manager reviewed examples of ROW transactions
 - Addressed property owner concerns of appraisal values not being sufficient to cover the costs of a new home in the Charleston housing market
 - The Uniform Act accounts for making people “whole” and providing comparable homes and amenities through relocation.
 - Reviewed Tenant Rent Supplement Example (included in CAC PowerPoint packet)

- Homes classified in the low-income bracket will receive an additional 30% (of area median income) supplement for 42 months
- Allows tenant time to determine long-term housing plans
- Not intended to be a long-term solution, particularly for tenants on fixed incomes
- Designed to encourage building affordable housing which is deemed a more sustainable solution
- Supplement payments may be used as a down payment for affordable permanent housing
- **Question from CAC member:** Will SCDOT use current HUD data to determine the 30% supplemental rates
 - **Response:** Yes, based on SC HUD tables. Information such as proof of income (pay stubs, tax returns, etc.) would be required to determine whether tenants meet the low-income designation to qualify for the 30% supplement.
 - For clarification, 30% is the percent of the tenant's gross monthly income.
- **Question from CAC member:** For clarification, is the intent of SCDOT to entice current renters to own their own property?
 - **Response:** That is something SCDOT has always tried to do. SCDOT is also looking for vacant lots to build on, but SCDOT is not looking to be property managers.
- *Time check: 11:45 AM*
- Reviewed Replacement Housing Example #1
 - Homeowners are eligible to receive Displacement Dwelling Appraised value plus the Replacement Housing Payment towards the purchase of a new home
 - If a homeowner has a current mortgage, they will likely still have a mortgage in the new home. The new mortgage should be the same as the mortgage for the home from which the homeowner was displaced.
 - SCDOT will pay the increased interest expense, if applicable, should the homeowner's new mortgage interest rate be higher than that of the previous mortgage.
- Reviewed Replacement Housing Example #2
 - There are some cases where SCDOT widens the highway and the highway is now encroaching on the front of the home. SCDOT will demolish the existing home and build a new one near the back of the property.
 - SCDOT will obtain a floor plan similar to the current plan and secure a builder that can replicate the structure, set further back on the property.
- Reviewed Replacement Housing Example #3
 - Homeowner was on a fixed income and could not qualify for a mortgage.
 - Owner did not have clear title. Another party held 25% ownership of the property.
 - The homeowner/resident had rights to only 75% of the Displacement Dwelling Appraisal value.
 - SCDOT was able to locate a home that needed repairs and renovated the home for him. After all entitlements were implemented, the homeowner was able to move into a renovated home with no mortgage (before and after displacement).
- Right of Way FAQs
 - Posted on the website
 - Included in the handouts
- Project team is not knocking on doors, talking to property owners yet
 - Currently focused on identifying replacement housing
 - Details of findings will be shared with the CAC as concrete opportunities begin to unfold
 - The Project Manager encouraged the Community Office with ROW Specialists to tell people about opportunities as details become available, especially if they live in impacted

- areas. This will be important so that the project team can begin working with homeowners, individually.
- SCDOT will begin developing a construction plan for replacement housing to build new homes on vacant lots
 - The project team is interested in talking with people who own land in impacted communities that may be interested in selling their property. SCDOT would like to place new construction on existing vacant lots.
 - Review of Affordable Housing/Replacement Housing slide
 - Orange – properties for which SCDOT has current options to purchase; zoned for multi-family development
 - Pink – City-owned properties that SCDOT can partner with to develop
 - Blue – SCDOT-identified properties without current dwellings; Ownership of these properties has not been established
 - SCDOT will begin conducting research and contacting property owners with purchase offers
 - SCDOT will keep the CAC in the loop at every step in order to minimize rumors and confusion in the affected communities
 - ROW Q&A
 - **CAC Member:** What will the project team do to inform and educate renters that affordable home ownership is a better choice than long-term renting?
 - **Response:** The project team will provide comprehensive education on ROW and Relocation, but cannot mandate home ownership on anyone. The project team wants to ensure that they make the information, resources (such as credit counseling), and options available to them.
 - **CAC Member:** Where are the lots located that SCDOT has the option to buy?
 - **Response:** Behind the mobile home park, adjacent to existing apartments
 - **CAC Member:** During the video, you showed apartments along the highway which happens to be on Russelldale Avenue. Do the current maps include the buffer or will the impacted area extend beyond the current footprint (represented in orange)?
 - **Response:** The current maps should be encompassing of everything.
 - **CAC Member:** I haven't heard the word "beautification" in any of the discussions so far. Under the current highway, there have been people living in tents, people with port-o-potties (defecating and urinating under the highways), SCDOT-installed chain-linked fences, trash dumped, lighting is poor, etc. In comparison to Mount Pleasant which is "set up nicely, will we have the same thing when this is finished or will we just have a wider overpass?"
 - **Response:** Addressing those types of issues is part of this process. There are multiple components in the mitigation process:
 - ROW
 - How the project is implemented/how the project is built
 - What the project looks like (eg. Noise walls, lighting, etc.)
 - Community mitigation (putting funds back into communities that are most impacted)
 - This addresses making the community "whole" as opposed to ROW which focuses on working with individual tenants and homeowners to make individuals and families "whole"
 - **CAC Member:** Will the lack of adequate lighting on I-526 be addressed as a part of this project?

- **Response:** Yes. The lighting has been repaired, but there are still some lights that are broken and needing to be replaced. There still exists some patchiness in repairs. Part of the issue in that area is that there was a temporary electrical connection to SCE&G for power because the transformer kept blowing out. That is an issue that will be addressed and upgraded as a part of this project.
- **Follow-up question:** How soon do you anticipate the lights that are currently damaged will be repaired?
 - **Response:** The lights are on and the electrical is on, but there are still damaged lights. There is a team currently working on repairs. The Project Manager will get a status update and follow up with the CAC.
- **CAC Member:** Are the maps displayed on the walls at the Community Office the same as the maps distributed at the Public Information and November community meetings?
 - **Response:** Yes.
- **CAC Member:** Are solar lights an option for the Interstate?
 - **Response:** Uncertain. That is outside of the scope of this project. The Project Manager is aware of the use of solar lighting in some smaller applications, but is unaware of solar lighting on the Interstates. Project Manager will look into it and follow up.
- **CAC Member:** There were rumors years ago that when I-526 was built between I-26 and the river, it crossed over areas where there was asbestos. Do you know anything about that? A part of the story is that because of the asbestos that was buried there, the EPA mandated that the area would remain untouched.
 - **Response:** Project team is unaware of buried asbestos related to the original I-526 construction project (would have been discovered in the HAZMAT assessment), but emphasized that SCDOT conducts extensive studies as an ongoing part of the process, none of which has indicated concerns with buried asbestos in the project area.
- **CAC Member:** Will local builders be used to help build parts of the project?
 - **Response:** A big component of the project is ensuring the community has an opportunity to participate in the project. This could include job training, partnering with larger contractors, etc. Larger companies are normally hired to serve as prime contractors because they are able to large enough bonds. But, SCDOT can arrange meetings between prime contractors and local contractors. The CAC's role is to provide thoughts and suggestions such as these, on how local businesses should be included as a part of the mitigation plan. Including local businesses in mitigation projects is standard practice for SCDOT. The project team is always open to suggestions.
- **CAC Member:** Will bike trails still be included under the Interstate as a part of this project?
 - **Response:** Yes, evaluation of foot traffic and alternate means of people traveling from one community to another is always included in the project. SCDOT evaluates how they can restore some of those connections.
- Time check: 12:00 PM
 - **CAC Member:** Other than me going and knocking on doors (in Ferndale), what is the best way to ensure that all community members know what is going on (regarding the I-526 project)? I've already heard from two people living on the "back row" near the Interstate that they don't know anything about the project.
 - **Response:** The project team is open to suggestions regarding communication and awareness efforts. Community liaisons requested to talk further with the CAC member following the meeting. Maximum Consultants and community liaisons can report back to the counsel on a strategy moving forward.

- Open House dates
 - Will be held at the Community Office to generate publicity and to ensure the public knows and understands what services are being offered
 - Open House date: Saturday, January 25, 2020, 1:00-4:00 PM
 - Advertisement strategies will include:
 - Neighborhood door hangers
 - Notices placed in Charleston Chronicle
 - Partnering with Cumulus Media, Inc.
 - Local radio station broadcast during
 - Suggest “A Taste of Gas Light Square” to incentivize attendance
 - Music
 - Social Media/Facebook page
 - Post the event on Community Boards
 - Community Transportation for the Open House
 - Perhaps providing bus passes for community members to attend
 - Primary focus of this event will be on the impacted communities, but should be open to the larger community because lots of people travel on I-526
 - Recommendation from CAC Member to reach out to other restaurants in the community (eg. My Three Sons from the Ferndale community) to provide refreshments also. That would be a benefit to the restaurant and to the community.
 - CAC Member: What about going into other communities to hold Open House sessions throughout the year?
 - Response: Purpose of the Open House is to have people come to the Community Office to meet staff and understand the function of the office. Community liaisons offered to remain after CAC Meeting 3 to discuss further.
- Project team will continue to work on the meeting agenda to more effectively balance CAC engagement and time management
 - Open Mic will be scheduled for the next meeting
- Project team briefly reviewed the project schedule

Summary and Next Steps

- Next meeting scheduled for Saturday, January 4, 2020, 10 AM-12 PM at the Community Office
- Begin developing priorities based on the Social Needs Assessment; Mitigation conceptualization
- Vision Statement development

Post Wrap-up Discussion

- **CAC Member:** Discussion on beautification should be included in future meetings
- **CAC Member:** When you increase the number of members in this type of group (CAC), you increase the amount of feedback. There should be more time and respect given to the people who are here serving on the CAC. CAC members who are able to stay longer should be allowed to make comments. When the project team is rigid in adhering to the two-hour time frame, CAC members may feel more guarded in their feedback. This may increase the likelihood of participants leaving with misunderstandings or not enough information to share with other people in the community.
- **CAC Member:** At the last meeting, the project team talked about downsizing the CAC. Is there any update?

- For logistical purposes, the project team asked the best way to communicate with the CAC. CAC members responded that email is the best form of communication. Project team asked CAC members to accept email invitations (or not) when they are sent, for proper planning of CAC meetings.

Facilitator Observations/Recommendations:

- Begin with ROW Discussion
- Move Open Mic to the first hour of the meeting
- Suggest a more comprehensive evaluation of CAC participant profiles (residents, relatives of residents, homeowners, tenants, years of residency); Preparation of CAC directory
- Evaluation of CAC agenda and best strategy for balancing time management and optimizing engagement during meetings

Respectfully submitted,

Jamelle H. Ellis, Ph.D.
President/Managing Director
Empowerment Strategies, LLC

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 4

Date: January 4, 2020

Time: 10:08 am – 12:15 pm

Location: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office, 5627 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale | LaTonya Derrick, Stantec |
| Larenda Baxley, Ferndale | Joy Riley, SCDOT (Project Manager) |
| David L. Johnson, Ferndale | David Kelly, SCDOT |
| Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale | Pamela Foster, FHWA |
| Charlynn Smith, Ferndale | Yolonda Jordan, FHWA |
| Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace | Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison) |
| Nathan Bryant, Highland Terrace | Carolyn Lecque, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison) |
| Jeavaris Bannister, Liberty Park | Horrace Tobin, Community Office (Coordinator) |
| Doris Twiggs, Liberty Park | Jamelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies (Facilitator) |
| Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way | |
| Tony Grasso, Russelldale | |
| Rick Day, Stantec | |
| Ryan White, Stantec | |

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 22

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Ferndale: 5 | Adjacent/affected communities/agencies: 1 | Community Office: 1 |
| Highland Terrace: 2 | SCDOT: 2 | Stantec: 3 |
| Liberty Park: 2 | FHWA: 2 | Facilitator: 1 |
| Russelldale: 1 | Community Liaisons: 2 | |

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

All meeting participants provided introductions. Restroom, exit, and external emergency meeting locations were reviewed. Administrative issues were addressed:

- Reminder to all participants to provide signatures for attendance and initials for consent to record meeting
- Approval of Meeting 2 minutes
- Distribution of CAC Meeting 3 minutes for review
- Distribution and review of Meeting 4 agenda
- Overview of agenda items
 - 'Open Mic' Session - Distribution of comment cards to CAC members for open-mic session for written questions or comments. The purpose of comment cards is to allow CAC members to ask questions or make comments via the facilitator. The project team adjusted the agenda for

Meeting 4 in order to conduct the open mic session at the beginning of the CAC meeting, and in an effort to allow adequate time to address all questions, comments, and concerns of CAC members. CAC members were encouraged to continue to present questions or comments that arise after meetings to the project team.

- Demographic Survey was distributed in CAC Meeting 4 packet. CAC members were asked to complete the survey and submit it to the project team by the end of the meeting.
- A draft of the Roles and Responsibilities guiding document was included in the packet.
- Brainstorming Worksheet for potential mitigation ideas for recreational facilities included in CAC Meeting 4 packet

Open Mic

Facilitator: CAC members were asked if there were any outstanding questions or comments from CAC Meeting 3, community drop-ins, or the Public Information meeting that were not previously addressed.

The printed Rules of Engagement poster was displayed in front of the room for CAC members. CAC members were asked to remember the Rules of Engagement as the group navigated through discussions.

The floor was opened for discussion.

Project team member reminded the CAC that the Community Office was established to serve as the source of factual information about the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor project within the community, so if there are things that CAC members are hearing that seem confusing or in conflict with information discussed with or by the project team, the open mic session is a perfect opportunity for the project team to provide clarification. It was reiterated that the project team wants to ensure accurate information on issues, such as the project schedule, is being disseminated to the community from the Community Office directly rather than from outside entities that may not have a clear understanding of the mitigation process.

CAC member emphasized that he did not want additional auto access in the back of the Ferndale neighborhood because that area serves as a pedestrian access.

CAC Member revisited the issue of beautification. Stressed that community members in Russelldale are currently dealing with wooded areas where there are rats and mice, and people living under the bridges. He asked if these issues would be addressed when the bridge is widened.

- Project Manager: Responded that once the right of way is finished, SCDOT will demolish and remove everything in that area.

CAC Member asked who cuts the brush or the sides of highways where there is an accumulation of trash and overgrowth on the swales and in the streets. CAC Member asked if it was possible to erect a façade to block visibility of the trash.

Project Manager: SCDOT has played a much bigger role in addressing trash removal on the interstate than we have in past years, but trash removal is a much larger issue that SCDOT doesn't typically manage. If its within our right of way, citizens can submit a maintenance request. SCDOT has agreements with some municipalities to do some of the maintenance in this county.

CAC Member stated this is the entry way to North Charleston and that more should be done to beautify this section of the Interstate in a way that would make the community proud to welcome dignitaries.

- **Project Manager:** Project Manager validated the CAC Members concerns., and shared that she thought the City of North Charleston was proposing to do a gateway entrance and landscaping at the Remount exit but the project was postponed due to the current project (I-526 West). Stakeholder did not want to damage or remove new structures because of the requirements of the current project. She encouraged the CAC Member to present those concerns to the City if they wanted to get more information, but stated that a gateway sign project would not be done until after this project has been completed or it could be a part of the project. At some point, SCDOT will hold a charrette to get into the fine details of what the community mitigation project looks like. [Through this process], SCDOT can actually “put lines on paper” to define areas of concern and visually mark what should happen in those areas as a part of the mitigation process.

CAC Member expressed concern was about more than beautification. Near the sliver of Deacon Street that was left after the first I-526 expansion, there is a ditch that is in front Deacon Street, between the railroad tracks and the street itself. Because of the water movement, the ditch is widening. As a result, the street is starting to wash away. It is now a safety issue. Trees are being uprooted. One tree has fallen.

- **Project Team:** One of the issues that came up in previous meetings was stormwater management as an issue, even beyond this project, in terms of areas being low and flat. In looking at the proximity of Deacon Street to the widening of I-26 as part of the interchange process, new ditches will have to be cut along the outside of I-26. Project team member was not certain the new ditches will address all of the issues, but stated there will be some changes based on the project that will impact current stormwater flow along that section of I-26.

CAC Member asked if ditches could be replaced entirely by underground pipes.

CAC Member expressed that ditches were supposed to be replaced by pipes in the last expansion, and that after the last expansion, water started to run off of the interstate and there was no access point for maintenance. The dirt eventually washed down in the backyards of residents who were right up against the fence because there wasn't enough right-of-way purchased to maintain it.

CAC Member stated there is an unkept, clay cut-through path under the bridge in their area. It goes under the bridge and it isn't safe to walk through. The weeds removed so that residents can see “unsafe people.”

- **Project team member:** Stated that point was related to the previous discussion regarding pedestrian connectivity and how the project team can improve walkways and sidewalks within the larger scope of the mitigation project. Project team member asked about the location of the clay path.

CAC Member referenced the Piedmont (clay/dirt foot path) that goes under the bridge to get to the stores on Rivers Avenue.

CAC Member indicated there are a few foot paths in Russelldale. People cut the chain-link fence. Residents do not want to walk to Delta Street or Rebecca Street when there are closer gas stations. He stated that he would like to see the project include installing sidewalks that provide better, safer access to Rivers Avenue.

Another CAC Member added that she would like to see flowering trees planted rather than trees like Elms.

- Project team member referenced the Project Manager's earlier comments about the project team eventually holding charrettes and that charrettes are where beautification can be discussed. The project discussions will also include pedestrian walkways as a part of a much bigger plan, but vegetation makes a huge difference in the appearance and the required maintenance.

CAC Member expressed concerns that the current overpass (I-526 and Rivers Avenue) has a sloping edge and that there are people with mattresses sleeping underneath. He asked if it is possible to construct a deterrent to vagrancy as a part of the project, and referenced the vertical walls at the overpasses in Mount Pleasant that deter the homeless population.

- Project Manager: Stated that this is an issue in all urban areas. From a geotechnical standpoint, vertical walls at underpasses are not our first choice, but the project team can look at what other cities have done. It is being policed more now because of the fire that happened in Atlanta that damaged the interstate bridge. That was the result of homeless people living under the bridge. There is currently a more robust program to sweep those areas, but it requires regular enforcement to keep people out of those areas. We can look at some methods for deterring vagrancy.

Open Mic session was closed, but CAC members were encouraged to complete comment cards. Any outstanding questions or concerns would be addressed at the end of the meeting.

Roles and Responsibilities

Project team member: One of the objectives of CAC 4 meeting was to cap the size of the advisory council. The advisory council currently has 20 people. That was the original goal as outlined in the Rules and Responsibilities. The goal was to balance participation on the CAC among the four impacted neighborhoods.

- A current breakdown of participation on the CAC by neighborhood is: 7 members from Ferndale, 3 from Highland Terrace, 2 from Liberty Park, 2 from Russelldale, and 2 from Joppa Way.
- Pastor Johnson represents Harvest Point Church.
- Mr. Muhammad representing Muhammad Mosque.
- The current number of council members is acceptable, but the numbers are a somewhat skewed toward the Ferndale community. Because the CAC has more Ferndale members, the project team gauged if any CAC Members were interested in serving in other roles during outreach sessions in order to bring balance to the team. The project team would continue to leave open seats on the CAC to invite future members from some of the more underrepresented communities like Russelldale. Feedback on the structure of the council was requested in order to finalize membership and document how the team determines who serves on the CAC.

CAC Member stated that some of these (residential) areas are just hard to get commitments from the community and that the project team is going to have to work with the representatives who have already committed. [Seconded by another CAC member.]

- Project team member: Asked the CAC if there other approaches the CAC or project team can take to more effectively solicit community members to serve on the CAC.

CAC Member responded no.

CAC Member indicated they have begged people to come to community association meetings. They may show up one time if they have a big or special project that is particularly interesting and that affects them directly, or food. Attendance is typically inconsistent after a special project or program.

- Project team member: The goal for the next meeting (Meeting 5) is to present the final Roles and Responsibilities document for the CAC.

CAC Member sCAC Member suggested using gimmicks to get community members' input and having CAC members collect information and apply it appropriately.

- The project team is proposing open houses at the Community Office. There will be other opportunities to get people from the community in the Community Office to meet the CAC and the Community Office staff. There are resources available to ensure that people are prepared for the project moving forward. The project team wants to ensure that we leave space on the CAC for underrepresented neighborhoods to be better represented if there is future interest from the community.

CAC Member emphasized that community members are meeting, but they are meeting in settings where misinformation is being disseminated. There are other people outside of the SCDOT process who have established side committees. That is the reason for low participation and engagement in the CAC process. People don't know what to believe or who to trust. There are trust issues in a lot of these areas. People are operating in fear because there are other "officials" sending [mixed or incorrect] messages into the community.

Community Office Coordinator has planned for the Maximum Consulting Group to go into the communities, door-to-door, passing out flyers, talking with people and inviting people to come to the Community Office for more information. Open House is planned for January 25th, but the Community Office is always open to suggestions from the CAC team on how to get people to visit the Community Office. Recommended CAC members brainstorm amongst themselves or communicate with the Community Office staff to figure out what they can do to get more people into the office.

CAC Member stated that a part of the problem is that in areas like Ferndale, the majority of people are renters and they may not want to invest the energy into a place where they may not live in the next couple months or the next year. That may apply to Russelldale or Liberty Park as well.

CAC Member indicated he heard about agendas [meetings] in which they were using elected officials in the area to spread incorrect messages about property seizures for political gain.

CAC Member stated that he has gone door-to-door, passing out flyers and has spoken with a lot of residents. Some had mixed feelings, but he gave them the schedule of community meetings and invited them to attend. About a third of those people attended the meetings he attended. He agreed with the CAC Member's statement earlier, that the project team should use the CAC members who have currently committed and stated the people currently representing the CAC are the ones who are serious about their communities.

Facilitator: What do you see as the CAC in countering the messaging that is coming out of some of the [unofficial] meetings mentioned earlier? Do you think there is a role for the CAC to counter some that messaging?

CAC Member replied that the basis of counter-messages is finance [personal financial impacts]. He stated people are hearing 'they're going to take your property and you're not going to get the value [of] your property.' [Agreement from other CAC members.] Those are the scare tactics keeping community members away. Some people don't feel this [CAC meeting/mitigation process] is a necessity. He indicated there are always pros and cons. He felt addressing the congestion problems on I-526 is a necessity for people traveling it daily, but unimportant to those who don't travel it every day.

Facilitator: Do you think there is an opportunity for the CAC to develop a strategy together to come up with something this group can do to work against incorrect messaging that's coming out of some of these off-shoot groups?

One CAC Member stated having a commercial on tv is the solution. He had seen some commercials, but suggested doing more. Another member suggested social media.

- Project team member: How can we drive more traffic to social media when the Facebook page has been in existence since months after the project kicked off? And there's been a lot of push and sponsored advertising targeted to the markets.
- Project Manager: You can target markets. And we have done that. For instance for the Open House, all of the social media advertising will be targeted toward the communities that are tied to the project.

CAC Member asked if the project team was referencing Facebook and Twitter.

Community Coordinator asked if the communities being impacted would be on social media.

CAC Member stated that most of senior-citizen residents are retirees and go to church on Sundays. He suggested using churches as an avenue to get the word out. Residents have to trust the system in order to make it better. If we can't gain their trust, they are not going to participate. Ultimately, the CAC should direct individuals in those meetings to come and talk with Community Office staff because they are best equipped to share accurate information with the project.

- Project Manager stated that is why SCDOT hired Maximum Consulting into the Community Office. They are a local business who is here to serve as the liaison between community members and SCDOT. They don't work for SCDOT, are not SCDOT employees, and have no special interests in this project. They are here to help community members to get information. When the CAC thinks something is not fair or is not right, Maximum takes those concerns to SCDOT to try to reach some resolution.
- The project team stated the biggest resource is the credibility of the CAC and Maximum Consulting. The project team, within the confines of this project, is trying to fix wrongs that were done. There is also legislation that requires the project team to fix some issues based on cumulative impacts.

CAC Member asked about the actual count or approximate number of people who will be misplaced.

- The Project Manager responded with 115, but stated the number may be a little higher based on a recent count that included liens.

CAC Member inquired about why residents are not contacted directly regarding displacement.

- The Project Manager explained that the CAC and Community Liaisons are allowed to communicate with the public through outreach efforts. SCDOT follows the Uniform Act which has rules about when SCDOT can discuss specifics with communities. Residents can come to SCDOT and SCDOT can give them information. SCDOT is also allowed to use outreach to try to encourage community members to attend meetings or to contact SCDOT directly; but, SCDOT cannot contact residents directly at this point to inform them of displacement. CAC Members are free to disseminate information now.

Community liaison suggested that displacement numbers not be used in discussions with residents. The next event that Maximum will help to promote is the Open House on January 25th. They will be meeting with and going to the neighborhoods to meet with the residents. They will meet one-on-one with seniors, who are not on social media, and who may not have email addresses to receive an eblast. They will meet with them face-to-face.

- The Project Manager stated the project implementation design is being developed and is evolving as the project team moves forward. The team always wants to show worst case scenario at the beginning of the process. Then, we are going to try to minimize the impacts when possible, within reason. SCDOT wants to minimize leaving a resident in an undesirable situation.
- Project team member cautioned against discussing numbers [associated with displacement] as well due to its sensitive and emotional nature.

Community Consultant emphasized that discussing numbers also makes people fearful of the process.

CAC Member stated that he is not familiar with what happened years ago, but has heard from people in neighborhoods like Liberty Park and things that happened during the I-26 expansion and believes people still think about past offenses. He asked what SCDOT has done regarding public relations to let people know that this process is going to be different. He felt the public relations approach of inviting people to meetings sounds like it sounded to community members 20-30 years ago and stated SCDOT should take accountability for its mistakes and present impacted neighborhoods with how they are doing it differently this time, and let that come directly from SCDOT and not from people who are in the community. There are significant discrepancies between the conversations taking place in the community (expressing a lack of trust) and the discussions taking place in the CAC meetings. He suggested SCDOT get on media outlets and explain how the process is different now than when interstate expansions took place years ago.

Community Liaison explained that one of the ways that Maximum will help with messaging is to schedule radio interviews for the Project Manager. One of the meetings Maxim will schedule next week is with Cynthia Bell who coordinates all of the advertising. Community liaison would like for the Project Manager to be interviewed in person or by phone and let those interviews run continuously over the next few weeks so she can tell SCDOT's story. By taking this approach, not only is SCDOT inviting people to come to the open house but they are saying that 'in the past, this was done...but, this is now and this is what we

are going to do.’ Maximum did not write the press releases or public service announcements. Maximum’s responsibility to get the message on the radio waves that our people [affected communities] listen to.

- Project Manager suggested the project team can host another right-of-way workshop if CAC Members believe community members would attend to get that information. She encouraged CAC members to continue inviting community members to visit the community office and just talk to the staff and give them an opportunity to get authentic, direct answers from the office.

Community Liaison stated she would like to see the project pay for the advertisement in the Black newspaper, The Chronicle. The churches subscribe to the Chronicle and on Sundays, a lot of churches will distribute them to their members.

- Project team member stated, “a lot of what is being said that ‘people need to hear,’ has already been said. If you review media content from when this project started, there is an article where Joy [Project Manager] is quoted. She has stated early in the project that ‘this is a new day, ‘ but the key is making sure we’re using the right tool to convey that message. Because while its being said here, [only] you hear it. So, it needs to be marketed to the right audience using the tools your target audience uses to obtain information. Not everyone subscribes to the Post and Courier. So, the CAC telling the project team the right tools the community uses would be very helpful in implementing the most effective means of communication.”
 - To revisit Roles and Responsibilities as it relates to higher representation on the CAC by Ferndale residents, because there is only one CAC member representing Russelldale and the two communities are close in proximity, the project team encourages collaborative efforts in supporting grass roots efforts between communities represented by the CAC. Project team member expressed that the project team knows everyone will have flyers for events, but not everyone can go out and walk the street and distribute them. She asked if the 5 CAC Members from Ferndale would support the efforts the Russelldale member.

SCDOT Team member observed that there seems to be huge issues with trust based on what happened in the past and asked if there is a way to create a list of grievances from the previous project, itemizing offenses of the previous project and providing specific steps SCDOT is taking to avoid recurrence of those offenses in the current project.

- Project Manager agreed that approach is something SCDOT would like to include in the impact analysis, in the historical and cumulative impacts.

SCDOT team member agreed with the Project Manager, but emphasized the importance of making it available to the community in order to increase credibility. Admitting the specific ‘wrongs’ rather than trying to manage vague, high level concerns.

- Project Manager reminded everyone the same laws were not in place during previous expansions and they were not as protective of communities as current laws.

CAC Member indicated that was the reason she called the Project Manager about the project initially, to let her know she would only remain committed to the project if the process was transparent. It comes back to trust.

CAC Member asked for specific examples from the past expansion of what caused the current distrust.

CAC Member 6: My dad had property on Drury Lane when I-26 was expanded. They clipped the front of the property and took acreage that took away his front yard. My dad trusted them. He let it go. When I-526 came through, they took the remainder of his property. With the check he received from the deal, he couldn't buy another piece of property. The years he owned the property, paid taxes on the property and maintained the property – it was a giveaway to the state. In an effort to embrace the future, I wouldn't like to see that happen to anyone. Take away their property and when they leave they don't have money to purchase other property. After two interstates came through he had no profit.

CAC Member3: Deacon Street and Elder Street about the water running off and running under the house. The wood under the house decays and the water continues to run under the house.

CAC Member asked how SCDOT would handle those issues today.

- Project Manager stated SCDOT would purchase entire lots today. In the past, there may have been situations to avoid relocating someone, SCDOT would opt just to purchase just a front yard, but property owners can dispute that and asked to be relocated. We don't want to do that. Residents will probably be better off allowing SCDOT to purchase their entire property so they can receive the full purchase price and apply it to relocating.

CAC Member asked if those options available in the 1960s.

- Project Manager responded no,, not in the 60's. The current rules were not in place in the 60's. Anytime SCDOT cuts off the front of a property, in some cases we take off too much so you're now eligible for proximity damages so you should receive a payment to compensate for that. There are different things in the law to account for those situations. Because these communities have been affected in the past and now they are being affected again, people need to know their rights. You have basic rights but because these are low income communities that have cumulative impacts, if you feel like something is unfair then bring it to our attention and we will see what we can do to make it right.

CAC Member stated in response to area being considered "low income," that his home is fully equipped with everything but an elevator and a dishwasher (by choice). He expressed concerns about his home being classified as low income when he has kept his home updated.

- Project Manager stated the value of property is based on your appraisal and you can provide information that the appraiser will take into consideration - including investments and improvements that you have made.

CAC Member expressed concerns about his property being considered low-income.

- Project Manager stated that although she is not an expert on appraisals, she is aware appraisers use recent sales to determine costs, but they also use comparable homes. Anything you dispute in the appraisal, you can ask for your own independent appraisal.

CAC Member stated that is the type of information residents need to know. Inform residents of their options.

- Project Manager: The Community Office is here for that reason, so that people can come here and get the information they need. There are two Right-of-Way specialists that are here one day a week for residents to come in and talk about their specific situations and potential impacts. These lines [on the maps displayed] may change a little. We start the process with a big footprint because there's a big impact in being "front row" on the interstate. Sometimes, people who live on the front line want to be able to make that choice.

CAC Member expressed concern that the Liberty Park and Highland Terrace communities are so tight that somebody is going to be affected [regardless of how the lines are drawn]. Another asked if there is a definite route (footprint) of the houses that will be affected?

- Project Manager: There is always a "No Build" alternative. Based on the public comments to date, there is a large contingent that doesn't want this project to proceed.

CAC Member asked if people who oppose the project they live in this area or drive through.

- Project Manager: The data hasn't been analyzed on that level yet, but she expressed that interstates are a critical route. Leaving an interstate where it is currently is a lot less impactful than building a new road in another location. No matter what area we consider in Charleston, we will still face the same issues of relocation (displacement) and many of those communities would also be African American, minority, or low-income communities. The current plan is less impactful than building a road somewhere else.

CAC Member stated she did not think it would be fair to her tenants to not inform them of the potential for their rental units to be taken from them by the project, while she is still collecting monthly rent. Although she wants to give them time to look for another place, she does not want to alarm them too early.

- Project Manager: That may be an issue for long term renters, but keep in mind that displacement for tenants is not anticipated for another 3-4 years. SCDOT is trying to create housing that offer them options. They can choose to move where they'd like. But we want to ensure that we have provide options. As a landlord, you should know that as we get closer, if you feel uncomfortable or are having trouble securing tenants because of the pending project, we can start paying protective rent or buy you out early once we get a little closer to the 5 year target. That is included under protective rights in the laws. Similarly, with hardship rules. If you own a house and you need to relocate, but you put your house on the market and no one wants to purchase because the house falls within the project footprint. Contact us so that we can do a hardship early purchase. There are several scenarios like these that are covered in the rules, but we need residents to come into the Community Office and ask questions. Those are also things we can explore when we get closer to construction, but we don't want to alarm everyone to make a mass exodus right now.

CAC Member asked what protections are in place or will there be protections to keep it housing affordable long-term.

- Project Manager: We haven't determined the mechanism to ensure long term affordability, but we are working on that. We will have protections in place.

CAC Member asked if long-term residents with criminal backgrounds would be able to obtain housing in the relocation process since they will be required to have a background check.

- Project Manager: We work with a variety of issues and we will work with that tenant to find a solution on that matter. We have to ensure that people are relocated into affordable housing in which we can place them.

CAC Member asked about the chance of this project not going through.

- Project Manager: The project is definitely needed. If we don't do this we would have to do something else. Most of the comments we received for the "No Build" option have a misunderstanding about how transportation works because they want SCDOT to invest instead in transit. So, if we don't build the project here, it will be used for an interstate project in another area. The funds are allocated specifically for interstate projects. It will not go to transit projects because its earmarked for interstate projects. A number of comments, for example, direct us to construct a bus lane. Under the current legislation cannot close a lane and make it a bus lane only. However, the new construction project improvements are being developed in a way that will allow for future operational options. That's why we're doing 12-foot shoulders. A lot of the things that people are asking for in this project (but are not included in the scope of the project) cannot happen without this project. This infrastructure improvement will allow many of those projects to happen.

CAC Member asked for clarification on "traffic management"

- Project Manager: Traffic Management is actually related to the infrastructure to help manage traffic. Its an actively managed system, so every half mile there are overhead message boards with digital notifications to help move traffic during peak hours. But, it takes the infrastructure, having a traffic management center with staff to operate the cameras and controls...it's a huge investment to get to the point where you can implement project like that. People who express a desire for "no build" typically fall into one of two groups: (1) "no build" because it's not worth the community impact. Those people probably don't drive on the interstate. (1) "no build" that drive on the interstate but believe SCDOT can provide public transit, and put busses in one of the lanes on the interstate, which is not possible. And, there are some people who know that its needed and just want to make sure that SCDOT is doing the right thing.
- Project team member: Before we move on, I want to revisit what [SCDOT team member] mentioned regarding development of a list of offenses ("historical wrongs") against community members in previous interstate expansion projects. Scheduling a session to address those issues should be an action item. We will discuss that in our follow up internal project team call.

Vision Statement Activity

Facilitator tabled the vision statement activity due to time constraints. , but provided a brief discussion for clarification between the mission statement (statement of purpose) and vision statement. Members were asked to think about their vision for the group as they transition from the CAC to the oversight committee.

Project team member distributed survey clickers to survey the CAC on issues such as resource allocation and to ensure proper utilization of the Community Office space (CAC meeting access). The office is open

five days a week and every other Saturday. CAC Members were guided through a Community Office use logistical survey.

Survey results:

- CAC members prefer to meet on a recurring date & time, 1st Saturdays
- CAC members prefer to extend the meeting to 3 hours, from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- CAC members would like the option to meet together outside of the regularly scheduled CAC meetings

As information, the public comment period has been extended to the end of January. CAC members were encouraged to have friends, relatives, and neighbors to visit the website or come to the community office to engage with project team and community office staff.

Outreach Update:

Community Office Coordinator: Since the community office opened, there have been approximately 107 visitors, approximately half of which represent the impacted communities. The office is averaging about 14 people per week. The holidays presented a bit of a slowdown during the holidays.

Brainstorming Session: Potential Mitigation Ideas for Recreational Facilities

Project team members: There have been 291 comments (comment cards) submitted. We are categorizing them by general themes such as noise, meeting experiences, meeting requests, etc. Questions were asked about various project dynamics, right of way, bus lanes, bike and pedestrian lanes, transit, affordable housing, environmental concerns, maintaining access to rivers, alternatives for smaller maps displaying system-to-system interchange (N. Rhett Avenue and manage lanes), etc. One of the more specific (commonly asked) questions was feedback from community drop ins. There were 61 comments in support of “no improvements,” people who are advocates for alternative methods of travel. The 31 comments made at drop-ins are public information, but printed copies can be provided to CAC members upon request. CAC member requested the be sent by email.

Air quality related to existing traffic and air quality in the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to I-526 corridor. The project team will be conducting an air quality analysis project.

Review of Community Office form for visitors to complete in order to assist the project team in collecting information on needs for housing replacement needs throughout the community. This is the next stage of the social needs assessment (which will run through the end of the comment period).

In upcoming meetings, the project team will address a path forward for mitigation based on the impacts gathered and prioritized from the social needs assessment and community office forms. Some parcels have already been provided and are included in your packet. CAC was asked to be mindful that the project team has not begin talking with property owners. The project team emphasized the critical need for confidentiality in the current stage of the project. The project manager reminded everyone that when the notification process begins, residents must be a willing seller. SCDOT cannot force to sell. CAC members were asked to continue thinking about the value the community center will add to neighborhoods and to consider uses or services that may not yet be included in the plan. This will be revisited at the next meeting.

Summary and Next Steps

- Reminder to complete the Demographic Survey and return it to the project team before the end of the meeting
- Reminder to CAC members to request missed materials from Meeting 3, if they were absent
- CAC Members requested an email meeting reminder one week prior to the meeting
- Open House flyers will be distributed to CAC Members at the Community Office on Monday, January 6, 2020
- CAC Members were encouraged to email questions, concerns, or ideas for meeting topics to Council@526Lowcountrycorridor.com or stop by the Community Office
- Next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 8, 2020, 10 AM-1 PM at the Community Office

Respectfully submitted,

Jamelle H. Ellis, Ph.D.
President/Managing Director
Empowerment Strategies, LLC

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 5

Date: February 8, 2020

Time: 10:00 am – 1:05 pm

Location: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office, 5627 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

Larenda Baxley, Ferndale
Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale
Charlynn Smith, Ferndale
Geneva Swett, Ferndale
Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace
Jeanaris Bannister, Liberty Park
Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park
Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way
Tony Grasso, Russelldale
Angela Anderson, Russelldale
Venus Silva, Russelldale
Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque

Rick Day, Stantec
Amy Sackaroff, Stantec
LaTonya Derrick, Stantec
Joy Riley, SCDOT (Project Manager)
David Kelly, SCDOT
Pamela Foster, FHWA
Yolonda Jordan, FHWA
Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison)
Janelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies (Facilitator)

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 21

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Ferndale: 4 | Adjacent/affected communities/agencies: 2 | Community Office: 0 |
| Highland Terrace: 1 | SCDOT: 2 | Stantec: 3 |
| Liberty Park: 2 | FHWA: 2 | Facilitator: 1 |
| Russelldale: 3 | Community Liaisons: 1 | |

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting began with self-introductions of everyone in attendance. Restroom, exit, and external emergency meeting locations were reviewed. Administrative issues were addressed:

- Meeting participants were reminded to sign in and that the meeting was being recorded to ensure an accurate record of discussions
- Request for approval of Meeting 3 minutes
 - A request was made to correct the spelling of Jeavaris to Jeanaris
 - Meeting 3 minutes were approved
- CAC Meeting 4 minutes were distributed
- Meeting 5 agenda was distributed
- Overview of agenda items
 - 'Open Mic' Session - CAC members were offered an opportunity to complete comment cards for the open-mic session for written questions or comments. The purpose of comment cards is

to allow CAC members to ask questions or make comments via the facilitator if they do not wish to speak. Otherwise, CAC members are encouraged to ask candid questions regarding the mitigation process.

- Reminder to CAC members to complete the Demographic Survey that was distributed in CAC Meeting 4. Demographic Surveys were provided to members who were unable to attend Meeting 4. CAC members were asked to complete the survey and submit it to the project team by the end of the meeting.
- Approval of final Roles and Responsibilities guiding document. The document was provided to CAC members who were unable to attend Meeting 4. Roles and Responsibilities should be placed under the Guiding Principles tab in CAC binders. The primary purpose of this document is to:
 - Outline the expectations for the Community Advisory Council and the project team
 - Establish the CAC as a non-voting body
 - Limit the council membership on the CAC to 20, with flexibility to accept additional members from the Russelldale community to ensure proper representation
 - Establish that no single chair will be selected to represent the CAC. Members will represent their respective communities.
 - Change the timeframe for meetings from a 2- to 3-hour format
- All discussions in CAC meetings are subject to the Freedom of Information Act
- CAC Members are encouraged to use the Open Mic session to bring questions and concerns discussed with stakeholders (primarily community members outside of CAC meetings) to the full Community Advisory Council and project team during CAC meetings. The CAC is also encouraged to direct community members to visit the Community Office (CO) to discuss questions directly with CO staff and liaisons.
- CAC members who were unable to attend meeting 4 were provided the Brainstorming Worksheet for potential mitigation ideas for recreational facilities
- A CAC member requested for meeting minutes to be distributed for approval prior to CAC meetings, rather than receiving them during CAC meetings.

Open Mic

Facilitator: CAC members were asked if there were any outstanding questions or comments from CAC Meeting 4 or from discussions with residents in respective communities.

The floor was opened for discussion.

A CAC member expressed concern about rezoning causing unforeseen problems. There is a meeting scheduled on February 10th at City Hall regarding rezoning (R1, single-family to R2, two-residential dwelling units) on Cary Street/Piedmont Street in the Ferndale community with the idea of multifamily units, specifically apartments. Ferndale residents are opposed to more apartments because of the associated problems (e.g. crime, particularly drug-related). They expressed concerns that higher density means higher crime. They prefer duplexes or single-family housing.

Project Manager: SCDOT is considering purchasing five lots in that area. Three of them are adjacent to the existing apartments. Two are at the corner of Piedmont and Cary. The two smaller lots are designated as R1, so SCDOT is not certain the property is larger enough to accommodate an apartment complex. However, there is a significant number of renters who will be displaced as a result of the project. While SCDOT is working to get as many residents to enter into homeownership, there will be a percentage that cannot or will not choose to do so. For those residents, SCDOT must be able to provide replacement rental

units. Ferndale and Russelldale are the only two communities that have parcels zoned for multifamily units.

CAC Member: Expressed desire to see multifamily units, such as duplexes like the units on Jason Street, as opposed to apartment complexes.

Project Manager: [Although the project team is still working on the details], the mobile home park will likely be moved and the land will be used for a multi-faceted development that includes new affordable housing and some type of recreational facility. Multi-use facilities can sometimes discourage certain activities (i.e. crime).

CAC Member: Each time rezoning has resurfaced as a possibility, residents have fought it. They plan to fight this one as well. Although they understand the rationale behind considering apartment complexes, apartments have created problems in the past. Once it is rezoned, the community is stuck with it.

Program Manager: SCDOT is required to collaborate with the Housing Authority under the tax incentive program. The property in question is not Housing Authority property. The property falls under the Tax Incentive Program in which developers must qualify by meeting certain criteria for the housing to remain affordable for a certain number of decades. Under the program, developers own the property. They have a rigorous inspection program. SCDOT wants to ensure that new apartments will be nice units and that they will be maintained for the duration. These are anticipated to be different from the current apartments which are owned by developers, but under the current program, are not required to be maintained. So, it isn't just the criteria of rent levels, but also standard of living that is being considered.

CAC Member: Re-emphasized the tax credit programs she is aware of have much more rigorous background checks and management takes better care of their units.

Program Manager: Agreed with the CAC Member and stressed that they are required to be more stringent in order to receive tax incentives annually. The developer cannot build the unit and walk away and never deal with it again. They are also vetting potential tenants to make sure they don't have someone making \$100,000. These units are for people who qualify as low-income, and need an apartment at a lower rate. These will be market-rate apartments (with amenities) at a lower rent rate.

CAC Member: Not everyone will meet the criteria. What happens to low-income tenants who engage in drugs and drinking who will be displaced?

Project Manager: From SCDOT's perspective, any housing they create (SCDOT) will be built to house people who are displaced. As long as the current tenants meet the requirements and can pay the rent, if they are displaced by this project, they will be placed in a new unit. SCDOT is required to offer replacement housing that is safe, decent, sanitary, and at the same rent rate that they are currently paying. They are guaranteed to be qualified if they meet the criteria during the relocation period. If someone begins to make a higher income or doesn't pay rent, there may be a time when they no longer qualify. Once a person is in a unit, as long as that person complies with the criteria of their lease, it is not anticipated they can be removed because of subsequent background checks [absent a crime committed post-lease]. These are the types of questions we need. Community members are concerned about sustainability, so all of the questions you are presenting are things we need to know and consider as we begin the relocation process.

CAC Member: Stated he understood the concerns expressed by the previous CAC member regarding large, highly populated units leading to more problems, and asked if it would be possible to distribute money to current residents and allow them to find housing on their own rather than placing them all in one unit.

Project Manager: There isn't enough housing available for everyone, and SCDOT cannot cut checks and wish residents good luck. However, people have choices of the type housing in which they would like to relocate. SCDOT's responsibility is provide choices and comparable pricing. SCDOT has to give people choices. There's always going to be the choice to go into a single family home ownership situation. We would encourage people to use their benefits package to make that step for long term stability in affordable housing. But, we have to provide choices. Not everybody wants affordable housing. SCDOT cannot force people to make housing decisions.

CAC Member: Have you done a survey to understand where SCDOT will be taking people from (current residence) and where you plan to move them? In other words, are they leaving homes (houses)? Are the majority of residents currently in apartments, and your goal is to move them into more apartments?

Project Manager: We have already done a relocation study. The results of the study provided us with confirmation that we will have a lot of displacements with this project, specifically in the four communities that center around the I-26/I-526 system to system interchange. In the relocation study the team looked at all of the different types of housing that will be impacted, - whether single family homes, apartment duplexes, etc. Then they look at the market and determine the availability of housing that would be comparable to the housing in this region. The study also told us that there are not a lot of affordable housing options available in the Charleston or in the Tri County region, and certainly not enough to absorb the number of displacements we're going to have. Having that information made it clear that SCDOT has to figure out a solution to this problem because we can't move everybody. We can't disrupt people's lives. They have jobs. They have families that are here. We have broken up communities numerous times with past interstate construction projects. With this project, we don't want to disrupt communities anymore that we have to. We don't want to make people move out of communities they have lived in their whole entire lives, but everyone has a choice. If you want to move to Monks Corner, then we're going to help you find housing. And if you want to move to New York state, we're going to help you find housing in New York. But, we cannot relocate 150 people, which is probably the number of units we're looking at in North Charleston. A large percentage of residents are going to have good jobs here, and they're going to want to stay here. So we have to create options. Apartments are one only one component of that. There are many lots in these communities that are single family lots that don't currently have homes on them. One of the other things we're working on is identifying whether or not the owners of some of those vacant lots would be interested in selling. Once we have lots it is fairly easy to bring in home builders, get home plans, and build homes. We have to have a variety of things. We're also looking at other developments that are actively going on. There's a town home development that is currently being constructed. But, they will be owner-occupied town homes. We have to give people options because if you're in a single family home and you own it, you're probably going to want another single family home. We usually relocate people in the same type of housing they are being displaced from or better, but the choice will be left to individual residents.

CAC Member: I see this as putting the cart before the horse. I'd like to see you go to everybody that's going to be displaced and ask them where they want to live. Somebody in Ferndale might not want to live in Ferndale if they have someplace else they prefer. Somebody in Russelldale might not want to live in Russelldale. Somebody in Russelldale might not want to come to Ferndale. And then in the meantime, you've built an apartment that people don't want in the neighborhood, but somebody will have to be put

in it. [The current residents might not need to be relocated] and we'll be stuck with something in our neighborhood, especially apartments, that the police has told us many times they hate because of the trouble associated with them.

CAC Member: Same in Russelldale, absolutely. Awful. Awful idea.

Project Manager: Is there a difference between apartments versus the duplexes?

CAC Member: The apartments have denser occupancy so you have maybe 10 families in a building where duplexes house only two families. So there's lower chances that you will have crime. Less crime, less police calls.

CAC Member: First of all, I'm concerned about all areas, but Liberty Park and Highland Terrace are supposed to be single family dwelling only. What about modular homes? We have had issues with modular homes before. But we have been to City Hall in the past trying protest modular homes in the area because they reduce your appraisal value for a stick-built house. Are modular homes included in this project or just stick-built houses?

Project Manager: We generally like to upgrade residents. So, I guess it depends. And I don't know what perception is. What is the perception of modular homes?

CAC Member: Are you talking modular homes or mobile homes? Modular homes are more expensive. Yeah, they're basically stick-built homes. They're just built in a factory and they're brought to the location in parts.

CAC Member: We had an incident in Liberty Park two years ago where there was a double wide trailer. But they said at City Hall that it was a modular home.

CAC Member: If it's a mobile home it can be moved. If it's a modular home, it is there permanently.

CAC Member: If they take the wheels off, it's there permanently.

Continued discussion about modular vs. mobile homes

CAC Member: [Recommended CAC members read an article in The Chronicle newspaper by Bonnie Blakely in which he was asked for his opinion about the I-26 corridor.] My main concern is whether new homes will be slab-built houses. And most houses I see now are slab-built homes vs. homes with a crawl space. Another issue is that in Liberty Park and Highland Terrace it seems as if there are going to be a lot of vacant lots that will be taken. I don't see a whole lot of families in Liberty Park.

Project Manager: There are some. I think we're finding a lot. Even single family homes have renters in them. We're trying to collect that information as people come into the Community Office to discuss right-of-way. We can't go knock on people's doors, telling them they are going to be displaced. There are rules we must follow.

CAC Member: In that area, the literature is out because we put the literature out.

Program Manager: I would encourage them to come into the Community Office so we can talk with them and find out if they are going to be displaced. Then we can find out what they are interested in doing as far as relocation.

CAC Member: I can speak for Liberty Park and Highland Terrace, we have a lot of renters in houses that don't stay here [in the community].

Project Manager: This is why you are here. Generally, we want to start off single-family homes. We would build homes that are similar to all the other homes [in the community]. We're not going to build three-story houses that look completely different than other homes in the neighborhood. But the CAC is here to help shape some of that because as we move forward, we're going to start actually putting some lines on paper to begin conceptualizing what this mitigation package looks like. That would apartments with recreational areas and other amenities. We're going to draw something up so that when we have a CAC Open House, we can present you with some of the ideas we've come up with, and give you an opportunity to give feedback so that you have a voice. We want to know your opinions, which things you like and which you don't. I can already see that there are going to be a lot of opinions about the housing component.

CAC Member: Take for instance Joppa Way. Joppa Way is a new neighborhood and is still growing. They have a selection of different style homes, but they [the style of homes] fit in the community.

CAC Member: Is there the opportunity along with those recreational areas to upgrade street lighting to help the overall community?

Project Manager: Yes. Housing is only one piece, and it's twofold. Not only were we trying to create replacement housing, but we have to mitigate for our impact to affordable housing in North Charleston, meaning if no one chooses to move into the housing that we build, we still have to build it because we're removing so many apartment complexes. We can't come in and wipe out all the affordable apartment units in North Charleston in this region and not put something back, regardless of who decides to live there. So, it's multifaceted in that we have to mitigate the impact to your communities, even if you're not displaced. Some of that is beautification.

CAC Member: I know that this is a hard pill to swallow, but when the project is completed, the neighborhood is going to be so much better as long as we can all come together and create this opportunity.

Project Manager: Right. That's why it is important that we not focus on an isolated piece of property. When all those pieces come together, it will actually change the look and feel of the neighborhood. I'm not a crime expert, but we could probably get some people to come in here and help us figure out ways that we can also make it less desirable for crime.

CAC Member: I hear you saying 'affordable housing,' but there's a difference between low-income housing and affordable housing. Affordable housing means you have to meet a median (income). So I think sometimes there is confusion between low income and affordable housing. It's income-based when you say low income. So that means if someone has no income, they still qualify. Affordable housing means they have to have some income, and usually it's the median of the surrounding area. So I think sometimes it gets confused. But you may have some low income people that's going to get displaced.

CAC Member: We don't want to make it a worse situation for everybody concerned. It's one thing to have a mobile home park and you've got the area in the back. You've got 15 mobile homes that have been your replaced, 15 families. It's another thing to take all of those 15 families and place them in one apartment complex. You know there is going to be a problem because we've seen it in the past. We know what came in when those apartments were built. I was very little when they came in, but I remember the difference in having a family versus a ton of families move in.

Project Manager: North. Charleston is also redoing their zoning plan, and we have repeatedly asked the city tell us what you want. Tell us what you want for these communities. Of course, we want to know what the community members want for their communities in the hopes that we can all come together. SCDOT does not want to dictate that we're in the business of planning a neighborhood development. That is up to you guys. The community members themselves are going to carry more weight through this process than the City. But the City does control zoning. We have to agree at some point on how to proceed.

CAC Member: How many people did you say you're being relocated?

Project Manager: It fluctuates with the alternatives. We will have more precise numbers this fall.

CAC Member: What was the approximate number?

Project Manager: It's It fluctuates between anywhere for 129 to 175

CAC Member: So, let's say it's a 150. Are there not 150 individual lots?

Program Manager: No. They're not 150 individual lots. But We've talked to some people who were not interested in staying the community. Some of the owners are older and they're at a time in their lives when they want to make a change anyway, So they're they're going to represent a percentage of people who want to move somewhere else. We still have to provide options. Even if half of them want to stay that's still a lot of housing to create.

CAC Member: You mentioned you're looking at some vacant lots. Are you also looking at lots that are vacant, but have homes that are boarded up?

Project Manager: Yes, absolutely. And if you know the owners and they are willing to sell please send them up here

CAC Member: We can get you a list of the owners.

Project Manager: We have pulled all that information. Right now, we're kind of focusing on the multi-family because that's the most complex part of the project. The single family, we're just going have to get the money and start going out trying to purchase land. We monitor the MLS listings, to try to take advantage of things. I'm still working through some funding issues right now to make sure that I have the money to purchase, but we're working towards that. We [the project team and the CAC] have some long meetings in the coming months. But we've got to get this mitigation piece done because once I start buying land, I need to know it is within the vision of this mitigation plan and that it is something the community feels good about.

CAC Member: All I can say is good luck getting the City to open up about what they want to do. [We cannot obtain information on their 5- or 10-year plan.

Project Team Member: You have access to that information.

Project Manager: That's why I say community members drive this process. We are bound by the same zoning laws that everybody else is. I can't come in and override anything so whatever we come up with in this process, the CAC (and community members) has some power. And the City is going to want these infrastructure improvements. It helps them as an entity. And part of getting this project done is going through this process of mitigating and going through, minimizing impacts of mitigating for them. Which is why you guys are here, to help us figure out how to do that. So it's a powerful thing that we do have leverage and that whatever we come up with is going to have the strength. All state representatives are going to stand behind you because this is what the community has spoken and this is what they said they want to see for mitigation of your community. It will be hard for North Charleston to not support you. You have a powerful voice through this process. So I encourage you to really think about the big picture.

Project Team Member: And just a side note, we're putting together what we can to support your decision making process. So we have some mapping that we're putting together that shows a lot of the vacant underdeveloped parcels, proximity to transit school district's lines, voting district boundaries, things like that. So that when we're looking at maps and trying to think what might be some good locations for these things for the you know, the replacement properties that we have that information, you all have that information on hands to be able to make those decisions. Because I do think personally, I'm very curious about the renter aspect and what the demographics are. If it's mostly young people of working age, they want to be closer to employment centers, things like that. So we'll have to get into that a little bit further. North Charleston has also updated their comprehensive plan and, I believe, it is going to council this month. As soon as that is released, we're going to bring that all to you so you could have their future zoning maps. We will be the data collectors and bring that information to you. Mr Mohammed, I know you asked about the bus rapid transit and I tried to go through the website and synthesize some of the information, and I think we might just need to get some material from them directly.

Project Manager: We are actively coordinating on the design side of things.

Project Team Member: There are already prepared materials. But if you have questions like how does the bus rapid transit fit into this area? What is transit-oriented development going to look like on Rivers Avenue? Because those questions dovetail with what we're trying to do here.

Project Manager: That's part of why North Charleston is doing the comprehensive plan, because they know the bus rapid transit is coming. If you want to use that bus lines and trains, they're going to have to have employment centers and housing on that line. You have to decide where everything should go. If North Charleston met with the community and decided we want to transition the neighborhood completely to single family homes, we would be looking at doing apartments probably somewhere along Rivers Avenue. We can help leverage what the community wants with the City.

CAC Member: We need affordable housing for low income people. What sets the dollar value of what a low income family is considered? Where is the dollar value? You need to be able to provide that affordable housing. I own property. There's no such thing as low income taxes, low income city fees, low income material to build a house. There's no such thing as low income anything for me. So what level do I have to

be at to provide that home for a low income person? Is it the difference between working a Taco Bell or Boeing? What's that dollar value that you need to be at to provide that?

Project Manager: We're trying to make sure that we create something comparable to what we're displacing. When I say comparable, I'm talking about if there is a three bedroom, two bath units and the rent is \$700 a month. [CAC Member states that isn't possible.] Okay, but I'm going to create it. That's the thing. That's where the betterment comes in...if you're living in one of those three apartments and they're old, they are not maintained, we're going to create the same size and type of apartment. It's going to be a market rate apartment. It's going to be a brand new apartment, but the rent is going to be the same as what you were paying in that previous apartment.

CAC Member: I could not rent one of my three bedrooms for \$700. And its old. How are you going to do that with a new unit?

Project Manager: The tax credit program is there to make the math work because you can't build brand new apartments and then charge that low rent because it costs more to build and operate the maintain. That's where the tax credit program in the Senate's come in. They get the tax credits. They get the seed money. That helps off-set that difference and we get first rights on those units. So the residents who are being displaced under this project can get in those units. But, they still have to pay their rent and meet the requirements of their lease.

CAC Member: There's already a shortage of apartments. That's without the highway. How long is that going to be applied on that tax credit to each of those people that move in and is it going to go up three years later?

Project Manager: Those are things we're working through right now? We're still collecting information for people who come in here to see whether they are Section 8 voucher holders. Are they receiving any kind of housing assistance at this time? Some of those programs will be transferrable, right? So that's when we need to create a sort of a variety of housing so that you can accommodate anybody. There might be people in those apartments that wouldn't qualify. If we use tax credits for a sum of money, the housing will be affordable housing for the duration. We don't have to decide what duration be 30-50 years, whatever it is and so they do have income criteria. We wouldn't be able to put people in there that wouldn't meet that criteria. We have to have some other options of housing for people that make too much money to be in that affordable housing. That's why we have to create single family homes, different levels of housing, and it helps us to know who we're displacing so that we can make sure we have options for everybody

Facilitator: That is why it is important that people come into the Community Office so that the project team has a better understanding of the needs of the community.

CAC Member: I'm listening to everything that's being said and I hope the same thing doesn't happen that happened with the John C. Calhoun project when people were displaced and promised they would be able to move back into the community, but that did not happen. People were made the promise they would be able to come back and that did not happened. They got displaced and told they would be able to come back once the project was rebuilt. I'm sitting here listening to both sides are saying, and I'm just praying and hoping that's not going to be the same thing. A lot of people with that project [John C. Calhoun] fell through the cracks.

Project Manager: And that's why we're trying to get in people in now so that we're actively moving people directly into the housing, not moving them somewhere else with a promise of when we get housing you come back because that is a risky situation all the way around. We've learned our lesson. We've done affordable housing and incentives on other big projects. But on a lot of those projects we have given the money to the City and said 'You guys are responsible for implementation' and it didn't happen within the required timeline. Now, the money is not enough to do what you were originally supposed to do because it's 10 years later. So, SCDOT is trying to avoid that and instead, take control and responsibility and do it as a part of project.

CAC Member: There's a lot of people, especially in Ferndale. We've had a lot of influx investors who come in and renovated a lot of the houses. I mean, it's made a huge improvement. There's no doubt about it. What about seeing if you could work with some of them, through a tax incentive or something – the trick there being that they build a house, it doesn't necessarily have to be built and sold. It could be rented. That's fine. But make sure that they do have certain criteria that they have to follow. Because one of the things we have had trouble with in Ferndale is you've got people who are renting properties that don't have a working bathroom or they don't have a sink in the kitchen or there's holes in the floor and they're afraid to say anything because they get kicked out and have no place to go. But the landlords get away with that. If we take that route, we want to make sure that they are held accountable.

Project Manager: That's why we are encouraging affordable housing. SCDOT is not in the business of apartments or property management. We don't do that. We meet with the Housing Authority regularly. They have a vigorous program. They were moving away from building their own housing, using incentives to partner with developers and holding them to the wire. That is key. They have the resources to get in there and do enforcement and inspection every year because SCDOT can't do that. We have to partner with another agency to do that because the last thing we wanted to build apartments or put money towards apartments with a developer and then we walk away. He could choose not to maintain home. He can kick people out, raise the rent. We've got to have controls in there. Otherwise, we're not helping the situation from a timeline standpoint.

Project Team Member: That is why we are starting to look at titles on some of the potential properties. That's another lesson learned that sometimes acquiring the property titles can take a long time and that can put us behind, too. So that's another lesson learned to get a jump start on that effort now so that people can be moved from the houses that they're in right into the replacement housing. So we're trying to learn other lessons from other projects across the country and not make the same mistakes here.

CAC Member: Housing is not the best now. I started working with the Housing Authority in 1987. They were great back then. I have my own housing. I have had homes on housing and off. But I would not rent if not house, because you do get some sort of cushion. They would check more, but now you have to do your own walk-throughs (inspections). Now, I write that into my contracts.

Project Manager: The inspection program is a lot more rigorous on apartments under the tax credit program. At least that's what we've seen so far.

CAC Member: Warned against slum landlords that just want the money and do not maintain the property.

CAC Member: Revisited the John C. Calhoun project where people did not meet the requirements to move back in, and asked if there is a mitigation plan for displaced residents who spent time in prison and have a

felony record, but are required to have a background check. Is there a mitigation plan to ensure people who fall into this category will qualify for the tax credit?

Project Manager: That's why this is good discussion, because I don't know about all these of these nuances. So those were things that we're talking with them about because we have to make sure that we can provide safe, decent, and sanitary housing to everyone we displace - to everyone, no matter what. We're meeting on a regular basis with the Housing Authority trying to come up with the best way to move forward because we know we have some section 8 voucher holders that we will be displacing. We want to make sure that we mitigate for the affordable housing impact we're having. Regardless of whether they move into a unit that we create or they move into a market-rate apartment or house, SCDOT is required to provide housing for everyone displaced.

CAC Member: Can they just decide to take the money and then go where they want?

Project Manager: No.

FHWA: You have to spend the money to receive the money, then provide SCDOT with assurances the money was spent appropriately.

CAC Member: So, it's like reimbursement?

CAC Member: I believe we have a lot of members here who own or manage property. Are they a part of that meeting that you're having to determine what needs to be done or do you have people who are doing the negotiations and are already familiar with how to manage properties?

Project Manager: No. The meetings taking place are between two state agencies to determine if they can partner with each other to mitigate for affordable housing under their existing programs and with funding SCDOT is required to spend towards those efforts.

CAC Member: Can the property owners take part in those meetings to serve in an advisory capacity.

Project Manager: No. Developers who develop their own property are going to compete to get that contract. So they can't be in the room helping to develop the details of what the procurement is going to look like, because they would have an advantage to come in and get that contract. So it's the Housing Authority and SCDOT talking together to see if we can partner through their regular tax credit program to at least build some of the housing that falls within the mitigation plan of this project in North Charleston.

CAC Member: I think what he's asking is whether you're partnering with a private individual like me.

Project Manager: No. We talked about doing that. But we're not set up to manage that. The Housing Authority is set up to do that. We are talking to developments, and we have other tools through the right-of-way process that we can use. For example, let's say, there's a townhome complex that's about to be built across the river. When that development comes to fruition, goes to construction, and we're getting close to starting to displace people, I may go in and say there is an option to buy 10 units within this complex so that if I have a displaced resident that wants to go over there, I have 10 units that they can choose from. There are tools like that that we will use as well to make sure that we're not losing opportunities for housing because housing here sales quickly, at least the ones that we want to buy. So we

need to make sure that we can come to the table with each property owner and say here are the options that we have for you.

CAC Member: The only reason I'm asking, and I'm just trying to get clear. You have members of this council who are property owners and who have a better understanding of what needs to be done and what should be done. Can they be a part of the advisory for [property] management?

Project Manager: That's part of your role here [as a CAC member], to help come up with mitigation. I think in our next meeting we will actually start coming up with real concepts that we could go back and draw. We will move into different phases. Once we figure out what that mitigation plan is, the mitigation plan will focus on 15 things. Then, we move into the implementation phase and making sure those things happen. That's the role the CAC plays. Coming up with an idea is one thing. But then you have to determine how is this going to work, logistically? How is SCDOT going to do that? Who is going to be responsible? When is the work going to happen? What's the mechanism? We'll continue to work together through those things. Project Manager will then come back to the CAC with options that she has developed, for questions and recommended changes. Then, the Project Manager and project team will go back and work on the plan again. So, a part the CAC's role is to advise us through the entire process.

CAC Member: So, you've never been a landlord.

Project Manager: I have been a landlord in my past life. I didn't like it very much. That's what I don't do it anymore.

CAC Member: But, you would understand if I made this statement to you. I did not go into business to support low-income housing. When I bought property, I bought property to gain as much money as I can as a businessman. That's what I've done. So this is something you are going to be fighting against, especially with landowners like myself. I don't want to be under the government of somebody telling me how much I've got to take, which I went through this in my last section eight. I told section eight to get that tenant out of my house, because they came out, they told me they were going to stop paying me for things that tenant damaged. And I said, That's it. I'm not doing it. I won't do it again. I don't want somebody tell me how to run my business.

Project Team Member: These are good things to keep in mind once we get those maps in front of us and we start thinking about the kind of themes that we have talked about regarding revitalization versus redevelopment and how to make sure that some of the integrity of the neighborhoods is being preserved and enhanced and that we're not doing things with this project that are creating other kinds of ripple effects such as gentrification. So next time be prepared to come with your sleeves rolled up to see what we can come up with.

An email invitation will be sent to CAC email addresses for the next meeting which will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2020. CAC meetings will continue to be held the first Saturday of every month. A summary of the parking lot issues from CAC Meeting #4 was reviewed and is included in the meeting presentation packet for CAC Meeting #5. CAC Members were asked to provide any parking lot items from Meeting #4 that were not included on the summary sheet. No additional comments or concerns were presented.

Highway Project Impacts

Direct impacts to recreational facilities were discussed. Because of the proximity to the project, the Russelldale Community Center and Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center will have to be relocated. The project team reviewed preliminary displacement totals and maps displaying the proposed new locations for each recreation facility based alternatives 1 and 2. CAC Members were invited to look at maps in greater detail during the break.

- Cumulative Impacts from past highway projects (review of aerial maps of pre-and post I-26 and I-526 construction, in 1957 and 2018 respectively)
 - Historically, there were a significant number of homes on Taylor Street and in Highland Terrace; I-526 construction split the Russelldale community
 - CAC Member: Revisited concerns about SCDOT taking portions of property in the past and residents not having enough acreage to build or profit from sale of the parcel of land
 - Project Manager: With the current project, everyone has the right to express concerns about property damage associated with taking partial parcels of land, and make a decision to relocate. The difference in the relocation process today is that local governments have requirements on how far back houses must be from the road
 - If SCDOT violates those requirements, they must pay damages. Because most of the neighborhoods have smaller lots, it is likely many of them will have setback violations.
 - If a resident stays in a home that violates setback requirements and their home is destroyed by hurricane or fire, they cannot rebuild, and they still end up having to move. Some people take that because they rather receive \$30,000 in damages and the fair market price of the land and stay there or make a decision to relocate because they don't meet the requirements.
 - CAC Member also asked how SCDOT handles renters who decide not to stay, but want to use the money for relocation, if they have identified a place of residency outside of the project area
 - Project Manager: A Right-of-Way workshop was held in these questions were reviewed. She offered to talk with the CAC member one-on-one to address remaining questions.
 - Right-of-Way experts are also at the Community Office to answer any related questions on Wednesdays.
 - CAC Member: If a renter has to move, would they be eligible for moving expenses?
 - Project Manager: Renters are eligible to receive benefits of moving expenses, real estate services, and supplemental rent for up to 42 months.
 - SCDOT must ensure that new units are comparable, but, safe, decent, and sanitary
 - A formula is used to determine the minimum number of bedrooms a replacement unit can have based on the number of individuals that currently live in the home
 - Because supplemental rent is limited to 42 months, SCDOT encourages residents to consider the affordable home option which will have longer term benefits of 30-50 years. SCDOT does not want to create for residents a situation that is unsustainable if they are unable to maintain rental payments beyond the 42-month window. Even if they have an income increase, they will still have to find another place to live.

- CAC Member: North Charleston is building up, but when you refer to “affordable housing,” it is affordable for those who are working. So, if someone has a criminal background, they can’t afford to go to Trident Tech to advance into jobs that allow them to obtain affordable housing.
 - Project Manager: Job training should be a part of the Community Mitigation Plan
- CAC Member: That's why the people being displaced should visit the Community Office
 - Project Manager: Would like to see the Community Office be one of the more successful based in part on the workshops offered (that will be offered) such as contractor job training, financial planning, and resume writing.
- Project Team Member: Completed review of Past Impacts from Highway Projects and Community-wide cumulative and recurring EJ Impact

Developing the CAC Vision Statement

The CAC decided to adopt the draft vision statement provided by the project team which states, “A diverse and engaged group of residents working together, embracing new ideas to develop an equitable and inclusive approach to address project-related impacts and contribute to building a sustainable, healthy, and safe community.”

Brainstorming Session: Potential Mitigation Ideas

Project Manager/Project Team provided clarification for the term mitigation and the difference between right-of-way and mitigation within the context of this project.

- Mitigation means to offset negative/cumulative impacts (for example, from dec
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- Right-of-way is the part of the project in which you have to spend the money to get the process. Mitigation is the big picture

CAC Member: Can I had something to your mitigation meaning? I hear a bit of micromanaging here. In other words, I hear you have to spend the money in order to get the money.

Project team member: That is due to the mitigation process.

Project Manager: Project Manager provided clarification on the difference between mitigation and right-of-way. Right -of-way requires that you spend the money to get the money. Mitigation is an overarching approach to offsetting impacts to the community. In the right-of-way process, we will interact with every renter. In the case of the I-526 construction, how were the apartments that were there before construction impacted? What was the community like? Was there crime before I-526 was constructed? Did the construction of I-526 being so close to those apartments devalue them and make it less desirable to live there? All of these things are considered impacts and those are things that we are trying to mitigate for. So how do we replace those apartments in a way that makes it better or returns it to the same quality as it was before I-526 was constructed? We have to do mitigation regardless of whether anybody who's displaced chooses to live there. We are still required to mitigate for affordable housing.

CAC Member: Rather than you going out and determining that the carpet is not good enough. Walls are not painted. There is an outlet hanging out of the wall, so you can't have this [rental unit], have you looked into surveying how many would settle for just a payment for moving and that's it?

Project Manager: We have federal laws that dictate that process. I don't have options. I have to comply with federal laws. People will make their own decisions about where they're going. We are required to move them into a new residence that is safe, decent, and sanitary.

CAC Members: Expressed concerns about some residents taking relocation funds and spending them on items unrelated to housing and relocation. The Program Manager emphasized that as the reason controls are in place to reduce mishandling of allocated funds.

- CAC Member: Giving people money to spend it on housing as they wished is a quicker, easier approach than building a 200-unit apartment complex.

Program Manager: But that would not mitigate for the impacts to the community because of construction. Our focus is on whether the quality of those apartments was diminished because they were 20 feet from the interstate. Moving relocated residents into subpar housing would not be mitigating, but rather perpetuating a problem.

Project team member: Good clarification. These were some of the questions that that we will be asking and that we'd like you to be thinking about. Going back to the open mic session from the last meeting, some of the impacts that were not addressed from past transportation projects were discussed. Today, we're just going to talk about the recreational facilities and the fact that they are being impacted and that we will be looking at replacement locations for those properties.

Maps of proposed new recreational facility locations were reviewed. Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center is a 6(F) property. That means the property or a portion of the property was purchased with Land and Water Conservation Act funding. When you impact that type of property, you need to find a replacement location of comparable appraisal value. We're essentially trying to recreate something of the same value or better under the 6(F) requirements and then something else called Section 4(F), that's of the U. S. Department of Transportation Act. This is related to the Russelldale Community Center. Under federal law, we are required to mitigate the impact. Early public involvement is a part of both processes. And so, in addition to working with you all to identify potential locations will also be working with city staff and other local entities. school transportation officials, et cetera, on and being able to finally come home in on where the mitigation plan would propose to have the recreational facilities relocated.

CAC Member: Asked if the plan was to place both recreation facilities back in their respective communities. [Project team member responded yes]. CAC member did not think that would happen.

CAC Member: The new location will present a little longer walk, but that's where the sidewalks could come in under the highways. I don't know if that's gonna be something that we're Russell Dale on one side of 5 26 If it moves to the other side, they have to give us some access that we did meet with the people that run city people that run those recreational and, you know, cities are expressed a desire to have a more centralized community center that's more of a betterment, like a gymnasium with indoor classrooms. They have a lot of after school activities there, a lot of events there and then maybe have some pocket parks, you know, because land is an issue buying lost houses. One thing buying a lot big enough to build a community centre and have playgrounds and all that is a hole that's a much bigger piece of property.

Project team member: But that's one of the ideas that we need you all the way.

CAC Member: Liberty Park and Highland Terrace are already compact communities. So, where will a new recreational facility be placed?

Program Manager: The City already owns some pretty big lots in Liberty Park. So our initial goal would be to look and see if some of the other landowners surrounding that would be interested in selling some of their property to make one big lot. The city owns the lots next to Filbin Creek.

CAC Member: Is that off of Dorothy Williams, where the drainage ditch is located? [Another CAC Member confirms.] That is a lowland area.

Project team member: Right. That's one of the things that could actually work in our favor because you can put picnic shelters, playgrounds - things like that - in those low areas.

Project Manager: That area has some flooding, but we are required to do a full hydraulic study as a part of this project. That will address some of the issues with drainage.

CAC Member: When it rains, that area/Taylor Street floods.

Project Manager: It's the bridge on Rivers Avenue that's holding everything back. There is a culvert and a bridge that is not allowing the water to flow through. We're studying that now to see what happens when we replace that bridge - how it affects flooding upstream and downstream. The current proposed location for the recreational facilities is the ideal area to get a big enough piece of property combined with the city property to potentially build. The facility would have a nice indoor facility with computer classrooms and indoor gymnasiums and some outdoor amenities. We are also hopeful we can secure smaller parcels for playgrounds close to the communities. You will also have the after school events center that's upgraded and a much nicer facility.

CAC Member: Recommended not using the small wooded lots in the back corner due to safety reasons. The Project Manager acknowledged the feedback.

CAC Member: Shared information she felt was a lesson learned from one of the other project communities that would not have a new recreational center built as a part of this project. There was an opportunity for the church on Bolton Street to sell their community center to the City. There were a couple of problems. (1) The community doesn't get to use it because the City rents it out to other groups, so our kids don't get to use it. (2) Because it is no longer centrally located, children on one end of the community don't get to use it.

- CAC Member advised that two things are made clear before entering into an agreement: (1) how the facility will be used and what types of limitations will be placed on the residents to use it. (2) Determine whether people will allow their children to go to the facility if it isn't going to be centrally located

Project Manager: Our understanding is that the Russelldale and Highland Terrace/Liberty Park facilities are very well used, both for afterschool and for community events.

CAC Member: Ours was, too, until they moved it.

Project Manager: SCDOT will not own these facilities. Although SCDOT is building the facilities, we are giving them to the City as an asset. Ownership will belong to the City, but we can place stipulations on how the facility is used to better ensure community members are able to use them.

Project team member: Hopeful the new athletic center would work in our favor in terms of making the recreational facilities a community focus. There may be parking limitations that would require more land for facilities and make it less enticing. The goal is to make it more walkable.

- The relevant needs identified as primary concerns from the social needs assessment were service for seniors, service for youth employment opportunities, and supervised after school youth activities. The project team can ensure those elements are being addressed in the relocation of facilities from staff with the city. We've heard that children in the Russelldale community also use in the Highland Terrace- Liberty Park Community Center. So that would be from a walkability standpoint. We want to make sure that we were connecting everybody. Children in Joppa Way walk home across the railroad tracks from the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center. Rail safety is important.
- Brainstorming should include high level ideas. CAC Members may consider writing down thoughts to bring to the next meeting. Potential areas to discuss:
 - What resources are lacking?
 - What are your thoughts on preferable locations?
 - Based on the maps provided, what do you think about the potential locations? What do you think would be some of the more optimal locations for residents going back to that idea of having multiple facilities?
 - What are some of the resources you would like to see?
 - We've heard it would be really nice to have some computers and fax machines at the community center.
 - Recreational facilities amenities such as walking trail, shaded play areas, picnic tables, grills, benches, pickleball, bike racks, lockers, outdoor drinking water fountains and space for a community garden.

CAC Member: Would like have books at the recreational facilities.

Project team member: Noted that libraries are South and North, but none in close proximity to the impacted communities.

CAC Member: Will recreational facilities have monitoring (for crime)? Expressed concerns about local police unfamiliarity with streets in their communities, and lack of police presence less than three blocks from City Hall. Residents need to have casual (non-emergency) patrols through the neighborhood occasionally.

CAC Members: Installation of cameras for security

Project team member: Encouraged CAC members to complete the brainstorming worksheet home. Additionally, two hard copy resources were distributed during the meeting: Planning for Equity and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). We will discuss these documents at the next meeting.

Project team member: Provided Public Outreach Updates

- During the month of February, the Community Office has had 14 visits
- Managed 5 calls (February 2020); Made calls to residents who provided comments after the Public Information Meeting public comment period
- No calls received on the toll free line this month; To-date, we have answered 11
- An additional Social Needs Assessment participant
- The January 25th Open House was successful. There were approximately 58 people, including about 10 CAC members, one elected official and one city official maybe a couple of spouses of CAC members.
- At the beginning of March, office hours will change to Monday thru Friday, 10 AM – 6 PM. Staff will accept appointments for meetings outside regular office hours. Right-of-way experts are in the office on Wednesdays from 10 AM – 4 PM, both walk-ins and appointment.
- Asked and Answered Flyers are being distributed in venues such as churches. CAC members were asked to review them and provide any suggestions for additional content so that information provide remains relevant to the community.

Community Outreach Liaisons

- Conducted two ride-along canvassing efforts were conducted on January 15th and 17th, 2020. Leaflets placed in doors or mail slots.
- The January 25th Open House was intended to focus on Russelldale. As stated previously, there were 58 participants. Recommend hosting more open house events.
- Canvassing will be held leading up to any event
- The Community Office will have a booth for the EJ Mitigation Project at the Black Expo on March 14th at the Charleston Area Convention Center from 10 AM - 5 PM
- March 19th MUSC Senior Expo, 9AM – 1 PM, Charleston Area Convention Center
- First in the series of Informational Workshops will be held on March 21st. Capacity is approximately the session is 20. Consultants will rotate different topics each quarter. Topics will be selected from a list of 8-9 topics selected by Maxim Consulting. Three sessions will be held during each Informational Workshop:
 - 9 – 10:15 AM
 - 11 AM - 12:15 PM
 - 1 – 2:15 PM
- Subsequent Informational Workshops will be held on June 20, September 19, and January 2021, for which a specific date has not yet been identified.
- CAC Members encouraged to use the meeting space as a resource and to notify the Community Office of events that are held throughout the area that may be beneficial to the community such as the Black Expo or MUSC Senior Expo. This includes events at local churches, including health fairs.
- Community Liaisons attended the Ferndale Community meeting recently
- Project team member: Proposed Meet Your Community Advisory Council Open Houses where the draft mitigation plan would be available as a resource when residents stop the Office to ask CAC members questions. Renderings can be made available. Target timeframe is April 2020.
- Outreach will be conducted before the CAC Open House is held.

Summary and Next Steps

- Review of project schedule
- Next meeting scheduled for March 7, 2020, 10 AM – 2 PM
- CAC Member: Asked that the Mitigation Process also addresses the effects on Senior Citizens.
- Facilitator: How is the senior population, particularly those who may be disabled and unable to visit the Community Office, informed and included in the mitigation process
 - Community Liaison – Home visits will provide better information on senior and disabled populations. This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
 - Transportation can be provided
 - Contact the Senior Center on Dorchester Road



MEETING MINUTES

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 6

Date: March 7, 2020

Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office, 5627 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston, SC

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees:

Larenda Baxley, Ferndale
Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale
Charlynn Smith, Ferndale
Geneva Swett, Ferndale
Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale
David L. Johnson, Ferndale
Michael S. Halls, Sr., Ferndale
Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace
Jeanaris Bannister, Liberty Park
Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park
Doris Twiggs, Liberty Park
Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way
Angela Anderson, Russelldale
Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque
Rick Day, Stantec

Amy Sackaroff, Stantec
LaTonya Derrick, Stantec
Ryan White, Stantec
Hannah Clements, Stantec
Joy Riley, SCDOT (Project Manager)
Chad Long, SCDOT
David Kelly, SCDOT
Pamela Foster, FHWA
Annette McCrorey, THC
Willie Johnson, THC
Horrace Tobin, Community Office (Coordinator)
Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison)
Mattese Lecque, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison)
Carolyn Lecque, Maximum Consulting (Community Liaison)
Jamelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies (Facilitator)

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 30

Ferndale: 7

Highland Terrace: 1

Liberty Park: 3

Russelldale: 1

Adjacent/affected communities/agencies: 4

SCDOT: 3

FHWA: 1

Community Liaisons: 3

Community Office: 1

Stantec: 5

Facilitator: 1

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting began with self-introductions of everyone in attendance. Restroom, exit, and external emergency meeting locations were reviewed.

- CAC Meeting 4 minutes approved
- CAC Meeting 5 minutes distributed

Approach for Mitigation Work Session

Amy explained the logistics of the work session to CAC members and provided an overview of the CAC Mitigation Work Session packet. Every CAC Member received a copy of the CAC Mitigation Work Session packet to review and complete prior to CAC Meeting #6. The worksheets accompanied a detailed work session guide which was also provided prior to the meeting. Both documents were used to guide the meeting discussion.

Group Work Session

The Mitigation Work Session was based on the four pillars of Community Impact Mitigation: Community Cohesion, Community Enhancement, Community Preservation, and Community Revitalization.

Immediately following is a detailed account of the work session discussion. A summary of key topics presented by the CAC during the work session is presented at the end of the meeting minutes.

Community Cohesion

Facilitator provided context for community cohesion as direct and cumulative impacts from past and planned highway projects and other factors such as crime, high cost of living and home ownership trends that have reduced the amount of community locations in the affected environmental justice neighborhoods. The purpose of this activity was to gather the CAC's input on potential measures that can be evaluated to improve community cohesion.

What do you see as resources that are currently lacking that would improve community cohesion?

CAC Member Feedback:

- Residents are not allowed to use the Ferndale Community Center gym. Tournament schedules get priority over general use by neighborhood children.
- The city dictates the community center schedule.
- The Ferndale Community Center should have designated hours for general residents to have access to the gym and other activities. Currently, residents are not allowed access until after basketball season and tournaments end in March. Residents cannot use the gym during the summer months because of summer programs, so general residential use is limited to March (after basketball season ends), April, and May.
- Residents can submit a request to use the gym, but available slots are limited. CAC members feel time slots are intentionally blocked for use primarily related to tournament events.
- CAC member emphasized that the point wasn't scheduling the gym, it is that on a broad scale, their children are not allowed to go into the community center to play. The kids have no place to play during the summer months.
- One recommendation is to build another smaller facility near the back of the neighborhood. There was one on Iron Street in the past. Many of the neighborhood children don't have close parental supervision. Parents don't want children walking to the other side of the neighborhood to be able to play.
- Russelldale experiences similar challenges to Ferndale with the exception of restrictions on use due to basketball tournaments. The children have to be off the courts by 9:00 PM. During the day, the community center isn't open to neighborhood children because of afterschool programs. There are limitations on the community center in the summer months due to summer camps. The only thing

available to neighborhood children is an outside basketball court, but there is nothing available for younger children.

- CAC members feel the Ferndale Community Center is used more as a “City” center than a community center for the children who live in Ferndale.
- When asked if there was a time when they were able to use the current facility, CAC member responded by saying that residents could use the old facility with the exception of afterschool programs or summer camps they were not registered for. In the new facility, the “big gym” is the focal point. If there is a program taking place inside the gym, neighborhood children are not allowed to play on the outside equipment, even though it isn’t being used. They don’t offer an explanation. They are in charge, so they just say “no.”
- CAC member shared the reason given for not wanting the community children to play outside on the equipment is due to liabilities associated with community kids “mixing” with scheduled tournaments and practices taking place on the inside of the facility. Another CAC member felt that rationale was not logical, but rather an excuse.
- CAC member emphasized that even though they (tournament personnel) are on the inside, they have liability during tournament-related activities for the entire facility (inside and outside).
- When asked if the construction of the new large facility changed anything. CAC members responded by saying it became worse because the larger facility attracted more people. Now, they use the large facility for the games, and the other facilities for practice.
- CAC emphasized that Ferndale needs a community center. What it has is a city athletic/activities center.
- CAC member shared that when her boys were younger, police would stop and complain, but they don’t stop kids now because they figure it is giving them something to do, whether they’re blocking the road or not.
- When asked if there are other factors that will contribute to bringing community members together, CAC members stated, “yes, because where you have kids, you have parents.”
- CAC member shared that neighbors have expressed when there is a nice community center, it provides a place to host drives, meeting your representatives on City Council, the mayor, etc. because oftentimes people in the community do not know the people representing them. The member also suggested that meeting police officers that patrol or have a presence in their neighborhoods at the community center would help them better understand situations such as them driving at 50 miles per hour through residential communities.
- CAC members also shared the following thoughts regarding the community center:
 - It could provide employment opportunities to residents, especially adult residents. Counselors could be hired for upkeep of the center as well as supervision of the children. Young people seeing adults from the community employed at the center will increase their respect for community adults.
 - It could be operated like the senior center. There is a fee for seniors to participate at the senior center, approximately \$10 a month or \$100 a year.
 - It is a place for people to congregate and learn about each other. People from different backgrounds can use the center as a common meeting place. The current community center is not for the community at this time. It is for the City. It is for those that are coming in that need a space. But it is not for the community. CAC member indicated that while

growing up in the Chicora/Cherokee area, they had a community center where during the summer they could visit and play with the other kids. They offered a lunch program. That's something they don't have now. Another CAC member added that now parents have to pay for summer programs for the kids.

- Current community center programs seem to be geared to younger children that need childcare during the day, mostly afterschool. Perhaps consider expanding facilities where there are commitments for programs for all members - not just young children, but teenagers, young adults trying to get into the work force, seniors, parents.
- Community centers should focus on children first.
- Probably 90% of people that use the Ferndale community center don't live anywhere near Ferndale. The facility is rented out for basketball practice, rented out for middle school drum practice, dance practice.

What about after the power is out after a storm? Do you see any use for a community center to serve as a hub for the distribution of water or related activities?

- Yes, that will be the perfect thing to bring the community together. When there is a hurricane or threat of a hurricane, everyone has to evacuate. But if you have a community-based center, residents can congregate there for water, blankets, and shelter, for those in the community that cannot leave. There are also some seniors and disabled people who cannot evacuate during hurricanes, that the center would benefit as shelter.
- Employing residents at the center will increase accountability in children. They will see familiar adult faces from the community and respect them as someone they know from the community, and know that if they are misbehaving, community members will tell their parents. They are much more likely to experience that type of community cohesion with employees who are from the community than with someone who is hired from outside the community.
- Community liaison summarized that community centers are (1) not staffed by a local residents or not staffed at all, (2) the planned activities are not geared toward the community, (3) there is no place in the community for the children to participate (not child-centered). The point was made that the Liberty Hill community center is actually staffed by residents.
- Residents don't want to see another "four walls" built because they feel it is a waste of taxpayers' money. But when you have an area that is conducive to a variety of activities as well as diverse in inviting people in the neighborhood to come, then they will come and they will also stand up for it so that the city of North Charleston or anyone else will not come and take over the schedule for the activity that's going on there.
- CAC member addressed Liberty Park/Highland Terrace. The community center needs to be a staffed, "working center" with scheduled activities (day and evening programs) that engage the community. That may include day programs for seniors that transition into joint (youth and senior) programs in the afternoon/evening. In order for this type of program to be successful, the center must be staffed with someone who will be responsible for maintaining a program or schedule that may even extend to events such as weddings, services such as physical therapy, or activities such as embroidery and other crafts.

- The model that is being used at the senior center needs to be used as a model for the community center. The bulk of the time should be allocated for community use and the other 25% for other (non-residential) events.
- Another example of a successful model is the Danny Jones swimming pool where they host a variety of activities. It is rare that the entire pool is blocked out for one activity. They have swim team practice, swim lessons or water aerobics. They almost always have lanes that a person can use. They follow an equitable schedule.
- CAC member was concerned about Russelldale losing its community center for a more centralized facility.
- Project Manager: SCDOT is actively looking for property for affordable housing and community centers, and finding the property is the first step. If we build a facility like the one the CAC is describing, that is staffed all day, that has indoor classrooms, gymnasiums and those types of facilities, likely, we would only get one of those, and that's why we're looking for a bigger piece of property in the middle of all the communities to do that bigger facility. However, if we do that, SCDOT will probably look for smaller areas for pocket parks with things like basketball courts that would still be within the actual smaller communities. Russelldale is one of the tightest areas. There's one property that SCDOT is trying to purchase, but it is probably half an acre and the biggest piece of property in the center of the community that doesn't have anything on it. The work session packet probably includes some pictures where common areas are placed under the bridges, but that would be a last resort. We would rather have something that's not underneath an interstate bridge. However, as we work to get property, that's always an option we can look at as well. It's probably a last resort.
- Project Manager: If you know people that have property and are interested in selling it, for a specific purpose, let us know because that's a big hurdle for us to overcome. Residents might be willing to sell their property if they know what's going to happen on it, but they may wonder if they can trust SCDOT to do what they say they are going to do. Land is key to every issue that the CAC has discussed to this point. To build these types of larger community centers is probably the biggest logistic challenge that we're going to have going forward. The money is there to do enhancements in the community, but getting the land to do it is probably first and biggest hurdle.

What measures can be taken to increase the number of “eyes” on the street to help minimize crime in these areas?

- Well-lit streets – All common areas free of “dark spots”; Going above code for minimum requirements
- Private/public areas that are well-defined
- Areas that welcome people who are supposed to be there and deter people who are not supposed to be there
- Use of signage
- Boundaries don’t always need to be established with fences, but rather with more user-friendly landscaping
- Establishing proper physical and law-enforcement boundaries with police officers; Officers should approach residents differently within neighborhoods as compared with on main thoroughfares, such as Rivers Avenue
- Eliminating abandoned properties and overgrown lots

- Transparency of agreements with the community as they are being developed
- Identifying a courtesy officer that lives in apartment complexes or neighborhoods (perhaps incentivized with compensation or tax credits)
- Street cameras would deter crime
- CAC member made comment that North Charleston owns a significant number of lots and asked if those lots were being considered by SCDOT. Project Manager stated that SCDOT has to partner with local municipalities on community centers because management of those centers is outside of their scope. SCDOT can secure property, build infrastructure (roads, bridges, buildings, etc.), but the county or city will ultimately be required to take ownership of community center, including long-term maintenance.
- SCDOT will work with municipalities to develop an intergovernmental agreement that will outline many of the programs, services, and structural components the CAC wants to see in the community centers. SCDOT will provide seed money for municipalities to start the programs agreed upon in the agreement, but in order for them to receive the money they have to agree to both start and maintain programs. Those agreements can be written to include language that gives residents priority on the issues identified by the CAC. Ultimately, SCDOT must partner with municipalities for maintenance, operation, and long-term implementation.
- CAC member asked about transparency during the process of developing the agreement between SCDOT and municipalities so that community members are kept informed of the initial terms of the agreement as well as any subsequent changes that may take place.
- The project manager emphasized that in order to ensure transparency, it is going to take a lot of participation by the community and community organizations. The more organized communities and community associations are, the more leverage and power communities have in ensuring terms of intergovernmental agreements are enforced. Some of the expectations addressed by the CAC will be addressed as part of the environmental document, which serves as an additional enforcement tool. But, the effectiveness of community groups is based on that groups' ability to come together and hold government representatives accountable
- CAC member asked about Tim Scott's proposal for opportunity zones, potential federal grant money associated with that proposal, and whether the grant money has been considered by SCDOT for this project. The project manager indicated she didn't think the four communities in this program are currently in the opportunity zone, but SCDOT researched opportunity zones early in the process.
- CAC member spoke about apartment complexes that have courtesy officers who live in affected neighborhoods or apartment complexes and are compensated or incentivized by free or discounted housing. Courtesy officers would be responsible for the safety of designated areas and would deter people from hanging out in neighborhoods. An apartment will be given to the courtesy officer and he will be there to maintain order in neighborhoods.
- Street cameras in Downtown Charleston were referenced as an effective crime deterrent and were suggested as a possible resource for reducing crime in the affected communities. Placing cameras at corner lots was suggested.
- Community members have requested more street lights, but have been told that the current lights meet code. CAC member suggested that in some cases, the number of street lights installed should go beyond code. Another CAC member agreed and indicated that insufficient lighting on Russelldale

behind the car lot is also a problem. There is a light at the car lot, but further down the street, closer to her residence, there is no light.

- CAC member discussed how dark it is at the corner of Railroad and Harper. She called SCE&G to increase/improve lighting around her home, and she currently pays for two additional street lights. Another CAC member felt she should not have to pay more for proper lighting around her home.
- Project team member worked with CAC member to identify poorly lit areas on the map. CAC member indicated that high speed chases would often take place in the same area (identified on the map with the project team member) and end on the dark section of Russelldale Avenue because of poor lighting.
- CAC members suggested speed humps as a possible solution to speeding through neighborhoods. Project team member indicated there were different design options on speed humps that may be acceptable to residents but deter unwanted speeding in communities. Another CAC member indicated that no one should be against speed bumps when it relates to the safety of young people and seniors in a community.
- A CAC member mentioned that in addition to speeding being an issue and having a lack of speed bumps, there are also no sidewalks on Rebecca Street. A speeding study was conducted, but the final report indicated there wasn't enough evidence of speeding to have speed bumps installed.
- Stop signs at Railroad Avenue and Piedmont Avenue were requested and denied as well.
- CAC member referred back to the lighting issue and recommended "common sense" (no dead-heading) tree trimming to improve lighting. He also recommended "common sense," strategic placement of street lights so that lights are not blocked by trees.
- CAC member mentioned that the power company offers packages for additional lighting at \$3 per month. As it relates to installation of security cameras, not everyone can afford cameras, but perhaps community members can identify a company that would offer a discount, but anything would help in reducing crime.
- There is a large, dark, empty lot at the end of Good Street in Highland Terrace where people meet for undesirable and potentially criminal activities. A light should be installed in that area. CAC member indicated she has called police officers when she sees those activities, but they never respond. CAC member and Project Team member identified and marked location on the map.
- In Liberty Park and Highland Terrace, the problem is that most lots are 50 feet wide with lighting placed every 300 feet, so their area is essentially "black." The entire area needs to be revamped regarding the placement of lights.
- The Project Manager clarified the difference between pedestrian-scale lighting versus street lighting. Standard placement of street lights placed much farther apart because it is based on visibility. Pedestrian-scale lighting is lower-level lighting that will light everything. CAC member stated that as a lifelong resident and a senior citizen, the issue of lighting is a matter of personal and community protection.

What activities would you like to see in your neighborhood?

- Cross-cultural activities and educational workshops
- Health and wellness screening
- Historical programs, activities, and festivals that highlight and preserve history

- Impacts on children, leaving a legacy; “We want [to leave] a legacy that we were here,” and archive the things we were able to accomplish in our communities
- Harvest Church could be designated as a historical marker to capture the history, personal contributions, and changes in the landscape that have occurred; Resident at 2019 church yard sale brought year book that gave historical context, information on streets, A-Z, in the community; Project team member recommended collecting pictures from community members (“documentation beats conversation”)
 - Jazz mobile played music in the community during summer months
 - Various neighborhood associations (such as block or tennis associations) were in place during youth; Should be put in place again for neighborhood children to see how things used to be and how they should be (“this is how I am supposed to act,” “this is how I’m supposed to think about things that need to be done”); Dealing with the present, shaping the future
- Cross-cultural cohesion
- National Night Out
 - Was once held in Ferndale, but has been moved to Park Circle
 - Resource officers no longer provided for National Night Out if residents choose to host in Ferndale community
- Community Yard Sale (in vacant lot at front of neighborhood)

What measures can be taken to show a sense of ownership (public or private)?

- Signage (Designating property as private or public; directional)
- Dead end, “No drive-thru” signs
- Shrubs/landscaping (Wire fences are not necessary)
- Common areas in neighborhoods (to meet, walk dogs, etc.) with attractive aesthetics
- Community gardens
- Hold monthly neighborhood clean-up days (Neighborhood Sweeps)
- Adopt-a-street (engage neighbors)
- CAC member recommended all CAC members form a monthly Clean Sweep/Neighborhood Cleanup, engage other community members, and rotate efforts through the four affected communities
- Request the City pick up debris (for example sheetrock, shingles, etc.) quarterly; CAC member identified for project team member on the map where sheetrock has been left for an extended time on James Bell, James Bell, Jonah, and Dorothy Williams Streets were cited as common dumping locations for all types of debris that normal trash collection won’t pick up.
- CAC member indicated there was a similar problem at the end of Elder Street about 10 years ago, but she called and had a “No Dumping At Any Time” sign installed. The area looks much better. Project team member marked the area on the map.
- Request the County commit to one or two days per year for pick up of special materials/items being discarded.
- Project team member shared that in Richland County, some of the elected officials will routinely have district-wide clean up days where construction, demolition debris, hazardous paint (such as paint) and white goods (such as appliances) on the corner by a certain time on Friday and it will be picked up on

Saturday. Residents are given a 30-day notice. This pickup is for things that should not go into the municipal solid waste (landfill). So, it is recommended that the CAC and community members contact elected officials to leverage coordinated neighborhood cleanup activities.

Community Enhancement

What are your thoughts on having a single, larger, centrally-located replacement facility versus two smaller facilities?

- CAC member referenced conversation from CAC Meeting 5 in which the Project Team discussed a single replacement center and asked where the new facility would be relative to Russelldale and Highland Terrace residents.
- The Project Manager stated that SCDOT is considering a site that leverages several properties near Filbin Creek that are owned by the City of North Charleston. She is currently working to contact the owner of a piece of property in the middle of the area in consideration to determine their interest in selling the property to SCDOT. The property is located at Dorothy Williams and Elder Streets on property that extends back to the creek.
- CAC member asked, in terms of safety, if the expectation is for kids from Russelldale to walk from their home community to the proposed location for the new community center.
- Project Manager: If SCDOT builds a larger facility, similar to the senior center or the North Charleston gymnasium, a large piece of property will be required to build the facility. If the main building was built in the highland area and other features such as picnic tables, walking trails, etc. were placed on some of the other parcels, such as the one on Rebecca Street to do outdoor parks, playgrounds, etc., we'd have to build several of those features in the smaller communities. The Project Manager stressed that having a facility that is big enough to do everything in one location is not possible. And with a single facility, you won't be able to bring elements of the park (such as basketball) into each of the smaller communities. Currently, the Dorothy Williams and Elder Street property is the largest piece of land SCDOT has been able to locate. The benefit of leveraging the property owned by the City is it would reduce the impact on other property owners.
- CAC member asked if there were existing sidewalks in the areas being considered. Project Manager stated they would have to incorporate sidewalks and safe pedestrian access from other communities into the project plan. SCDOT cannot design sidewalks without addressing drainage.
- A Project Team member highlighted that the large piece of property on Elder Street doesn't provide network connectivity from Russelldale Avenue to Elder. So, an option is some type of pedestrian bridge at the end of April Avenue over Filbin Creek.
- Another CAC member asked why it is that residents don't see many sidewalks. Is that because of codes? Project Manager responded that it's likely because the affected communities are simply older neighborhoods. There are challenges associated with sidewalks because then I don't have enough room to maintain the lane widths. Drainage adds another layer of challenges. Accessing people's yards and determining setbacks presents another set of challenges, such as whether or not so much of their yards will be taken away that they will not be able to park. The units are small, don't have garages, and sidewalks may require parking in driveways. Funding, logistics (setbacks), and physical impacts and limitations (installing pipes) of installing sidewalks present significant challenges.

- SCDOT will figure it out. It may involve limiting staying on the current street and increasing access at the front of Filbin Creek.
- CAC member stated that sidewalks are important to safety and health benefit because it allows people to be more mobile.
- CAC member asked about “spacing,” placing pocket parks or amenities throughout smaller communities. The Project Manager stated that implementation will be determined by the land SCDOT is able to acquire. That is one of reasons why the CAC is so important to the process. SCDOT has mapped undeveloped properties that don’t have homes on them. What SCDOT doesn’t know is what land has homes that are abandoned. Those are harder to identify, so please let SCDOT know because we can add them to our mapping and try to reach out to property owners to see if they are willing to build. Ultimately, SCDOT will not displace residents to build a park.
- Project Team member directed the CAC to the overhead screen to show a map with green lines representing existing sidewalks and yellow lines representing proposed sidewalks. She also emphasized the timing on this CAC discussion being a good time because the City is working on their comprehensive plan, and they are taking comments from residents on where sidewalks should be placed.
- CAC member asked about sidewalks on James Bell with elevated curbs vs. Taylor street which has flat sidewalks. Many people park their cars on the flat sidewalks as if they are parking pads. Also, there are no bike trails. He uses curbed sidewalks in the community to ride his bike because it is safer. None of the streets, April Avenue, Russelldale, and Dorothy Williams, have sidewalks and they are dangerous areas. CAC member mentioned the need for safety or guard posts in those areas.
- Project Manager: SCDOT does not include sidewalks on a resurfacing job, but if there is a full reconstruction or reconfiguration, which is the case with some of the streets in this project, we would look at doing sidewalks as long as it makes sense. In this area, it would make sense because you have so many other sidewalks. If we’re doing a project in an area where there are no sidewalks, SCDOT will not build a half mile of sidewalk. The bus rapid transit project is going to add numerous pedestrian accommodations, so some of the issues being discussed here will overlap and be addressed through that project. Realistically, SCDOT will not be able to put sidewalks on every street in all four neighborhoods. But, we want to look at safe connections to the community centers and to transit stops on Rivers Avenue, and making sure we are selecting the best locations to make those connections.
- There are currently no proposed sidewalks in Russelldale.
- Project Team member summarized the high points with land limitations, larger facilities with smaller amenities (pocket parks) throughout communities, potentially building two larger, similar facilities on either side of I-526, and providing connectivity from the four communities to the community center.
- Project Manager asked the CAC to consider that staffing the facility or facilities is going to be another limitation (in addition to land acquisition). She urged the CAC to keep in mind the operating costs of the type of enhanced facility being discussed and the challenges that may be associated with building two of them. Two large facilities may be more difficult for the City to support. If you want it to be successful, it must be manageable long term.

- Based on CAC concerns expressed regarding lack of access to the current community center parks and playgrounds, pocket parks would be an option that would be open to the community all of the time.
- CAC member asked for clarification: If the CAC prefers a larger, centrally located center, would it be a community center or a City center?
 - Project Manager: Those types of stipulations would be included in an intergovernmental agreement to include issues like residents getting first priority to use the facility, even for paid programs such as childcare. At some point, she anticipates that SCDOT will bring the CAC together with the City to talk through the logistics of the agreement so that the CAC has an opportunity to voice their concerns directly to the City.
 - CAC member asked whether the terms of the intergovernmental agreement would go through the community council (CAC) long term. The Project Manager stressed that the decision for the CAC to stay together long term will be entirely up to CAC members. She stated that she would like to see the group stay together because it would be powerful and that SCDOT is going to stay with the group through the process. At some point, we will have a plan, and we would hope the CAC would stay together with SCDOT through the implementation phase of the plan to ensure the plan is carried out the way it is supposed to be carried out.
 - Project Manager also stressed that at some point, when SCDOT finishes the project (which could be 10 years from now), the County or the City will be required to implement a long term continuation of operation of these facilities and programs, and the CAC may choose to stay together to maintain oversight and feedback on how the facility is managed.
 - CAC member asked in order to ensure that residents remain a part of the decisions, how would you ensure that the representatives from the neighborhood are heard from? Who will ensure, for instance, that center staff will be hired from the community?
 - Project Manager stated that there will be an intergovernmental agreement, most likely with the City of North Charleston because this is their jurisdiction. The intergovernmental agreement will lay out the terms of how things will happen at the facility. SCDOT will build a specified list of structures, and at the end of the project, turn over ownership to the City. She suggested the CAC or some kind of community organization be maintained that will hold the County accountable. At that point, SCDOT will have no mechanism to monitor how the City manages the community center after the intergovernmental agreement is final.
- CAC member asked if the community can come together and voice their opinions. Project manager responded affirmatively.
- Project Manager: That is what the CAC is designed for. We will have open houses where we will bring in the rest of the community members to see what you come up with. When we bring the City of North Charleston to the table, your request can be presented to them and SCDOT will verify its part of the agreement in supporting the CAC. I think it's very important that they hear from the CAC and the community. We may be able to do an open house if the City is agreeable.
- CAC member asked if all of the communities would meet with the City in a joint meeting or as individual neighborhoods. After some discussion, the CAC agreed that it may be better to have a joint meeting because it would better support community cohesion and consistent feedback across communities with the City.

- Facilitator: It is important to understand the timeline, the process, and being involved in that process up front, because if you let certain milestones pass, then it's too late to come back after the fact to modify the agreement. That is the purpose of the CAC coming together. And that's one of the benefits of this type of meeting today because you're getting all these ideas on paper and in an organized way. While there are things that SCDOT will be able to manage, there are some things that the CAC will have to take the lead on, so timing is important.
- CAC member: On the subject of staffing, one person can staff each community center, but volunteers are needed from the neighborhood (which is what we want anyway) because you want all of the key stakeholders involved.
- CAC member prefers the term 'neighborhood center' as opposed to 'community center' because what may be common or accepted for one community may not be for another. She advocated for one large center with smaller common areas, that are close to the neighbors and that particular neighborhoods can work for. If the larger facility is spacious and easily accessible, let people with the expertise design a building that is for now and in the future. Let's not put ourselves in a small box and have a little community center like the one that we have presently. Let's go for neighborhood areas with bike paths, wheelchairs, and accessible sidewalks. All of these things are very critical to how we operate in the now and in the future. The CAC should consider diverse uses for the community center - broader-scale, forward-thinking, multifaceted. Make sure a qualified person (organization) is designing the building. It doesn't matter whether it's one large area or some smaller areas, as long as it's not a box. Everyone in the neighborhood should see a use for the center. That's most important. The staff hired for the center, along with volunteers, will manage scheduling with the City of North Charleston and community sports groups, because they will be the watchdogs.
- Project Team member directed CAC members to the mitigation packet (under community enhancement) to example pictures of requested community center enhancements (such as computers and Internet access) based on CAC feedback. Feedback was requested specifically regarding outdoor athletic equipment and pocket parks.
 - CAC member indicated that the Ferndale community has tried to get a picnic table and covered area (shelters) for cookouts, birthday parties, family reunions, etc.
 - Project team member suggested additional amenities such as shaded playgrounds, special needs playground equipment, benches, bike racks, lockers, outdoor drinking water fountains.
- CAC member stated that there is a need for advocacy training ("Advocacy 101 Workshop") because people don't know how to advocate for themselves. They need to know how to do that, and there is a process.

Session break for lunch

Community Preservation

Do you walk as a means of transportation or to access public transit? If not, why? What reasons are related to infrastructure needs?

- CAC member stated that her tenants walk to work, shopping, to the bank, etc. and that she fears for them because of the lack of streetlights and because there are areas that are wooded that they walk through such as Elder Avenue. This area belongs to the City and is not cleaned up, so there is trash and heavy debris.
- Project Team member asked what are some of the paths people are taking?
- CAC members identified the area on the map near Elder Avenue, James Bell, and Deacon Streets as having inadequate lighting and frequent issues with debris. This is particularly an issue at 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning when it is dark. There is a bus stop in the area, but the CAC member has picked tenants up due to safety concerns.
- Other streets identified as having lighting issues are Target, April, and Russelldale.
- CAC member stated that all lighting in Highland Terrace and Liberty Park is 300 feet apart.
- There is also a path that leads to World Overcomer's Church (*confirmed as Life Changers Covenant Ministries*). There was a gate installed, but the gate is broken. Some residents use that pathway to get to Rivers Avenue, to go to the store, or to the bus stop as a common path.
- CAC member suggested potentially having CARTA or a shuttlebus (with seats/not standing only) to transport neighborhood residents at least during the early morning and evening hours; CARTA covered bus shelters needed at stops such as Russelldale and Target Avenues/Ferndale. Accessibility for disabled people should be included in the considerations for providing covered shelters.
- The main streets to exit the Ferndale community are Piedmont and Railroad Avenues. There are currently no sidewalks on Railroad Avenue, it is dark at night, and it is very dangerous for pedestrians. Would love to see statistics on who has been injured on Railroad Avenue because it is dark. There is a drainage ditch on one side. Lights don't overlap at all. Piedmont has sidewalks.
- Railroad Avenue is a "drag strip."
- Covered areas are needed for children waiting for school buses. Children don't have individual stops so they congregate in large groups. They stand in the rain and cold.
- Project Manager: A number of enhancements related to shelters will be addressed under the Bus Rapid Transit project, but SCDOT will try to connect to or enhance the work done on that project.
- Pedestrian accommodations across Rivers Avenue are also an issue. The main foot traffic across Rivers Avenue: Railroad track at Highland Terrace, Taylor Street, James Bell, Target Street, Fuller, Rebecca Street, residents (veterans) crossing at Patriots Villa
 - Many Patriots Villa residents cannot walk well and have difficulty crossing Rivers Avenue
 - There was a pedestrian fatality last year; Another wheelchair-bound resident has been hit twice (once by a train)
- The back end of Ferndale beyond Jason does not have sidewalks
- Footpaths underneath I-526 – The City is planning a multi-use path along Filbin Creek. The information collected from the CAC about those areas will be provided to the City.
- From Fuller to the back of the neighborhood, there is no access to Rivers Avenue, so residents have to walk through unimproved and unsafe areas to get food and general shopping.

- Because of the way Ferndale is designed, would there be an access street in the back or would construction have to go through the neighborhood when the project starts? Concern about construction equipment in the neighborhood during the construction phase. Project Team member noted that the City will need to address concerns regarding the logistics of construction equipment in neighborhoods.
- Project Manager: Most of the time on interstate projects, construction crews access through the ramps. Oftentimes, they will fence off a lot of the construction zone and to access the surface street, they will come off a ramp. SCDOT would never go through a neighborhood street unless it was absolutely necessary because construction equipment can tear up roads and they have to be repaired. So SCDOT crews will likely access the site from Rivers Avenue or a ramp.
- Project Team member addressed another pedestrian location at east and west Deacon Street, under I-26. There is a footpath connecting the two streets that goes over the train tracks that goes to Highland Terrace. It is the property of the railroad, is overgrown, is and presents a safety concern. There have been serious issues with that area, including someone losing their life there. There is currently a path leading to Elder Street. CAC member asked if it is possible to create a barrier to stop people from taking Deacon to Rivers Avenue. People take chances jumping the tracks. The footpath should not be continuous. A fence runs from Taylor to James Bell and stops at the corner of Elder Street where there is a house. If someone continues on the path, it leads to a ditch with a 6-foot drop. Placing a barrier would eliminate access. Project Team member and CAC member identified the area on the map.

Where is stormwater runoff or standing water a problem in your neighborhood?

- Russelldale at the corner of Rebecca and Rivers Avenue (flooding after rain events)
- Liberty Park at the corner of James Bell and Taylor to Rivers Avenue; Yard flooding at first house on Taylor Street because they (the City) changed the drainage system so that it runs alongside the fence so the drain is constantly overflowing whenever there is an extended period of rain. CAC member says she has reported it, but nothing has been done to address it.
- The Woodbine Avenue area (with warehouses – *identified as Palmetto Heights*) has built up the property higher near the train tracks which has changed the flow of water, increased water flow and flooding on Taylor Street; from Taylor up to Elder Avenue. Project Team member marked this location on map. Drains are not being cleaned. CAC member speculates that water runs from Taylor Street properties onto James Bell which creates a drainage issue for them.
- Project Manager: Some streets are SCDOT streets, some are city streets. There is a maintenance request form on the SCDOT website (scdot.org) or you can call 855-GO-SCDOT. Don't call the local DOT office. The Department of Transportation does not know drains need cleaning unless residents tell them. Formal requests submitted online or through the telephone number provided are monitored by the Secretary and they have a designated turnaround time. Maintenance crews are graded on response times. Drainage issues get higher priority than signage issues.
- In Ferndale, between Graham and Emden Streets, there is a two-story brick house; large lot flanked by large ditch with poor drainage (marked on map).
- Harper and Railroad; On Harper Street, there is a lot of open space in front of the yards that is always muddy because of standing water.
- CAC member identified a parcel next to the L-shaped parcel that has been open for 20 years.

What do you see as barrier(s) to “aging in place” in your neighborhood?

- A lot of landlords are taking their properties off Section 8 designation, so a lot of people have had to move out of the neighborhood.
- CAC member listed the following as challenges: Home repairs, transportation (access to transit), meals, home health, expenses, lawn maintenance, and ramps. If the aging population is low-income, they cannot afford most of these items.
 - Sidewalk access
 - Inadequate services for seniors
 - Neighborhood centers
 - Meals on wheels (limited service)
 - Residents may not know the requirements to qualify for the program
 - More access to resources (Community/Senior Center)
 - Free health screenings
 - CAC member cited home maintenance and repair as the biggest challenge for seniors
 - There were programs in place at one time several years ago to assist with upkeep of homes. When you visit the homes of elderly people, sometimes you see that something needs to be fixed, but they can't afford to have it fixed. Homes begin to decline, and people do not even realize it unless they are visiting elderly neighbors.
 - Block grants are available to assist with home repairs. CAC member indicated she knows people who have applied for but did not receive the grants and are living with other people because they cannot afford repairs; asked for the guidelines.
 - Another CAC member suggested contacting the City Council representative.
- CAC member revisited an earlier comment, stating that seniors don't know how to advocate for themselves. He indicated he'd visited seniors that haven't had electricity for months or are without water or don't have a bathtub because they don't know how to get it fixed. They may not have the financial means for home repairs. Many people are disconnected from family. They don't have resources nor the educational level, so having a “third space” for them to get a break from their house and their living conditions and to understand what financial resources are available to them would be beneficial.
- CAC member has spoken to the City on behalf of several people, because they do have block grants, but all of the funding goes to the south side of North Charleston. There is supposed to be funding available to repair roofs, but Metanoia receives a lot of the money which stays in the south side of North Charleston. The north end residents may receive funds, but it is like going through a “round robin” to receive the funds.
- There is someone at the senior center who comes in to talk with seniors about Medicare and additional resources available to them. For example, some people need in-home care, but they don't know those resources exist. Providing seminars and workshops would be beneficial. There are grants available to seniors. She has worked with people who have received grants. There are plenty of resources, we just have to know where they are and how to access them.
- CAC member referred back to the role of the community center staff. The staff at the community center should serve as a resource who can interpret the needs of the senior community; volunteers should also be enlisted. Staff person should live in the community, inform the senior community about grants and senior citizen resources, and provide caregiver relief at no cost to the senior citizen. Hired community

center staff have to be able to envision what is needed for that community and point the neighborhood in the direction to access resources, and to follow-up consistently. Follow up is very important.

- Community Liaison: The window of opportunity for grants is narrow; you have to get in, qualify for the grant, and have all of your documentation. If you don't do that, you're not going to get the grant. There are grants out there, but they are so small and the window to apply is so tight, and the requirements are very strict.
- Community Liaison: There are several local colleges: The Citadel, Charleston Southern, Trident Tech, and MUSC. They all have nursing schools. Why not get some kind of an agreement with them in which some of the nursing students can come out and visit seniors to do blood pressure checks and see what's going on in the house? They also have students who study nutrition and social studies. We should partner with local colleges to develop a program that will allow students to earn class credits to do senior health checks quarterly. As a part of their visit, they can also include in-home inspections to document things like bathroom floors that are falling in or seniors who may not have running water. This type program for senior/graduate students would benefit both students and seniors (elderly).
- CAC Member: Grants are often community grants or community partnerships that have resources that can support many of the issues being discussed without having to totally rely on grants. During the 2015 Thousand-Year flood, I developed relationships with several companies. Georgia Pacific and two other companies agreed to bring tractor trailer loads of sheet rock and roofing supplies to repair damaged roofs, but I had nowhere to store the materials. I couldn't store the materials outside of the church building, and the City would not assist in finding a location to store the materials. And we had people lined up to provide labor for repairs. So, there are a lot of resources out there, but we have to find a way to collaborate and work together.
- CAC Member: Regarding the senior population, many of them don't have transportation. They spend a lot of money on Uber and cabs because they can't walk to the bus stop. Sometimes they make a decision not to take their medicine or not paying a bill because they need to get to the grocery store. There is an increased expense for locations like Ferndale and Russelldale in the back, because they do not have easy access to buses. They don't feel safe walking to the bus stop by themselves.
- CAC Member: Even if you applied for Teleride, you are charged for each trip. They pick you up and drop you off, but seniors cannot afford the service. If a person goes to the doctor on Monday, the grocery store on Tuesday, and to do laundry on Friday, that's \$15 per week which is outside of their budget.
- Facilitator revisited the Thousand-Year flood discussion, curious about the efforts and outcomes associated with a CAC member coordinating efforts to obtain materials, secure laborers, and provide temporary lodging to volunteers willing to assist the community in recovery after a natural disaster. CAC member was asked: *What would have been a solution outside of relying on the city [to store donated items]?* His response was, "Well, mine was just finding places like a warehouse that would allow me to hold use a space for a brief period because what would happen is I formed relationships with organizations outside of South Carolina. There were people...college groups, church groups that... would be willing to come here as a mission trip to help work on houses. And I got all the supplies...They lived in our building...We asked [the community center] could we use the gym, because the gym had showers. They wouldn't allow us to use it because they had basketball... So...we brought a shower trailer outside our church building, and we have people living in our building a week after we come in...electricians, roofers and we replaced most of the houses in Pepper Hill. I think we got 27 houses, gutting them out...insulation, everything and all the supplies were donated. Almost \$700,000 worth of stuff was

donated and services, and they kept telling us... 'we'll try to get this building. We'll try to get this.' And so we had, you know, we had everything we needed. We just can't get in your report. Then I find out later we were messing up the FEMA numbers because we're doing all this stuff for free and they couldn't get the money for it because we were doing it for free."

- Community Liaison asked "Have you ever thought about getting a media partner where you have someone who has access to the airwaves that will say, 'we've got this donated, we've got this donated, but we need a warehouse?'" She suggested the church think about doing something like that and extended an offer of support their efforts.
- Facilitator clarified the reason for the question being the fact they live in Charleston, that will not be the last time the community will face inclement weather that sets the community back.
- CAC member revisited the word *advocacy* and noted that CAC members seem to be knowledgeable about a lot of different things. He reiterated that this group has the potential to advocate for whole area (all four communities) in terms of speaking to government representatives. Another CAC member agreed and added that the CAC could also promote networking. Using the example of the flood and the fact that the Charleston area experiences annual storms starting in June, she emphasized that people from different neighborhoods may have common needs, as well as personal issues, but if communities continue and grow the current (CAC) brokerage from various neighborhoods they know who has different levels of expertise, knowledge, and skills from each neighborhood to best support each other. This will support community cohesion.

Community Revitalization

What do you see as the top priority for revitalization in your neighborhood and why?

- CAC Member: Removing and renovating boarded homes and to limit the amount of time boarded homes can be there. Currently, boarded homes can remain intact indefinitely as long as they meet criteria which is an issue, particularly if you live next door to a boarded home.
- CAC Member: I have housing in this area: Charleston, North Charleston and now it's moving on towards Dorchester County, Berkeley County. We're in desperate need of adequate housing for families moving in to take on jobs with the different industries coming into the area. Based on available vacancies, I recommend providing single rental units as opposed to multi-family dwellings like apartments or condos at this time, unless it's very tastefully done...mobile and manufactured homes, like-wise. Another concern was regarding small businesses in which the CAC member expressed a desire to see neighborhoods with a small, dedicated businesses. She would like to see small businesses that do not raise prices unnecessarily (price gauge) community members, but rather are vested in that particular neighborhood to provide for groups like the elderly who cannot always get to big grocery stores to buy fresh foods and other items. She would also love to see businesses like barbershops and beauty shops, and all types of services.
- In some parts of Columbia, SC there are developments in some communities where small business owners have a storefront on the bottom and their residence upstairs. Usually the owner may have a barber shop.
- CAC member expressed a specific concern with a particular business located at James Bell and Rivers. The owner is not suspected of living in the area, but they have a huge business. Their business traffic

spills over into the streets and people have to allow them to finish their business before you can pass through. If there is fire truck or some emergency vehicle, they don't have to go back out and go around to Taylor Street or Target Street, to get into the neighborhood. That's not fair to the residents in that neighborhood. And I think if one elderly person is sick, there should be an entrance for an emergency vehicle to come through and not have to go around.

What types of barriers need to be overcome to achieve revitalization without inducing gentrification?

- CAC member asked how Russelldale become light industrial
 - The City proposed a plan to rezone the area. It's part of the 10-year plan. Another CAC member mentioned that the public has until March 31st to call about rezoning, so there's still time for people from the Russelldale community to protest.
- Community Liaison stressed that they have held five hearings and emphasized that is why the community office is here, so that people can ask questions. We know two years from now people will say 'I didn't even know you were doing this.' It was publicized on television, radio, in papers - that they were having these five hearings. The last one was last week. We don't want anybody to come up with 2022 say that I don't know anything about this.
- Project Team member stated that a lot of times, if you couple things like improved community centers, sidewalks, and well-lit streets with the pressure that property owners are getting from developers, "let me come in and purchase your land." A developer first purchases a street, then a block, and then a corner before you know it that area is gentrifying. It is transitioning. When government agencies start putting in additional facilities, the concern is that it is going to "tip the needle" towards the gentrification process. So, how do we make sure that we developed this mitigation plan that isn't going to create some other issues afterwards? I think some of the things that we've identified, as far as making sure that the community centers are for the neighborhoods they served, that's a big one - keeping the residence as the main recipients of the amenities.
- Community Liaison stated that if you don't go to the City Hall meetings, you don't go to the planning meetings, you don't go to the zoning meetings, you're not going to hear anything. So, you can't wait for someone to bring you the message. They meet every third Thursday in the month and you've got to be vigilant and you need to go to see democracy at work. Neighborhoods that care about their neighborhoods, they come in droves and they're telling the city 'No, we're not going for it.' And they get heard because they come in numbers, and we're going to have to invest in that system in order to know what's happening to your neighborhoods. There's just no way around it. And you can't wait for me to tell you. There's a schedule out there and you need to look at that schedule and be at those meetings.
- Project Team member stated that you may also just want to be aware of what's happening in other neighborhoods and provide support because those people may come back and support you when you need advocates.
- Community Liaison stated that all communities can work together.
- Facilitator stressed how important it is to have cross generational engagement. The CAC is all here, fighting the good fight every meeting, but although this group may be able to give a little more time than people with young families, the CAC has to figure out which people in the community have time to commit, at every generational stage, because that's the only to achieve sustainable advocacy. The CAC needs to have a succession plan in place with young people. You will be the group to educate them. Like

it or not, you're here. You're getting all of the information. It's up to you to carry that information back and educate other people about some of these issues. You've got to get people across generations onboard with you, because some of the issues that you guys were talking about extend far beyond the SCDOT project.

- CAC member spoke about the importance of the history of all of the communities. It is important to research the history for each community and place it in the planned community center.
- CAC member addressed a question that was skipped in Section 7c (Community Preservation): **Is speeding a persistent issue anywhere in your neighborhood?**
- Railroad & Piedmont
- Rebecca Street/Russelldale
- Taylor Street & Elder (4-way stop sign; CAC recommends speed humps)
- Willis Drive/Rebecca (children's bus stop)

Summary and Next Steps

- The Project Team will compile all of the feedback and present a summary at CAC Meeting #7.
- CAC Meeting # 7 will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2020 and the agenda will include an update on the mitigation plan development and providing available details, gathering additional information at that time on potential housing.
- Informational workshops scheduled will be held on Saturday, March 21st. Please let the community office know if you would like more flyers.
 - We're also working at some of the locations where we have either internal or external information boxes where these flyers or any project-related flyers are being housed or distributed or can be collected. If you have places that you would like to see them added, please let us know because we track it to make sure we're meeting the needs of the community. We recognize that not everybody that lives in the area commutes in the area all the time. So if there are other places that you know residents are going or even within the community, let us know. If there are times when you feel that the office can be a space for you to convene a moderately sized group, if you need a space to have a conversation, particularly with your neighbors, and you want to get more feedback from them in a place where they're comfortable, the office is available for you to use the space and have conversations that are going to be beneficial to you and the group.
- **Informational Workshops, Saturday, March 21, 2020**
- **CAC Meeting #7 scheduled for April 18, 2020, 10 AM – 1 PM**

Recommendations:

The Facilitator asked a follow-up question to Reverend Johnson's experience during the Thousand-year flood out of curiosity for how their communities dealt with resiliency during the floods. Within the context of social vulnerability and the social vulnerability index, it may be beneficial to all stakeholders (the four communities, SCDOT, the City of North Charleston, etc.) to build those considerations into the mitigation plan via the design of the facility and the capability of the center to convert into an emergency shelter in the event of natural disasters. This would strengthen the supporting narrative of community cohesion and

community preservation through tangible community center systems and features that proactively address social vulnerability.

| COMMUNITY COHESION |
|---|
| <p><i>Limited Use of Community Center for community children</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ferndale – residents not allowed to use the community center gym - Current Ferndale Community Center used as “City” center - Community children should have access to the community center/limited use based on basketball/tournament season - Smaller facility in the back of neighborhood should be considered - Russelldale faces similar challenges to Ferndale with the exception of basketball tournaments - Community center staff concerned about liability associated with “community kids,” “mixing with scheduled tournament events and practices - Center should keep kids off the streets - Focus should be on children first - 90% of current center use by outside people and activities - Senior center operations should be used as model for the current/proposed community center(s) - Development of an “equitable schedule” |
| <p><i>General Limitations of Current Community Center</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ferndale Community Center – not staffed, not staffed by community, not geared toward community, not child centered - Liberty Park/Highland Terrace – Need a staffed, “working” center with scheduled activities that engages the community |
| <p><i>Potential/Desired Use of Community Center</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To hold meetings with government and community representatives - To congregate with other community members - Evacuation shelter, particularly for seniors and the disabled - Cross-cultural activities - National Night Out - Historical programs/archives that highlight/preserve history |
| <p><i>Benefits of the Community Center to the Affected Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide employment opportunities specifically for residents; increased respect of adult center staff by community youth - A place to learn more about neighbors - Cross-cultural cohesion – impacts on children; leaving a legacy |
| <p><i>Historical (past) uses for community centers/meeting spaces in the affected communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lunch programs for youth - Jazz mobile - Block association - Tennis association |
| <p><i>Neighborhood activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community yard sale (in vacant lot in front of neighborhood) |

COMMUNITY COHESION*Crime*

- Well-lit streets; going above code for minimum requirements for spacing of street lights
- Private/public areas are well-defined
 - o Signage
 - o Fencing should not be first choice; geographic boundaries should be user-friendly
 - o Proper law enforcement/ police understanding enforcement boundaries
- Eliminating abandoned properties/overgrown lots
- Designated courtesy officer who lives in the community or apartment complex (provide compensation, tax credits)
- Street cameras
- Practical tree-trimming (to unblock existing street lights)
- Additional street lights (nominal cost; discount/reduced price package)
 - o Install light at the end of Dark Street (Good St)
 - o Pedestrian-scale (lower-level) lighting vs. Street lights (spaced every 300 feet)

Speeding and General Safety

- Installation of speed humps
- Installing stop sign at Piedmont

Sense of Ownership

- Signage (Directional)
- Shrubs/landscaping
- Common areas/informal designations
- Community garden
- Monthly neighborhood sleeps
 - o CAC members lead rotating neighborhood sweep (between 4 communities)
 - o Adopt-a-highway (engage neighbors)
- Quarterly debris cleaning (City of Charleston)
- County pick-up once or twice a year for special waste (appliances, paint, etc.)

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT

- Pedestrian bridge to help children avoid traffic
- Lot spacing will depend on specific land acquisition
- Need for advocacy (Advocacy Workshop 101 suggested)

Sidewalks

- Concerns about walkability for children to the proposed community center
- Benefits of sidewalk installation: increased drainage and safety
- Challenges associated with sidewalk installation: achieving proper drainage and infrastructure challenges
- Russelldale – uneven, non-existent sidewalks; discrepancies noted between sidewalks on maps and actual sidewalk locations

Community Center

- Single, centrally-located facility vs. two smaller facilities
 - o Limitations related to two facilities: staffing and land acquisition
- Consider pocket parks, covered areas, grills

COMMUNITY COHESION

- Residents' first choice options (amenities) should be included in the intergovernmental agreement; CAC input in the intergovernmental agreement with the City of North Charleston
- Providing connectivity to the community center
- Staffing and volunteers (community buy-in)
- "Neighborhood" center vs. community center (CAC does not want a box design)
 - o Broad-scale, diverse use, forward-thinking, multi-faceted
- Staffing should be qualified to run the center

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION

- Tenants as pedestrians – safety issues related to poor lighting, walking to bus stop, trash, debris (Elder/James Bell)
- CARTA/shuttle bus (with seats) to transport residents, morning and evening; bus shelters
- Piedmont and Railroad Avenues (no sidewalk currently)
 - o Poor lighting drainage issues
- Railroad Avenue used as drag strip
- Covered areas for school bus stops
- Bus shelter needed at Russelldale Avenue; no covered bus stops currently
- Pedestrian accommodations over/across Rivers Avenue; safety issues for veterans crossing at Patriots Villa across Rivers Avenue
- Importance of safe, practical footpaths
- Safety for bike riders
- Construction traffic in neighborhoods during the construction stage
- Standing water
 - o Russelldale – Rebecca and Rivers
 - o Liberty Park – James Bell and Taylor
 - o Harper and Railroad
 - o Submit maintenance request to scdot.org or call 855-GO-SCDOT
- Aging in place
 - o Landlords taking homes off Section 8
 - o Home repairs
 - Community block grants; narrow window of opportunity
 - o Lack of ramps/inaccessibility
 - o Meals/food security
 - o Inadequate services (Community center, health screening)
 - Community center staff should serve as a resource and follow-up
 - o Advocacy and self-advocacy – educational and financial resources
 - o Limited access to affordable transportation
 - o Potential partnerships with local college nursing programs to develop health and wellness program for senior residents (win-win scenario)
- CAC as advocates for community residents; networking
- Speeding
 - o Railroad/Piedmont
 - o Russelldale
 - o Taylor Street (4-way stop)
 - o Willis/Rebecca

| |
|--|
| COMMUNITY COHESION |
| |
| REVITALIZATION |
| - Remove or renovated boarded homes |
| - Prefer single-family rental units to multi-family units/mobile homes/modular |
| - Prefer small businesses vested in the community |
| - Avoiding gentrification |
| - Including history in community center |

Name: _____



Community Advisory Council
CAC Meeting #7

April 18, 2020

How to Join the Meeting!

- *Reference your Adobe Connect Quick Start Guide on the following page*
- Call: **1-800-753-1965**
- Enter Access Number: **7236718**

Agenda

- Welcome
- Administrative Items
- 'Open Mic' Session
- Results from Mitigation Work Session: Review & Discussion
- Replacement Recreational Facilities Discussion
- Replacement Housing Discussion
- Outreach Update
- Summary & Next Steps

Administrative Items

- Technology check
- Review virtual meeting etiquette
- Confirm CAC members have all meeting materials
 - Meeting packet
 - Minutes from CAC Meeting No. 6
- Approve minutes for CAC Meeting Nos. 5 and 6



LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

ADOBE CONNECT Quick Start Guide

1

RUN CONNECTION TEST PRIOR TO MEETING

We recommend that you test your computer prior to attending the meeting. You can do so by visiting:

http://admin.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm

2

JOIN THE MEETING

You should have received an email invitation with meeting access information. When the meeting time arrives, click on the link or enter the URL into your browser. The meeting login screen will appear. Choose *Enter as a Guest*, type in your first and last name, and click *Enter Room*. The meeting room interface will appear once the meeting begins.

3

MEETING AUDIO

When the *Connect My Audio* window pops up after joining the meeting, select *Dial-in to the meeting via phone*. The dial-in information is as follows:

Phone Number: 1-800-753-1965

Access Number: 7236718

Note: Please keep your phone muted at all times unless speaking.

4

CHANGE STATUS

Within the meeting, you can change your status to provide feedback. To change your status, click the arrow on the *Status Options* dropdown list on the *Application Bar*. Here you can select from *Raise Hand*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, *Step Away*, *Applause*, etc.

5

CHAT

To send a message to everyone, simply type your message in the chat pod and hit enter or click the send icon.

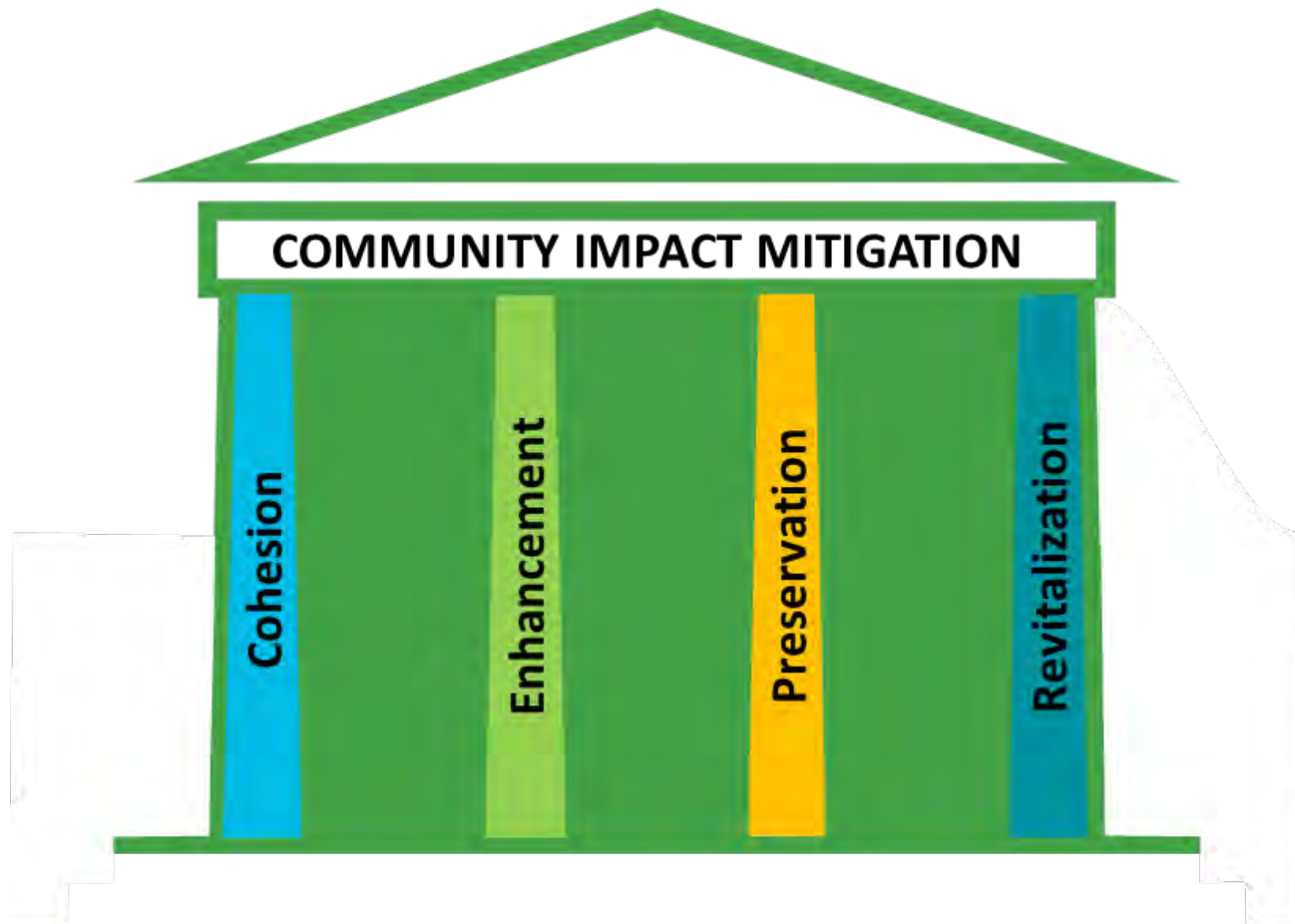
Open Mic



Outside of mitigation measures (which we'll be discussing later in the meeting), are there other items you would like to bring up with the CAC or project team?

Did you speak to any neighbors or residents who had additional comments for the project team?

CAC Community Impact Mitigation: Overview



Community Cohesion

- FOCUS AREAS: Actions that strengthen neighborhood connections



Community Enhancement

- FOCUS AREAS: Community center and recreational facility replacement



Community Preservation

- FOCUS AREAS: Infrastructure needs



Community Revitalization

- FOCUS AREAS: Replacement housing and employment/economic opportunities

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Cohesion

- FOCUS AREAS: Actions that strengthen neighborhood connections

MITIGATION WORK SESSION QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

“What do you see as resources that are currently lacking that would improve community cohesion?”

“What do you see as resources that are currently lacking that would improve community cohesion?”

Do you see use for a community center to serve as a hub for the distribution of water or related disaster-relief activities?

What measures can be taken to increase the number of “eyes” on the street to help minimize crime in these areas?

What activities would you like to see in your neighborhood?

What measures can be taken to show a sense of ownership (public or private)?

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Cohesion

- FOCUS AREAS: Actions that strengthen neighborhood connections

More access to community center for community children

- As example, Ferndale residents not allowed to use the community center gym
- Current Ferndale Community Center used as “City” center
- Community children should have access to the community center/limited use based on basketball/tournament season
- Smaller facility at the opposite end of the neighborhood should be considered
- Russelldale faces similar challenges to Ferndale with the exception of basketball tournaments
- Community center staff concerned about liability associated with “community kids,” “mixing with scheduled tournament events and practices
- Center should be focused on keeping kids off the streets
- Focus should be on children first
- 90% of the Ferndale center’s use by outside people and activities
- Senior center operations should be used as model for the current/proposed community center(s)
- Development of an “equitable schedule”

Address general limitations of current community center

- Ferndale Community Center – not staffed, not staffed by community, not geared toward community, not child centered
- Liberty Park/Highland Terrace – Need a staffed, “working” center with scheduled activities that engage the community

Desired benefits of the community center to the community it serves

- Provide employment opportunities specifically for residents; Increased respect of adult center staff by community youth
- A place to learn more about neighbors
- Cross-cultural cohesion – impacts on children; leaving a legacy

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Cohesion

- FOCUS AREAS: Actions that strengthen neighborhood connections

Potential/Desired Use of Community Center

- To hold meetings with government and community representatives
- To congregate with other community members
- Evacuation shelter, particularly for seniors and the disabled
- Cross-cultural activities
- National Night Out
- Historical programs/archives that highlight/preserve history

Historical (past) uses for community centers/meeting spaces

- Lunch programs for youth (USDA Summer Feeding Program)
- Jazz mobile
- Block association
- Tennis association

Neighborhood activities

- Community yard sale (in vacant lot in front of neighborhood)

Crime Prevention

- Well-lit streets; going above code for minimum requirements for spacing of streetlights
- Private/public areas are well-defined
 - Fencing should not be first choice; geographic boundaries should be user-friendly, possibly naturescape-based; signage installed
 - Proper law enforcement/ police understanding enforcement boundaries
- Eliminating abandoned properties/overgrown lots
- Designated courtesy officer who lives in the community or apartment complex (provide compensation, tax credits)
- Street cameras installed
- Practical tree-trimming (to unblock existing streetlights)
- Additional streetlights (nominal cost; discount/reduced price package)
 - Install light at the end of Dark Street (Good St)
 - Pedestrian-scale (lower-level) lighting vs. Street lights (spaced every 300 feet)

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Cohesion

- FOCUS AREAS: Actions that strengthen neighborhood connections

Sense of Ownership

- Signage (Directional)
- Shrubs/landscaping
- Common areas/informal designations
- Community garden
- Monthly Clean Sweep/Neighborhood Cleanup
 - CAC members lead rotating neighborhood sweep (between 4 communities)
 - Adopt-a-highway (engage neighbors)
- Quarterly debris cleaning (City of North Charleston)
- Elected City or County Officials to sponsor pick-up once or twice a year for special waste (appliances, paint, etc.)

Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for community cohesion that are not listed here?

Mitigation Workshop Results

Community Enhancement

- FOCUS AREAS: Community center and recreational facility replacement

MITIGATION WORK SESSION QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

Based on the preliminary mapping of potential locations for replacement facilities, what are your thoughts on locations that would be most optimal for neighborhood residents?

What are your thoughts on having a single, larger, centrally-located replacement facility versus two smaller facilities? How would the location of the replacement facility, or facilities, affect your thoughts on this idea?

What do you see as outdoor resources that are currently lacking or could be improved at local community centers?

What do you see as resources for after-school programs, youth/young adults, and seniors that are currently lacking or could be improved at local community centers?

What are your thoughts on having a single, larger, centrally-located replacement facility versus two smaller facilities?

Mitigation Workshop Results

Community Enhancement

- FOCUS AREAS: Community center and recreational facility replacement

Sidewalks

- Concerns about walkability for children to the proposed community center
- Pedestrian bridge across Filbin Creek to help children avoid traffic
- Benefits of sidewalk installation: increased drainage and safety
- Challenges associated with sidewalk installation: achieving proper drainage and infrastructure challenges
- Russelldale – uneven, non-existent sidewalks; discrepancies noted between sidewalks on maps and actual sidewalk locations

Community Center (also reference feedback under “community cohesion”)

- Single, centrally-located facility vs. two smaller facilities
- Limitations related to two facilities: staffing and land acquisition
- Consider pocket parks, covered areas, grills
- Residents’ first choice options (amenities) should be included in the intergovernmental agreement; CAC request for input in the intergovernmental agreement with the City of North Charleston
- Provide bike/pedestrian connectivity to the community center
- Staffing and volunteers (community buy-in)
- “Neighborhood” center vs. community center (CAC does not want a box design)
- Broad-scale, diverse use, forward-thinking, multi-faceted
- Staffing should be qualified to run the center
- Staff should focus on providing activities and resources that meet the needs of the communities

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Enhancement

- FOCUS AREAS: Community center and recreational facility replacement

Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for community enhancement that are not listed here?

Mitigation Workshop Results

Community Preservation

- FOCUS AREAS: Infrastructure needs

MITIGATION WORK SESSION QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

*Do you walk as a means of transportation or to access public transit?
If not, why? What reasons are related to infrastructure needs?*

*If you do walk for transportation means, where do you walk?
What infrastructure needs like sidewalks, sidewalk improvements,
streetlights, bus stops, and bus stop locations do you see?*

*Where do you frequently see people walking?
Do you see seniors and/or children walking? Where?*

Is speeding a persistent issue anywhere in your neighborhood?

*Where is stormwater runoff or standing water
a problem in your neighborhood?*

*Are there areas that frequently flood during large storms
or days of heavy rainfall?*

*Do you see other stormwater/floodplain or open space-related needs
that would help residents prepare for and recover from severe weather?*

Are there specific locations you would suggest for improvement?

*What do you see as barrier(s) to “aging in place” in your neighborhood?
Of these barriers, which ones can be addressed by infrastructure
improvements like sidewalks and access to transit?*

Mitigation Workshop Results

Community Preservation

- FOCUS AREAS: Infrastructure needs

Barriers and recommendations related to walking and biking

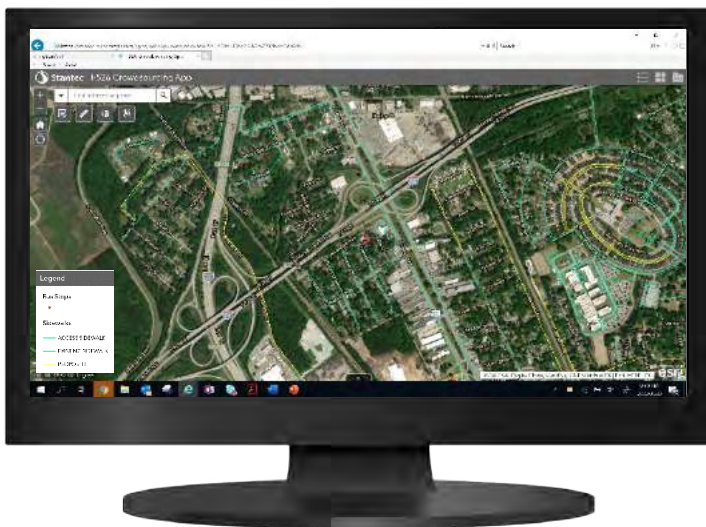
- Facilities that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Safety issues related to poor lighting, walking to bus stop, trash, debris (Elder/James Bell)
- Piedmont and Railroad Avenues (no sidewalk currently)
 - Poor lighting; drainage issues
- Railroad Avenue used as drag strip
- Pedestrian accommodations over/across Rivers Avenue; safety issues for veterans crossing at Patriots Villa across Rivers Avenue
- Importance of safe, practical footpaths
- Safety for bike riders

Flooding/Stormwater Management

- Standing water
 - Russelldale – Rebecca and Rivers
 - Liberty Park – James Bell and Taylor
 - Harper and Railroad

Speeding

- Railroad/Piedmont
- Russelldale
- Taylor Street (4-way stop)
- Willis/Rebecca



Your feedback from the mapping activity during the Mitigation Work Session was digitized in an online viewer.

See Page 17 for instructions on how to access and leave new comments.

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Preservation

- FOCUS AREAS: Infrastructure needs

Barriers and recommendations related to transit and school buses

- CARTA/shuttle bus with enough frequency to transport residents, morning and evening
- No covered bus shelters
- Covered bus shelters with seats recommended along Rivers Avenue
- Covered areas for school bus stops

Traffic Calming and General Safety

- Installation of speed humps
- Installing stop sign at Piedmont
- School bus stop safety

Aging in place

- Landlords taking homes off Section 8
- Home repairs
 - Community block grants; narrow window of opportunity
- Lack of ramps/inaccessibility
- Meals/food security
- Inadequate services (Community center, health screening)
 - Community center staff should serve as a resource and follow-up
- Advocacy and self-advocacy – educational and financial resources
- Limited access to affordable transportation
- Potential partnerships with local college nursing programs to implement periodic health screenings

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Preservation

- FOCUS AREAS: Infrastructure needs

Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for community preservation that are not listed here?

Online GIS Viewer

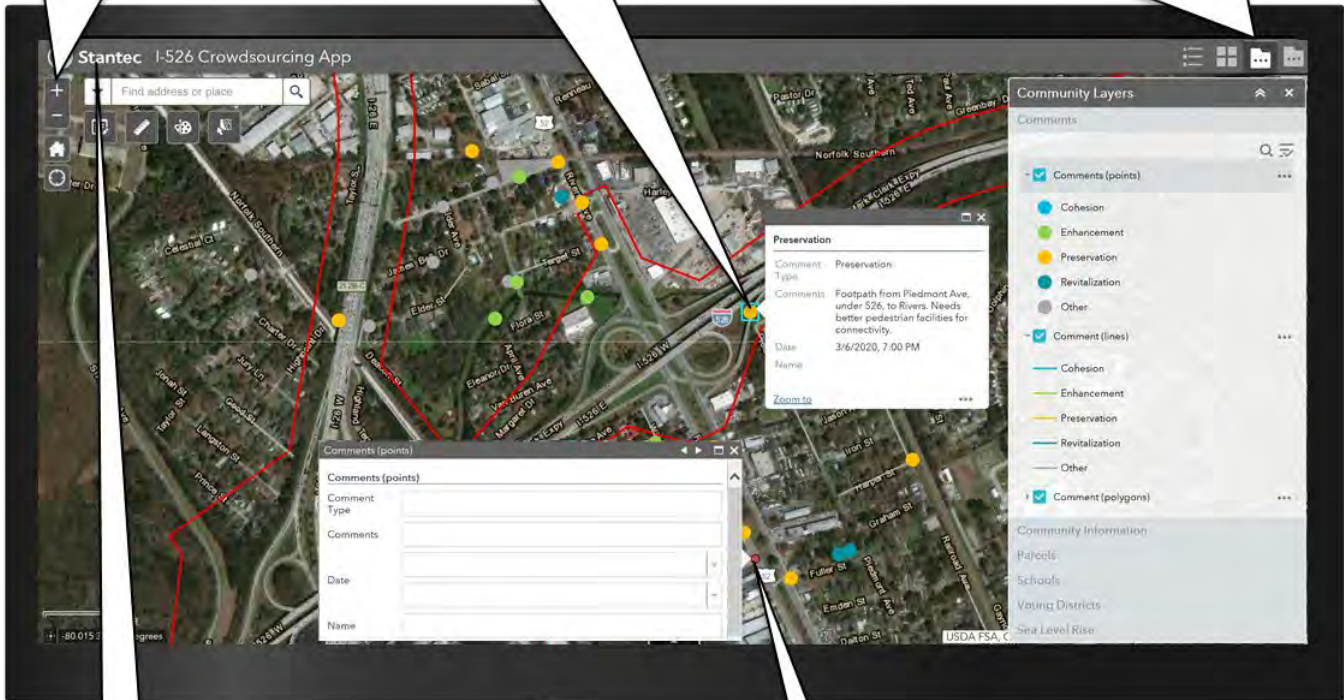
You can use the project online viewer to review CAC input on specific infrastructure needs.

1) Click [here](#) and enter username: **1784_stantec** and password: **Stantec!784**

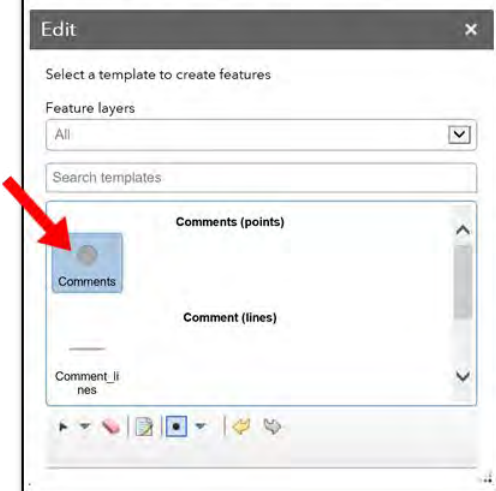
3) Zoom in and out with + and - buttons

4) Click any icon to see associated comments

2) Click "Community Layers" to see CAC comments color-coded by mitigation pillar



5) To leave new comments, click on "Edit" then "Comments"



6) Click on the map where you want to add your comment and fill out the pop-up menu (see below) then click "Close" to save your comment.

The screenshot shows the "Comments (points)" pop-up form. It has a title bar "Comments (points)" and a close button. The form contains several input fields with red placeholder text: "Comment Type" with "ADD MITIGATION PILLAR", "Comments" with "TYPE YOUR COMMENT HERE", "Date" with "ADD DATE", and "Name" with "ADD NAME". At the bottom right, there are "Delete" and "Close" buttons.

Mitigation Workshop Results

Community Revitalization

- FOCUS AREAS: Replacement housing and employment/economic opportunities

MITIGATION WORK SESSION QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS

What do you see as the top priority for revitalization in your neighborhood and why?

What types of barriers need to be overcome to achieve revitalization without inducing gentrification?

Are there details that could be added to make these needs more specific to your neighborhood?

Improved neighborhood aesthetics

- Remove or renovated boarded homes
- Eliminate barriers related to obtaining permits/approvals for repairs to homes occupied by residents with Heirs issues (new roofs, etc.) *(via public input Nov. 2019)*

Type of replacement housing

- Prefer single-family rental units, not multi-family units/mobile homes/modular
- Lot spacing will depend on specific land acquisition

Economic revitalization

- Prefer small businesses vested in the community values

Social/cultural preservation

- Avoid gentrification
- Incorporate references to local history in community center
- Need for advocacy (Advocacy Workshop 101 suggested)

Mitigation Workshop Results



Community Revitalization

- FOCUS AREAS: Replacement housing and employment/economic opportunities

Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for community revitalization that are not listed here?

Potential Locations for Replacement Community Facilities

Community Enhancement

- FOCUS AREAS: Community center and recreational facility replacement

The project team is searching for potential locations for replacement recreational facilities. The map on Page 22 and table on Page 23 show properties that have been identified as vacant or underdeveloped (meaning they may have building(s) onsite but no one lives on the property). During the April 18th CAC meeting, we will discuss the map and table to gather your feedback on the feasibility of the properties shown in the mapping as well as your input on any other properties that should be investigated. We will revisit the following questions from the Mitigation Work Session:

Based on the preliminary mapping of potential locations for replacement facilities, what are your thoughts on locations that would be most optimal for neighborhood residents?

What are your thoughts on having a single, larger, centrally-located replacement facility versus two smaller facilities?

How would the location of the replacement facility, or facilities, affect your thoughts on this idea?

Are there other locations, not identified on the mapping, that would be suitable location(s) for replacement facilities?

Potential Locations for Replacement Community Facilities



| # | Letters Sent on 3/19/20 to Following Property Owners | Address | Neighborhood | Size |
|----|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------|
| 25 | Mekiel Mitchell | 2233 James Bell Drive | Liberty Park | 2.19 ac |
| 29 | Leah Heineck & Nathan Heineck | 2329 Elder Avenue | Liberty Park | 0.19 ac |
| 11 | Caleb Harper | 2234 James Bell Drive | Liberty Park | 0.34 ac |
| 32 | William J. Goff, Sr. | 5228 April Avenue | Liberty Park | 0.32 ac |
| 27 | Corine Goodley | 2321 Elder Avenue | Liberty Park | 0.29 ac |
| 28 | Evelyn Frasier | 2325 Elder Avenue | Liberty Park | 0.22 ac |
| 10 | Faith Tabernacle of Jesus Christ Ministry (Rev. Robert McCleod Grant) | 2233 Taylor Street | Liberty Park | 0.34 ac |
| 30 | Hattie Ruth Levy Anderson | 5260 Deacon Street | Liberty Park | 5.72 ac |
| 34 | God's True Deliverance Church Inc. | 2249 Rebecca Street | Russelldale | 0.25 ac |



Legend

- Letter Sent on 3/19/20
- Privately Owned Vacant/Underdeveloped
- City Owned
- Church Owned Vacant
- Business Owned Vacant
- Ferndale
- Highland Terrace
- Liberty Park
- Russelldale
- Denotes that only a portion of parcel is currently being researched



Potential 6(f) Replacement Properties

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST
 Charleston County
 Last Updated by HC on 3/30/20

Potential Locations for Replacement Community Facilities

| Map ID # | Acres | Owner | Street # | Street Name | Letter Sent 3/19/20 |
|----------|-------|---|----------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 0.15 | AMEZQUITA INVESTMENT LLC | 0 | JONAH ST | |
| 2 | 0.15 | LEE VERNON JAILOR | 0 | JONAH ST | |
| 3 | 0.15 | LEE VERNON JAILOR | 2548 | JONAH ST | |
| 4 | 0.15 | JEROME MARTIN MYERS | 0 | JONAH ST | |
| 5 | 0.15 | PATRICIA ANN CROKER | 5329 | LANGSTON ST | |
| 6 | 0.15 | ERNEST MOSS | 0 | LANGSTON ST | |
| 7 | 0.15 | ERNEST MOSS | 0 | LANGSTON ST | |
| 8 | 0.15 | ERNEST MOSS | 0 | LANGSTON ST | |
| 9 | 0.87 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 2410 | RICHARDSON DR | |
| 10 | 0.34 | FAITH TABERNACLE OF JESUS CHRIST MINISTRY | 2233 | TAYLOR ST | Yes |
| 11 | 0.34 | CALEB HARPER | 0 | ELDER AVE | Yes |
| 12 | 0.34 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 2229 | TAYLOR ST | |
| 13 | 0.17 | PCAAAN REAL ESTATE INC | 2227 | TAYLOR ST | |
| 14 | 0.17 | HENRY THOMPSON | 2222 | JAMES BELL DR | |
| 15 | 0.15 | SAMMIE L SMALLS | 126 | JAMES BELL DR | |
| 16 | 0.17 | SHERALD D MOSES | 113 | CHIME ST | |
| 17 | 0.19 | SHELIA M SIMMONS | 0 | TARGET ST | |
| 18 | 0.17 | LOLA MAE MYERS | 2135 | TARGET ST | |
| 19 | 0.17 | ERNEST GREEN | 2125 | TARGET ST | |
| 20 | 0.17 | ERNEST GREEN | 111 | TARGET ST | |
| 21 | 0.65* | RLB INC | 5255 | RIVERS AVE | |
| 22 | 0.14 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 0 | DOROTHY WILLIAMS BLVD | |
| 23 | 0.14 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 0 | DOROTHY WILLIAMS BLVD | |
| 24 | 0.14 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 0 | DOROTHY WILLIAMS BLVD | |
| 25 | 2.04* | KEITH GREGORY | 0 | JAMES BELL DR | Yes |
| 26 | 1.85 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | 0 | ELDER AVE | |
| 27 | 0.29 | CORINE GOODLEY | 0 | ELDER AVE | Yes |
| 28 | 0.22 | EVELYN M FRASIER | 0 | ELDER AVE | Yes |
| 29 | 0.27 | LEAH AND NATHAN HEINECK | 0 | ELDER AVE | Yes |
| 30 | 1.73* | HATTIE RUTH LEVY ANDERSON | 5260 | DEACON ST | Yes |
| 31 | 0.10* | WILLIAM J GOFF | 2206 | ELEANOR DR | |
| 32 | 0.30 | WILLIAM J GOFF SR | 5228 | APRIL AVE | Yes |
| 33 | 0.56 | CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON | | | |
| 34 | 0.25 | GOD'S TRUE DELIVERANCE CHURCH INC | 2255 | REBECCA ST | Yes |
| 35 | 0.14 | GRASSO ANTONIO A | 0 | DELTA ST | |
| 36 | 0.14 | SPE PROPERTIES LLC | 0 | DELTA ST | |
| 37 | 0.15 | SPE PROPERTIES LLC | 0 | DELTA ST | |

This table corresponds to the map on Page 20 and is color-coded by type of owner:

- Privately Owned Vacant/Underdeveloped
- City Owned
- Church Owned Vacant
- Business Owned Vacant

UPDATE: SCDOT sent letters of interest on March 19, 2020 to nine property owners (as shown in the table to the left) to gauge potential interest in the sale of vacant or under-developed properties for use as locations for replacement community center(s), recreational facilities, and/or pocket parks.

SCDOT's next step is to contact these property owners to discuss potential opportunities. If the project team is not successful in acquiring any of these 'first round' properties, additional letters will be sent out to other property owners on this list.

If you have any information about the potential availability of any of these, or other, potential properties, please let a project team member know.

*Designates a portions of a parcel where development could occur without displacing residents



843.258.1135
info@526LowcountryCorridor.com
Community Office
5627 Rivers Avenue
North Charleston, SC 29406
www.526LowcountryCorridor.com

RE: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor West Project– Charleston County

Dear _____:

The South Carolina Department of Transportation is developing an interstate improvement project on the existing interstate 526 corridor between Virginia Avenue and Paul Cantrell Boulevard. This project will impact community centers currently located adjacent to the interstate in North Charleston near the interchange between I-526 and I-26. We would like to inquire about the possibility of purchasing properties that could be utilized for construction of new community centers as part of the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor West project. Our records indicate that you own property that may be of interest to the Department. In order to discuss the potential acquisition, it will be necessary for us to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the sketch showing your property and a “Highways and You” brochure describing the acquisition process. The brochure will assist in answering questions however; it is imperative that we meet with you to discuss the possibility in person.

SCDOT has opened an I-526 community office at 5627 Rivers Avenue in North Charleston where you can learn more about the project and meet with members of our project team. Due to our current emergency pandemic, the office is only open by appointment only during this event. We would like to schedule a time to meet with you at your convenience and discuss this matter further. To schedule a time to meet, please call 843-258-1135.

Sincerely,

Willie Johnson

Willie Johnson
Right of Way Outreach Specialist

Enclosures

Ec: Joy Riley, SCDOT Project Manager
Horrace Tobin, I-526 Community Office Manager

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing

Community Revitalization

- FOCUS AREAS: Replacement housing and employment/economic opportunities

The SCDOT project team would like to gather feedback from the CAC on the suitability of different areas for different types of housing.

The project team is searching for potential locations for replacement housing. The map on Page 24 shows the geographical area that SCDOT is monitoring for potential replacement housing locations. It includes the neighborhoods of Russelldale, Liberty Park, Highland Terrace, and Ferndale as well as other neighborhoods within the immediate vicinity. The boundary was set based with the intent to find locations that could provide a similar proximity to public transit and other public services in the area, as such, the northern boundary runs along Remount Road and the southern boundary runs generally along Dorchester Road.

SCDOT is monitoring residential real estate (MLS) listings within this area and have mapped parcels owned by the City of North Charleston and privately-owned vacant/underdeveloped properties that could be investigated as potential locations for replacement housing.

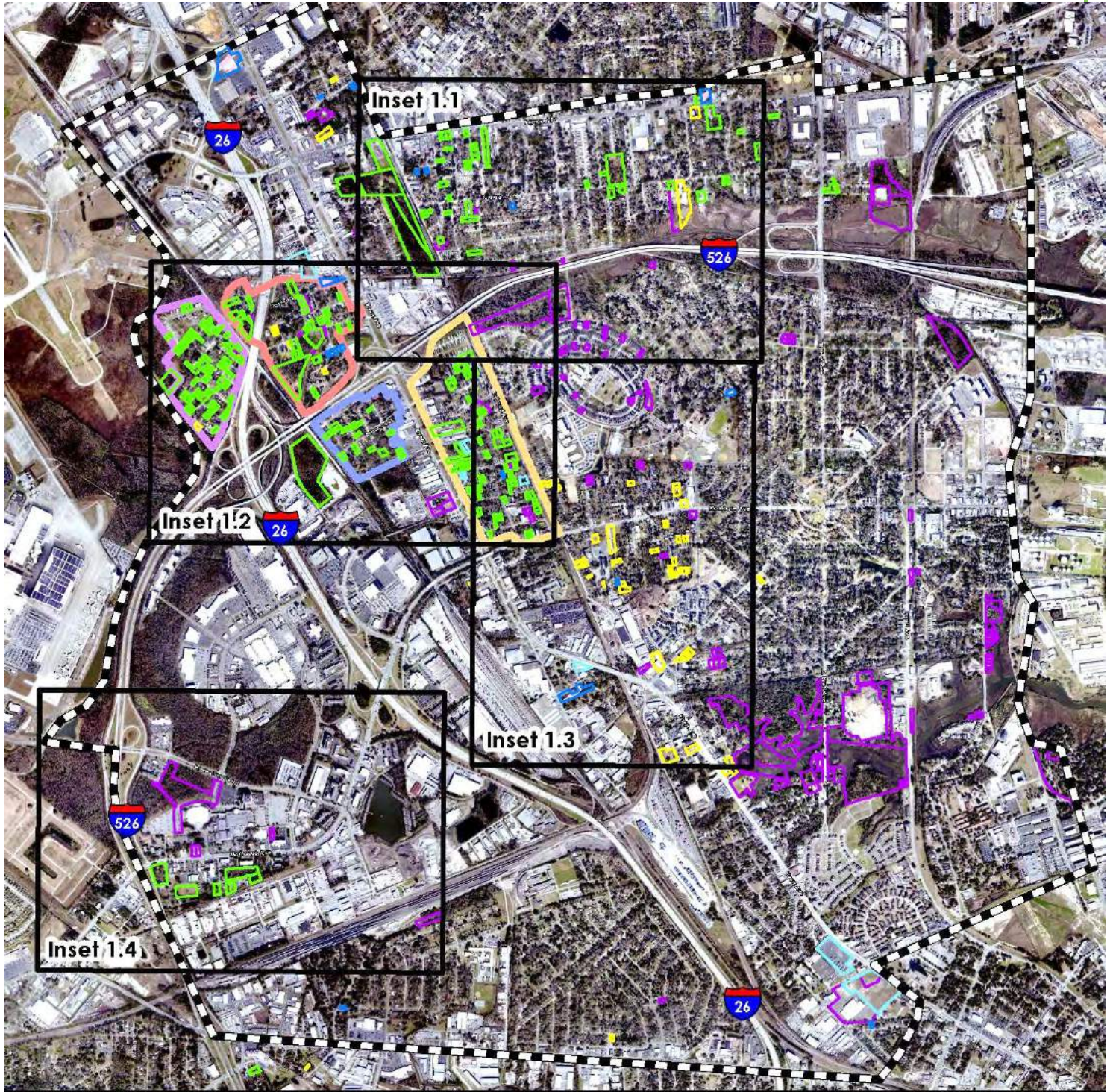
As you review the maps, think about the pro's and con's of the different areas shown in the mapping.

Are there areas nearby that would be attractive to renters that would provide same or better access to transit, public facilities, employment centers, planned development, and other services?

Are there other areas that you would recommend monitoring for potential replacement housing?

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing

This map shows the geographical area that SCDOT is monitoring for residential real estate (MLS) listings. Within this area, SCDOT also mapped parcels owned by the City of North Charleston and privately-owned vacant/underdeveloped properties that could be investigated as potential locations for replacement housing. The maps on Pages 26 through 29 are close-up views of the areas shown as “Insets” in the map below.



Legend












- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Ferndale | Search Boundary for Replacement Housing Opportunities |
| Highland Terrace | Parcel ID'd by the City of North Charleston as Underdeveloped |
| Liberty Park | Vacant/Underdeveloped Private Parcel |
| Russelldale | Vacant Church Owned Parcel |
| Parcel for Sale (3/27) | Vacant/Underdeveloped - Owned by the City of North Charleston |

Part of SCDOT's studies include gathering feedback from you on what areas you think are suitable for different types of replacement housing.

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing



Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Ferndale |  Search Boundary for Replacement Housing Opportunities |
|  Highland Terrace |  Parcel ID'd by the City of North Charleston as Underdeveloped |
|  Liberty Park |  Vacant/Underdeveloped Private Parcel |
|  Russelldale |  Vacant Church Owned Parcel |
|  Parcel for Sale (3/27) |  Vacant/Underdeveloped - Owned by the City of North Charleston |
|  Charleston County Parcels | |



Potential Replacement Housing Opportunities

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST












Inset 1.1

Last Updated by HC on 3/27/20

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing



Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|---|
|  | Ferndale |  | Search Boundary for Replacement Housing Opportunities |
|  | Highland Terrace |  | Parcel ID'd by the City of North Charleston as Underdeveloped |
|  | Liberty Park |  | Vacant/Underdeveloped Private Parcel |
|  | Russelldale |  | Vacant Church Owned Parcel |
|  | Parcel for Sale (3/27) |  | Vacant/Underdeveloped - Owned by the City of North Charleston |
|  | Charleston County Parcels | | |



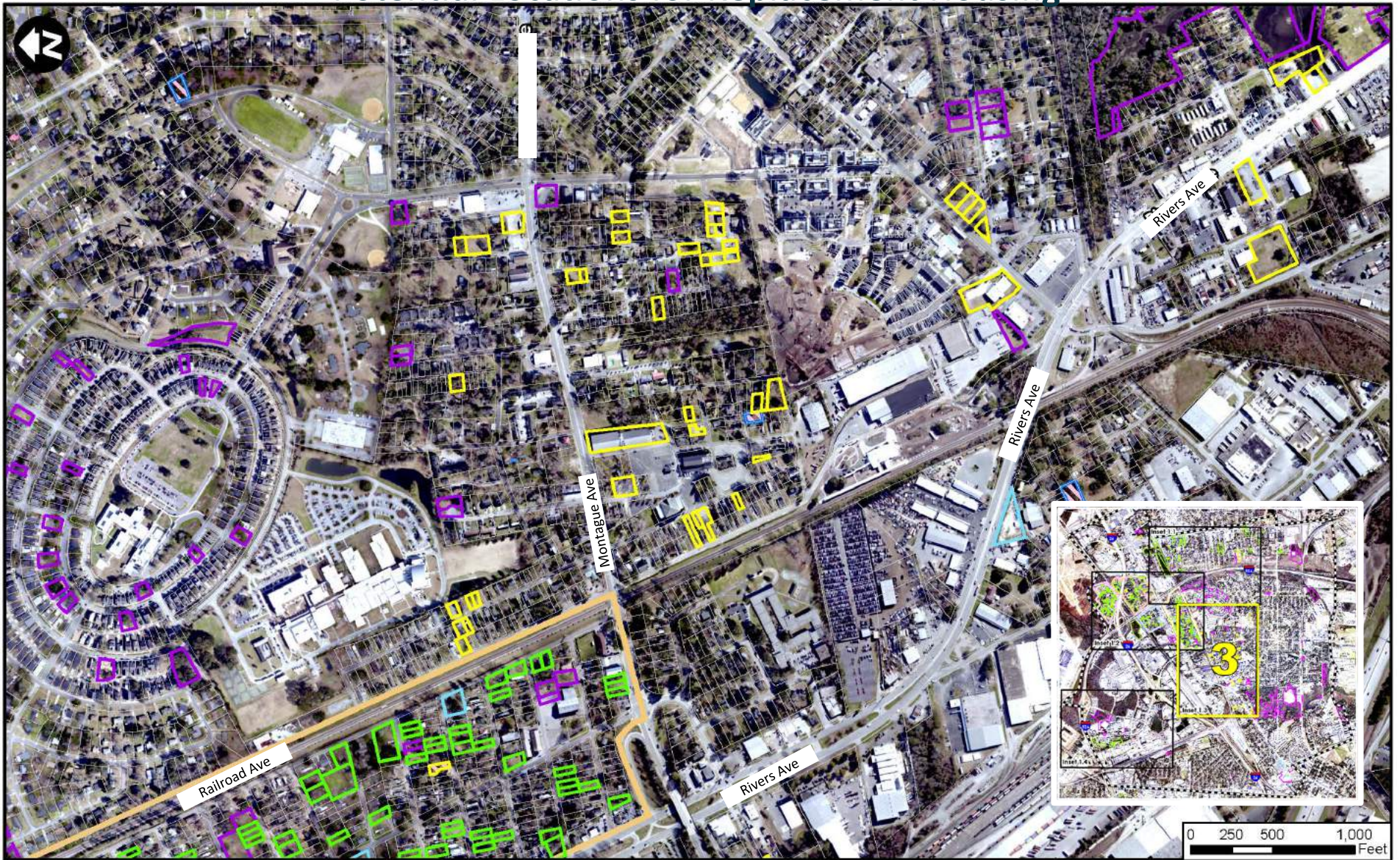
Potential Replacement Housing Opportunities

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST












Inset 1.2

Last Updated by HC on 3/27/20

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing



Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|---|
|  | Ferndale |  | Search Boundary for Replacement Housing Opportunities |
|  | Highland Terrace |  | Parcel ID'd by the City of North Charleston as Underdeveloped |
|  | Liberty Park |  | Vacant/Underdeveloped Private Parcel |
|  | Russelldale |  | Vacant Church Owned Parcel |
|  | Parcel for Sale (3/27) |  | Vacant/Underdeveloped - Owned by the City of North Charleston |
|  | Charleston County Parcels | | |



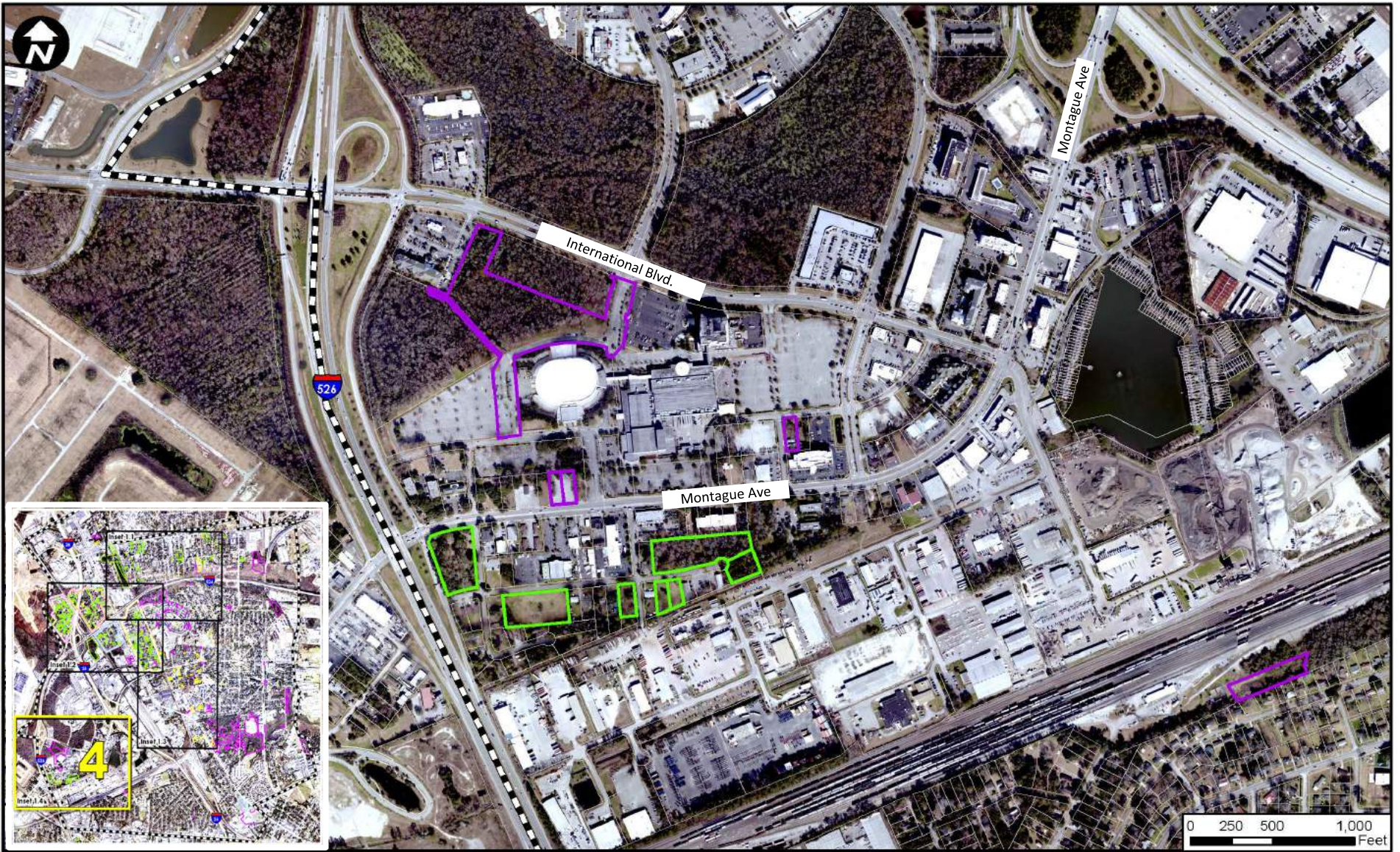
Potential Replacement Housing Opportunities

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Inset 1.3

Last Updated by HC on 3/27/20

Potential Locations for Replacement Housing



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|---|
| | Ferndale | | Search Boundary for Replacement Housing Opportunities |
| | Highland Terrace | | Parcel ID'd by the City of North Charleston as Underdeveloped |
| | Liberty Park | | Vacant/Underdeveloped Private Parcel |
| | Russelldale | | Vacant Church Owned Parcel |
| | Parcel for Sale (3/27) | | Vacant/Underdeveloped - Owned by the City of North Charleston |
| | Charleston County Parcels | | |



Potential Replacement Housing Opportunities

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Inset 1.4

Last Updated by HC on 3/27/20

Community Office

- Office Data
 - Days open in March: 22 days
 - Call-ins: 13 calls
 - Outreach Calls: 10 calls
 - Voicemail Follow-ups: 2 calls
 - Walk-ins/Appointments: 11 visits
 - Calls to CAC (postponed Informational Workshop): 11 calls
- COVID:
 - The Community Office is closed to visitors, but Office Manager Horrace Tobin is onsite daily to address concerns and requests received by email, postal mail, and phone.
 - Right-of-Way Liaisons are not currently scheduling face-to-face appointments but are handling related requested received in the Community Office by phone.
- Community Liaisons:
 - Clay Middleton, a new employee to Maximum Consulting, is also an addition to the Community Liaison staff.
- Informational Workshop:
 - The sessions planned for Saturday, March 21st will be rescheduled.

Summary and Next Steps

- Confirm schedule for upcoming CAC Meetings
- 5/2/20 agenda to include update on mitigation plan development, providing available details and gathering additional feedback on potential housing mitigation
- Poll group for CAC open house date: post-COVID



MEETING MINUTES

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 8

Date: May 2, 2020

Time: 10:00 am – 12:07 pm

Location: Adobe Connect Virtual Meeting

Project Name: I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

Attendees

Larenda Baxley, Ferndale
Tina A. Baxley, Ferndale
Gilbert Reeves, Ferndale
Rev. David L. Johnson, Ferndale
Angela Anderson, Russelldale
Ruth Mae Whitney, Highland Terrace
Jeanaris Bannister, Liberty Park
Carolyn Varner, Liberty Park
Doris Twiggs, Liberty Park
Prayonda Cooper, Joppa Way
Earl Muhammad, Muhammad Mosque
Rick Day, Stantec
Amy Sackaroff, Stantec

LaTonya Derrick, Stantec
Ryan White, Stantec
Horrace Tobin, Stantec Community Office
Joy Riley, SCDOT (Project Manager)
Chad Long, SCDOT
David Kelly, SCDOT
Pamela Foster, FHWA
Yolonda Jordan, FHWA
Maxine Smith, Maximum Consulting
Mattese Lecque, Maximum Consulting
Carolyn Lecque, Maximum Consulting
Clay Middleton, Maximum Consulting
Janelle Ellis, Empowerment Strategies

Participant Summary:

Total participants: 26

Ferndale: 4

Highland Terrace: 1

Liberty Park: 3

Russelldale: 1

Adjacent/affected communities/agencies: 2

SCDOT: 3

FHWA: 2

Community Liaisons: 4

Community Office: 1

Stantec: 4

Facilitator: 1

Meeting Summary:

Welcome and Introductions

- LaTonya conducted a roll call, verifying participants connecting by phone only
- Janelle welcomed and thanked the CAC members and participants for joining the meeting via Adobe Connect and reminded everyone the meeting would be recorded for accuracy of meeting minutes
- An overview of the agenda was provided
 - Review of administrative items
 - Open Mic session
 - Potential Site Layout for Replacement Community Facilities
 - Replacement Community Facilities: Potential Functions and Services

- Community Mitigation Plan Development: Coordination with Local Organizations
- Outreach Plans for 2020
- Outreach Update
- Summary & Next Steps

Administrative Items

- LaTonya served as the host and contact for technical issues throughout the meeting.
- Jamelle provided overview of Adobe Connect features and logistics
 - Chat room (general and private discussions); chat dialogue will be saved
 - Raise hands
 - All participants had access to Adobe Connect, paper copy of CAC Meeting #8 meeting packet, and phone connection
- Review of virtual meeting etiquette
- CAC Meeting #7 minutes approved

Open Mic

Prior to addressing formal project issues, CAC members were acknowledged for their continued participation in the I-526 West LCC project in the midst of the pandemic. Time was taken to allow CAC members and other participants to share insights regarding impacts related to the pandemic.

CAC members provided no comments or questions.

A general overview of the steps the CAC has taken to date was provided, in which meetings one through five included brainstorming sessions while meetings six and seven allowed CAC members to focus more on specific community needs. Although the project team and CAC have not developed a draft mitigation plan, discussions and resulting documents are beginning to lay the groundwork for potential mitigation plans related to the four pillars identified in the Mitigation Work Session (CAC Meeting #6) including: Community Cohesion, Community Enhancement, Community Preservation, and Community Revitalization. The CAC will begin to move from meetings that are solely devoted to brainstorming into discussions about the potential actions required to put plans into place. CAC members were asked to share any observations or to ask any questions arising since CAC Meeting 7 (April 18, 2020).

CAC members provided no comments or questions.

Potential Site Layout for Replacement Community Facilities

Ryan reviewed potential site layouts for the replacement community center. He emphasized that the layouts were conceptual drawings to give the CAC an opportunity to provide feedback on improving the plans.

Project design team considerations:

- Focus potentially on a single, larger community center
- The project team will need to identify multiple adjacent parcels that can accommodate a larger facility based in Liberty Park
 - Designed to meet the CAC's request for a facility that would provide meeting spaces for various programs

- Focus on children in the community to ensure they have a safe place to congregate and play, and that would provide constructive activities
- Landscaping and common areas for neighbors to safely congregate and host a variety of community events; Open space is important because they will provide opportunities for community cohesion
- Small parcel, pocket park proposed for the Russelldale community

Filbin Creek Community Center

- City of North Charleston is proposing a greenway along Filbin Creek which will provide a direct connection to various areas of Liberty Park. Other features include:
 - Parking along Dorothy Williams Boulevard
 - Parking at the main facility with access from Elder Avenue
 - There is a separate parcel (#9 on layout) south of Filbin Creek with the potential for additional parking on the creek side edge of the property
 - Parking and accessibility from various parts of the community were considered in the design
 - Walkability between various greenways and amenities within the facility
 - The main facility includes a gym, classrooms, and office space in an effort to provide residents with a multipurpose facility that will also accommodate the elderly and children
 - Pollinator loop and birdboxes to enhance the wildlife element of the park
 - Space for a community garden, educational wetlands
 - Playgrounds, pavilions, picnic areas
 - A multi-use sports field
 - A pedestrian bridge over Filbin bridge to provide connectivity to the north and south sides of the park and community
 - A turf amphitheater
- Joy stressed that this is the first round of conceptual drawings. SCDOT is talking to property owners. Several of the proposed lots are owned by the City of North Charleston. Several are not. Conceptual models were developed for two purposes: (1) To start the conversation with the CAC about what they want in the space and (2) for use when talking with property owners to give them an idea of what SCDOT would do with the property. Joy stated that the layout presented represents a conservative model of what the layout may look like and that SCDOT would like to purchase more land than what is displayed on the layout. SCDOT could spread out the design if more land can be acquired.

CAC Member Feedback:

- Will Filbin Creek Community Center serve all represented communities (Liberty Park, Highland Terrace, Russelldale, Joppa Way, and Ferndale)? (Bannister, J.)
 - The proposed facility will provide a much larger facility for the broader community. (White, R.)
 - One of the reasons it makes sense to have one larger community center is because SCDOT is asking North Charleston to enhance services (activities and programs) and to provide staff and an operations budget for daily operations. If three facilities are built, the City is much less likely to provide the same level or quality of services than with a single facility. (Riley, J.)
- How do we prevent repeating past practices in which community center activities are not tailored to community members/residents? How do we ensure the community center remains for the community so that we maintain access and don't lose the community "feel?" (Johnson, D.)
 - An Intergovernmental Agreement will be developed between SCDOT and the City of North Charleston to specify what the community center will have to include. Because of way the City

develops programming, they will have to have some flexibility because they have to engineer and build the facility and be able to make it work, from a permitting and programming perspective. SCDOT will give the City the funds to do that, as well as initial funds to start specific programs the CAC is asking the City to set up in the agreement. The City will be committing to setting all this up then operating and maintaining it throughout the life of the community center. The CAC can stipulate some requirements, but those are things that will have to be negotiated with the City. The first step is for the CAC to come up with what they want. The CAC will need to develop their “asks,” after which SCDOT will negotiate with the City. We will have meetings with CAC members and with the City to prepare to have those conversations as constituents of the City of North Charleston. The CAC has a powerful voice in making decisions in the communities that affect them (Riley, J.)

- CAC members were encouraged to provide feedback from both a personal perspective but also from the standpoint of the broader needs of respective communities (White, R.)

Highland Terrace Community Pocket Park

- The Highland Terrace pocket park layout was designed taking into consideration the proposed improvements to I-26. Based on interchange modifications, additional lanes will be added to I-26 which will require Taylor Street to be realigned. As a result, the project team has a smaller footprint (a smaller amount of land) to design the pocket park, while trying to maintain as many of the original intended features as possible:
 - On-street parking and sidewalks on Taylor Street. The project team will continue to evaluate the sidewalks and mid-block crossing based on the location of the current crossing near Taylor Street.
 - Basketball courts
 - Open air pavilion and benches, picnic tables and playground
 - The primary original feature discussed by the CAC team (not included in the conceptual drawing) was a multipurpose building. However, the need in this area for a multipurpose building is intended to be filled by a larger Filbin Creek Community Center.
 - It was reiterated that this design was based on the available property that will remain after the I-26 widening.

CAC Member Feedback:

- CAC member enthusiastically supported the idea of having activities, such as basketball courts, on the back end of the property as opposed to its current location on the front end, where traffic is higher. (Twiggs, D.)
- Is it possible to use meeting spaces at the Russelldale Community Center since the Highland Terrace pocket park will not have a meeting space? (Bannister, J.)
 - CAC members were reminded that the existing community center (at Russelldale) will be impacted by the I-26 improvements. That facility will no longer exist, but that is why the design of the larger, Filbin Creek Community Center is so important. The project team has an opportunity to redesign the current layout to include more open space. The conceptual layout presented to the CAC had the same number of basketball courts as the current Russelldale facility, but more open space can be incorporated into the design if there is a need. (White, R.)
 - Both pocket parks have open air pavilions with benches or picnic tables for outdoor type events. We could also look at doing covered spaces with picnic tables for instance near the bird park. The project team is asking for the CAC’s preferences for these locations. (Riley, J.)

- The question was asked about CAC members' concern for the lack of enclosed space or open space. If there is a concern with open space the design team can review the plan to identify more open space for activities. If there is a concern at this particular location because you're looking for an enclosed building, that is something that will need to be revisited as well. (White, R.)
- CAC Member had two concerns: (1) to have a recreational space for the children and (2) for an enclosed space for the entire community to use, specifically seniors. If Filbin Creek Community Center will fill those requests and needs then the CAC member accepts closed spaces only at the Filbin Creek Community Center. (Bannister, J.)
- CAC members were asked which proposed amenities designed to enhance the pocket park would they remove from the design if they had to sacrifice a feature or what tradeoffs is the CAC willing to make? In order to provide a closed-space facility, what amenities would the CAC be willing to give up in the current proposal? (White, R.)
 - It was reiterated that the design team would be informed that having the park near the back of the neighborhood is a plus. They will continue to work on designs with open-air, covered, and enclosed facilities. (White, R.)
- CAC member asked, as the project team looks at the size of the facility, please consider that because there are times when it is very warm outside, it is especially challenging for seniors who would not be as comfortable outside as the children. If the team can bring back to the CAC sizes and scales of the proposed facility, it would provide a better frame of reference when considering the pocket park. CAC member indicated they don't want to shortchange activities and facilities they've asked for by having pocket parks that don't provide ample space. They do not want to go through this process feeling as if they did not do a good job researching this for the community. CAC member asked that the project team bring options back to the CAC to review. (Twiggs, D.)
- One of the concerns discussed in previous meetings was ease of travel for seniors. It would be more convenient for seniors to have a path to community centers when they don't have to go over railroad tracks or highways. Seniors should have priority in being able to access the Filbin Creek Community Center, particularly if they demonstrate they are members of the community. Regarding the Highland Terrace Pocket Park, CAC member suggests thinking about indoor enclosed facility. If there is no way to construct an indoor site at Highland Terrace, then the community should have full access to the Filbin Creek Community Center. (Muhammad, E.)
 - Community liaison inquired about the distance between the Filbin Creek, Russelldale, and Highland Terrace sites. Stated that knowing the distance between sites would determine the feasibility of enclosed buildings in the pocket parks. If the Filbin Creek site is within walking distance of the pocket parks, there may be no need for enclosed structures at the pocket parks. During the day it may be difficult to find personnel that can keep the building open and staffed based on the City of North Charleston's typical allocation of funds. CAC members may want to think about Filbin Creek Community Center as the center for all of their activities and pocket parks used for outdoor activities as opposed to having a building that will be closed most of the time. (Lecque, M.)
 - It is less than one-half mile between the proposed Highland Park and Filbin Creek locations. From one parcel to the next is less than one-third mile. Access is important because of how the interstate intersects the neighborhood and there is a considerable population on both sides. Noting the short distance and accessibility issues, we will ask the design team to consider other

options available to provide an enclosed structure for indoor activities at the Highland Terrace Pocket Park. (Derrick, L.)

- In response to concerns about access, once North Charleston assumes operations at the new community center, the project team and CAC should consider putting in place a mitigation monitoring plan. As the CAC transitions more into an oversight committee, post construction, the project team can build in meeting times and some type of monitoring to ensure the goals of the CAC in having the community center open and accessible to all members of the community and that their needs are being met. (Long, C.)

Russelldale Community Pocket Park

Features include:

- Located at the corner of Rockingham Street and Rebecca Street
- There is limited space at this location which both limits amenities, but also helps determine which amenities may be included at a site. The design team has a goal to incorporate as much open space as possible
- Park benches, pavilion, 2,500 square foot playground, shrubs, public art
- There is an L-shaped drive that wraps around the park which connects Rebecca Street and Rockingham Street
 - Current layout has more open space; but if CAC members think there should be another basketball court at this location, the design team will include it. As with the Highland Terrace Pocket Park, if a feature like basketball courts is included in the design, there will be a tradeoff. CAC member will have to decide what is more important for this location. Is it open space? Basketball courts? Combined open space and basketball courts? CAC members were asked to keep in mind the community is losing the existing basketball courts at the Russelldale Community Center (White, R.)
- CAC member expressed that it appears Russelldale is getting the short end of the deal because they are losing a whole community center, and the basketball courts, and currently they are not getting the basketball courts back as a part of the proposed plan. While she understands not having an enclosed meeting space on the small parcel, she feels that the neighborhood children will have to walk to Highland Terrace Pocket Park if they want to play basketball. Russelldale should at least get a half court for the children who live in that community. Requiring children to walk from Russelldale to Highland Terrace Pocket Park or Filbin Creek Community Center creates a safety issue. (Anderson, A,)
 - That is something we can incorporate and still try to find the balance between basketball courts and open spaces and provide an updated concept. We may be able to reduce the size of the driveway to get more space for the pocket park. (White, R,)
- What is the distance between Russelldale and Filbin Creek? This is important because Russelldale has many residents who don't have cars and primarily walk most places. (Anderson, A.)
 - The walking/driving distance between the existing Highland Terrace Community Center and the Elder Avenue entrance to the Filbin Creek Community Center is 0.4-mile. The walking/driving distance between the existing Russelldale Community Center and the April Avenue/Flora Street entrance to the Filbin Creek Community Center (at #8 on the site plan) is 0.4-mile. The walking/driving distance from the existing Russelldale Community Center to the

- Elder Avenue entrance of the Filbin Creek Community Center via Dorothy Williams Boulevard and James Bell Drive would be 0.7-mile. (Sackaroff, A., via chat window)
- LaTonya shared Google Earth in the Adobe Connect display with pins on the locations of the proposed Filbin Creek Community Center and the existing parcel on which the Highland Terrace Pocket Park would be developed (reduced footprint of existing HT-LP CC). She presented a measured distance of less than 0.4 miles (lines) from pin to pin.
 - The design team will focus on adding a basketball court, maximizing open space so that it is a multi-use park, while maintaining the playground (White, R.)

Replacement Community Facilities: Potential Functions and Services

- Brief discussion about the importance of prioritizing functions and services at the various community centers for residents based on CAC recommendations from previous meetings. This will help prioritize the CAC's "asks" when they meet with the city of North Charleston (White, R.)
- No CAC response to this question at this time, but Ryan stressed the importance of CAC feedback on developing priorities list prior to plan discussions with the city

Community Mitigation Plan Development: Coordination with Local Organizers

- Clay Middleton was introduced as a new member of the Maximum Consulting team who was charged with leading the discussion on coordination with local organizations (Smith, M.)
- Maximum Consulting has been charged with identifying potential courses of action to move forward as the CAC transitions into the oversight committee (Middleton, C.)
- These topics were discussed as potential actions the team can take now to explore ways to coordinate with local organizations in order to implement CAC recommendations including:
 - Removing barriers to residents ability to 'age in place'
 - Home repairs and food insecurity, health and wellness, and community development block grants in financial assistance
 - Preference for small businesses vested in the community
 - Discussion about support from minority owned businesses in North Charleston
 - Potential partnerships with local college nursing programs to develop health and wellness programs for senior residents
 - Discussion about entities and organizations with related resources
- Would need to identify specific homes in which residents are homebound and have food insecurity. This information would allow Maximum Consulting to develop a plan for how these organizations may meet individual level needs
- Pointed out that the USDA has food programs that are available throughout the year
- Noted that there are additional organizations like the Tri-County Black Nurses Association (not listed under health and wellness on the slide)
- Recommended scheduling a meeting with the City of North Charleston's CDBG programs
- If you have relationships with anyone who serves in an official or volunteer capacity with any local organizations, we welcome your engagement with them so that we can foster relationships more quickly (Derrick, L.)

- Maximum Consulting is prepared to move forward immediately with helping CAC members make connections with any of the organizations listed. For instance, there is a way to enlist the help of youth with Palmetto CAP in conducting some of the assessments that will be needed for those with food insecurities or in need of home repairs (Middleton, C.)
- In response to the lists, CAC member stated he has spoken to a couple of the organizations on the list on behalf of Ferndale and they indicated that their funding is limited to certain areas, which often did not include Ferndale communities or Liberty Park, especially as it relates to community block grants. Would the CAC be speaking with the City of North Charleston CDBG group about including these areas moving forward? (Johnson, D.)
 - Block grants would include these areas. In reference to how these areas ‘age in place,’ the organizations listed are those that can assist with that. As it relates to CDBG funds, it is typically a year-long process for a group to be included in future programming. (Middleton, C.)
- My concern is still that although we are reviewing nice conceptual plans once the pandemic is over, the City remains responsible for making sure everything is still in place fiscally. How do we ensure that funds are not diverted from community needs (related to the use of the community center) and that the City will not start renting out the new community center to outside parties to adjust for current economic losses? CAC Member does not want the community needs to be put on the backburner but wants to ensure that the CAC actually becomes a project oversight group. CAC Member is also concerned the communities will experience a repeat of what is happening now with a lot of the communities’ residents being pushed out. (Johnson, D.)
 - I would suggest as we move forward especially as the CAC transitions to project oversight that an assessment be done to say here is how we move forward despite living in a COVID-19 environment. But because of COVID-19, there will be resources available at the federal level provided to the City of North Charleston to help because people will have a longer recovery period. Federal resources will be available to remove that barrier. (Middleton, C.)
- We have to ensure that we have the power to enforce and monitor what is happening in our communities because everything sounds good now but if we don't put plans in place to ensure the community benefits this will be a waste of time. (Muhammad, E.)
- If we want to add organizations to the list, will we have the ability to do so? We have veterans who are homeless and who have medical problems. Do we have a relationship with the veterans administration downtown Charleston? (Muhammad, E.)
 - Trident Technical College has a veterans upward bound, one of the few in the country, that services veterans from the educational standpoint and also for other resources. We also have the VA center in North Charleston that will visit your office or conduct events to review the services such as getting access to health care or helping people with their claims. Through the VA, there is an annual event that focuses on homelessness and getting veterans who are not a part of the VA into the VA system so they can receive the wrap-around services. There will be opportunities to specify veterans issues and concerns throughout this process. Some of these activities can happen parallel to the mitigation. We can have a focus workshop to provide a veteran focused workshop. (Middleton, C.)
- Do we contact you or the office with any recommendations of other organizations? Also, we have a mixed community of different ethnicities. Will we be able to accommodate diverse groups? we need

to have organizations that can work with people from all different ethnicities on health issues. (Muhammad, E.)

- All service providers will provide printed materials in Spanish and will be able to speak Spanish as well as to make sure you can mitigate effectively (Middleton, C.)
- As Mr. Middleton indicated, there are several organizations that can be contacted now in order to initiate services for the community. The key, when we made some of these recommendations that are on the list, is that some of them served as barriers. You have to jump through hurdles to get their services. The other thing is having knowledge of how quickly you can get their services. And it is a turn off when someone tries to get services and they are put on a list. If they are even contacted is a long time before their issues are addressed (Twiggs, D.)
- [To Mr. Middleton] Would you be able to come back to us from time to time and keep us abreast of what's out there? How active can we be with getting these services so that when we talk to people in the community, we will have a connection and there will not be a long wait or barriers they will have to go through? (Twiggs, D.)
- For example, ramp installations can be done on a local level despite national and global issues (Twiggs, D.)
 - The only thing I would emphasize is knowing what the assessment is. Who are the individuals in your communities that need a ramp or a roof repaired or their homes weatherized? By having an itemized list of needs we can approach planning holistically. (Middleton, C.)
 - Maximum Consulting will begin assisting families in the Liberty Park community when Ms. Twiggs is able to provide them with a list. (Smith, M.)
 - Maximum Consulting's purpose is to get in touch with 'the powers to be' and give you that point of contact. You are the voice for the community. You have a lot of power. There are services that can help identify underlying reasons for homelessness in the veteran population. (Lecque, M.)
 - Joy clarified that the two primary goals of this project include focus on developing the mitigation plan and on doing outreach in the community. Part of that is identifying resources for the community that they may not be an aware of. We have an opportunity to bring those types of meetings or discussions to the community through the community office for the next decade. We can facilitate partnerships with some of those organizations through the mitigation plan that will last beyond the life of this project. (Riley, J.)

Minority owned businesses in North Charleston

- There are a number of locally owned businesses that we can go to that would provide sponsorship and lend their expertise through workshops or services that support the needs of the community.
- We can also have mobile festivals or culturally based festivals in your communities (Middleton, C.)

Potential partnerships with local college nursing programs

- These programs can come to the community or to the community office to provide health programs. It is our task to figure out when they can come to the community office or to individual homes once assessments have been made (Middleton, C.)
- May consider establishing a relationship with MUSC to do mobile health care units throughout the neighborhood (Ellis, J.)

- Charleston County and MUSC have recently partnered to provide mobile health care services. This is a service that may be available to the represented communities but we have to ensure there are enough people to support the program. They may be willing to provide a mobile unit at the community office as well. (Middleton, C.)

Outreach plans for 2020

- CAC provided guidance and feedback on how they would like to see the community office used those responses will be shared with the CAC before meeting #9. (Derrick, L.)
- CAC was asked to prioritize community events for EJ outreach in 2020
- Once we get an all clear from SCDHEC and the CDC regarding when we can have group events, we will know how to best proceed with planning for how many events we can have between now and the end of 2020. Carolyn will discuss how we can combine events if we are unable to have all 7 events. (Smith, M.)
- Everything will depend on the pandemic. We will need residents from communities to help with those events because people want to see familiar faces so volunteers will come from the neighborhoods (Lecque, C.)
- Carolyn provide an overview of the Seven proposed events the CAC identified as the top three EJ outreach events:
 - Care packages for seniors
 - Summer learning activities
 - Back to school supply fair

The CAC will be contacted to determine how they would like to proceed with planning these events.

CAC Member feedback:

- Supports moving forward with EJ outreach events. Committed to being engaged when the project begins. (Bannister, J.)
- Support rotating outreach EJ events throughout the represented communities on some frequency. (Muhammad, E.)
- Expressed concerns about identifying a realistic way of getting neighbors to participate in neighborhood council meetings. They have had challenges with consistent participation for years. Any help with getting community members consistently engaged would be appreciated. (Baxley, T.)
 - It may take a few of us getting started, then others will join in. It is important that neighborhoods work together to effect the change that we want to see. It is her experience that neighborhood councils are not easy, but she encouraged CAC members not to give up. Suggested inviting kids and seniors to attract more people. (Lecque, C.)
 - Please access the link which includes additional events for the CAC to vote. Not only can the CAC vote on the top three preferences, you can also provide additional suggestions in the recommendation section of the poll. Please share as much as you can. Suggestions may also be provided to LaTonya anonymously. (Derrick, L.)
- Round Robins are a great idea. CAC member committed to engaging in events (Baxley, T.)

Outreach Update

Provided by Horrace Tobin

Community Office update for April 1-24, 2020

- Received two incoming calls
- Placed eight outgoing calls
- Responded to four voice messages

COVID

- The community office is closed to visitors, but the Office Manager is on site daily to address concerns and request received by email, postal Mail and phone.
- Right-of-way Liaisons are not currently scheduling face to face appointments but are handling related requests received in the community office by phone.

Status update on events postponed due to COVID

- Black Expo has been rescheduled for June 20th at the North Charleston Coliseum from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Confirmation of this event will be shared with LaTonya for distribution to the team. (Smith, M.)

Summary and Next Steps

- Topics for CAC Meeting #9 will include a discussion of outcomes from an upcoming meeting scheduled with the City of North Charleston where we will be providing them with feedback received from the CAC during the mitigation workshop. The project team will relay outcomes from that meeting back to the CAC on June 6th. During our next meeting we will focus on transition from CAC to the project oversight committee. We will be discussing how to include advocacy training to ensure everyone is on the same page in terms of roles and responsibilities in the project oversight committee. We will also discuss the potential housing mitigation update.
- Supplemental information from today's meeting will be provided with the invitation and materials for meeting #9. If maps or other information is requested by community members, please have them call the Community Office and Mr. Tobin will coordinate delivery of requested materials.
- Joy and Chad thanked everyone for their time, input, and participation at this meeting
- Pam thanked everyone for their time and active participation. She thanked the team and the CAC for their time wished everyone a Happy Mother's Day, and sent congratulations to everyone with 2020 graduates

CAC meeting #9 is scheduled for June 6, 2020 beginning at 10:00 AM until 11:30 AM. Look for updates from LaTonya on the format that will be used for this meeting.

This information was prepared to provide the City of North Charleston with a high-level overview of SCDOT’s progress on creating and implementing an Environmental Justice (EJ) Community Mitigation Plan for the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST project. This document complements the presentation that will be given at the virtual meeting to be held on May 19, 2020. It includes explanations and updates on past/current efforts, as well as potential mitigation objectives that have been outlined by neighborhood representatives on the Community Advisory Council (CAC). The purpose of this meeting is to provide a status update for City of North Charleston representatives and to facilitate future coordination.

1.0 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

1.1 PURPOSE

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) was formed to provide input and help guide the project team as they navigated through unique challenges. The CAC provides a way for citizens to voice their opinions, feelings, and ideas on the project so the project will have a positive, local impact. CAC members provide input on actions to minimize and mitigate impacts.

1.2 CAC MEMBERS

The CAC is comprised of 20 members who were recommended to join the CAC based on their background and relationship to the community. The project team contacted local churches, schools, and other entities to help identify residents of the impacted Environmental Justice (EJ) neighborhoods that may be interested in participating in the CAC. The CAC’s membership includes homeowners, tenants, business owners, property owners, and religious leaders across the demographic spectrum to fully represent the community’s history and future goals. The boundaries of the following EJ neighborhoods (Figure 1.1):

- Ferndale
- Highland Terrace
- Liberty Park
- Russelldale

1.3 CAC MEETINGS

The CAC meets approximately monthly and has convened eight times since September 2019. The CAC will continue to meet throughout the course of the project. The initial meetings focused on member responsibilities, project specifics, and community issues. The CAC also provided feedback on the materials that were to be displayed at

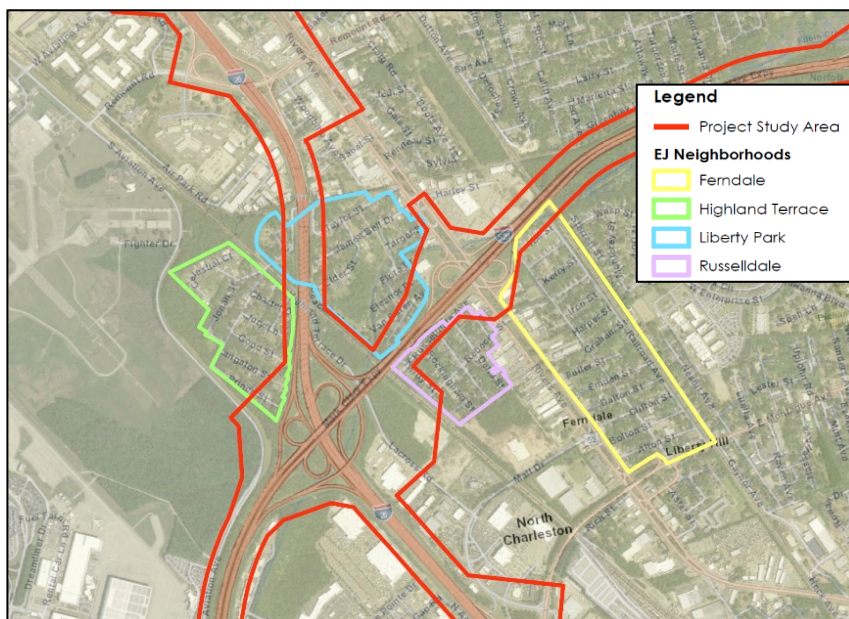


Figure 1.1: EJ neighborhoods near I-526 and I-26

the November 2019 public information and community meetings, and helped distribute meeting information to neighbors.

CAC meetings in March, April, and May have focused on CAC recommendations on potential measures to mitigate direct and cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project. An emphasis was placed on a potential replacement plan for their community centers and recreational facilities that would be displaced by the project. The CAC will continue to play an advisory role in the mitigation development process and transition to a Project Oversight Committee to provide oversight during implementation of the Community Mitigation Plan in early 2022 (*projected*).

2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2.1 PURPOSE

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is a technical report prepared as part of developing environmental documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The document is used to identify anticipated cultural, social, economic, historical, and physical impacts that a transportation project may have on nearby communities. It records and adds perspective on the possible effects of a project to determine the quality of life for nearby communities before, during, and after construction. Figure 2.1 identifies the study area for which the CIA was developed.

The CIA prepared for this project also includes an Environmental Justice analysis given the presence of low-income and minority populations. Executive Order 12898 directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law.

2.2 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

2.2.1 Direct Impacts

Preliminary impact calculations estimate approximately **157 residential relocations**, many of which are disproportionately located in EJ neighborhoods closest to the existing

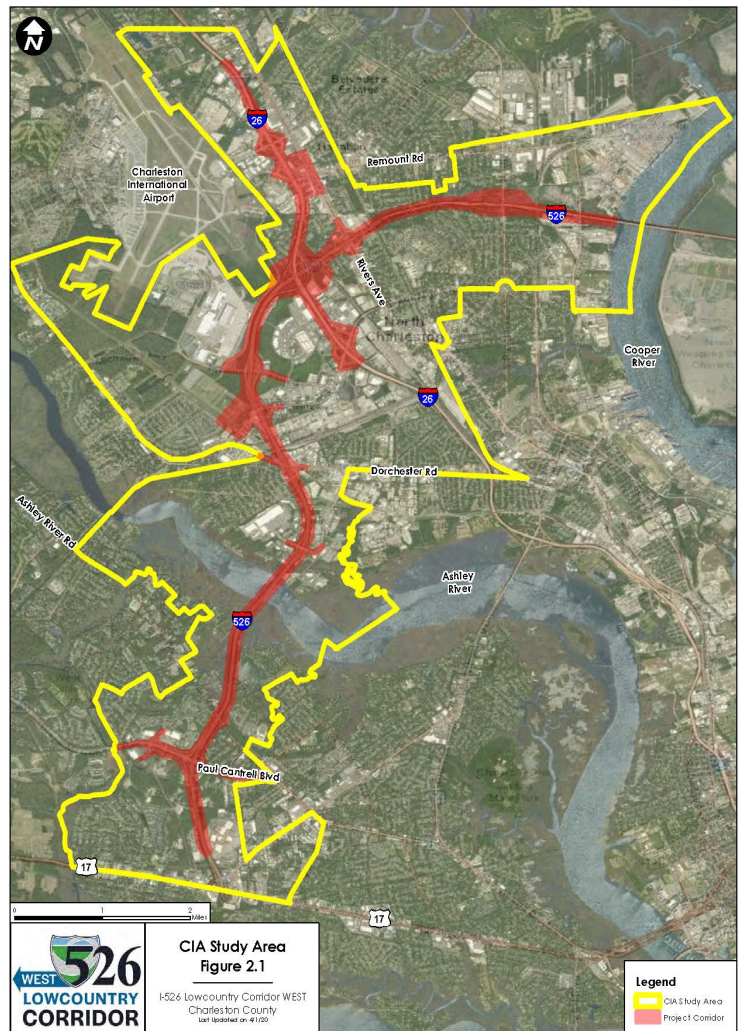


Figure 2.1: CIA Study Area

interstate. “Disproportionate impacts” refer to situations where there exists significantly higher and more adverse health and environmental effects on minority populations, low-income populations or indigenous peoples. **Without mitigation, the anticipated displacements are considered disproportionately high and adverse.**

2.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

The construction of I-526 in the 1980’s resulted in the bisection of neighborhoods and disruption of community cohesion. The original construction of I-26 impacted 26 residences in Highland Terrace along with 22 residences, three businesses, and one church in Liberty Park. The construction of I-526 impacted 16 residential structures (12 single-family homes, two apartments, two mobile homes), and 12 businesses. These previous relocations are seen in Figure 2.2 below. This physical barrier divided communities and disrupted existing community cohesion. Additional cumulative effects are anticipated to communities along the I-526 corridor. Further residential displacements associated with the proposed project serve to further separate these communities.

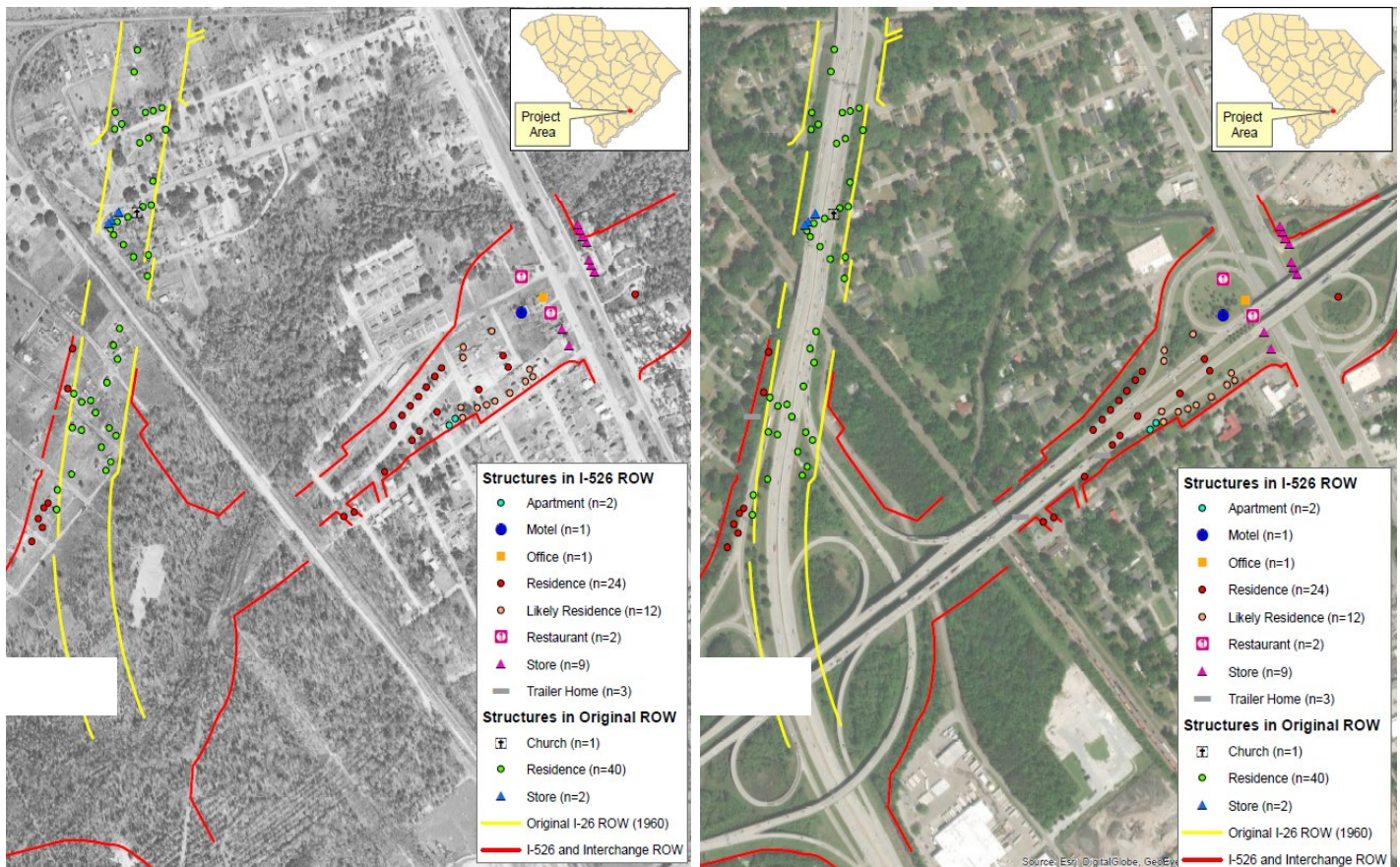


Figure 2.2: Past Impacts of I-526 and I-26

3.0 OVERVIEW OF MITIGATION EFFORTS IN PROGRESS

3.1 COMMUNITY CENTER/RECREATIONAL FACILITY MITIGATION

SCDOT sent letters of interest on March 19, 2020 to nine property owners in the impacted EJ neighborhoods to gauge potential interest in the sale of their homes or vacant/under-developed properties. SCDOT is interested in these properties for use as locations for replacement community center(s), recreational facilities, and/or pocket parks. The properties of interest are identified in Figure 3.1 below.

SCDOT is in the process of following up with these property owners to discuss potential opportunities to purchase their land for mitigation. If the project team is not successful in acquiring any of these ‘first round’ properties, additional letters will be sent out to other property owners in the EJ neighborhoods. The project team has prepared a desktop screening of the properties to identify wetlands, floodplains, lidar or topography of potential properties, and draft recreational facility drawings to share with interested property owners.



Figure 3.1: Vacant or underdeveloped parcels identified by the project team as potential recreation facility replacement parcels

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY MITIGATION FEEDBACK

On March 7, 2020, the project team hosted a workshop with the CAC members to discuss possible mitigation ideas that could be implemented in their neighborhoods by the I-526 LCC WEST project. This workshop was an opportunity to gather information that would assist in structuring replacement community centers and the desired recreational amenities, as well as discuss other forms of potential mitigation. The ideas voiced by the CAC are grouped by the Community Impact Mitigation pillars depicted in the image to the right and are detailed below.

Community Cohesion ideas include:

- Cross-cultural activities that engage the entire neighborhood
- Community gardens
- Neighborhood Clean-Up Day / Adopt-a-Street

Community Enhancement ideas include:

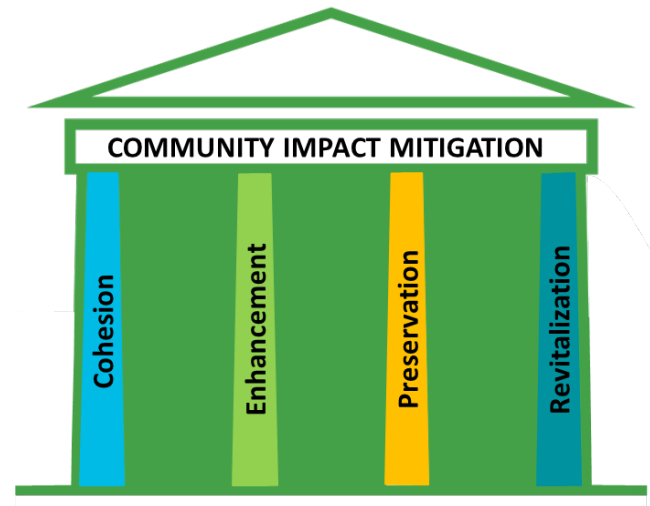
- Community centers as a structural foundation for community cohesion (e.g. a safe place for neighborhood kids to play)
- Possible pedestrian bridge across Filbin Creek to improve a connectivity to the proposed recreational facility
- Sidewalks with curbs

Community Preservation ideas include:

- Traffic calming infrastructure (like speed humps)
- Sidewalks
- Stormwater drainage
- Streetlights

Community Revitalization ideas include:

- Remove or renovate boarded up or abandoned housing
- Support small businesses/neighborhood businesses
- Explore rezoning opportunities



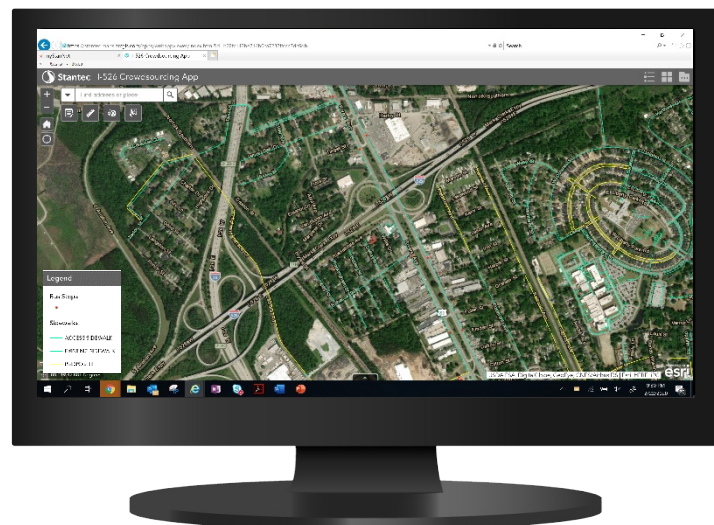
Areas with infrastructure needs are shown in the comment layer on the **ArcGIS Online Viewer**

[HERE](#)

Click "ArcGIS login"

Username: 1784_stantec

Password: Stantec1784



3.3 SOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The CAC and other EJ neighborhood residents that participated in Community Drop-In Meetings, Public Information Meeting, and visits to the Community Office were asked to participate in a Social Needs Survey and rank the importance of, and satisfaction with, current services and programs. A total of 47 EJ neighborhood residents participated in the survey. All categories were considered important, with residents generally unsatisfied with current services and programs. The survey results show how residents rank the 25 social need categories included in the survey. **Top social needs priorities include infrastructure needs related to stormwater management, bike/pedestrian facilities, and quality affordable housing followed by services for seniors and youth.**

SOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT: RANKED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Adequate stormwater management | 14) Adequate public transportation and facilities |
| 2) Adequate sidewalks/bicycle facilities | 15) City's response to requests related to public services |
| 3) Availability of quality housing | 16) Availability of employment-assistance services |
| 4) Availability of affordable housing | 17) Availability of nearby medical services |
| 5) Availability of agencies providing services for seniors | 18) Parks and recreation facilities |
| 6) Availability of agencies providing services for youth | 19) Employment opportunities |
| 7) Quality of teaching at schools | 20) Availability of opportunities for small businesses |
| 8) Well-lit streets/sidewalks | 21) Quality of daycare centers |
| 9) Appearance of neighbors' homes | 22) Ability to open a small business |
| 10) Safety of schools | 23) Emergency services response times (ambulance, police, fire) |
| 11) Availability of youth employment opportunities | 24) Availability of affordable daycare centers |
| 12) Availability of supervised after-school youth activities | 25) Garbage collection frequency |
| 13) Availability of good grocery stores | |

4.0 CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT MOVING FORWARD

4.1 PARTICIPATE IN LISTENING SESSIONS WITH THE CAC

During several CAC meetings, members have expressed their desire to meet with representatives of the City to voice concerns, address expectations, and verify a spirit of cooperation with implementing relevant portions of the forthcoming mitigation plan. Meeting with the CAC will not only help build trust with the impacted communities, but will also provide an opportunity for the City to hear directly from constituents engaged in project mitigation discussions.

The CAC has identified specific feedback to be relayed to the City, specifically related to replacement recreational facilities. Their feedback includes:

- Full time staffing at the proposed Community Center with regular hours posted
- Readily accessible restrooms
- Consistent open "community play" hours at convenient times for residents
- A weekly programming/activity calendar that prioritizes programs for community seniors and youth such as meeting spaces, youth lunch programs, health/wellness programs and tennis associations

- Local resident priority for staffing needs
 - This item would serve to increase community cohesion and provide an economic benefit to the community
- Local resident priority for event space
 - For example, discounted fees for neighborhood residents and minimizing city league sports/activities that often take up event space slots

4.2 MEET MONTHLY WITH THE SCDOT PROJECT TEAM

To meet the project timeline and keep the City involved at every step of the community mitigation efforts, the project team would like to request regular coordination meetings. These meetings would be a vital part in ensuring continued communication and involvement in the project.

SCDOT would like to identify specific Parks and Recreation Department staff and other City staff members to stay involved with these meetings as the project team continues to discuss community facility mitigation and implementation.

4.3 PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

The replacement community center facility, pocket parks, and other infrastructure or program-related mitigation will not have long-term success without intergovernmental coordination and cooperation. SCDOT mitigation for this project would provide for resources, land, and facilities, but agreements with the City will need to be developed related to mitigation implementation/operations and maintenance/or other City commitments.

4.4 FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Zoning and Future Land Use Designations

- Duplexes, mobile homes, and apartments options to facilitate a potential land trust
- Review housing options (i.e. auxiliary dwellings, microhomes) and any needed UDO change(s)
- Future land use designation for Russelldale - Light Industrial

Potential to Utilize “Complete Streets” Concepts

- Prioritization of bike/ped needs within neighborhoods and along transit routes
- Discuss proposed sidewalk projects in the vicinity of EJ neighborhoods

Filbin Creek Multiuse Path

- Past Ferndale Mobile Home Park and across Rivers Avenue
- Path could provide connectivity with new recreational facilities proposed in the Liberty Park and Russelldale neighborhoods
- Possible pedestrian footbridge over Filbin Creek

5.0 SCHEDULE, MILESTONES & GOALS

5.1 PROJECT MILESTONES

Overall project milestones can be seen in Figure 5.1.

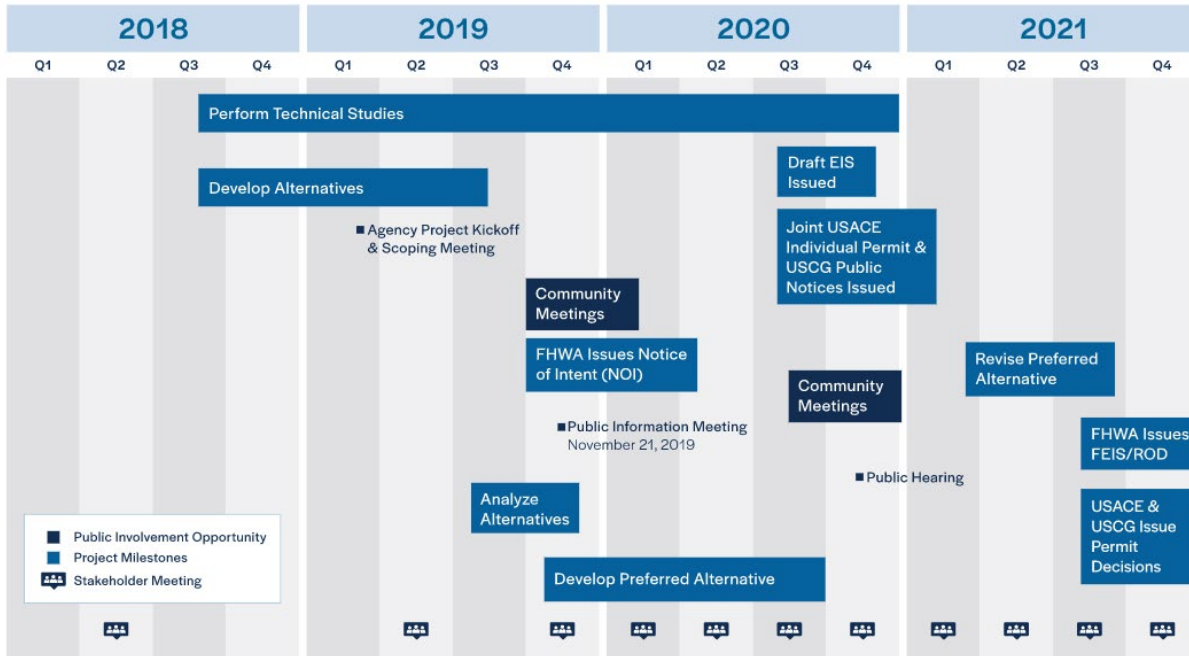


Figure 5.1: Project Milestones

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

A Community Impact Assessment is under development as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which is to be finalized in Fall 2020. Because proposed mitigation is a consideration when evaluating a project’s overall impact on EJ communities, the Community Mitigation Plan is a vital component to the EJ impact assessment process. Coordination with the City will facilitate the development of the Community Mitigation Plan through the development of specific actions for each entity.

5.3 SECTION 4(F) AND SECTION 6(F) REQUIREMENTS

City-owned parcels are being considered for use to construct a replacement facility for potential impacts to the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center and Russelldale Community Center. The replacement facilities would mitigate project impacts in accordance with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Mitigation for impacts to both facilities are being addressed in a Section 4(f) Evaluation which is being developed concurrent to the Draft EIS. A stand-alone Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared in accordance with Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to address impacts to the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center. As such, City coordination will be instrumental to resolving details related to property acquisition and long-term ownership and operation of the replacement facilities.

Date: 6/16/2020
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Location: Microsoft Teams (virtual)
Purpose: I-526 LCC WEST CAC Listening Session with the City of North Charleston

| Attendees: | Name | Organization |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Allyson All | City of North Charleston |
| | Ray Anderson | City of North Charleston |
| | Margaret Duffy | City of North Charleston |
| | Gwen Moultrie | City of North Charleston |
| | Carolyn Varner | Community Advisory Council |
| | Gilbert Reeves | Community Advisory Council |
| | Jeanaris Bannister | Community Advisory Council |
| | Doris Twiggs | Community Advisory Council |
| | Geneva Swett | Community Advisory Council |
| | Angela Anderson | Community Advisory Council |
| | Ruth Mae Whitney | Community Advisory Council |
| | Earl Muhammad | Community Advisory Council |
| | Tina Baxley | Community Advisory Council |
| | Jamelle Ellis | Empowerment Strategies |
| | Chad Long | SC Department of Transportation |
| | Joy Riley | SC Department of Transportation |
| | Shane Belcher | Federal Highway Administration |
| | Yolonda Jordan | Federal Highway Administration |
| | Pamela Foster | Federal Highway Administration |
| | Clay Middleton | Maximum Consulting |
| | Rick Day | Stantec |
| | Ryan White | Stantec |
| | Amy Sackaroff | Stantec |
| | Hannah Clements | Stantec |
| | LaTonya Derrick | Stantec |

Dr. Ellis – welcome, thanks, introductions, objectives

Recreational Facilities and Programs

J. Banister

- Computer classes, games, recreation and others are important for the facility
- Who will be using this center? 4 communities? North Charleston has the facilities on Remount Road.

Dr. Ellis – access is very important

C. Varner

- Build a positive relationship with members of their multi-ethnic community
- Want to reach and educate people, personal development
- When they have sports, she wants it to build positive relationships among the children
- The senior community needs programs for health and wellness

D. Twiggs

- Key person as a staffer who can help coordinate schedule and activities such as after school programs
- Leave open and adequate times so the community can see the benefit and enjoy it together

Dr Ellis

- Community cohesion has been a main focus for this group – how do we improve it?
- Programming is a key point in bringing the young people and seniors together
- Staffing the center with people who live in the community, specifically someone who has a vested interest in building programs that facilitate or increase cohesion
- Integrating a cultural component when employing

E. Muhammad

- Employment opportunities helps cohesion – role models for the youth
- You can always find qualified people in a neighborhood, you don't have to go outside the neighborhood. Make that a last effort resource.

G. Swett

- If we have easy access for community members, it will help bridge the gaps in our neighborhoods
- Our children are turned away from current community centers, we want structured hours
- Community pride and unity will make the community a better place – clean ups, place for the kids to go

Dr Ellis

- You may hear some themes of culture and services because the CAC understands it is more than just infrastructure

Ryan talks through Community Center concepts

J. Bannister

- Do we have a plan B for property?

A. Sackaroff

- Yes, we have talked to some privately owned parcel owners as a back-up. We will update the CAC once we get further along, hopefully in the next few weeks.

C. Varner

- Is it possible that the parcel of land can be a whole lot smaller?

A. Sackaroff

- The initial thought was to have one larger parcel since we are taking two community centers. We have to comply with some regulations, but we are looking at different privately owned parcels. I would be interested to hear why you think a smaller parcel would be more effective.

J. Bannister

- I really can't see a building at the Highland Terrace parcel – there isn't enough room

Public Safety

C. Varner

- Streetlights – lights are 300 ft apart and our dilemma is that the streets are so dark, especially with tree limbs. We would like to add more lights.

Dr. Ellis

- Residents want a feeling of protection – courtesy officers would be welcome

J. Bannister

- We would like to see patrolling on a constant basis, friendly communication with everyone

E. Muhammad

- Foot patrol is also encouraged so it doesn't look like the officers are scouting. Foot patrol allows face to face interaction, so people can have good interactions with police.

D. Twiggs

- It does something for a community when the police is a part of the community and not just for emergencies. If you are there with us and working together it lends itself to a friendly atmosphere.
- It could also help with traffic calming

A. Anderson

- The police used to do this and it was a good thing. They need to start again, it helps with overall communication
- There are also no speed limit signs in Russelldale

J. Bannister

- The City never came back to put the signs back up after adding sidewalks

C. Varner

- I believe that we need cameras at the beginning of the community or near stop signs – not sure how to accomplish this, but feel like we need it. It would also curb people from stealing.
- Maybe doorbell cameras?

J. Bannister

- The three way stop on Taylor – people just don't stop at the stop signs. They use this area as a drag strip. I got a speeding ticket in that same area 50 years ago, but the patrolling has stopped. Many trucks and cars are doing this.

C. Varner

- I am so concerned if a child runs into the street, they will be killed

A. Anderson

- Rebecca Street speeding is bad at all times of the day. The bus stop has kids out there and the speeding needs to stop

G. Swett

- Piedmont and Railroad too

J. Bannister

- Speed humps or bumps would slow people down tremendously

L. Derrick

- A lot of these issues are related to the replacement facilities – these concerns are not random. The whole session has been called a listening session, but we want to encourage the city to make a comment or ask a question

R. Anderson

- These issues are common to many neighborhoods in North Charleston. I have been taking notes and signs are not very hard to do. There is an opportunity here that the neighborhoods can become a better place to live. We will need to digest but thank you so much to the CAC for their effort and care for their community.

Stormwater

C. Varner

- I called several places in the City and had standing water in my neighbors yard. DOT did come out, but they discovered they could not work on it because it was a City problem. The City did a great job working with the drainage line and sewage job. I am well pleased and it's all because of the CAC meeting and pointing me in the right direction

G. Swett

- I am a long time Ferndale resident, Railroad and Harper have bad drainage. Because they don't have sidewalks, the dirt causes cars to get stuck and it looks so bad. Hoping to clean the ditches and drains to help with this issue.

A. Anderson

- When it rains, the corner of Rebecca and Rivers has a standing river.

R. White

- Livability plan will help us address stormwater and connectivity plan

Community Appearance

D. Twiggs

- We don't want the City to think we are just dumping with a lot of stuff, but we felt we would be remised if we didn't bring these topics up. Other than the safety issue, we know we will need your help with the community appearance maintenance. I would like to feel safe and enjoy walking through the neighborhood.
- The end of Deacon Street is overgrown and was once a dumping ground. If we could get a community day to clean up, that would be great. We want to make the neighborhood look nice. There are people who do not drive and have to walk through the neighborhood – it's just not safe! We would appreciate any help from the city to maintain common areas.
- Opportunity for the relationship to be stronger with the City

G. Swett

- In order for the community to have that appearance, the community has to want to work together. The community center will give us that foundation to become a closer community. This is an opportunity for betterment

D. Twiggs

- Thank you to North Charleston for sending out someone to Deacon Street to assess washout. The trees were pulling the topsoil and the City had a great response

J. Bannister

- I would like to see adequate sidewalks throughout all 4 neighborhoods. Handrails, speed bumps, ramps, etc.

Transit/Connectivity

Dr. Ellis

- Connectivity to transit stops is vital for those without other means of transportation in these neighborhoods. Providing connectivity through sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian accommodations will help this community keep its accessibility for all residents.
- Need to work with the City and CARTA to address transit stop frequency and facilities

Community Livability Plan

Ryan and Clay explain what a Community Livability Plan is and how a partnership with the College of Charleston Riley Center for Livable Communities would work.

Closing Remarks

R. Anderson

- Requested ample notice regarding logistics (dates and times) of upcoming meetings to allow for scheduling and identifying proper City representatives to attend meetings

J. Riley

- There are a number of opportunities for which the project team may be able to identify project resources to leverage in initiating some of the challenges discussed
- SCDOT looks forward to exploring mitigation opportunities and including them in the commitments and making a difference in the community.

C. Long

- Thanked the CAC and the City for participating
- Reiterated Ray's earlier comments regarding taking each concern and picking them apart to determine how to best address them
- Thought this was the start of good dialogue

R. Anderson

- Commended community advocacy, diplomacy of SCDOT and FHWA, and positive attitude of the CAC members
- Addressed Bus Rapid Transit – reducing the number of cars on the Interstate, creating redevelopment opportunities along the corridor
- Briefly addressed challenges of convergence in and migration through North Charleston area

R. Day

- This is a significant project for the entire region. We want to get it right. That's why we are taking the time to go through the extra effort.
- Thanked everyone for their participation.

Date: 5/19/2020

Time: 12:30pm – 2:10pm

Location: Conference Call via Skype

Purpose: Update the City on I-526 LCC WEST progress and gather initial feedback on mitigation concepts and ideas

Attendees:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Joy Riley – SCDOT | Chad Long - SCDOT | Ray Anderson – N. Charleston |
| Adam MacConnell – N. Charleston | Charles Drayton – N. Charleston | Mike Dalrymple – N. Charleston |
| Doyle Best – N. Charleston | Allyson All – N. Charleston | Robert Fludd – N. Charleston |
| Shane Belcher – FHWA | Pamela Foster – FHWA | Yolonda Jordan – FHWA |
| Rick Day – Stantec | LaTonya Derrick – Stantec | Ryan White – Stantec |
| Amy Sackaroff – Stantec | Hannah Clements – Stantec | |

MEETING MINUTES:

- Draft Community Mitigation Plan - Fall 2020
- Refining recommendations for mitigation
- J. Riley
 - No parcels for the replacement recreation centers have been secured to date.
 - Indoor facility at the proposed Filbin Creek Community Center models the Ferndale Community Center and includes classrooms and office space
 - Potential exterior features include a bridge and greenway
- R. Anderson
 - Can you share the CAC Membership with the City?
 - J. Riley: Yes....we will provide prior to the meeting
 - R. Anderson: Are you far enough along to know the participation split between the City and SCDOT
 - J. Riley: SCDOT will purchase the property and construct the facility. City would leverage some of the properties that are city owned. Would ask the city to take ownership and commit to future staffing, operations, and maintenance.
- A. McConnell
 - City received NFWS grant to look at Filbin Creek. Impacts from previous discussion. Will need to discuss with SCDOT.... City owns 90% of land adjacent to Filbin Creek. Grant was received due to previous hurricanes and will be used to assess habitat, water quality, flooding, and public accessibility – mostly planning needs.
 - J. Riley: We have a lot of technical information. It may be easier/better to give mitigation money to a future city project for mitigation – such as Filbin Creek greenway extension.
- D. Best
 - Will review with staff and provide questions/comments prior to the next SCDOT/N. Charleston Meeting.
- R. Anderson
 - What was the community's concerns with indoor facilities?

- J. Riley: Noted concern with elderly residents and their ability to have events in the summertime. CAC is also concerned about not having enough access for community residents to enjoy open play time due to the City programming the space for recreational activities. Noted need for the listening session. City should consider being prepared to discuss the feasibility of these requests with the CAC.
- R. Anderson: Is there a concern about floor surface for games or spectator space?
- J. Riley: Noted the need for “betterment.” Noted concern for access for residents versus outside renters. Noted need to balance renters as they defray the costs
- R. Anderson: What is the extent of the roadway improvements – complete streets?
- R. Day: It would be to the extent of the communities impacted, not just within the ROW.
- J. Riley: Noted improvements to sidewalks and drainage would result in more impacts. Not aware of all the City of N. Charleston Plans. Need get clarity on what's happening on Rivers Ave, transit stops, important connections, pedestrian scale lighting, sidewalks. Target most important connection points and improve those as a part of the mitigation plan.
- R. Day: Connections to parks, transit stations, etc. with convenience and safety in mind.
- J. Riley: Technical Work Sessions may be needed to review and provide technical input on the various mitigation requests. Important connections, drainage improvements, Filbin Creek.
- A number of entities noting their desire to participate in the restoration of the Filbin Creek Watershed. Enables mitigation in the actual watershed.
- J. Riley: Working with BRT to see how connections across Rivers Avenue will be developed.
- A. McConnell: Effort to connect pedestrian traffic. Neighborhoods are restricted due to highways. Questioned connection across I-26---Possibly extend Taylor across to aviation?
- J. Riley: Would require boring under I-26 and disruptions traffic and the CAC has not expressed an interest in this topic. Would require federal permissions.
- R. Day: We have pondered pedestrian access here, but we can look into it further
- D. Best:
 - Consider looking at bigger indoor community buildings at Russelldale and Highland Terrace, with the possibility of sacrificing the full court basketball (half court instead).
 - J. Riley: As a last resort, we could also look at using excess ROW for the basketball courts. Do you have a recommendation for building size?
 - Doyle: Will provide follow-up comments. 800 sf is not large enough for post-COVID19 environment (summer camps and after school care)
- A. McConnell: Have you identified additional parcels for affordable housing?
 - J. Riley: Monitoring available properties various uses. With Housing Authority.....targeting 130 low income tax credit units for mitigation. Would use NOFA and allow contractors to bid. Thinking developers will help identify larger properties adjacent to project corridor. Need to meet with the City of North Charleston to discuss how displaced residents will get priority. Noted special waiting list for individuals impacted by federal actions for when low income property comes available so they can get priority. CAC members expressed desire to see duplexes and single-family homes. Framework will be prepared in the next few months.
- J. Riley: CAC/N Charleston listening Session --- City of N. Charleston is open?
- R. Anderson: Yes, let’s evaluate dates....how many folks are to participate?
- J. Riley: Probably 30 people (CAC including consultants/staff/FHWA)
- R. Anderson: Will plan for 50 attendees...including City Staff? Which day of the week is preferred--Mid to Late June.
 - J. Riley: Saturday morning or 5:30 in the evenings-----except for Wednesdays.
 - R. Day: Need to set up recurring work session.
 - A. McConnell: will provide Mitigation Grant, Plans outside of Comprehensive Plan.

- D. Best: Review of Plans.....minimum building size.
- J. Riley: Set up late June N. Charleston/SCDOT Technical Group Meeting. Sidewalk connections, park and community center refinements...smaller group meeting.
 - R. Anderson: Later part of the week. **June 24 @ 2:30 pm --- verify date. In person meeting. Community Office**

ACTION ITEMS:

| Assigned To | Description | Due Date |
|---------------|--|---------------|
| L. Derrick | Send the City a list of the CAC members | Complete |
| H. Clements | Send SCDOT/N Chas meeting invitation for June 24 | Complete |
| D. Best | Send comments on rec facility renderings, including recommendation on indoor facility square footage | Prior to 6/24 |
| A. McConnell | Send NFWS mitigation grant information and City plans outside of the Comprehensive Plan | Prior to 6/24 |
| R. Anderson | Submit 2 potential dates for a CAC Listening Session at the Coliseum | ASAP |
| SCDOT/Stantec | Research connection under I-26, Taylor to Aviation? | Prior to 6/24 |

DISTRIBUTION:

Meeting Invitees

Date: 6/24/2020

Time: 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Location: Conference Call via Skype

Purpose: Review replacement community center concepts, refine layouts based off requested amenities and programs, and address connectivity issues

Attendees:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Joy Riley – SCDOT | Chad Long – SCDOT | Shane Belcher – FHWA |
| Pam Foster – FHWA | Ray Anderson – N. Charleston | Allyson All – N. Charleston |
| Megan Clark – N. Charleston | Eileen Duffy – N. Charleston | Gwen Moultrie – N. Charleston |
| Adam MacConnell – N. Charleston | Doyle Best – N. Charleston | Rich Day – Stantec |
| LaTonya Derrick – Stantec | Amy Sackaroff – Stantec | Hannah Clements – Stantec |
| Jenny Horne – Stantec | Ian Duncan – Stantec | Ryan White - Stantec |

MEETING SUMMARY:

Project Schedule Overview

- SCDOT:
 - Project mitigation will be implemented before construction; therefore, right-of-way activities will not begin before 2022.
- Stantec:
 - Goal is to conduct Technical Review Committee (TRC) meetings every two weeks. The need to continue to refine various mitigation components and incorporate them into the Mitigation Plan is driving the coordination need. We would like to conduct an additional Technical Review Committee Meeting before the July 11, 2020 Community Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting # 10.
 - TRC Meetings will continue to be scheduled into the fall to ensure commitments and mitigation items are refined as more detailed information becomes available.

Filbin Creek Community Center

- Stantec
 - Reviewed a map showing all the properties that have been identified as potential Section 6(f) replacement properties. Noted the USACE preliminary jurisdictional determination identified wetlands on Parcel #26 (2313 Elder Avenue), which was initially identified as the location for the proposed Filbin Creek Community Center. As such, the proposed location of the Filbin Creek Community Center has been moved to Parcel #30.
 - Noted the CAC would like a variety of youth and elder programs to be conducted at the Filbin Creek Community Center. Expressed the desire to maximize classroom size in order to accommodate the various programs.
 - Section 6(f) requires that the exact amenities located at the impacted facility be included in the replacement facility. As such, an outdoor basketball court is required even if indoor basketball court space is included in the community center.

- The City of North Charleston (or “City”)
 - There are no specific square footage requirements for community centers. Programming and amenities along with considerations for COVID precautions (as they continue to develop) are significant factors for space considerations.
 - Once there is a better understanding of the specific programs desired by the community, the structural sizing can be determined.
 - Because of the cost implications, the City needs the mitigation requests to be “clean and clear” including specifics per age group.
 - The City would need to conduct a demographic study to determine what the long-term (7 – 8 years) program needs would be. Additional conversations with the City’s Finance Department to discuss expenses for long-term operation and maintenance.
- SCDOT
 - There is opportunity to coordinate with USACE to reassess Parcel #26 which may result in a reduction in the wetland acreage on the parcel and identify more land on the parcel that is suitable for residential construction.

Highland Terrace-Liberty Park/Russelldale Pocket Parks

- Stantec
 - During previous discussions, City staff noted the size of the enclosed buildings on the pocket parks (approximately 800 – 900 square feet) would be inadequate for current programs.
 - The CAC noted the desire to exclude enclosed building space at the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park and Russelldale pocket parks in order to maximize the amenities to be included at the Filbin Creek Community Center.
- SCDOT
 - Parcel #34 (bounded by Rebecca Street and Rockingham Street) was being considered for the Russelldale Community pocket park. The parcel was sold to a developer and SCDOT is currently conducting title research to determine if there is still an opportunity to acquire the property. Requested help from the City to identify parcels in Russelldale where residents may be willing to voluntarily relocate, or the owners may be willing to sell.
- City of North Charleston
 - It is the City’s intent to continue offering after-school programs at as many sites as possible. Therefore, it would be beneficial to include enclosed buildings at these two locations as well.
 - Elimination of the half-basketball court included in Conceptual Plan Version 2 of the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Pocket Park might create an opportunity for a larger enclosed building (Amenity 5, currently depicted as a 900-sf structure). The proposed conceptual structure could be reoriented parallel to the northernmost property boundary and use more of the footprint of the proposed half-basketball court. A larger building would provide for a wider range of uses.
 - The City questioned the minimum replacement requirements for the impacts to the Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) resources.

ACTION ITEM: *Stantec to develop and provide to the City of North Charleston a list of impacts to the 6(f) and 4(f) resources and the replacement requirements per each regulatory framework.*

ACTION ITEM: *Stantec will re-evaluate the site layout of the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center based off the recommendation to eliminate the half basketball court to create a larger enclosed building.*

ACTION ITEM: *The City of North Charleston will coordinate with its Code Enforcement Division to determine if there are any properties with ongoing or unaddressed violations, abandoned or condemned structures, etc.*

Hiring of Local Staff at Community Centers.

- Stantec
 - The CAC has requested that staff with a connection to the surrounding communities be hired at the new community centers.
- City of North Charleston
 - The City of North Charleston has hired and currently has on staff at its community centers residents of the neighborhoods in which the community centers are located. Standard hiring practices will be continued for both part-time and full-time positions.
 - Noted residing in the adjacent communities could not be listed as a “*requirement*” but could be included as a “*preference*” for hiring.

ACTION ITEM: SCDOT to provide language commonly found in State Agency job postings related to qualifications, i.e. “...*preferred but not required*” to encourage submission of applications from residents of the impacted communities.

Community Center Connectivity

- Stantec
 - Safe bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between the community centers and the surrounding communities are extremely important to the CAC members. Improved sidewalks, streetlights, and a connection to the proposed Filbin Creek Greenway have been noted as priorities. Additionally, improved crosswalks and traffic calming measures were identified as requests.
 - The area consists of a combination of city-owned and state-owned streets.
 - Stantec has been tasked by SCDOT to develop “Infrastructure Focus Area Mapping” which will be used to overlay requested infrastructure improvements with existing or planned infrastructure improvements. Requested improvements will also be added to the I-526 Online GIS Viewer tool. Stantec will provide the link to the Online GIS Viewer to City staff.
- City of North Charleston
 - Right-of-way width will be a challenge to adding sidewalks to some of the neighborhood streets. Sidewalks are required for new neighborhood streets.
 - The City is currently transitioning to LED streetlights. Expenses of street light maintenance are approximately \$2.5M.

SCDOT

- Drainage related to sidewalk improvements will be a challenge.
- The bridge along Dorothy Williams Boulevard does not currently facilitate sidewalks.
- The pedestrian bridge over Filbin Creek should be relocated to the southern end of Parcel #30. It would enable SCDOT to utilize proposed I-526 right-of-way and provide improved access between the proposed Filbin Creek Community Center and Russelldale via Bryant Street under the elevated I-526. There may be opportunities for drainage improvements along Margaret Drive near the south end of Parcel #30.
- The majority of traffic calming will be along City streets, thus SCDOT will lead the traffic calming studies.
- Further discussion of streetlights will be held at a future Technical Review Committee Meeting. Requested street light locations will be included on the infrastructure mapping.

ACTION ITEM: Stantec to provide the City of North Charleston with credentials to access the 526 GIS Crowdsourcing site.

ACTION ITEM: The City of North Charleston will discuss with its Finance Department expenses associated with additional streetlights in the impacted neighborhood.

Key Takeaways

- The City needs to know which specific programs are requested in order to identify square footage and amenity requirements and to determine long-term funding commitments.
- The City currently works to hire local residents in many of their community centers. It is unlikely that they can make being a community resident a *requirement*. However, they may be able to note being a community resident as a *preference for hiring*.
- The City would like to continue to run as many after-school programs as possible, so including indoor facilities at the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park and Russelldale locations would be a benefit.
- Consider eliminating the half-basketball court at the Liberty Park/Highland Terrace Community Center in order to construct a larger building.
- The City will work with SCDOT to identify parcels that could be used for replacement housing or community centers.

ACTION ITEMS:

| Assigned To | Description | Status |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Stantec | Develop and provide to the City of North Charleston a list of impacts to the 6(f) and 4(f) resources and the replacement requirements per each regulatory framework. | In-progress |
| Stantec | <i>Stantec will re-evaluate the site layout of the Highland Terrace-Liberty Park Community Center based off the recommendation to eliminate the half basketball court to create a larger enclosed building.</i> | In-progress. Details to be provided at next Technical Review Meeting |
| City of North Charleston | <i>Coordinate with its Code Enforcement Division to determine if there are any properties with ongoing or unaddressed violations, abandoned or condemned structures, etc.</i> | On-going |
| SCDOT | Provide language commonly found in State Agency job postings related to qualifications, i.e. "...preferred but not required" to encourage submission of applications from residents of the impacted communities. | In-progress Details to be provided at next Technical Review Meeting |
| Stantec | Provide the City of North Charleston with credentials to access the 526 GIS Crowdsourcing site. | Provided in email on 6/25/2020 |
| City of North Charleston | Discuss with its Finance Department expenses associated with additional streetlights in the impacted neighborhood. | In-progress. Details to be provided at next Technical Review Meeting |
| City of North Charleston | Evaluate size of multi-use buildings based on requested program requirements | CAC to provide more detail regarding requested programs |

DISTRIBUTION:

Meeting Invitees

Date: July 15, 2020
Time: 1:30pm – 2:30pm
Location: Conference Call via Skype
Purpose: The purpose of the meeting was to continue to discuss and refine the components of the Environmental Justice Community Mitigation Plan related to the replacement community and recreation centers. The focus for the meeting was to receive comments from the City of North Charleston on the Draft Environmental Justice Community Mitigation Plan components.

Attendees:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Ray Anderson – City of North Charleston | Joy Riley - SCDOT |
| Megan Clay – City of North Charleston | Chad Long - SCDOT |
| Charles Drayton – City of North Charleston | Rick Day - Stantec |
| Doyle Best – City of North Charleston | Amy Sackaroff - Stantec |
| Mike Dalrymple – City of North Charleston | Ryan White – Stantec |
| Jeffery Belcher - FHWA | LaTonya Derrick, Stantec |
| | Hannah Clements, Stantec |

MEETING SUMMARY

- Stantec provided a review of the feedback received during CAC Meeting #10 regarding the programs and amenities requested to be included in the intergovernmental agreements related to the replacement community and recreation centers.
- Stantec reviewed updated conceptual renderings for the Highland Terrace Community Pocket Park and the proposed replacement community center.
 - The City of North Charleston noted a preference to minimize the number of community/recreation centers that they would need to staff. City staff noted that multiple communities could be served by one large, centralized community center.
 - The Highland Terrace Community Center serves as a voting precinct. If the Highland Terrace Community Center does not include an enclosed building, the voting precinct would need to be relocated. Stantec will coordinate with the Charleston County Board of Elections to determine the impacts of relocating the voting precinct from the Highland Terrace Community Center.
 - SCDOT recommended the removal of the multi-use path from the south side of Filbin Creek.
 - SCDOT prefers to remove playground facilities and parking from under the elevated structures. SCDOT would not be liable for damages to vehicles parked under bridges.
- Stantec reviewed the draft commitment text for the facilities, program and amenities, and connectivity and bicycle and pedestrian safety commitments.
 - The City of North Charleston noted they would conduct an internal review of the commitments and provide comments at a later date. This includes a conversation with Human Resources to determine how to address the CAC’s request for preference in hiring for community residents.

CITY OF NORTH CHARLESTON COMMENTS AND RESPONSE

The City of North Charleston comments and responses to the draft commitment language is shown in the table below:

| Focus Area | City of North Charleston Comment | I 526 LCC WEST Team Response |
|---|---|--|
| DEIS Draft Commitment - Facilities: <i>Community Garden</i> | Question: Did the CAC indicate how this would run? | No detailed conversations were conducted regarding the specifics of how the community garden would be run. |
| DEIS Draft Commitment - Facilities: Educational Wetland | Question: Is this part of [stormwater] detention/retention? The city will need to understand | Yes |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Programs and Amenities: | Add the following text to the commitment: <i>The City will continue to look for qualified candidates that lie in the neighborhoods. The City will post job openings in the neighborhoods and encourage CAC/Neighborhood Councils to submit qualified applications.</i> | Revised commitment language added to the added to the EK Mitigation Plan and DEIS |
| | Revise bullet: <i>A weekly monthly programming/activity calendar that prioritizes programs for community seniors and youth such as meeting spaces, youth lunch programs, and tennis associations.</i> | Information will be updated in the EJ Mitigation Plan. |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Programs and Amenities: Volunteer opportunities | Comment: <i>Would need commitment by community to be successful with these types of programs.</i> | Noted |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Programs and Amenities: Community Garden | Comment: Need to discuss how the garden would be run. | Will need to continue to develop plan in coordination with the City of N. Charleston. |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Programs and Amenities: Educational Wetland | Comment: Is SCDOT asking the City to maintain any detention created by the project? | The educational wetland would be a part of stormwater detention for the Filbin Creek community center only. |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Connectivity & Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety: Sidewalk Improvements | Comment: Will project only look at SCDOT-maintained streets? If plan uses city-maintained streets, can state / federal dollars be used? Will need clarification on responsible part for long-term usage. | The primary focus is on SCDOT-maintained streets. There may be minor improvements along some city-owned streets. Clarification on long-term maintenance will be defined in the inter-governmental agreements. |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Connectivity & Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety: Traffic Calming | Comment: There are multiple ways to affect traffic calming? Does SCDOT have recommendation on type [of traffic calming]? Each neighborhood is distinctive and different solutions may be necessary. | SCDOT will perform a traffic calming study to determine the appropriate type of traffic calming to be implemented. |
| DEIS Draft Commitment – Connectivity & Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety: CARTA bus stop improvements | Comment: City believes this is critical for connectivity to BRT. | Agree |
| Infrastructure Focus Area Mapping - Overview Map | Comment: Scope may adjust downward depending on widths of SCDOT existing R/W. Elimination of path on southside of Filbin Creek will adjust scope. | Agree. SCDOT/Project team will continue to develop the plan to identify the level of improvements identified in the Infrastructure Focus Area Mapping. |
| Infrastructure Focus Area Mapping – Focus Area 1, 2, 3, and 4 | Comment: Data may change, depending on final direction taken. | Agree. SCDOT/Project team will continue to develop the plan to identify the level of improvements identified in the Infrastructure Focus Area Mapping. |
| | | |

ACTION ITEMS:

- SCDOT will conduct a study to determine the lighting needs along the roadways proposed to be improved as part of the community center infrastructure improvements.
- Stantec to coordinate with the Charleston County Board of Elections to determine the impacts of relocating the voting precinct from the Highland Terrace Community Center.
- Stantec to remove recreation amenities and parking from under the elevated structures.

DISTRIBUTION:

Meeting Invitees

Date: 8/19/2020
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Location: Virtual TEAMS Meeting
Purpose: Provide the City of North Charleston an update on the components of the Community Mitigation Plan and discuss the Inter-Governmental Agreements that will be needed for the project.

Attendees:

| | |
|--|---|
| Ray Anderson – City of North Charleston | Robert Fludd – City of North Charleston |
| Allison All – City of North Charleston | Gwen Moultrie – City of North Charleston |
| Charles Drayton – City of North Charleston | Mike Dalrymple – City of North Charleston |
| Doyle Best – City of North Charleston | Adam McConnell – City of North Charleston |
| Eileen Duffy – City of North Charleston | Joy Riley - SCDOT |
| Allison All – City of North Charleston | Chad Long - SCDOT |
| Jeffery Belcher - FHWA | Rick Day - Stantec |
| LaTonya Derrick, Stantec | Amy Sackaroff - Stantec |
| Hannah Clements, Stantec | Ryan White – Stantec |

MEETING SUMMARY

Review of Action Items

- Stantec provided a memorandum to the City of N. Charleston which provides an overview of the federal regulations that dictate how Environmental Justice Mitigation is being developed and applied on the project.
- Stantec provided a summary of the recreation and community center programs requests from the CAC.

Recreational Facilities Update

- Stantec:
 - SCDOT is still investigating the opportunity to construct a pocket park to replace the facilities and amenities currently located at the Russelldale Community Center, which will be impacted due to the I-526 widening. There are currently three options under considerations.
 - (1) A pocket part at the intersection of Rebecca Street and Rockingham Street;
 - (2) A pocket park in cul-de-sac of Rebecca Street, near Twitty Street; and
 - (3) Incorporating the park facilities into a parcel along Margaret Drive, adjacent to the proposed replacement community center.
 - The City has no preference regarding the location of the proposed Russelldale Pocket Park.
- SCDOT:
 - Investigating a property swap which would transfer SCDOT-owned, multi-family zoned property in Ferndale (Piedmont Avenue/Kerry Street) for the property at the corner of Rebecca and Rockingham Streets.

- Property located at the corner of Lakewood and Railroad Street was acquired for the construction of replacement housing (duplexes).
- If either of the Rebecca Street parcels can be secured, the recreation facilities along Margaret Street (as shown in the latest replacement community center rendering), would be relocated to those parcels. The connectivity improvements (proposed bridges, shared use paths, etc.) shown in the replacement community center rendering would not change. The inclusion of parking in the excess R/W instead of under the new I-526 ramps will be investigated.
- Currently negotiating an agreement with the South Carolina Housing Authority for a NOFA to developers and property owners for the construction of one hundred replacement housing units.
- The City of North Charleston: No objections to the property swap and noted that the Ferndale property is zoned R-2, which will allow for the construction of duplexes.
- City of North Charleston
 - No preference on which Russelldale site is selected for the pocket park.

Recreational Program Recommendations (CAC Survey)

- Stantec:
 - The CAC was polled to identify which existing North Charleston Parks and Recreation programs and other activities they would like to see implemented at the proposed replacement community center. The poll results and summary were included in the meeting packet. The survey results have not been discussed with the CAC yet because the August monthly meeting was postponed. Additional feedback from the CAC will be shared with the City after the CAC meeting on August 29, 2020.
 - City of North Charleston: No real concerns with the list currently provided. However, the City noted it has to be mindful of the obligations and staffing considerations related to the programs being requested.
- SCDOT:
 - SCDOT would provide funding for the design and construction of the recreation and community centers and provide funds for the equipment (chairs, computers, etc.) required to support the programs.
 - Funds for the facilities and programs would not be available until after the FEIS/ROD approved (12/2021) and the window for legal challenges has closed (mid-2022). The community center and recreation facilities will need to be completed and open for operation prior to the initiation of construct of the I-526 improvements in 2027.

Community Livability Plan

- Stantec:
 - Overall goal of a livability plan is to provide an opportunity for the communities to create a vision and build connections to identify community resources and needs. The City would be a key partner in the development of this plan.
 - TxDOT Corpus Christi Harbor Bridge Livability Plan would be a great example to read to gain a better understanding of the process.
- SCDOT
 - Could the development of the Livability Plan be beneficial or integrated into the City's planning process?

- City of North Charleston
 - Would like to the land use recommendations from the Livability Planning process.
 - Does not want to over promise through the development of the plan, but could see this document as beneficial in their planning process

UPDATE SINCE TRC MEETING #3: *SCDOT is no longer moving forward with the Community Livability Plan. SCDOT is proposing to develop a Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan which will focus on improving the physical infrastructure in the communities and infrastructure-related concerns that are not being addressed by the improvements related to connectivity to the recreation and community centers.*

Potential Infrastructure Improvements

- Stantec
 - All potential improvements shown in the infrastructure Improvement maps are derived from input from the CAC.
- SCDOT
 - SCDOT will develop these improvements between 2022 and 2027.
 - The pedestrian bridge over the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks would be included in the highway improvements phase of construction.
 - SCDOT will maintain sidewalks on DOT-owned streets but requests that the City maintain shared-use paths and sidewalks on local roads. SCDOT will construct multi-use paths along SCDOT-maintained roadways.
 - SCDOT will pay for lighting improvements but requests that the City assume maintenance and operational costs.
- City of North Charleston
 - Would like to have input on the materials used in multi-use paths.
 - SCDOT: The shared-use paths would be included in the construction package for the replacement community center.
 - The City is in the process of switching their streetlights to LED which are brighter and have a wider lighting footprint.
- SCDOT
 - Street lighting will be a component of the community enhancements related to the community center connectivity improvements.
 - Requests that the City provide insight on lighting improvements they would like to be implemented as part of the infrastructure improvement plan. The CAC has made recommendations for areas needing lighting improvements, but it will be up to the City on how many lights they can take on in the long term.
 - It is recommended that an audit of the lighting in the communities be completed to identify the lighting needs.
- Need to ensure that pedestrian improvements are connecting to where the BRT is providing crosswalks along Rivers Avenue.

ACTION ITEM: *SCDOT will task Stantec to conduct a lighting audit of the four communities in addition to the traffic calming study.*

Intergovernmental Agreements

- Stantec
 - Pages 14-15 of the meeting packet provides a crosswalk of the various mitigation items, SCDOT's proposed commitment, and the requested role of the City of North Charleston in assisting in the development or implementation of the improvements.
 - The Draft EIS is planned to be published November 2020 and Final EIS/ROD will be published December 2021. The inter-governmental agreements (IGAs) would need to be finalized by the approval of the ROD.
- SCDOT
 - The FEIS/ROD Community Mitigation Plan will layout requirements for mitigation, but the City will have control in regard to ensuring the mitigation meets the City's design standards.
 - SCDOT is seeking to develop agreements with the city to fund the design, development, construction, and equipping the mitigation items that the City would ultimately take ownership of.
 - SCDOT would provide oversight on items related to transportation. SCDOT would provide limited oversight on vertical construction items to ensure mitigation commitments are being met.
 - From a timeline perspective, SCDOT would like to have the draft IGAs submitted for legal review this fall (2020). Anticipate 3 – 6 months of review and modifications between SCDOT and the City. The final signed IGAs would need to be completed prior to the ROD.
- City of North Charleston
 - Can SCDOT provide the City an example IGA commensurate to the scale of the project.
 - The City would like to have quicker turnaround timeframes for the IGA review.
 - Will send the meeting packet to City legal staff for them to be aware of what is going to be requested from SCDOT. The City will conduct internal discussions to identify any areas of concerns regarding ownership or maintenance of the proposed mitigation items.
- SCDOT
 - The development of the IGA will need to move quickly due to the need to get community centers constructed in order to progress highway improvements.
 - We will need to follow Local Programs guidelines. City will need to be qualified to administer the project. A staff level meeting will be scheduled to go through the details once the items are further developed.
 - Preference that the City of North Charleston maintains the two pedestrian bridges (over Filbin Creek and over the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks).
 - Presenting the Community Mitigation Plan to local officials in mid-late September. Requests that the City identifies areas of concerns as soon as possible.

ACTION ITEM:

- *SCDOT Legal to begin developing the draft IGA template which will be sent to the City. SCDOT anticipates that this will take several months to complete.*
- *City of North Charleston to review IGA items noted in the meeting packet and inform SCDOT of any potential areas of concern.*

ACTION ITEMS:

| Assigned To | Description | Due Date |
|-------------|--|---------------------------|
| SCDOT | Ask SCDOT Legal Department to start a draft intergovernmental agreement template/framework to send to the City | Date to be determined |
| Stantec | Perform a streetlight audit in addition to the traffic audit | Scope development pending |
| Stantec | Additional recreational program feedback from the CAC will be shared with the City after the CAC meeting on August 29, 2020. | September 21, 2020 |
| City | Review the proposed mitigation commitments for any deal breakers | September 21, 2020 |

DISTRIBUTION:

Attendees