



# 526

# LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

*July 2021 Stakeholder Meeting*  
*Joy Riley, PE, PMP, DBIA SCDOT*



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration





# Project Background

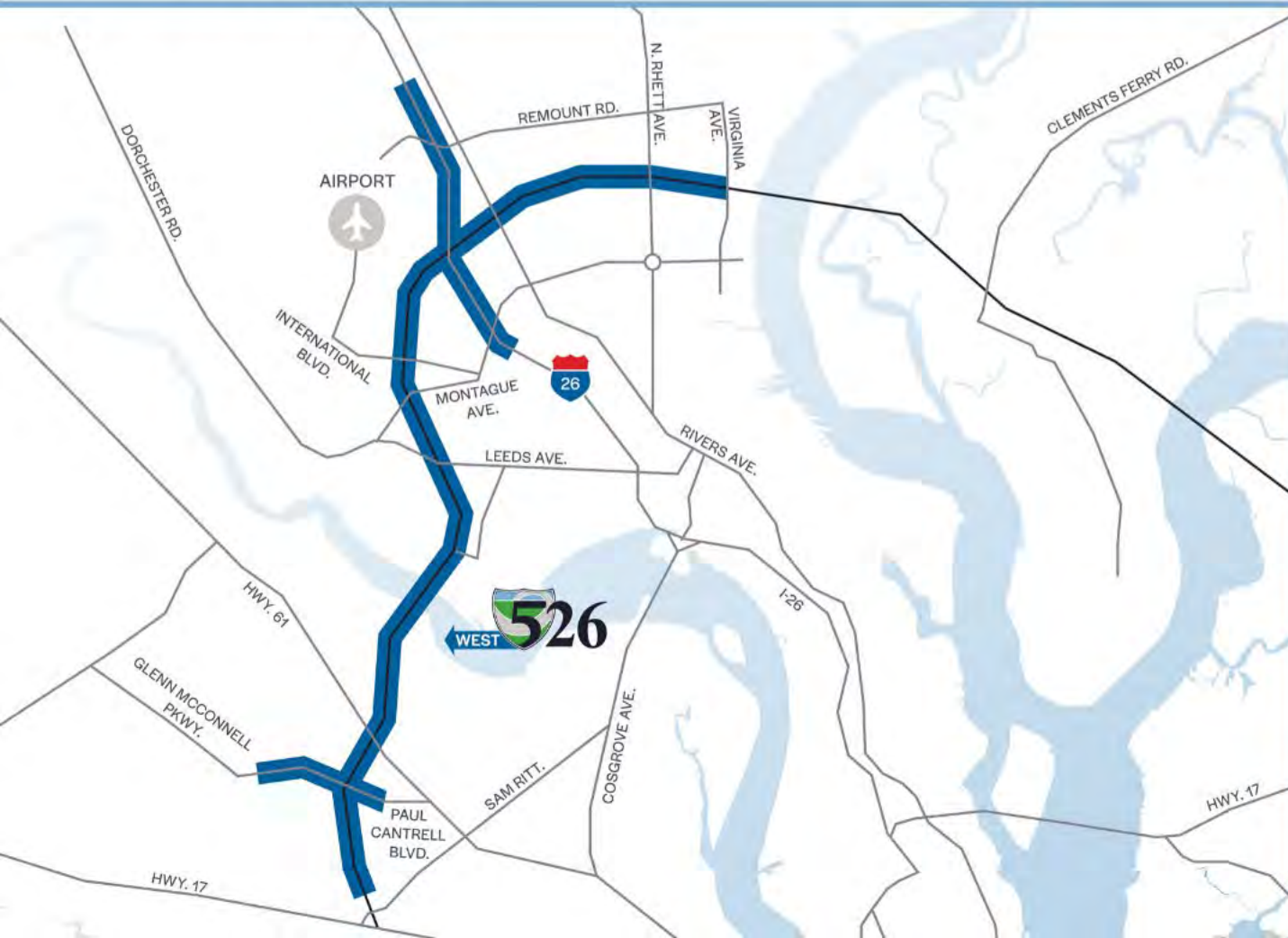
*An Environmental Impact Statement*



# WEST 526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR



WEST PROJECT



## I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

*Project Termini*

**Virginia Avenue  
North Charleston**



**Paul Cantrell Boulevard  
West Ashley**

**526 LOWCOUNTRY  
CORRIDOR**

**SCDOT**  
South Carolina Department of Transportation

# Project Purpose

*What is the reason for this project?*



*Increase Capacity* at the I-26/I-526 interchange  
and along the I-526 mainline

— thereby —

*Improving Operations* at the I-26/I-526 interchange  
and along the I-526 mainline from Virginia Avenue  
to Paul Cantrell Boulevard

# Project Need: Why?

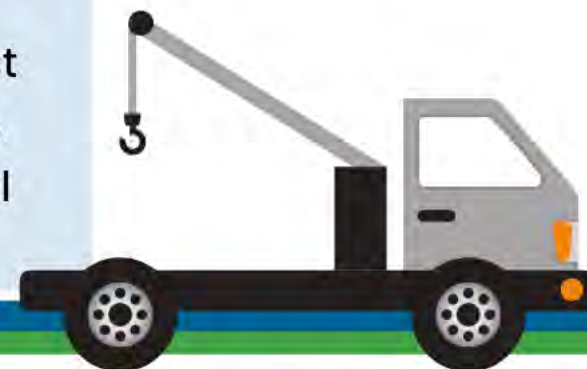


**I-526 is one of South Carolina's most congested interstate segments**

*Congestion*

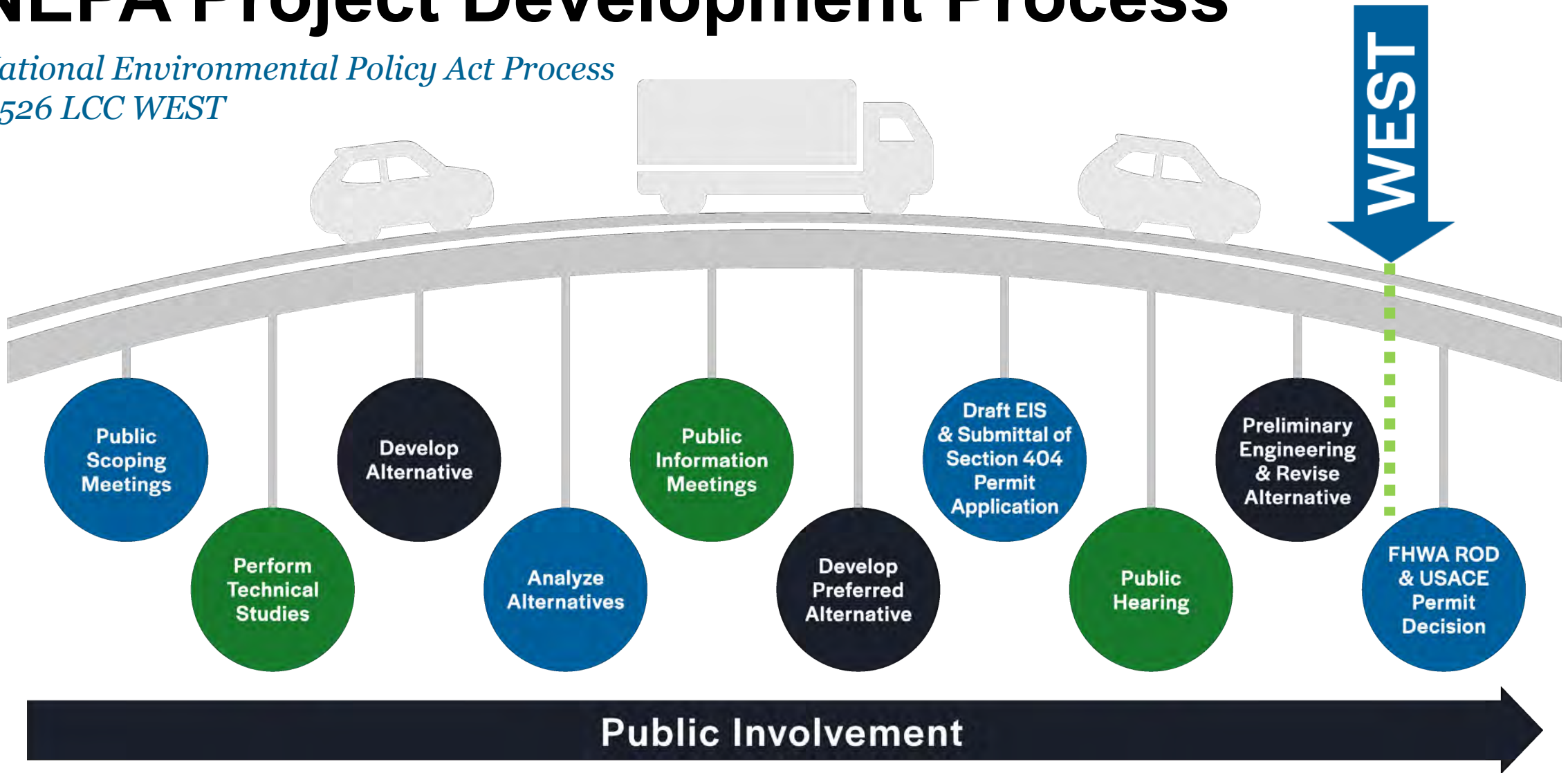
**#2: 2035 CHATS LRTP**

**#6: SCDOT Interstate Capacity List  
Top 20 most congested interstate  
segments (SCDOT 2014 Multimodal  
Transportation Plan)**



# NEPA Project Development Process

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





# Public Hearing Engagement



# Public Involvement Opportunities

*For the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST Public Hearing 2020*

**In-Person**  
Appointments at  
Community Office

**On-Demand Verbal  
Comments**  
on the Project Hotline

**On-Demand Online**  
Public Hearing webpage

*Meaningful  
Input*

**Live Online**  
Verbal Comment Session

**On-Demand Questions  
Answered**  
on the Project Hotline & Email

**Live Chat**  
Here During Set Times

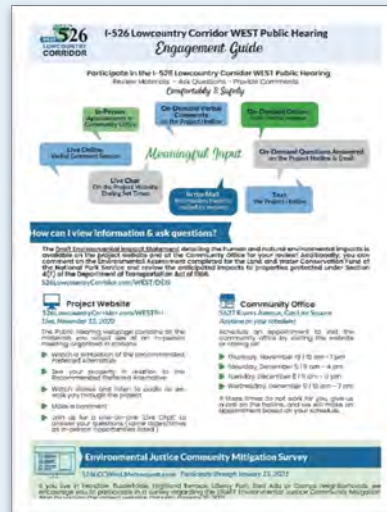
**In the Mail**  
Information Packets  
mailed by request

**Text**  
the Project Hotline

# How did we inform the public?

- ✓ Paid, Geo-targeted Social Media
- ✓ Media Day
- ✓ Digital Display Ads
- ✓ Radio: Traditional & Streaming
- ✓ Flyer Boxes
- ✓ Newspaper Notices
- ✓ Physical Road Signs
- ✓ Email Blasts

## Static & Digital Billboards



## Postcards



## Bus Inserts



# Public Hearing Information

*Public Hearing 2020*

## Project Website

**9,000+ Pageviews; 24 Live Chats**

[526LowcountryCorridor.com/WESTPH](https://526LowcountryCorridor.com/WESTPH)

## Community Office

**13 Visits for Public Hearing Appts.**

5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square



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

**Thurs., November 19 | 10 am - 7 pm**

**Sat., December 5 | 9 am - 4 pm**

**Tues., December 8 | 9 am - 6 pm**

**Wed., December 9 | 10 am - 7 pm**

## Live Virtual Comment Session

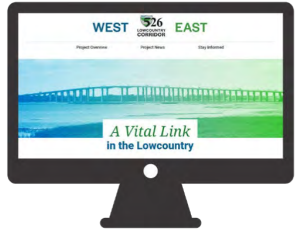
Tuesday, December 15, 2020 | 6:00 – 8:00 PM

**40 Viewers**



# Comments Received

*Public Hearing 2020*



**234 Total Comments**

Official Comment Period:  
November 4, 2020 – January 15, 2020

**Project Website**  
**104**

**Project Hotline**  
**5**

**Live Virtual Comment  
Session**  
**2**

**Email**  
**51**

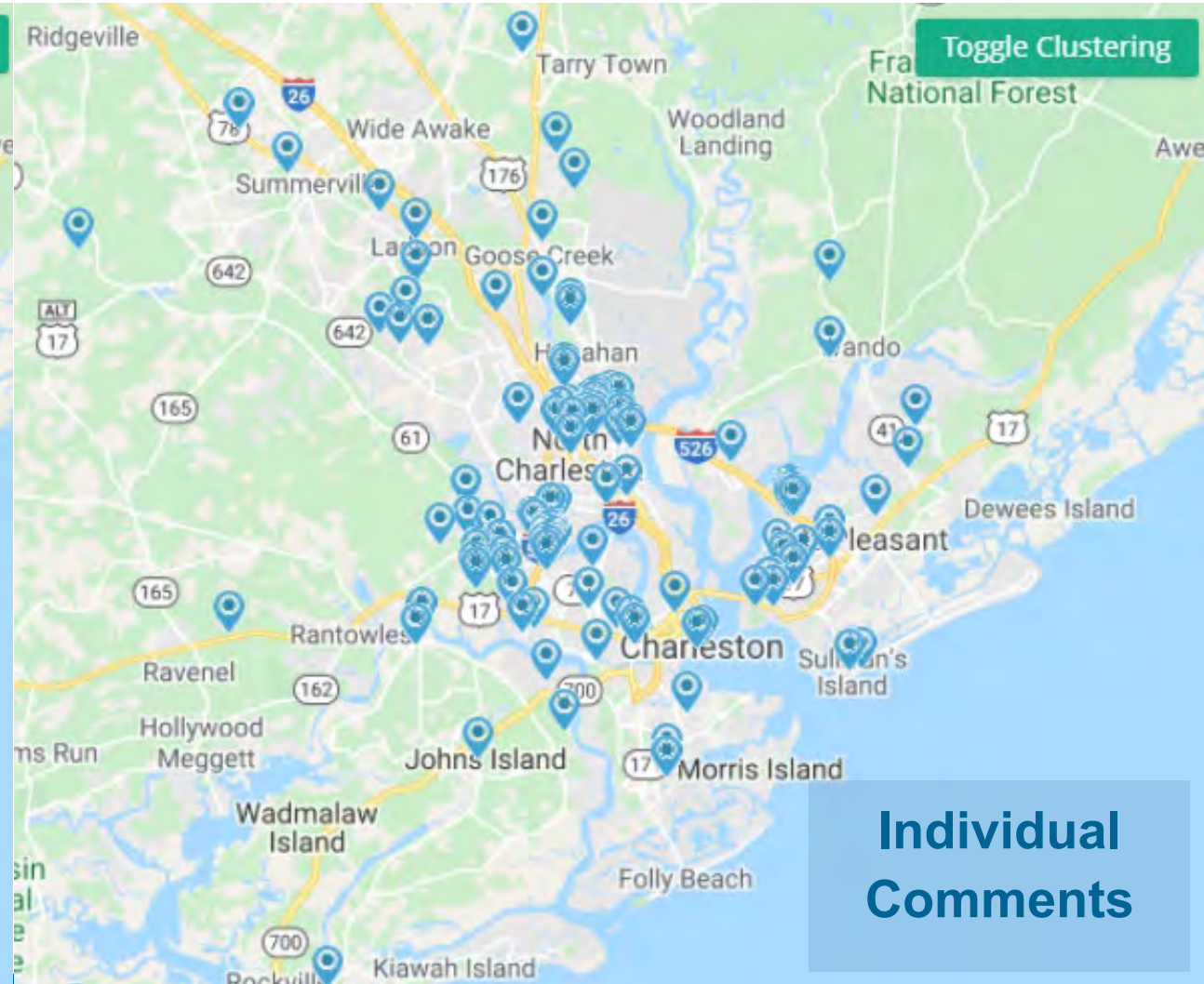
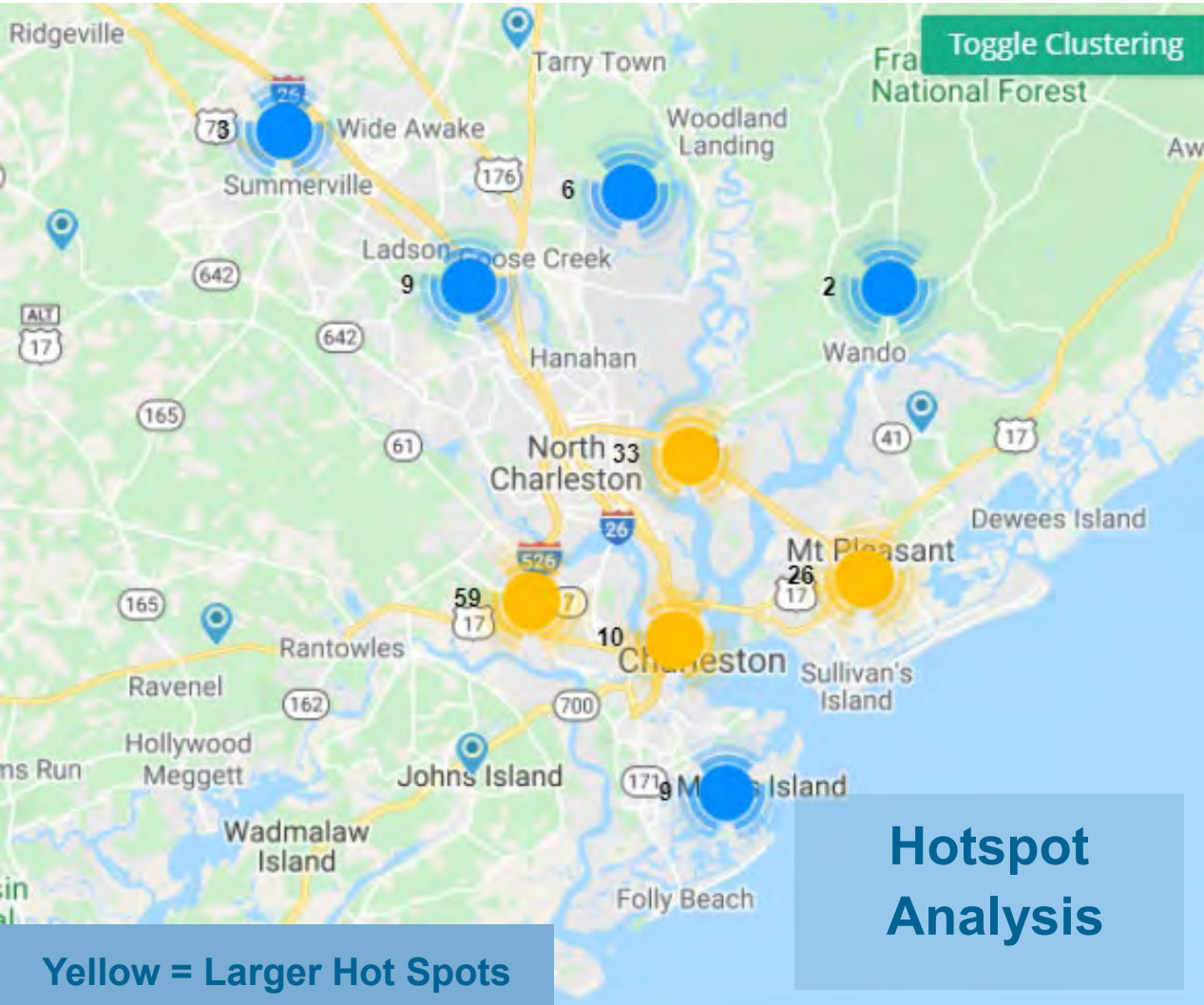
**Mail/Paper**  
**48**  
(Includes EJ Surveys)

**Live Chat**  
**24**

# Public Hearing Comments Mapped

*Public Hearing 2020*

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



# What We Heard!

*Public Hearing 2020*

## 234 Total Comments

*Note: Numbers below will not equal 100%*

**26%**

Concerned with  
Right-of-Way



**12%**

Concerned with  
Interchanges



**11%**

In Favor of  
Transit/BRT



**7%**

Environmental  
Concerns



**17%**

Mention Noise  
Impacts



**10%**

In Favor of Bike/  
Ped Lanes



**24%**

Concerned with  
Affordable Housing/  
Community Mitigation



**14%**

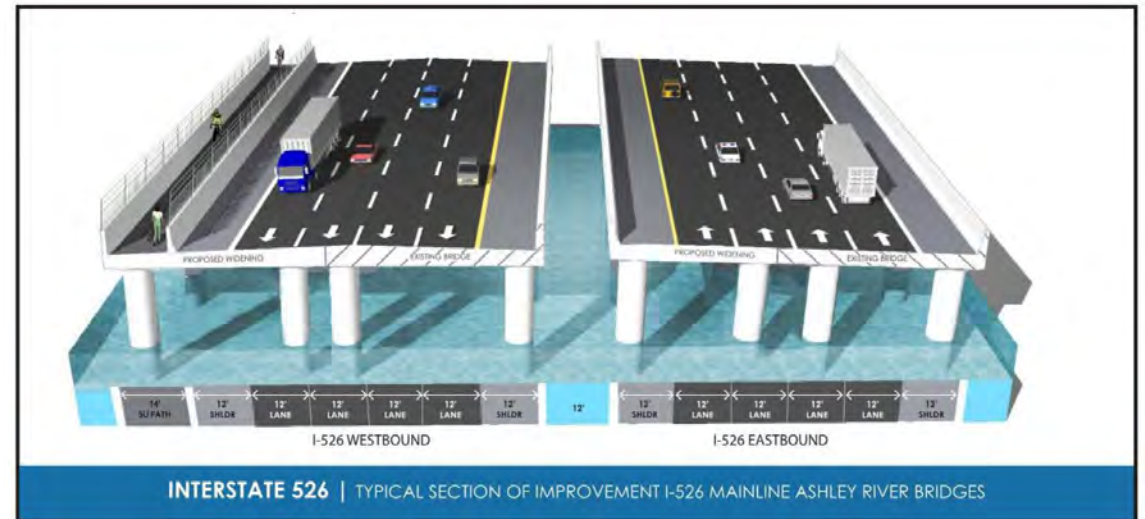
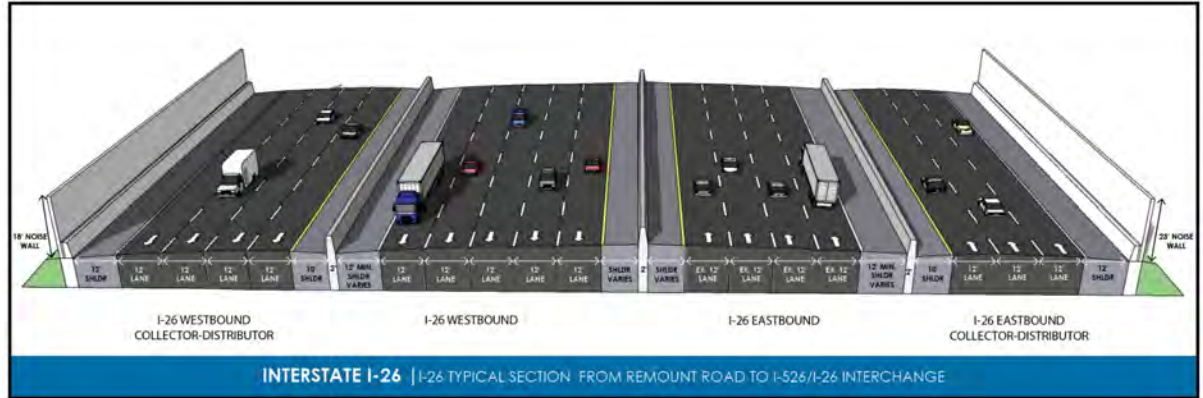
Supportive of the  
Project



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

# Design Improvements Based on Input Received!

- ✓ Added Community Barriers to the I-26 section at the edge of roadway shoulders to shield the surrounding neighborhoods from Interstate 26
- ✓ Widened the Westmoreland Bridge design to accommodate a shared use path along the bridge to align with local planning initiatives



# Design Improvements Based on Input Received!

- ✓ Shifted roadway widening design to the north to reduce impacts to Ashley Harbor's community's walking path and boat ramp
- ✓ Redesigned the N. Rhett and Virginia Ave. ramps based on comments from the City of North Charleston and local industry





# Environmental Justice Specific Outreach



# 2020 Environmental Justice Meetings



## Pop-Up Events

- Goal: Participate in local community events to raise awareness of the project, make the Community Liaisons easily accessible, and provide community support during the public health crisis
- 8 events from 9/3/2020 – 12/18/2020



## EJ Community Meetings

- Goal: Encourage feedback from EJ Communities on DRAFT EJ Community Mitigation Plan
- Three meetings in EJ neighborhoods from November 6–14, 2020
- 110 total participants



# Hispanic/Latino Monthly Outreach Activities



## Radio

**103.9 FM / 95.5 FM Charleston**  
**¡Aquí estamos! Radio Show**

Every Wednesday at 12:00pm  
(Charleston, We are here!)



## Online

**Facebook.com/charlestonaquiestamos**

Weekly Facebook Live events

- Website walk-through
- Promotion of Community Office



## Community

**Ferndale & Russelldale**  
**Community Walks**

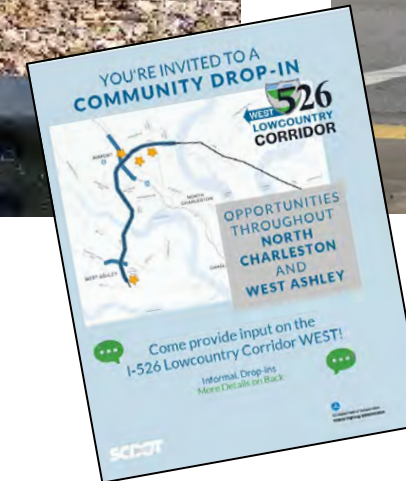
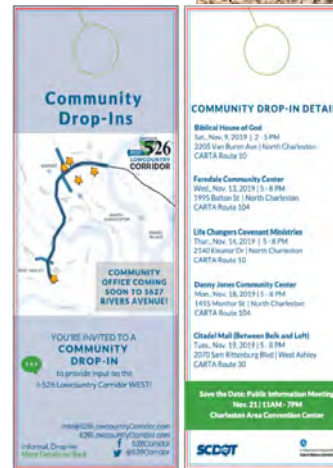
- 5 Bilingual teams of 4-7 individuals
- City of North Charleston Police Officers (6-8 per event)
- Bilingual project literature

Support at 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Drop-in

Attended service at Vida Nueva Church (November 22)

# Additional Outreach Activities

- Door Hangers delivered Door-to-Door
- Postcards/Mailers
  - Hard copies of draft mitigation plan materials
- Yard Signs
- Informational Flyer Box Program



# Additional Outreach Activities

- CAC & Community Liaison Door-to-Door Canvassing
- 1,109 EJ homes “touched”
- Interaction with 202 EJ residents



*Walk-In or Make an Appointment!*

## Community Office

5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square  
(CARTA Route 10)

866.632.5262 | info@526LowcountryCorridor.com



**YOUR Office for YOUR Community:**

- ✓ Ferndale
- ✓ Highland Terrace
- ✓ Liberty Park
- ✓ Russelldale
- ✓ Surrounding areas


**Visit YOUR Community Office for Information about:**

<b>Relocation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do I have to move?</li> <li>• Expenses</li> <li>• Schedules</li> <li>• Right of Way</li> </ul>	<b>Construction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule</li> <li>• View Plans</li> </ul>	<b>Impacts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools and Churches</li> <li>• Transportation Services</li> </ul>
<b>Renters, Homeowners, and Businesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights and Responsibilities</li> </ul>		

**For More Information:**

Visit our Website: 526LowcountryCorridor.com | Call our Hotline: 843.258.1135 | 866.632.5262 (Toll Free) | Check Facebook: @526Corridor

To request special accommodations, contact 866.632.5262



## I-526 LCC WEST Outreach & Canvassing Log

Date of Contact \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 2021      Time \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street, City, Zip)

Neighborhood ☐ Ferndale    ☐ Liberty Park    ☐ Highland Terrace    ☐ Russelldale

☐ Property Owner    ☐ Renter    ☐ House    ☐ Apartment    ☐ Town Home    ☐ Mobile Home    ☐ Heirs' Property

What is the resident's preferred method of contact?  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Would the resident like to receive project updates? (Circle one.) Yes    No

If so, how? ☐ Mail    ☐ Phone Call    ☐ Text Message    ☐ E-Mail

**Topics Discussed/Comments**

☐ Invited resident to the Community Office

☐ Informed resident of the FREE summer self-improvement/professional training courses

☐ Informed resident of the Community History Preservation Project

**Materials Left at this Address**

☐ FREE Summer Courses Flyer (Eng/Span)

☐ Community Office Flyer (Eng/Span)

☐ Community History Preservation Project Flyer (Eng/Span)

**Other Items/Concerns**

☐ Resident was NOT home. Materials were left at the residence: (Specify location.) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Resident WAS home.

☐ I spoke with the resident for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. (Provide time estimate.) \_\_\_\_\_

Will the resident require childcare to attend the FREE summer courses? (Circle one.) Yes    No

Will the resident require special accommodations or transportation to attend the FREE summer courses? (Circle one.) Yes    No

NOTE: Information provided, including name and address of resident, will be published and is subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Community Liaison \_\_\_\_\_



**WEST 526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR**

**COMMUNITY MITIGATION SURVEY**

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**  
Please rate the following items by filling in the appropriate bubble associated with each potential mitigation item related to the replacement community center and community center programs.

	Strongly Undesired	Moderately Undesired	Neutral	Moderately Desired	Strongly Desired
Outdoor Pavilion (Shelter)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessible Playground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking/Biking Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental Education Elements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interpretive Signage/Signage/Landscaping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Art at the Parks/Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Art at the Parks/Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pathway Signs (i.e. directional or historical markers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neighborhood History Display	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life Skills Classes (i.e. cooking, sewing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Literacy Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family Wellness Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GED Classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health/Wellness Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior/Student Mentorship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth After School Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small Group Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arts & Crafts Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multi-cultural Events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior Walking Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parenting Class (for single or new parents)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health Clinic for Grief Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior Chair Exercise Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**WHAT ARE YOUR MITIGATION PREFERENCES?**  
Please circle one (1) answer for each of the following questions:

1. Which potential athletic amenity would be most valuable in your neighborhood?  
 a. Basketball Court      b. Tennis Court      c. Volleyball Court      d. Soccer Field

2. Which potential infrastructure improvements should be prioritized by the project team?  
 a. Additional Streetlights      b. Sidewalks with Curb and Gutter      c. Crosswalks      d. Stormwater Drainage      e. Traffic Calming Measures

3. Where is the ideal location for replacement multi-family housing in your community?  
 a. Within the Impacted Neighborhoods      b. Nearby the Impacted Neighborhoods (within 1 mile)      c. Outside of North Charleston city limits

**WEST 526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR**

**Community Mitigation Plan Highlights**

**Background**  
Every effort was made to avoid and minimize impacts to your community during the development of the project alternatives. However, because of the close proximity of many communities to the existing interstate, significant community impacts were unavoidable in all reasonable alternatives and would require community mitigation.

**Community Mitigation Plan**  
Developed by identifying & considering the social needs & priorities of neighborhood residents

**Community Office**  
In November 2019, a Community Office was opened within walking distance of potentially impacted communities. Located in the Community Office at 5627 Rivers Avenue (CARTA Route 10), the project team and connect with resource specialists such as right-of-way relocation experts.

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

**CAC's Role**  
Advise  
Connect  
Represent  
Communicate

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

**Your Input Matters!**  
Make an appointment at our Community Office (5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Light Square) for assistance  
 info@526LowcountryCorridor.com  
 SCDOT Project Manager  
 Joy Riley, PE, DBIA, PMP, CPM  
 843.258.1135  
 (Call or Text)  
 526Corridor  
 @526Corridor

**NOW is the time to have your voice heard!**  
 Complete our survey & leave a comment by January 15, 2021:  
 www.526LowcountryCorridor.com

*"Provide input on the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST project AND review the DRAFT EJ Community Mitigation Plan"*

- ✓ 179 survey participants:
- ✓ 115 mailed-in
- ✓ 39 submitted by computer
- ✓ 25 submitted by mobile device

**Purpose**  
To facilitate full and fair participation by all potentially impacted EJ communities in the mitigation plan design

**A reminder from your I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST Community Advisory Council**

Don't forget to submit your comments on the DRAFT Environmental Justice Community Mitigation plan by 1/15/21.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS, and the project team needs to hear from you on potential improvements within these communities:

- Ferndale
- Highland Terrace
- Liberty Park
- Russelldale
- And neighboring areas

Scan the image to the right with your smart phone's camera, or visit the website below to learn more about the DRAFT EJ Community Mitigation Plan, take the survey, and access the Public Hearing materials.



www.526LowcountryCorridor.com/West/Community-Commitments



PSRT STD  
ECRVSS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EDDM RETAIL

Local  
Postal Customer



# Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan Survey

## *Purpose*

Identify community infrastructure needs related to:

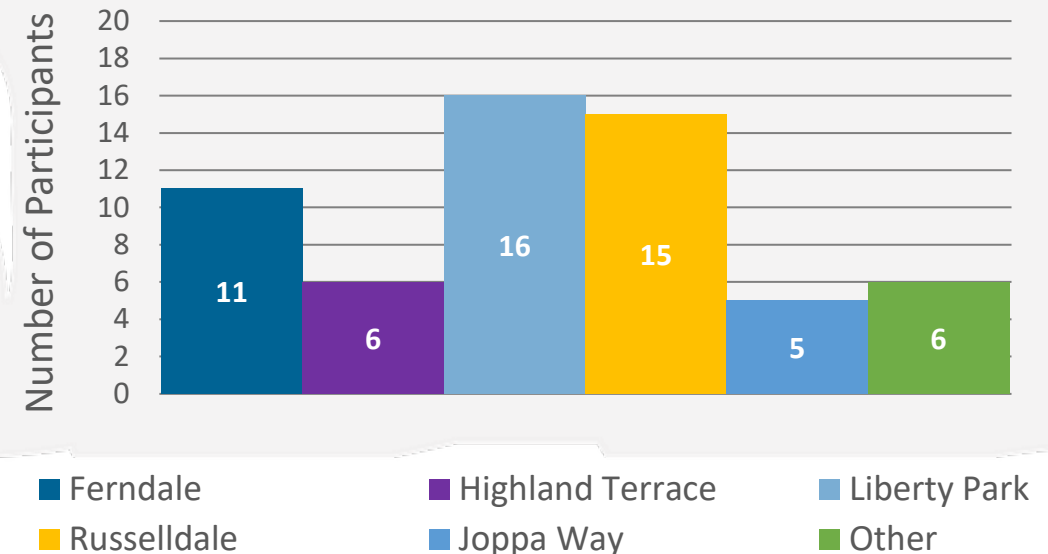
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety
- Landscaping and Aesthetics
- Pedestrian and Street Lighting
- Speeding Concerns
- Stormwater Management
  - Examples of Bus Shelters were also presented at the Open House on 3/6/2021

*“Tell us about the improvements you would like to see in YOUR neighborhood!”*

85 total survey participants:

- 49 paper submissions
- 9 computer submissions
- 27 mobile device submissions

89% of respondents live in EJ neighborhoods



# Community Office & CAC



## Community Office

- On Rivers Avenue just north of Liberty Park & on transit route
- Full-time Office Manager & 4 Community Liaisons, 2 part-time Right-of-Way Specialists

## Community Liaison Activities

- Partner with community service agencies to distribute project information
- Canvassing in impacted communities

## Community Advisory Council – *has met 18 times from 09/2019 - 05/2021*

- EJ Community Mitigation Plan development
- Canvassing & yard signs
- Mitigation subcommittees
- Organization after the project



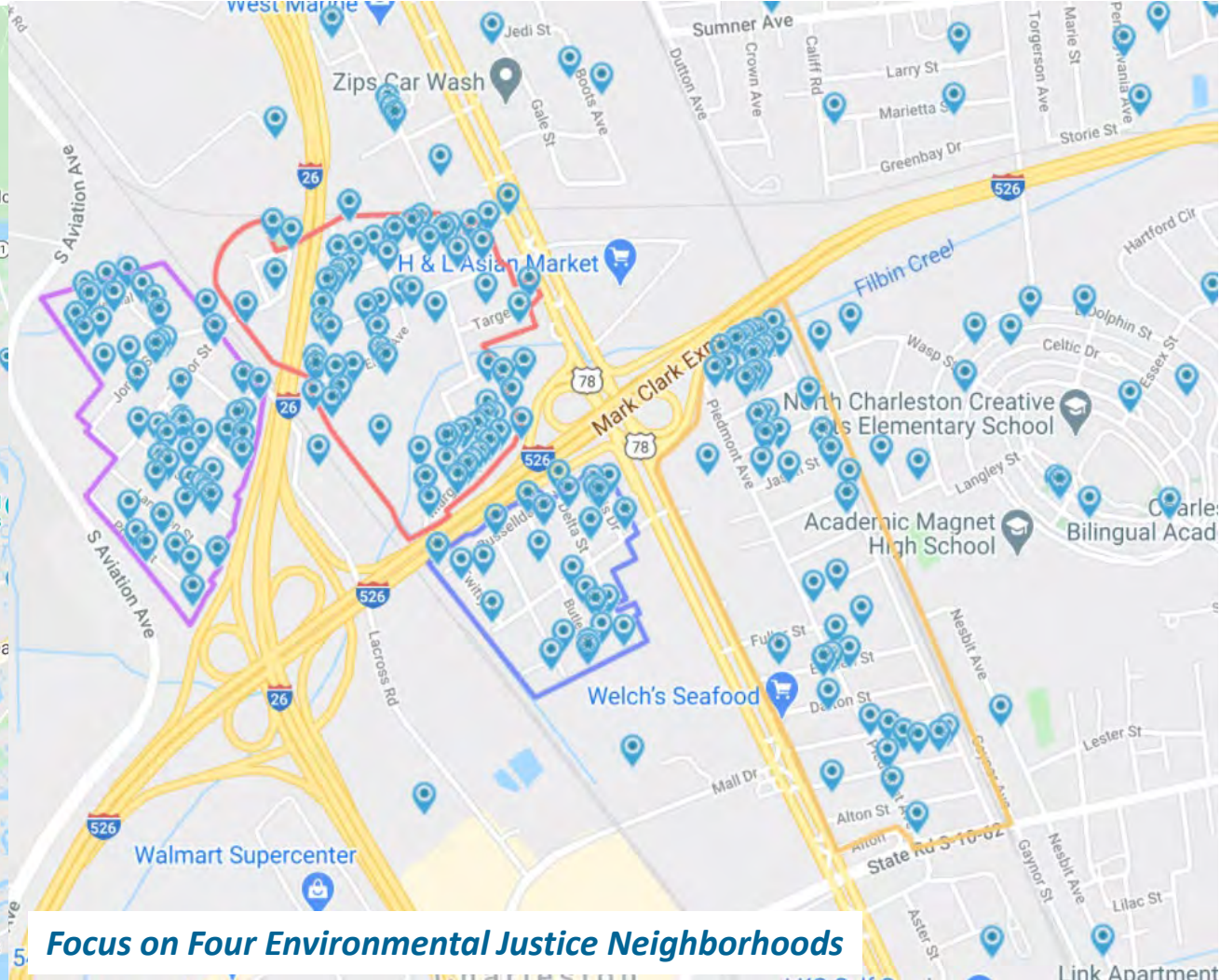
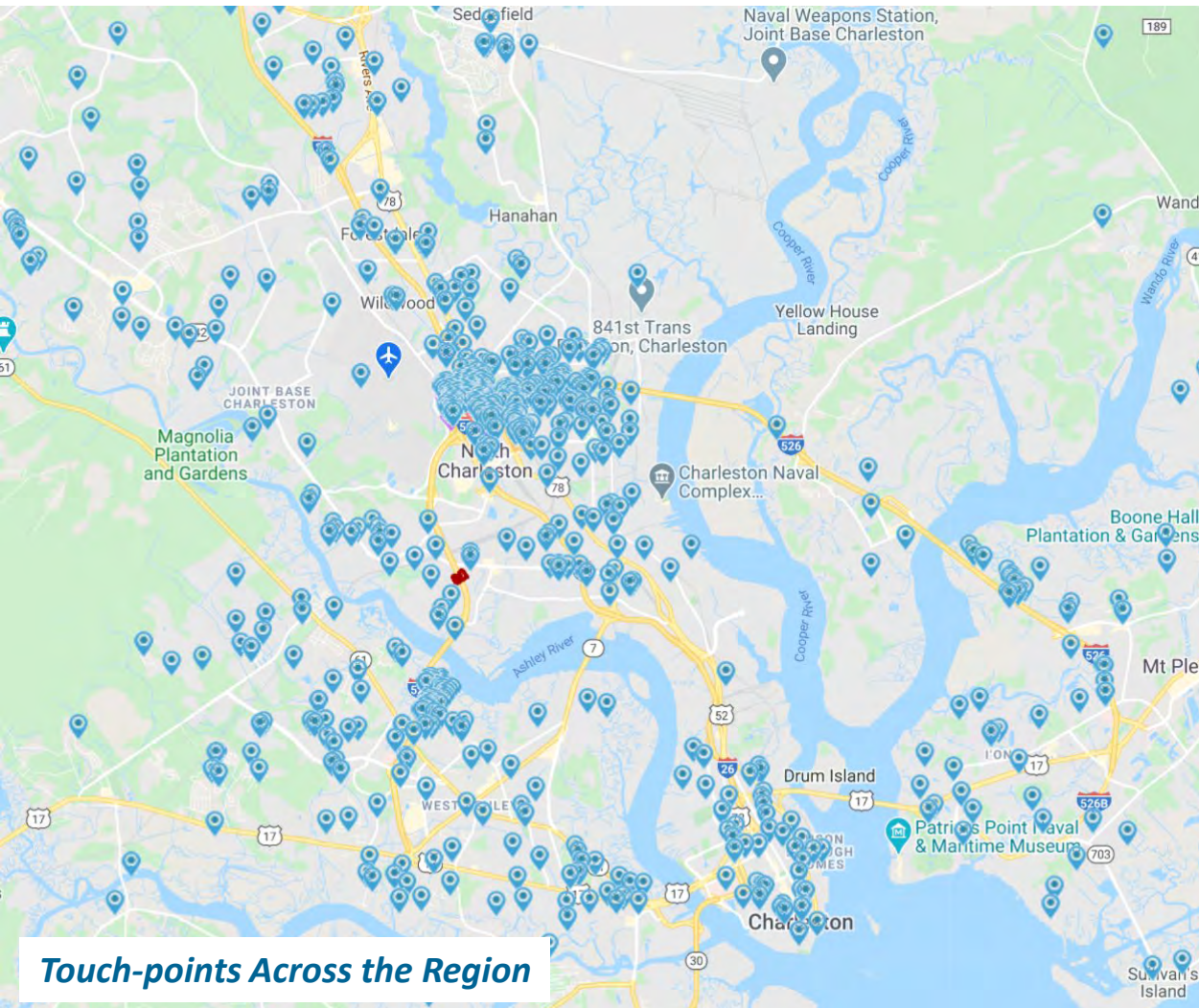
# Public Engagement Touch-Points

*Using Data-Driven Outreach Strategies*



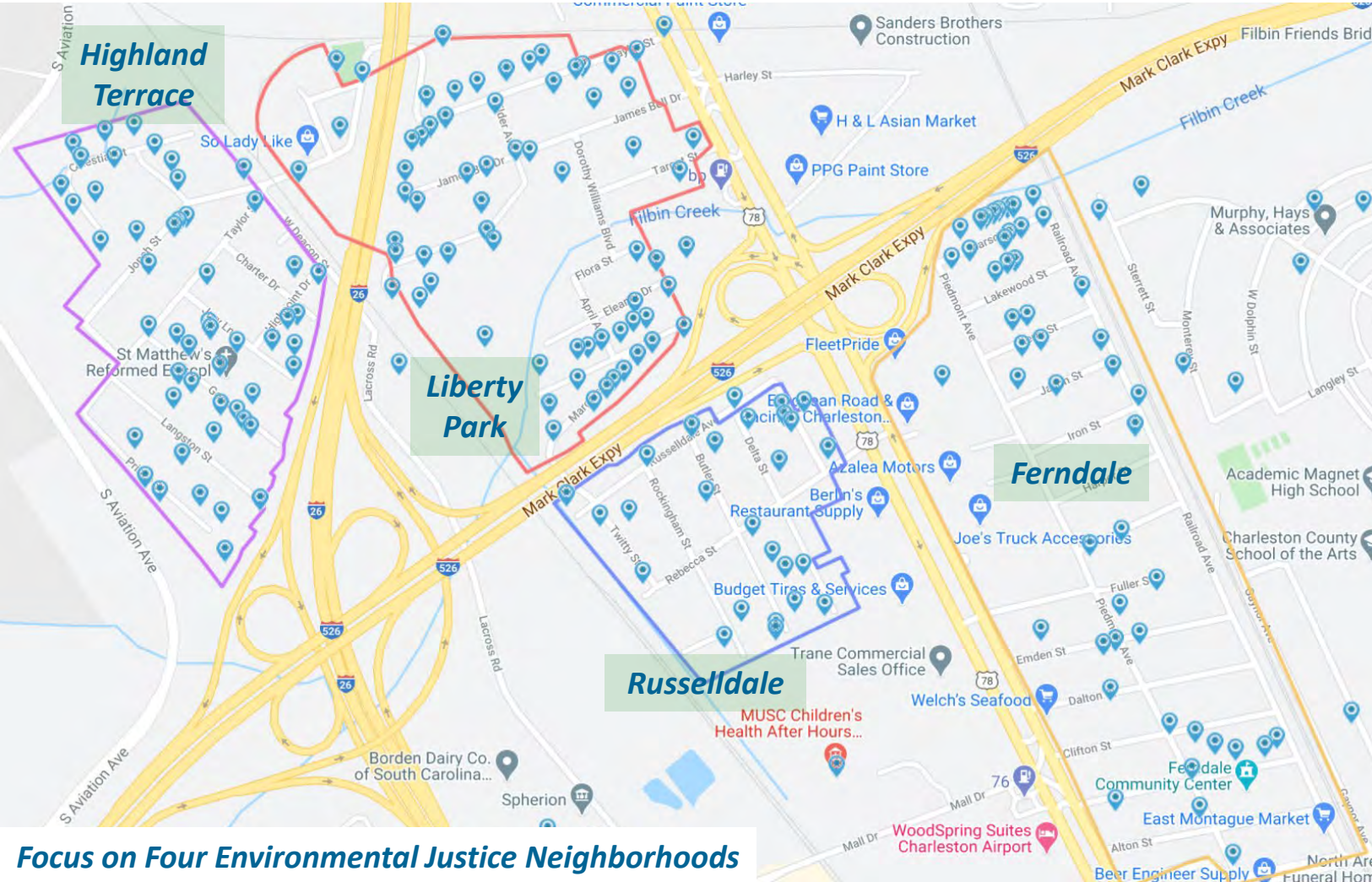
# All Public Engagement Mapped

*Fall 2019 – Winter 2021*



# Public Engagement Mapped

*Fall 2019 – Winter 2021*

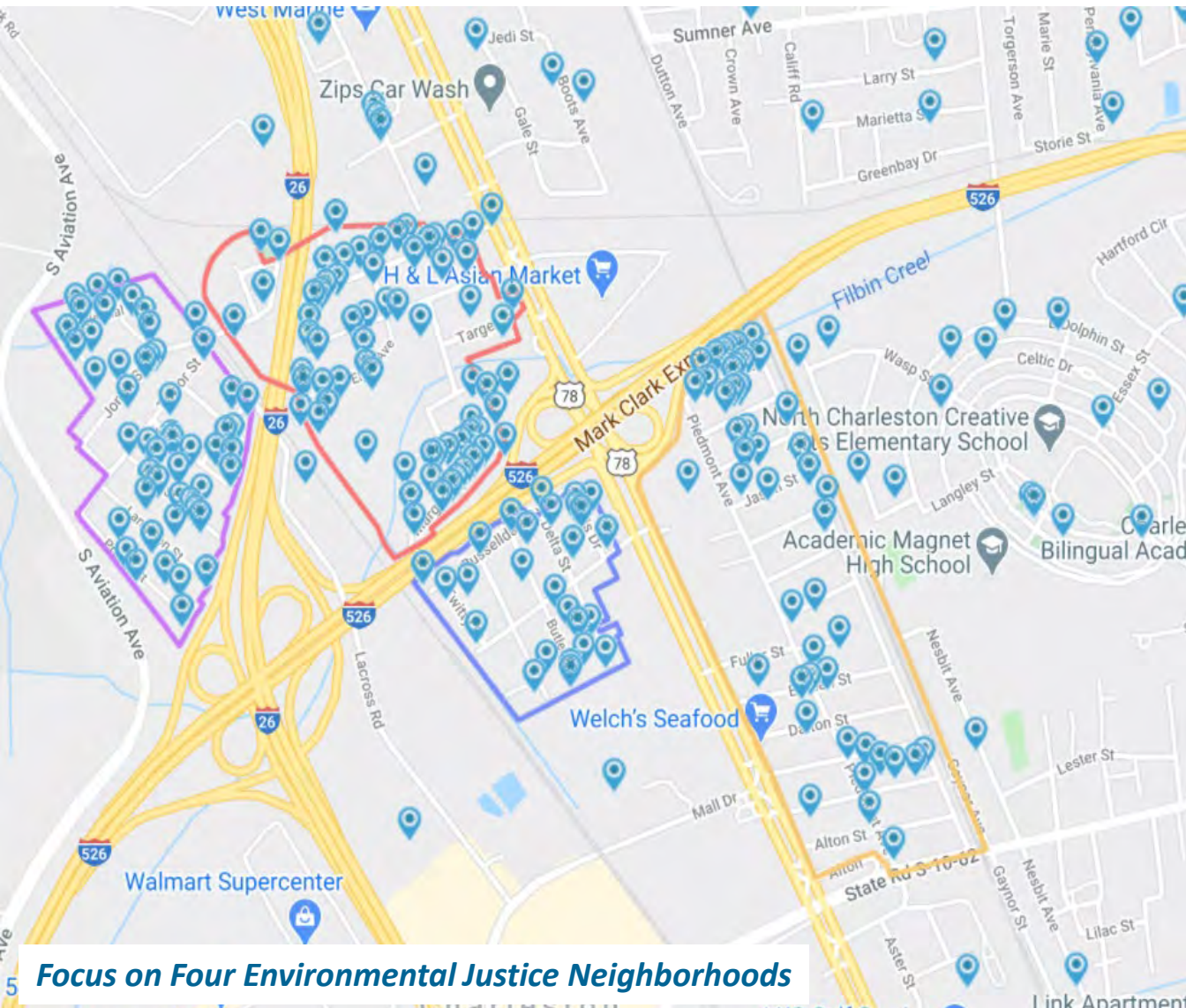


*Within each of the Environmental Justice Neighborhoods, the team has touched:*

- Highland Terrace: 51 houses (28.5%)
- Liberty Park: 64 houses (38%)
- Russelldale: 27 houses (20%)
- Ferndale: 48 houses (17%)

***Focus on Four Environmental Justice Neighborhoods***

# Addressing Gaps



Focus on Four Environmental Justice Neighborhoods

## *What has been happening?*

- Canvassing neighborhoods that have fewer engagements & capturing contact information while canvassing (**1,190 homes have been reached through canvassing**)

## *Additional Team Recommendations:*

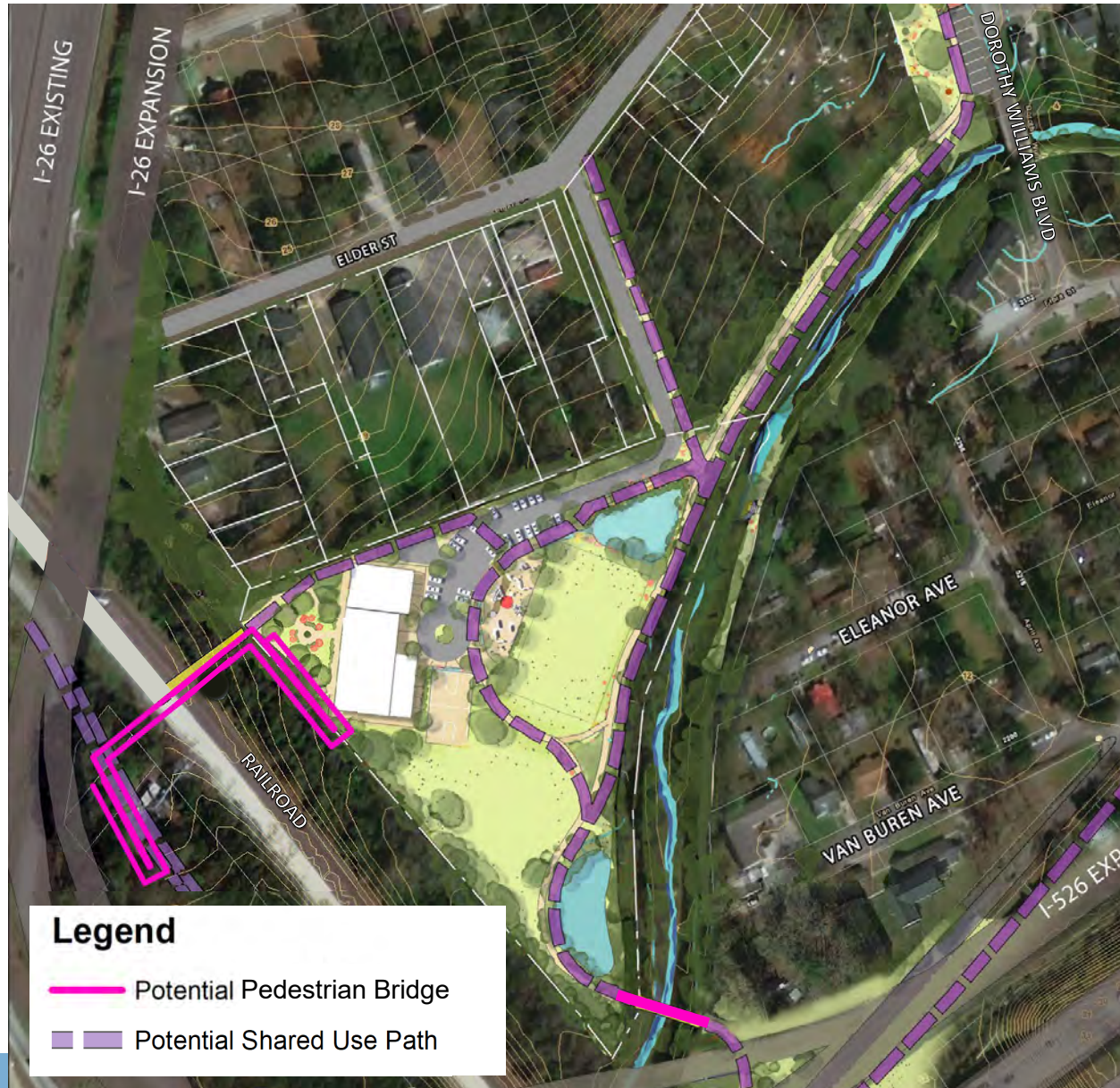
- Place yard signs in neighborhoods with specific calls to action (with or without flyer boxes)
- Send mailers to let people know specific calls to actions
- Set a “meet a neighbor day” – CAC members are tasked with bringing 3 neighbors to meet the team
- Open office to community groups



# Updated EJ Community Mitigation Components



# Updated Community Initiatives

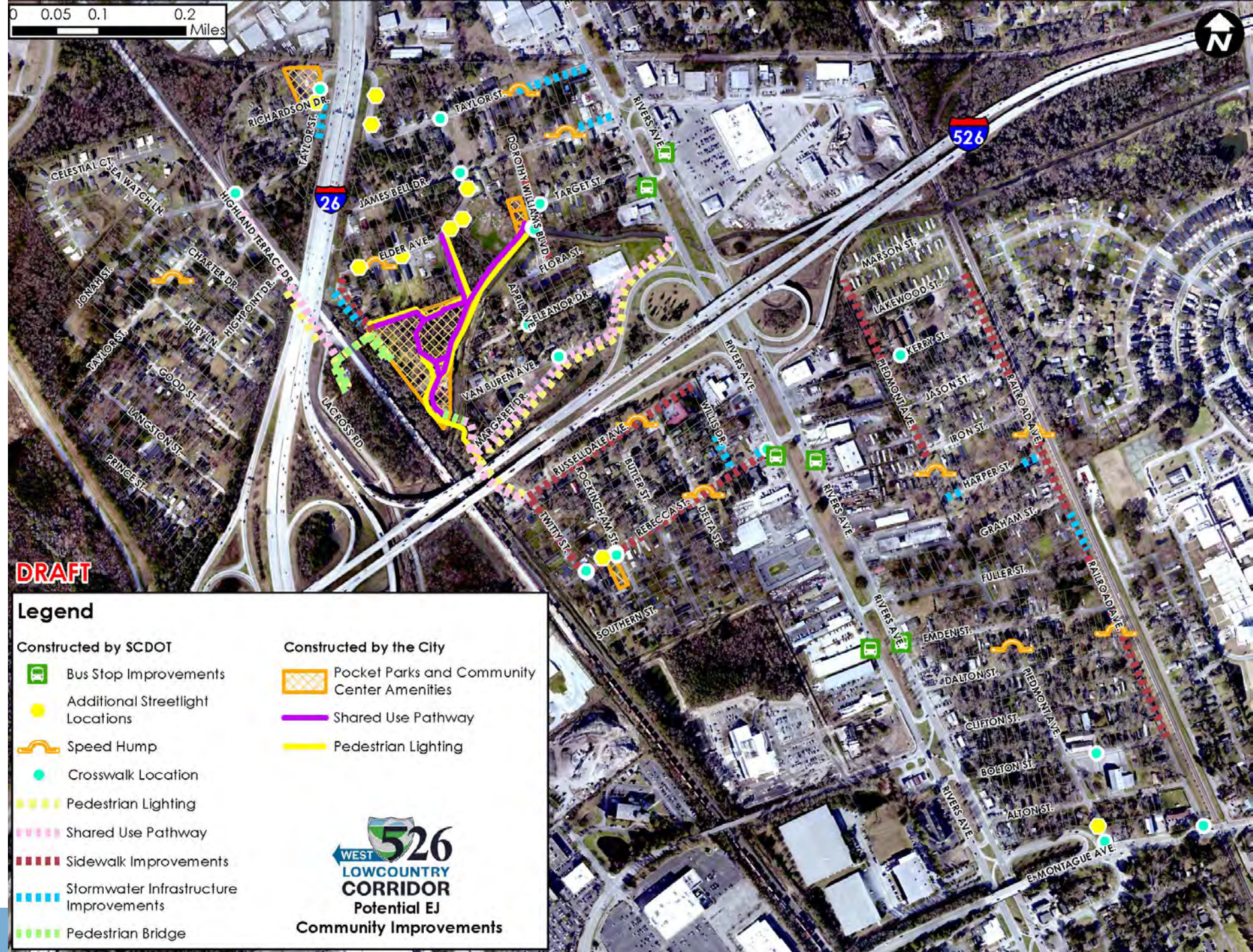


## *CIEP: Pedestrian Bridges*

- Improved Highland Terrace & Joppa Way connectivity to replacement community center
- Small bridge over Filbin Creek for connectivity to Russelldale
- Located near existing footpaths across the railroad tracks to help prevent trespassing and provide safe crossing over the tracks
- Additional fencing may be required near the railroad tracks

## CIEP: Summary of Potential Improvements

- Recommendations based on input received from the CIEP survey, EJ residents, and the CAC
- Potential improvements are preliminary & subject to change based on coordination with entities such as the Norfolk Southern Railroad & the City of North Charleston



# Updated Community Initiatives

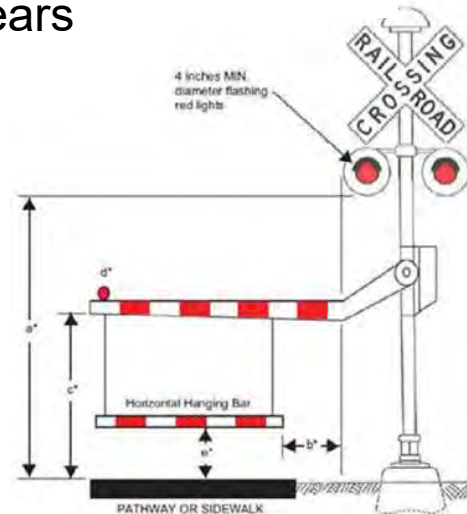
## *CIEP: Safer Railroad Crossing*

### **Taylor Street at Jonah Street**

- Primary route for Highland Terrace & Joppa Way residents to access Highland Terrace-Liberty Park pocket park
- Identified multiple times as a location needing pedestrian improvements in the CIEP survey
- CAC members noted safety concerns at the railroad crossing
- Rail traffic projected to increase in future years



Opportunity to install pedestrian protection measures such as a crossing gate and upgraded signing



# Updated Community Initiatives

## *Community Resource Guide*

Help sustain livability within affected EJ neighborhoods by increasing residents' access to local organizations, resources, and other information on the following topics:

- Food Insecurities
- Health & Wellness
- Home Repair
- Financial Assistance
- Minority-owned Businesses
- Referral agencies

## *Mitigation Barriers*

- To be built on either side of the I-26 corridor from south of Remount Rd to the southern end of the Highland Terrace neighborhood
- Options for reducing noise along I-526 near the EJ neighborhoods include structure mounted barriers, improved pavement surfaces, and/or technology to reduce noise from bridge deck joints.



# Updated Community Initiatives

## *College Scholarships & Internships*

Expanded scholarship programs from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and increased transportation internship programs in order to provide these opportunities for a longer time period during the project development and implementation.

## *Job Training Programs*

- Expanded job training programs to be offered during project development and construction to provide more opportunities to impacted residents
- Initiated job training programs this summer to offer CDL permit preparation classes, CDL Full License Program, and a high school professional development program for residents and student residing within the impacted communities.





# Community History Preservation Program



# About the CHPP



## Focus Neighborhoods

Highland Terrace

Liberty Park

Ferndale

Russelldale



## Purpose

Document the history of the focus neighborhoods through the collection of oral interviews, photographs, maps, and other historical documentation.



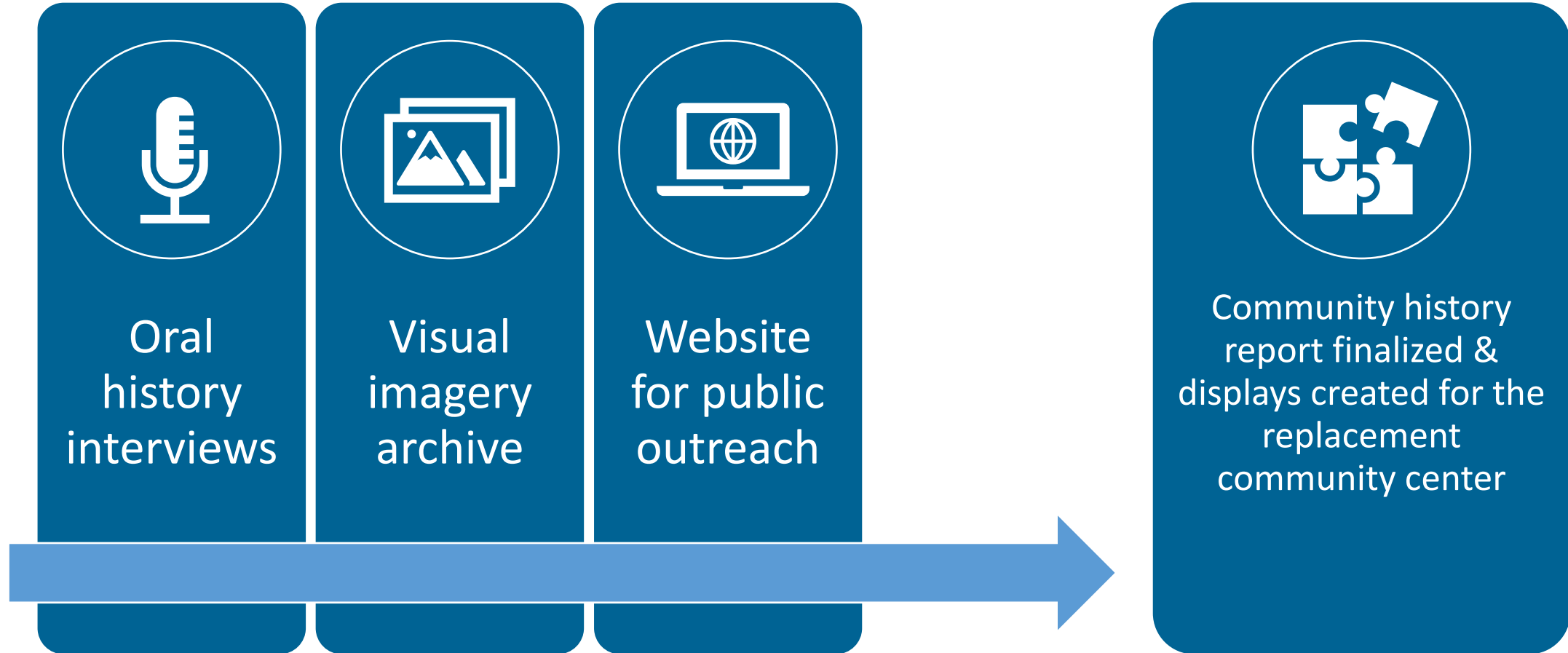
## Goal

Final visual product will be integrated into the design of the centrally located replacement community center.

# CHPP: Program Video



# CHPP: The Process





# EAST Updates

*Planning & Environmental Linkages Study*

# I-526 LCC EAST Study Area

*Virginia Avenue to US 17*

**10** 

total miles

**5** 

interchanges

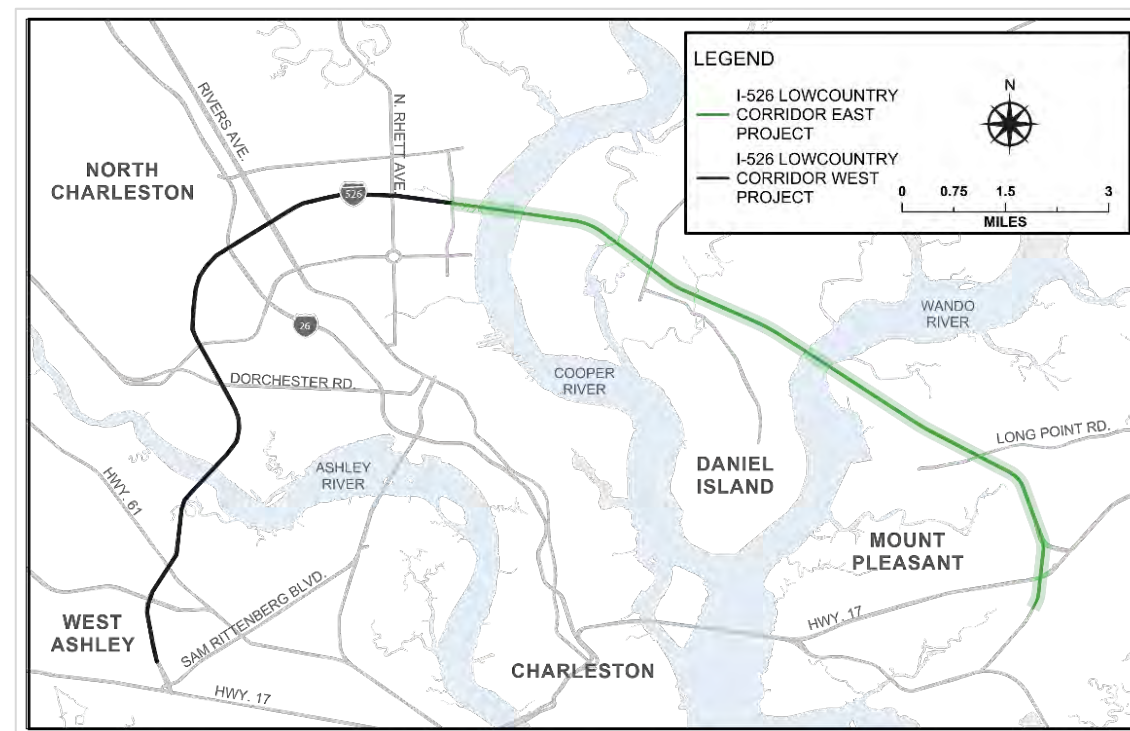
**5** 

miles elevated structure

**2** 

major bridges over  
navigational channels

–Don Holt Bridge &  
Wando River Bridges



# What is a PEL?

1

Tool for **creating efficiency** in transportation development

2

Considers **environment, community & economy**

3

**Collaborative & integrated** approach to decision-making

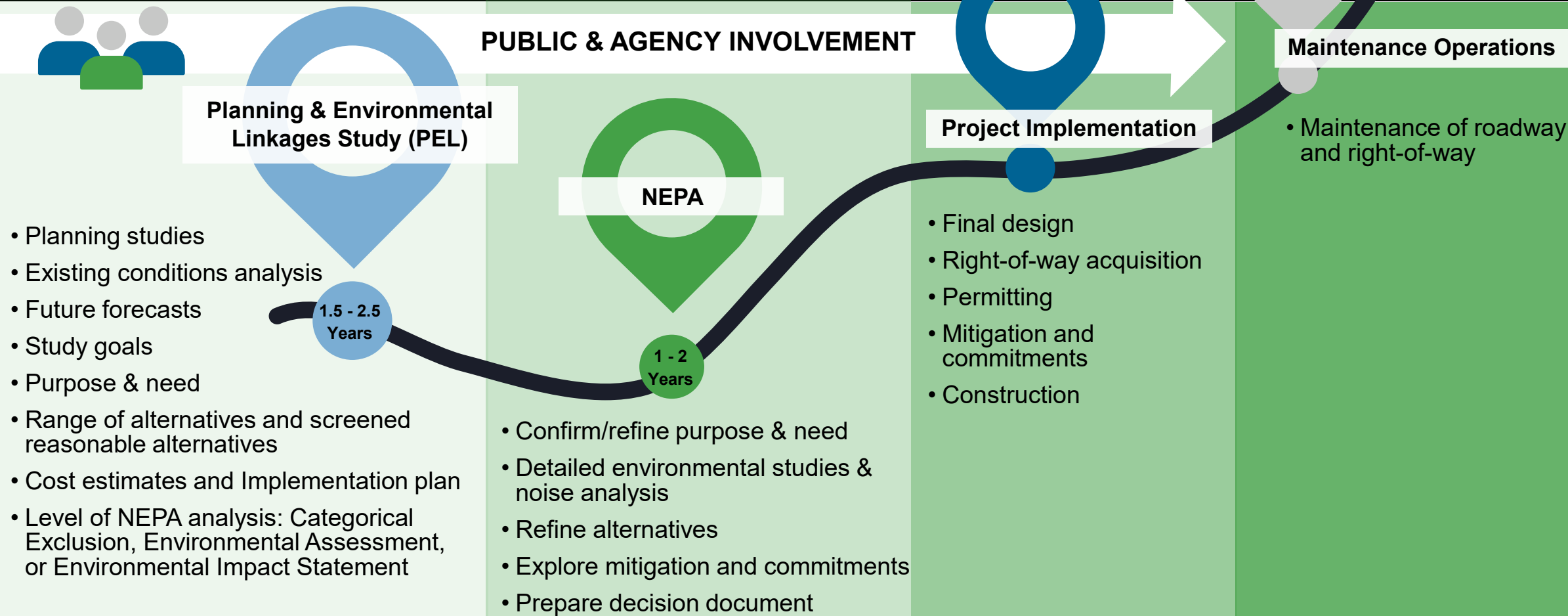
What are the Benefits of including a PEL Study in the project development process?



Who Participates?

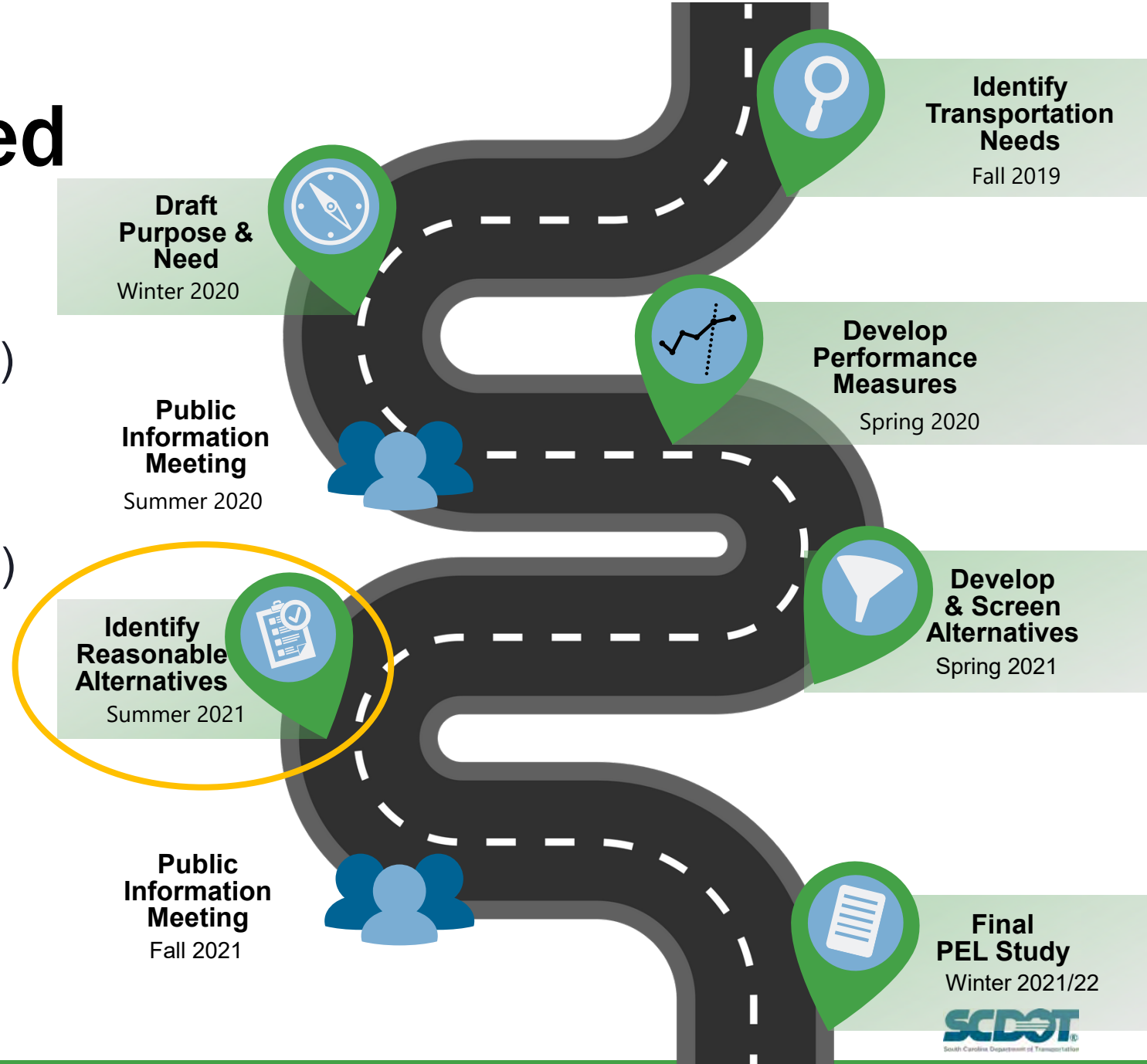


# PEL & NEPA Process



# PEL Study Completed Milestones

- PEL Initiation (FHWA Concurrence)  
*March 23, 2020*
- MetroQuest Survey  
*May 14 - August 15, 2020*
- Public Information Meeting (Online)  
*July 15 - August 15, 2020*
- Purpose & Need (FHWA Concurrence)  
*February 18, 2021*
- Concepts Development & Preliminary Screening  
*April/May 2021*





# Summary of Summer 2020 Public Engagement

# Survey Input

## Survey


Captured corridor usage, concerns & priorities for the corridor  
May 14 – August 15, 2020



3,103  
Responses

Most Travelers  
Experienced  
Congestion both  
AM & PM

Top multimodal improvements  
desired along the corridor:  
42%       
Truck-only Lanes

 High-Occupancy  
Vehicle (HOV) Lanes  
or Carpool Lanes  
OR  
\$ High-Occupancy  
Toll (HOT) Lanes

Most people use the  
corridor daily for:

work, shopping,  
entertainment & recreation



Most people travel the corridor using their personal vehicle 85%



Travelers are experiencing these top safety-related issues:

 Congestion 25%  Truck Merging 22%  Aggressive/  
Distracted Drivers 19%  Speeding 16%

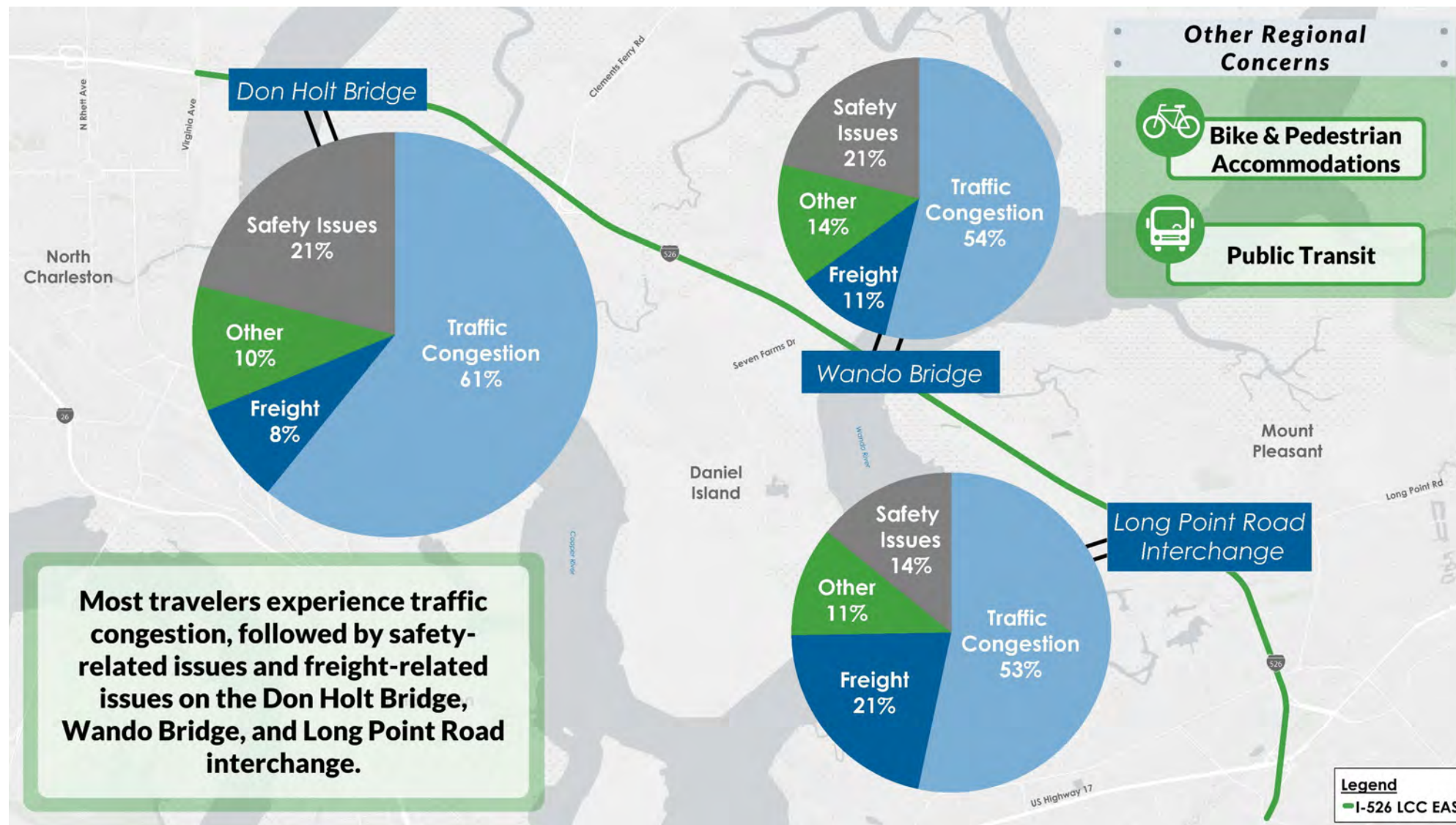
# Survey Input Continued



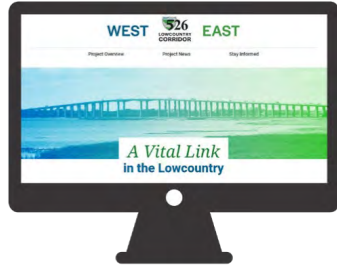
## Survey

Captured  
corridor usage,  
concerns &  
priorities for the  
corridor

**May 14 –  
August 15,  
2020**



# Public Information Meeting Input



## Virtual Meeting

All materials available online

**July 15 –  
August 15, 2020**

[www.526lowcountrycorridor.com/vpim-east](http://www.526lowcountrycorridor.com/vpim-east)

**Meeting Live:  
July 15 -  
August 15, 2020**

[526LowcountryCorridor.com](http://526LowcountryCorridor.com)

**84  
Comments**

83 Online Comments  
1 Emailed Comment

## Top 5 Comments & Concerns:

**21%**

Concerned  
with Noise  
Impacts



**13%**

Concerned  
with  
Neighborhood  
Impacts



**10%**

Wanted  
Alternative  
Truck/ Freight  
Routes



**6%**

Wanted Trucks  
in the Right  
Lane/ Truck-  
Only lanes



**5%**

Support  
Widening





# Concepts Development & Alternatives Analysis

# Draft Purpose and Need

The purpose for transportation improvements along this corridor is to **improve travel time reliability & reduce congestion** along I-526 from Virginia Avenue in North Charleston to US 17 in Mount Pleasant.

## Identified Needs

### *Mobility*



Traffic congestion from high traffic volumes & limited capacity



Over Capacity Roadways



Unreliable Travel Times



Congestion-Related Crashes

### *Roadway Deficiencies*



Shoulder Widths



On & Off Ramp Lengths



Tightly Curved Ramps

# Supplemental Project Goals



Compatibility: Align with local land use plans & projects



Demand: Accommodate increased numbers of vehicles



Seismic: Any new roads or bridges should be designed to new earthquake standards



Connectivity: Improve connections with local ports, railway facilities and transit



Safety: Reduce traffic-related crashes



Multimodal: Enhance movement through the corridor including through other modes such as carpool, transit, walk, bike or truck



Technology: Accommodate future transportation technologies such as vehicle technologies, system monitoring, driver information and traffic operations technologies

# Initial Concept Development

- Intentionally broad
- Encompass all ideas and challenges using:
  - Existing and No Build conditions analyses
  - Stakeholder input
  - Public input
- Address purpose and need
- Address study goals

# Preliminary Concepts

## No-Build

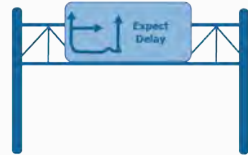


**The No-Build  
Alternative**

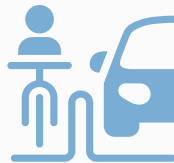
## Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO)



**Managed Lanes**



**Operational  
Elements**



**Multimodal  
Improvements**

## Infrastructure Improvements



**New Location Alignment**



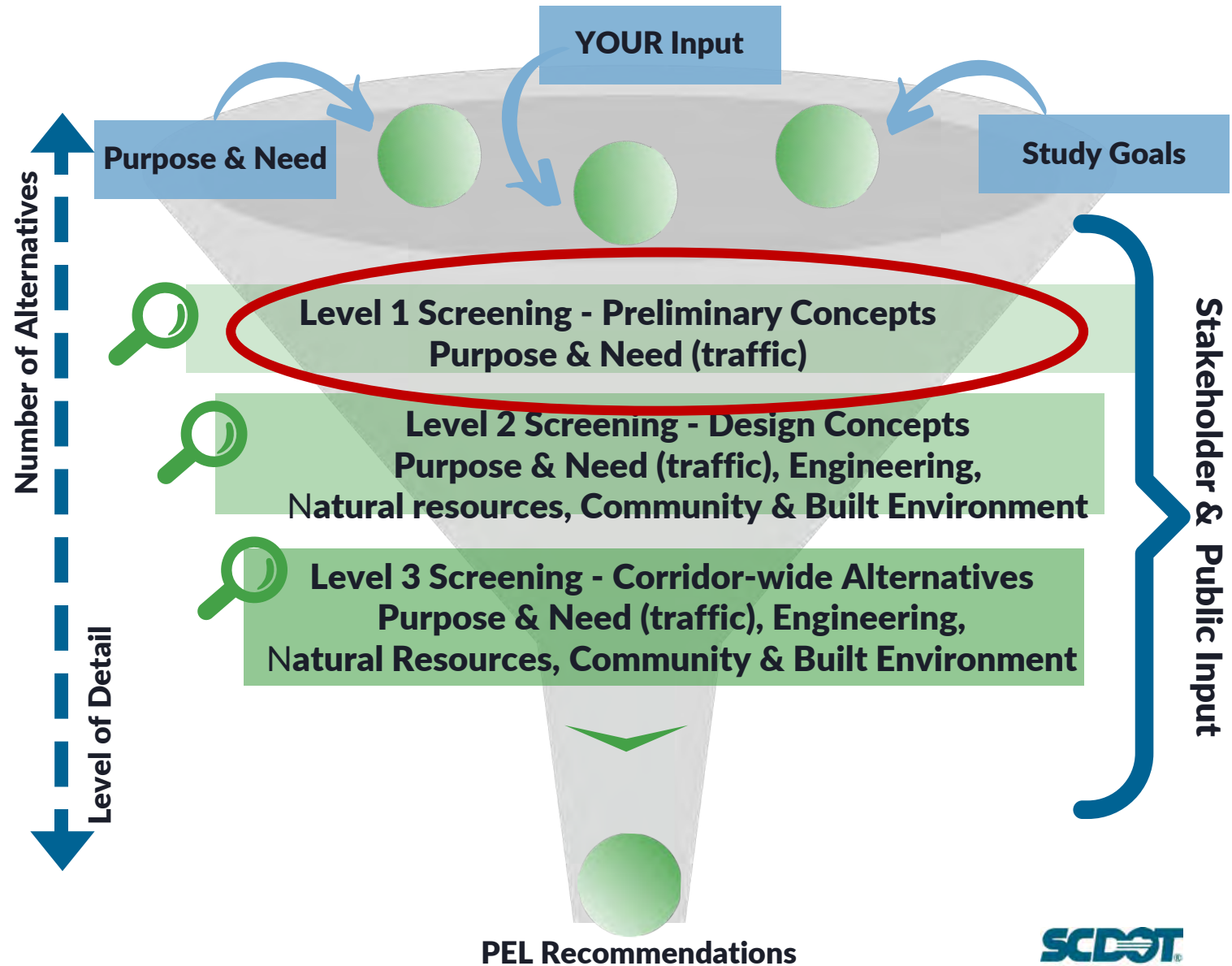
**Mainline Improvements**  
1 or 2 additional lanes



**Interchange  
Improvements**

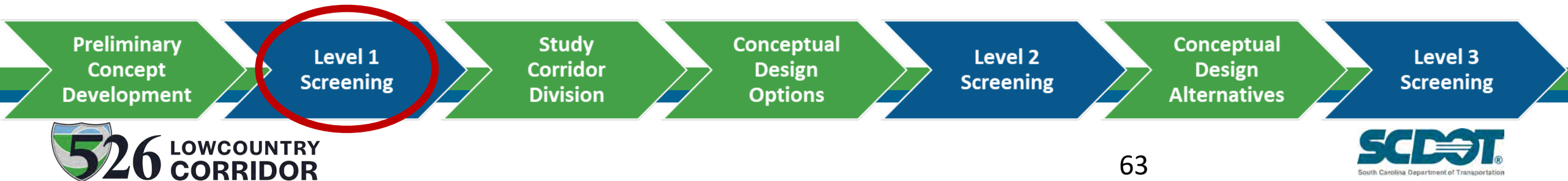
# Level 1 Screening

- High-level
- Identify concepts that do not meet the purpose and need
- Improve congestion (Quantitative)
- Improve roadway deficiencies (Qualitative)



# Level 1 Screening Criteria

- Improve congestion (Quantitative)
  - Performance Evaluation Methodology-CHATS Interim Regional TDM
  - Improved Level of Service and Volume to Capacity Ratio
  - Reduced Delay and Improved Travel Speed
- Improve roadway deficiencies (Qualitative)
  - Does the concept have the potential to meet SCDOT roadway design standards?

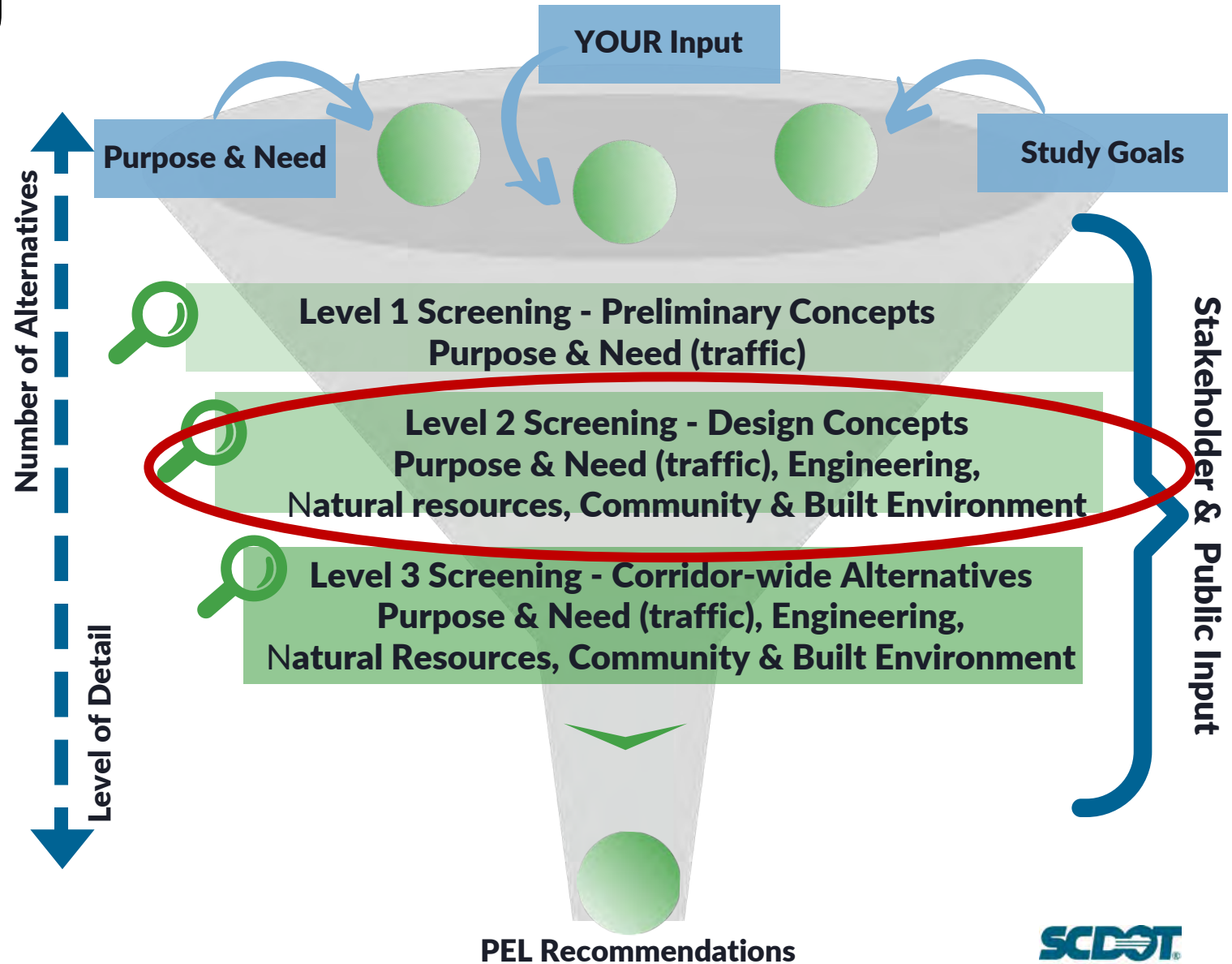


# Level 1 Screening Results

- Concepts Carried Forward
  - No-Build
  - 2 additional lanes in each direction
- Supplemental Options Carried Forward
  - Interchange Improvements
    - Dedicated truck ramps to port (additional facility)
  - TSMO Concepts
- Eliminated
  - New location alignment route
  - 1 additional lane in each direction

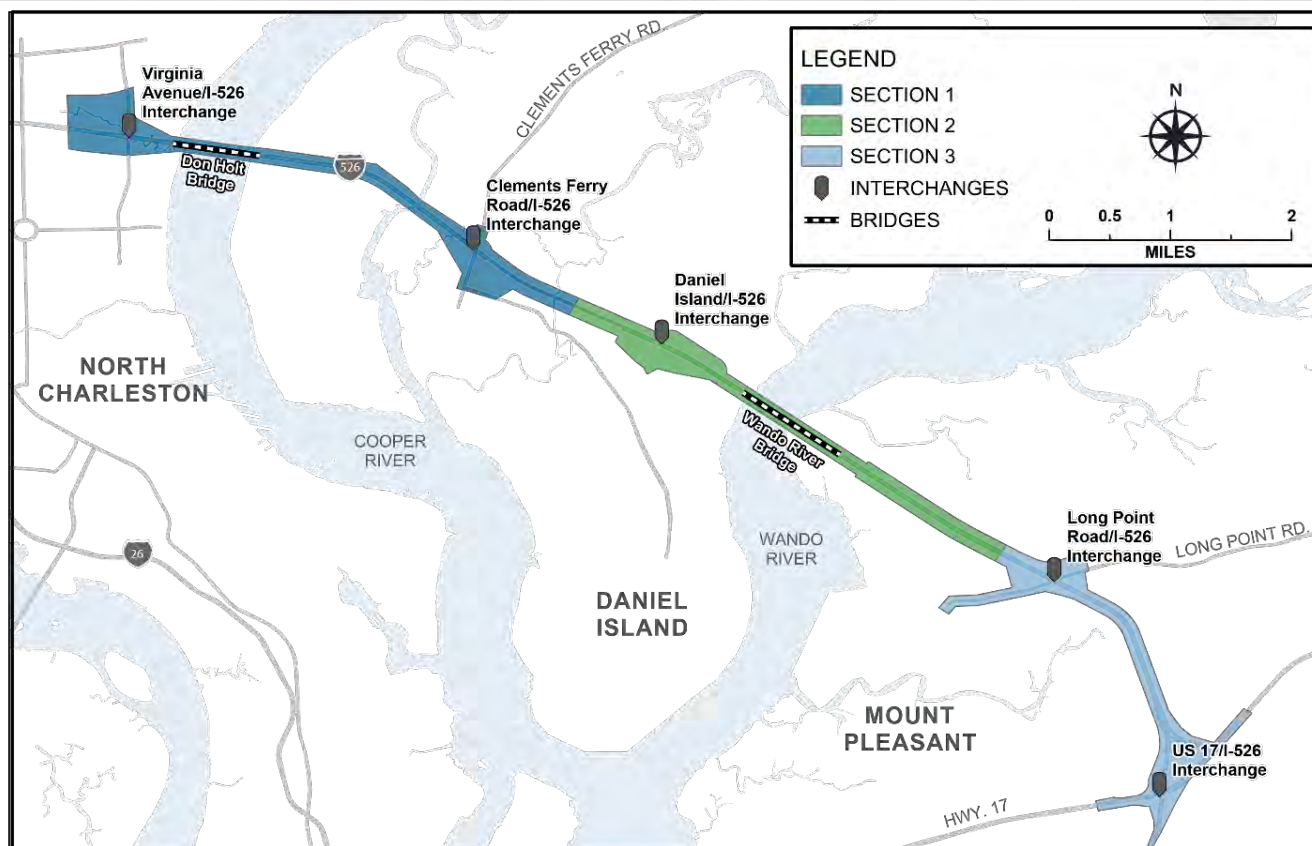
# Level 2 Screening

- Evaluate conceptual design options against the No-Build
- Screening criteria:
  - Traffic performance (level of service)
  - Compatibility with local projects, seismic resiliency, ports & transit access, constructability
  - Natural resources (aquatic resources)
  - Community and built environment (relocations, parks, cultural sites)



# Study Corridor Division

- Divide corridor into three sections
  - Based on engineering and environmental constraints
- Allows for localized design concepts to be evaluated



# Conceptual Design Options

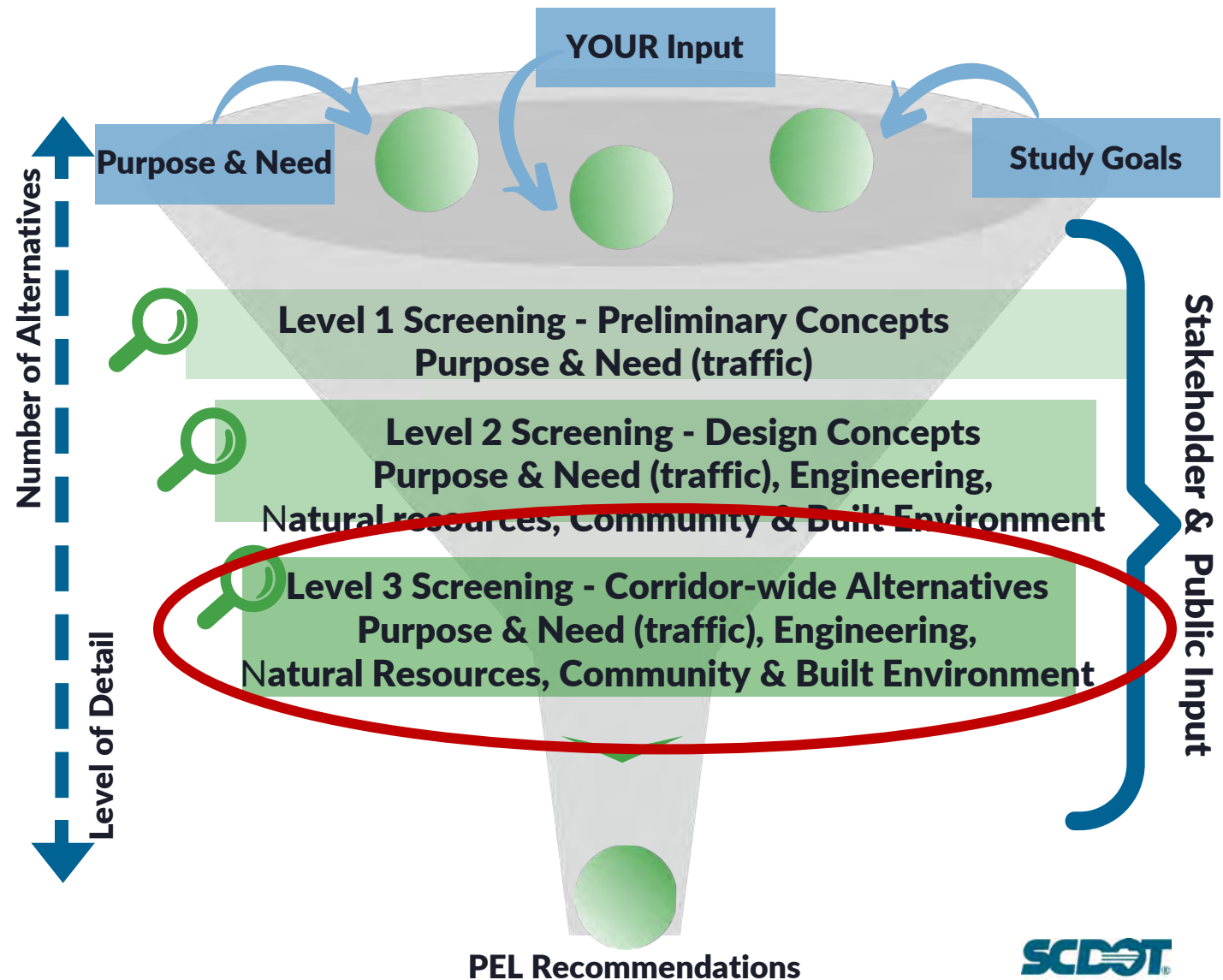
- Symmetrical – Add capacity symmetrically to each side of the existing alignment
- North – Add capacity to the north of the existing alignment
- South – Add capacity to the south of the existing alignment
- Retain – Retain the current bridge structure(s)
- Replace – Replace the current bridge structure(s)

# Level 2 Screening Evaluation

- Conceptual Design Options eliminated for:
  - Failing to satisfy the purpose and need based on traffic performance (LOS F)
  - Significant impact(s) to natural or cultural resource(s)

# Level 3 Screening

- Corridor-wide evaluation of conceptual alternatives
- Screening criteria:
  - Travel Time
  - Compatibility with local projects, seismic resiliency, ports & transit access, constructability
  - Natural resources (aquatic resources)
  - Community and built environment (relocations, parks, cultural sites)





# PEL Study Next Steps and Milestones

# PEL Study Next Steps

- FHWA coordination on concepts development and alternatives screening process
- Stakeholder and public input on reasonable alternatives
- Study recommendations – phasing, NEPA class of action, funding opportunities, unresolved issues
- FHWA coordination on PEL FHWA Questionnaire and PEL Study Report

# PEL Study Upcoming Milestones

- Alternatives and Screening FHWA Concurrence – Summer 2021
- Stakeholder Meeting – October 2021
- Public Information Meeting – October 2021
- FHWA PEL Questionnaire – January 2022
- PEL Report – January 2022

# Contact Information



[www.526LowcountryCorridor.com](http://www.526LowcountryCorridor.com)



[www.facebook.com/526Corridor](https://www.facebook.com/526Corridor)



[@526Corridor](https://twitter.com/526Corridor)



[info@526LowcountryCorridor.com](mailto:info@526LowcountryCorridor.com)



Community Office:  
5627 Rivers Avenue | North Charleston, SC 29406



866.632.5262 (toll free)  
843.258.1135



**Joy Riley, PE, PMP, DBIA**  
SCDOT  
Project Manager

