

## What has been happening with the I-526 LCC EAST?

We appreciate all of you who shifted from the planned in-person engagements last summer to join us online and offer your concerns and vision for the I-526 LCC EAST (I-526 from Virginia Avenue to US 17 in Mount Pleasant).

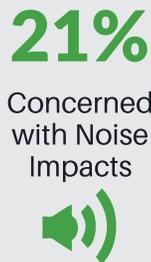
Your feedback is critical to the success of this Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. Input received now is helping to set the purpose and need and priorities for future improvements within this corridor. The graphics below summarize what we learned from both the survey and the public meeting.

**Meeting Live:**  
July 15 -  
August 15, 2020  
[526LowcountryCorridor.com](http://526LowcountryCorridor.com)

**84**  
*Comments*  
83 Online Comments  
1 Emailed Comment

The online survey began May 14, 2020 and was extended through August 15, 2020 to coincide with the launch of a full online public information meeting, which ran from July 15 through August 15, 2020.

### Top 5 Comments & Concerns:



### Survey Live: May 14 - August 15, 2020

**3,103**  
*Responses*

**Most Travelers Experienced Congestion both AM & PM**

#### Top multimodal improvements desired along the corridor:



**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:



## How was your input used?

### ▶ To validate the purpose & need for transportation improvements in the corridor.

We heard from you that you experience congestion during morning and evening commutes and that congestion was a top safety concern. This was consistent with the available data - confirming the following purpose statement for any improvements along this corridor:

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.

We know it's important to get to work and other places on time. That's why we've also included travel time reliability in the purpose and need statement. Currently, the amount of time it takes to travel along I-526 can vary greatly from day to day. Travel time reliability in this sense means that we're looking to provide some consistency in how long it would take to travel through the corridor from point a to point b. This "reliability" can help you better plan when to leave and which route to take.

### ▶ To refine project goals.

We also understand that proposed improvements to this corridor must be comprehensive. A PEL study allows us to think strategically and fold in regional and community considerations. With your input, the following goals have been established. These goals provide additional guidance for creating alternatives and the evaluation of those alternatives.

**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

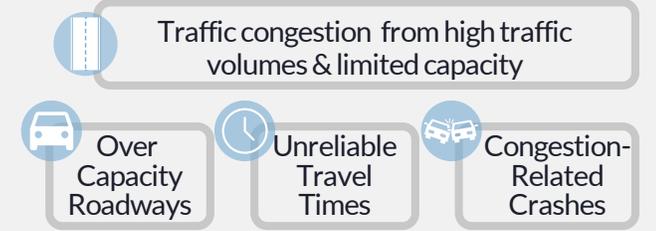
**Multimodal:** Enhance movement through the corridor including through other modes such as carpool, transit, walk, bike or truck

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

## Identified Needs

### Mobility

This corridor is a busy corridor - with a large number of people, goods and services. The key issues are:



### Roadway Deficiencies

The current roads, bridges and interchange ramps are not designed to handle the current or future traffic demands. The key issues are:



## How was your input used?

### ▶ To develop alternatives concepts.

This PEL study will use several steps to identify, evaluate, and refine planning-level concepts for improving the corridor. The first step includes developing the preliminary alternatives concepts.

A PEL study should consider local planning efforts while offering an opportunity for creating new solutions. As such, the concepts evaluated in this study include solutions identified by the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Study (CHATS) as well as new alternatives based on your input and the analysis of existing and anticipated future traffic conditions.

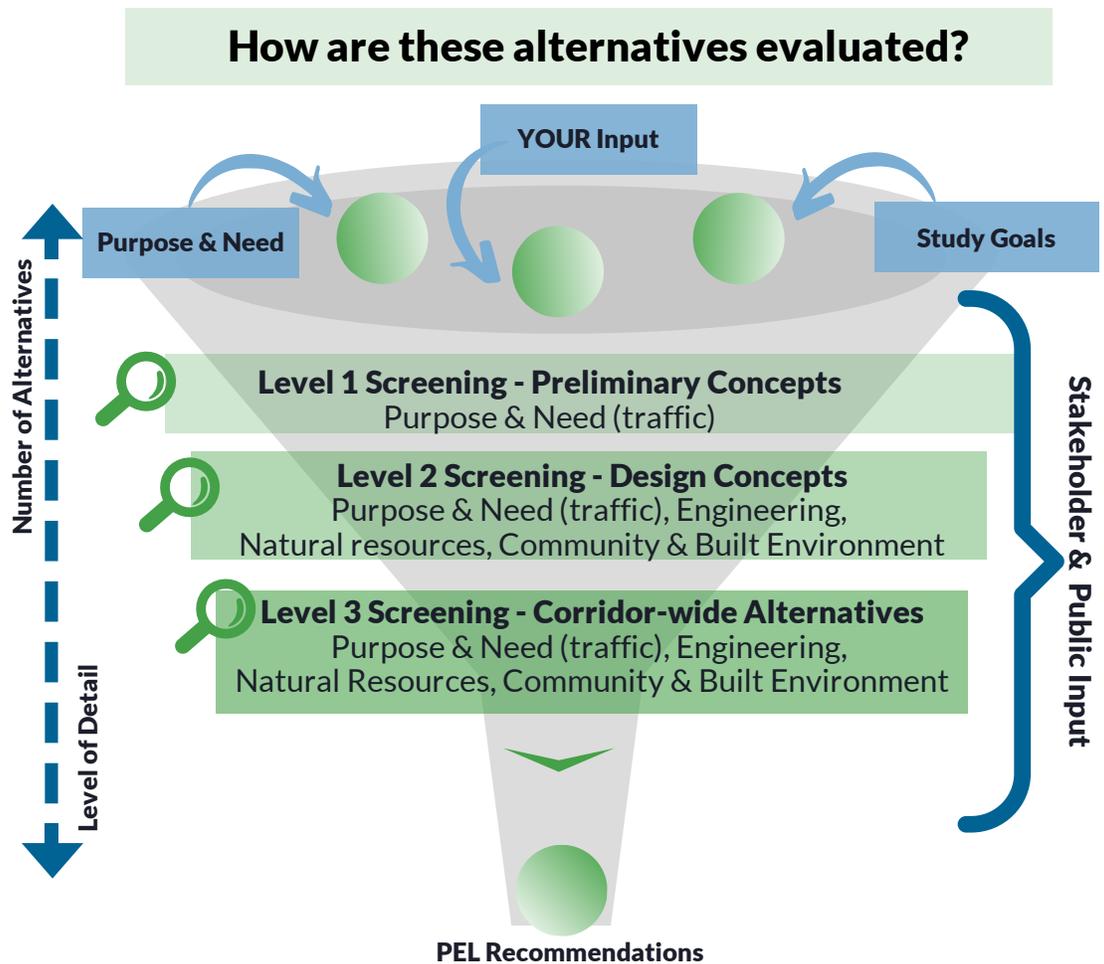
#### Preliminary Concept Development

The range of congestion management strategies and infrastructure improvements to be evaluated are identified. *Concepts include:*

- ▶ **No Build (Do Nothing)**
- ▶ **Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Strategies**
- ▶ **Infrastructure Improvements**
  - Alternative Alignments
  - Mainline Improvements (Widening 6 or 8 lanes)
  - Interchange/Ramp Improvements

## What happens next with the I-526 LCC EAST?

The team will evaluate the alternatives through a three-step screening process to identify the reasonable alternatives that will be carried forward to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Each level of screening involves a more detailed analysis of the alternatives. As the process progresses, alternatives that perform poorly are removed from further review.



Visit our Community Office (5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square)

## How can I learn more and provide my input?

A set of public information meetings is being planned for later this fall to share more detail regarding the creation and evaluation of potential improvements for this corridor. The meeting will also highlight the proposed reasonable alternatives to be carried forward in the NEPA planning process.

## How does a PEL Study transition to NEPA?

Following the public information meeting, the project team will finalize the PEL Study. This study will provide the framework for implementing future transportation improvements - including possible funding, prioritization, and potential issues that may need to be resolved in NEPA. This process is designed to move the project forward with little to no-need for rework of these important studies. This information will be used to help determine the level of NEPA environmental evaluation that would need to occur. The NEPA process would be able to build on this valuable input by confirming and refining the purpose and need for the corridor. Additionally, the engineering and environmental analysis would build on these initial studies to help determine the preferred alternative.

SAVE THE  
*date*

**In-Person & Online Public Meetings tentatively planned for October 26th & 27th!**

### When could construction start?

The NEPA process must be completed and the project permitted before any construction can occur! See estimated times below to understand the process.



## PUBLIC & AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

### Planning & Environmental Linkages Study (PEL)

1.5 - 2.5 Years

- Planning studies
- Existing conditions analysis
- Future forecasts
- Study goals
- Purpose & need
- Range of alternatives and screened reasonable alternatives
- Cost estimates and Implementation Plan
- Level of NEPA analysis: Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, or Environmental Impact Statement

### NEPA

1 - 2 Years

- Confirm/refine purpose & need
- Detailed environmental studies & noise analysis
- Refine alternatives
- Explore mitigation and commitments
- Prepare decision document

### Project Implementation

- Final design
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Permitting
- Mitigation commitments
- Construction

### Maintenance Operations

- Maintenance of roadway and right-of-way

## What is happening with the I-526 LCC WEST Community Mitigation Plan?

### What is the Community History Preservation Program?

The purpose of the Community Mitigation Plan for the I-526 LCC WEST, is to effectively mitigate project impacts in partnership with residents of the Ferndale, Russelldale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park neighborhoods. These four neighborhoods are just a few of many neighborhoods in North Charleston with a rich cultural history. The purpose of the Community History Preservation Program is to record the past of these neighborhoods through interviews with current and former residents; to collect historic photographs of the communities prior to the construction of I-26, I-526, and other developments; and to gather images of the communities prior to the potential construction of the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST transportation project as part of the Community Mitigation Plan.

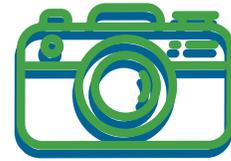


**We encourage you to stay engaged—participate in interviews, share your historic images, and provide information to document the unique historic and cultural elements of your community.** Based on community feedback, this program will also be used to inspire design concepts to be incorporated into the appearance of the new community center. Upon completion, a final report will be available at the new community center, the public library, and online. Stay tuned for information regarding community events where you can meet and interact with our History Preservation Program Manager, Professor Damon L. Fordham, and share your stories.

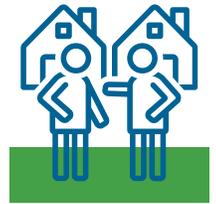
Live or have lived in the Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, or Russelldale neighborhoods? Please contact us at the Community Office by phone at (843) 258-1135 or in person at 5627 Rivers Avenue in Gas Lite Square, North Charleston. Email us at [HistoryProject@526LowcountryCorridor.com](mailto:HistoryProject@526LowcountryCorridor.com) to share stories, pictures, and videos of your memories. Join us, and be a part of history.



**Participate in interviews!**



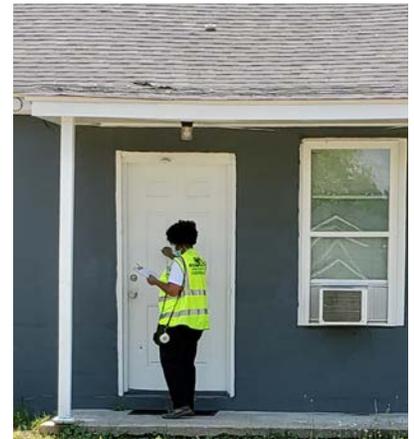
**Share your photographs!**



**Be a part of your Community History!**

### How are we reaching out to the community?

Have you seen our Community Liaisons in your community? We have been canvassing in the Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, and Russelldale neighborhoods over the last few months distributing project information and talking with the community about mitigation opportunities, such as job training. This has been a great opportunity to talk with community members face-to-face and invite them to come to the Community Office to have their questions answered. The Community Office and Liaisons are resources for you to learn about project updates and opportunities available under the Environmental Justice Community Mitigation Plan. If you see them out in your community, be sure to stop and say hello!



**So far, our Community Liaisons have reached over 1,190 homes across the potentially impacted neighborhoods.**

Visit our Community Office (5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Lite Square)

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

☎ 843.258.1135(Call/Text)

📱 @526Corridor

## Is there an update on the professional development training?

Residents of the Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Liberty Park, and Russelldale have been invited to participate in free professional development classes this summer as part of the Environmental Justice Community Mitigation Plan. The initial offerings included a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) permit preparation class, the CDL full license program, and career development training.

**Interested? Come to the Community Office or call 843.258.1135 to make an appointment and register for these free courses!**

The career development classes are geared towards high school graduates or college students (aged 16+) to enhance their career skills. Training topics may include: interview skills, communication skills, time management, employability, CPR/First Aid, computer classes and more. Classes would last 4-6 weeks online during the weekends and participating students would also be eligible for a stipend for their participation. **This is the first round of job training opportunities, but we want to hear from you what training opportunities you would like to see offered next year!**



## We want to hear from you!



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 @526Corridor

Your comments and suggestions are important to the development of a quality transportation project. We have multiple ways for you to stay informed about upcoming project-related events and information updates.

