



# LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

*June 2022 Stakeholder Meeting*  
*Joy Riley, PE, PMP, DBIA SCDOT*



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration





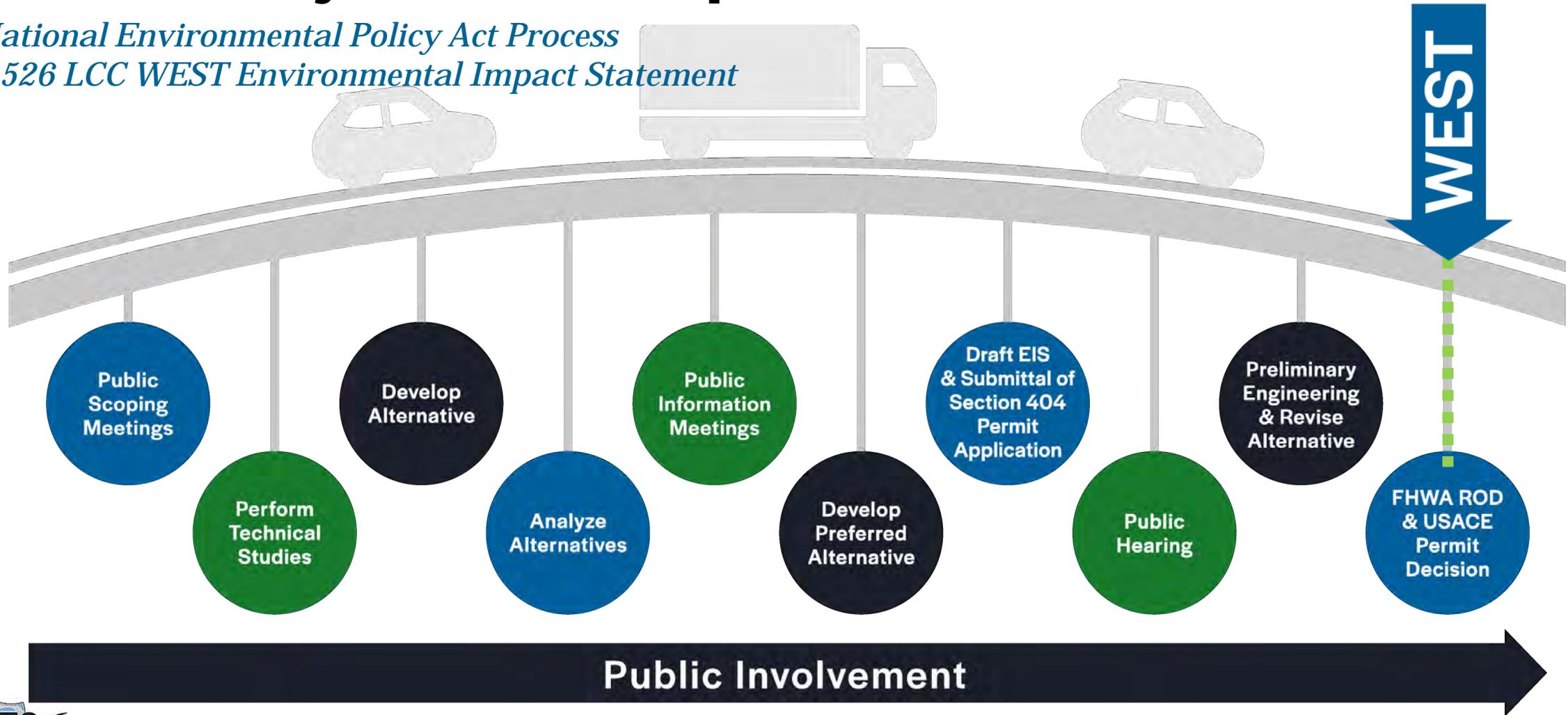
# WEST Updates

*An Environmental Impact Statement*



# NEPA Project Development Process

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



# Community Mitigation Plan

Effectively mitigate direct, indirect, and cumulative (recurring) impacts on EJ communities by **establishing relationships, building trust, and gathering feedback that will inform decisions** on mitigative measures and other aspects of project development



# Additional Changes Coming Soon

- Coordination ongoing with FHWA
- Additional items being considered to increase benefits
- Geared towards increasing the **quality of life** of the community residents and providing opportunities to increase their **generational wealth**
- Community Meetings this Summer to reveal revised mitigation plan

***YOUR***  
**comments**  
**made a**  
**difference!**

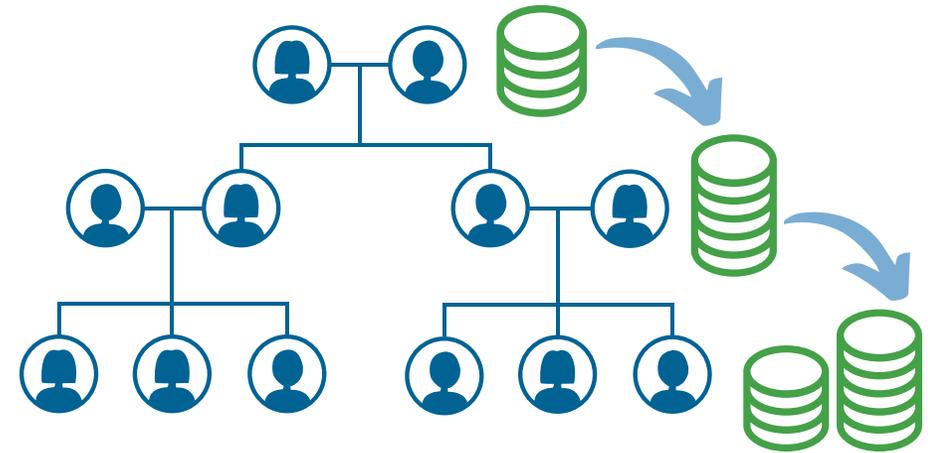
# What is Generational Wealth?

Generational wealth allows parents to give their children more options in life by passing down assets like cash, stocks, and property.

*Generational wealth also includes the passing down of:*



*Passing wealth from a previous generation to the next, benefitting the next generation*



# ADVANCE MITIGATION IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

PROPOSED  
SCHEDULE

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

DESIGN 2021-2027

RIGHT-OF-WAY 2023-2027

CONSTRUCTION 2028-2038



**Community History Preservation Study (2021 - 2027)**



**Focused Community Outreach (2019 - 2038)**



**Affordable Housing (2022 - 2027)**



**Enhanced Right-of-Way Services (2022 - 2027)**



**Education, Employment & Economic Opportunities (2023 - 2038)**



**Community Infrastructure Improvements (2023 - 2038)**

# Community Mitigation Implementation Schedule

NEW

## *Community Mitigation Schedule Commitment*

Will implement all community mitigation **PRIOR** to interstate construction, except:

- Mitigation Barriers – *would expand the footprint of the project and result in additional ROW impacts*
- Railroad Crossing Upgrades in Highland Terrace
- Pedestrian Bridge over Railroad – requires railroad approval and flagging operations; may not be feasible prior to interstate construction



*Subject to Change*

# Focused Community Outreach

## *Community Advisory Council (CAC)*

Continue to support CAC through publishing of the FEIS/ROD:

- Facilitating regularly scheduled monthly meetings
- Providing logistical and administrative support, as needed.

## *Project Oversight Committee (POC)*

Assist in creating a POC to ensure adherence to commitments in the Final Mitigation Plan:

- Coordinate with technical staff
- Serve as a liaison between the communities and project staff

## *Organizational Training*

Provide organizational training for CAC & community members interested in creating a community advocacy organization



*Subject to Change*

# Focused Community Outreach

## *Community Office*

- Maintained through project development, final design & right-of-way phases
- Office Manager, Community Liaisons/Outreach Specialists & Right-of-Way Specialists
- Meeting space for CAC, POC & other stakeholders



## *Community Resource Guide & Community Workshops*

Help sustain livability within affected EJ neighborhoods by increasing residents' access to resources:

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

*Subject to Change*

# Enhanced Right-of-Way Services

## *Enhanced Advisory Services*

- SCDOT ROW Liaison
- Provide advisory services to resident
- Home Buyer Assistance
- Section 8 Coordination
- Affordable Housing Coordination
- Transportation for viewing replacement properties
- Conflict Resolution

**NEW**

## *Acquisition Fairness Program*

- Independent Appraisals Paid by SCDOT for second opinion of value
- Owners may be eligible for additional Mitigation Payments to address property values impacted by previous public acquisitions or zoning changes.

*Subject to Change*

# Enhanced Relocation Mitigation Assistance

**NEW**

## ***Enhanced Relocation Mitigation Assistance***

SCDOT will offer **additional supplemental rental mitigation payments** based on income and rent for up to **an additional 18 months** (in addition to 42 months provided under the Uniform Act)

### ***Example Scenario to demonstrate this change:***

Average Rent (2 BR apartment) w/ Utilities = \$1967 /month

Average incomes in EJ Communities (per census data) = \$20,695 per year

30% of income for affordable housing costs for this individual = **\$517**

Calculation of monthly rent supplement = \$1967 - \$517 = **\$1450**

42 months of supplemental rents = \$60,884

60 months of supplemental rents = \$86,977

*\*Actual rent supplements based on each individual's specific income & rent*

*Subject to Change*

# Affordable Housing for Residential Displacements

## UPDATE

### *Affordable Housing*

- Partner with the SC State Housing, Finance & Development Authority to **BUILD** 100 new affordable housing units as close to the impacted communities as possible
- Partner with a local non-profit to implement a Single-Family Affordable Replacement Housing Program on 20 **45 residential lots**
- **Have direct access to transit & convenient access to the proposed Lowcountry Bus Rapid Transit System**
- **Developments in compliance with LCRT Transit-Oriented development given priority**
- **Relocated residents will get priority, remaining units available to other residents in the EJ Communities**



*Subject to Change*

*To be completed prior to the start of construction of the I-526 LCC WEST improvements*

# First-Time Homebuyer Program

## *Financial Literacy & First-Time Homebuyer Counseling*

- Financial literacy & first-time homebuyer counseling to displaced residents
- Partnerships with local organizations like Trident Urban League
- Assist residents in securing residential loans & transitioning from renters to homeowners
- ***Counseling will occur in group & individual classes; start in 2022***

**NEW**

## *First-Time Homebuyer Grant Program*

SCDOT will partner with an agency to administer financial grants for down payment assistance for first time homebuyers



*Subject to Change*

*To be completed prior to the start of construction of the I-526 LCC WEST improvements*

# Community Recreational Amenities

UPDATE

## *Community Center Facilities and Amenities*

Partner with the City of North Charleston to fund the construction of **one replacement community center, two pocket parks**, and associated infrastructure that could potentially include:

- Flexible space/classrooms
- Basketball courts
- Wi-Fi & internet access
- Audio/visual equipment
- **Emergency generators & refrigerators (NEW)**
- **Solar Power (NEW)**
- Well-lit facility access
- Shared-use path
- Multiple pedestrian access points
- Crosswalks/traffic calming
- Walkways, user-friendly common space
- Directional signs
- Community garden
- Educational wetland
- Covered shelters/grills
- Mural in the community center
- Parking for the community center near trail entrances

*Subject to Change*



*To be completed prior to the start of construction of the I-526 LCC WEST improvements*

# Community Recreational Amenities



## *Programs and Activities*

Partner with North Charleston: develop programs, services, & arrangements for long-term operation/maintenance of replacement community center & amenities

- Priority given to the 4 EJ communities
- City will encourage 4 EJ communities to apply for jobs at replacement community center
- Potential programs and activities could include:
  - Senior/youth-focused programs & activities
  - Yearly calendar of community center events focusing on community cohesion
  - Access to educational and financial resources for community advocacy and self-advocacy
  - A community garden as educational program & mitigation for the food desert
  - Maintenance of stormwater detention for educational purposes during summer programs

*Subject to Change*

*To be completed prior to the start of construction of the I-526 LCC WEST improvements*



# Stop & Pause for Questions

# Educational & Employment Opportunities

Expanded all programs to be available throughout right-of-way & construction phases!

## UPDATE

### ***College Aid Initiative***

- Increased fund to **\$500,000** (from \$100,000)
- CAC will develop the criteria for eligibility
- SCDOT will distribute the funds

## UPDATE

### ***Summer Transportation Institute Program***

- Skill-building program to create awareness & expose high school students to transportation careers
- **Priority to students from Impacted Communities for up to 50% of the slots/year**

### ***Pre-Employment Training***

- Provide training & job readiness skills to individuals from impacted EJ communities

## UPDATE

### ***School-to-Work Program***

- Partner with organizations to develop school-to-work employment programs in construction, engineering & transportation
- Internship program funded by SCDOT for **20 internships** (increased from 10) to high school students, college students and young adults up to age 25 from the impacted EJ neighborhoods (during ROW) *Subject to Change*

# Internships start this summer!

## UPDATE

### *Summer 2022 School to Work Opportunities*

- Intern at Community Office & assist with outreach
- Internship at SCDOT Charleston office to learn about construction & maintenance careers
- Summer Transportation Institute held at Benedict College; EJ community residents will be prioritized but program open to all students
- CDL Training continues to be available for those 18+

*Priority will be given to residents of Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Joppa Way, Liberty Park, and Russelldale. However, residents from all neighborhoods identified in the I-526 Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis report are eligible to participate.*

*Subject to Change*



**ATTENTION Students!**

Contact the I-526 LCC Community Office Today to Learn More!  
843.258.1135  
info@526LowcountryCorridor.com

**INTERESTED IN A SUMMER INTERNSHIP?**

The following PAID transportation-focused internships are available through the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) in Charleston, SC for those 16+:

- **I-526 Lowcountry Corridor Community Office Internship**
- **SCDOT Charleston Office Internship**

**OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:**

- **Summer Transportation Institute (STI)**  
A 4-week program this summer to introduce high school students to careers in the transportation industry. Learn how to apply today (843.258.1135)! Must have a minimum 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
- **CDL Training (18+)**  
Both a CDL Permit Preparation Class and CDL Full License Program will be offered.

Training and internships sponsored by the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

*Apply Today!*

# Educational & Employment Opportunities

Expanded all programs to be available throughout the right of way and construction phases!

**NEW**

## Careers in Transportation Education Program

- Provide awareness, skill building & expose students & young adults to transportation careers
- Transportation Technology Education

Priority will be given to residents of Ferndale, Highland Terrace, Joppa Way, Liberty Park, and Russelldale. However, residents from all neighborhoods identified in the I-526 Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis report are eligible to participate.

### CAREER PATHS IN TRANSPORTATION

Education/Experience Level	Job Role	Median Wage
4-YEAR OR MORE COLLEGE DEGREE AND/OR EQUIVALENT EXPERIENCE	Transportation, Storage & Distribution Manager	\$46.77
	Logistician	\$35.22
	Police, Fire, & Ambulance Dispatcher	\$27.70
1-2 YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE	Bus & Truck Mechanic & Diesel Engine Specialist	\$25.36
	Auto Service Tech/Mechanic	\$21.18
	Heavy & Tractor Trailer Truck Driver	\$23.84
LESS THAN 2 MONTHS CREDENTIAL/ LICENSURE	First-Line Transportation Supervisor	\$29.29
	Industrial Truck or Tractor Operator	\$21.15
	Dispatcher	\$22.45
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED AND/OR EXPERIENCE/ ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING	Cargo & Freight Agent	\$23.73
	Laborer & Freight, Stock & Material Mover	\$16.96
	Light Truck or Delivery Driver	\$18.75

**WHY CHOOSE A CAREER IN TRANSPORTATION?**  
 Transportation is an essential industry. The transport and logistics industry is one that cannot be replaced by technology, and in fact may even be enriched by it — all forms of technology must be produced and transported, and you could be the person behind that. There are abundant opportunities. Earn a great income!

These jobs are in demand in Minnesota and these are Central Minnesota Median wages. Data collected from Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Provided for you by the Minnesota Rural Career Counseling Coordinators (RCC Grant)

Partnered with CareerForce and American Job Center.

View career information for Transportation occupations:  
[www.careeronestop.org/sitesearch.aspx?keyword=transportation](http://www.careeronestop.org/sitesearch.aspx?keyword=transportation)

Subject to Change

# Small Business Development Program

NEW

## *Small Business Development Program*

- Bring awareness to generational wealth benefits of entrepreneurship
- Partner with organizations and other disadvantaged business enterprises to develop and deliver an educational program that empowers those interested in learning more about starting a small business enterprise
- Awareness to small business resources and orientation to the benefits and programs offered
- Information sessions & recruitment opportunities to work on the I-526 LCC projects



Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification

Our DBE Certification is recognized by 27 partners in SC!



Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Certification

Our SBE Certification increases your opportunities for contracts in the transportation industry in SC.

*Subject to Change*

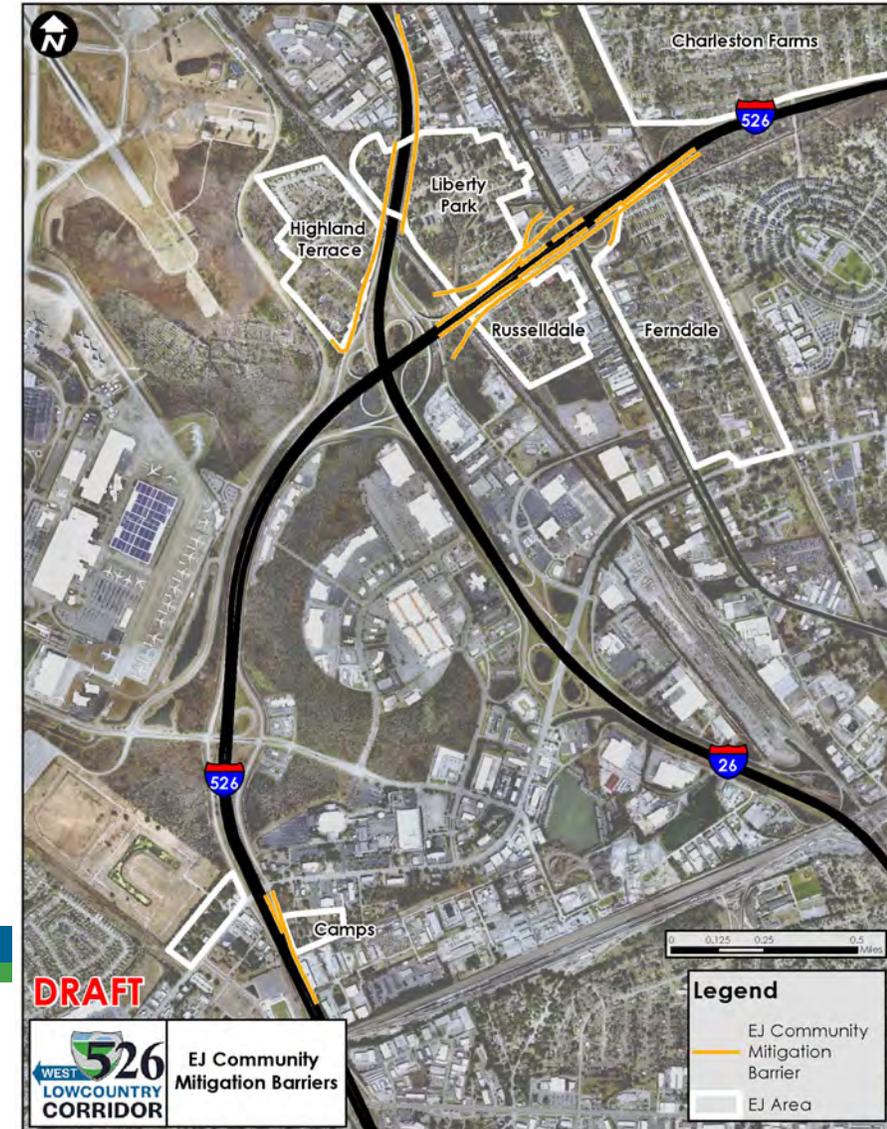
# Mitigation Barriers

UPDATE

## Mitigation Barriers

- Highland Terrace and Liberty Park: Along the eastbound and westbound sides of I-26 and I-526 and Remount Road interchanges
- Liberty Park: Along westbound side of I-526 between the Rivers Avenue and I-26 interchanges
- **Russelldale and Ferndale: Along eastbound side of I-526 from I-26 interchange to east of CSX railroad tracks**
- **Camps: Along the eastbound side of I-526 and the eastbound exit ramp at the Montague Interchange**

*Subject to Change*



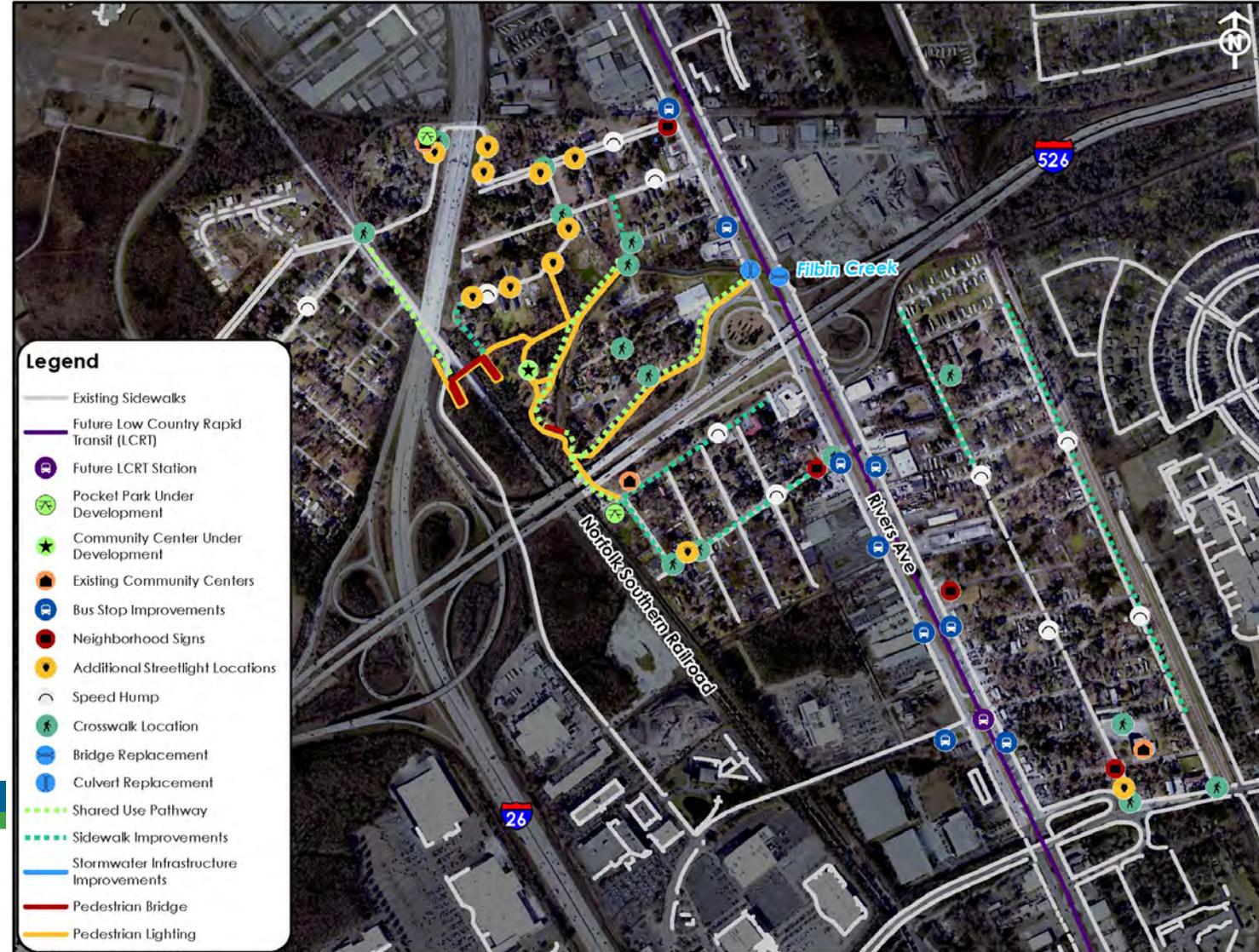
# Community Enhancement Initiatives

## Community Infrastructure Enhancement Plan (CIEP)

Improvements to:

- Bike/Pedestrian Connectivity & Safety
- Bus Shelter Amenities
- Pedestrian Lighting
- Traffic Calming Measures
- Stormwater Infrastructure
- Landscaping and Aesthetics
- Railroad Crossing Upgrades
- Pedestrian Bridges

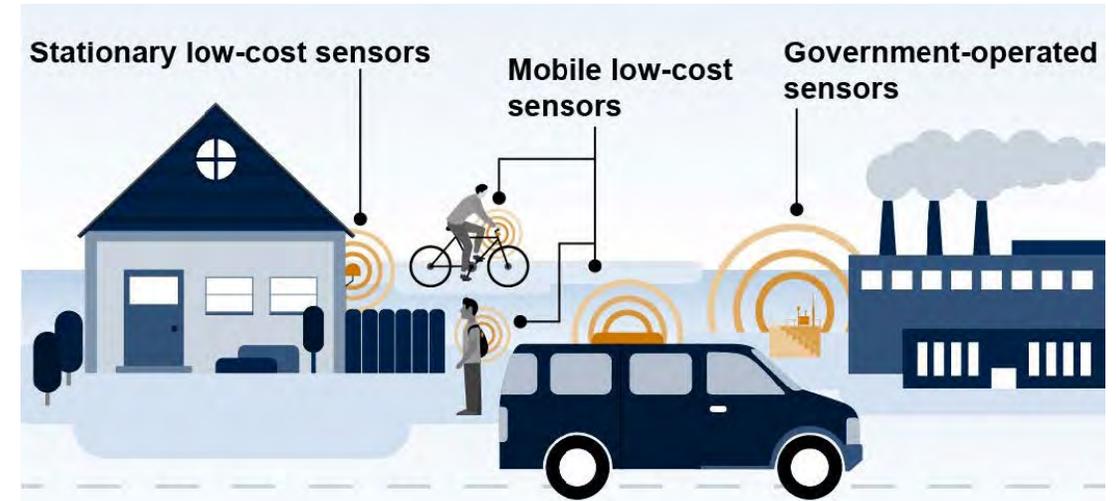
*Subject to Change*



**NEW**

## *Community Air Quality Monitoring Program*

- Fund the purchase/installation of Particulate Matter 2.5 Sensors
- Sensors placed in all 4 impacted EJ communities
- Sensors provide real-time data online
- Sensors in place during construction
- SCDOT will develop an implementation plan and a response plan for elevated levels



*Subject to Change*

# Larger Community Office?

**Gas Lite Square**  
5605 Rivers Avenue  
North Charleston

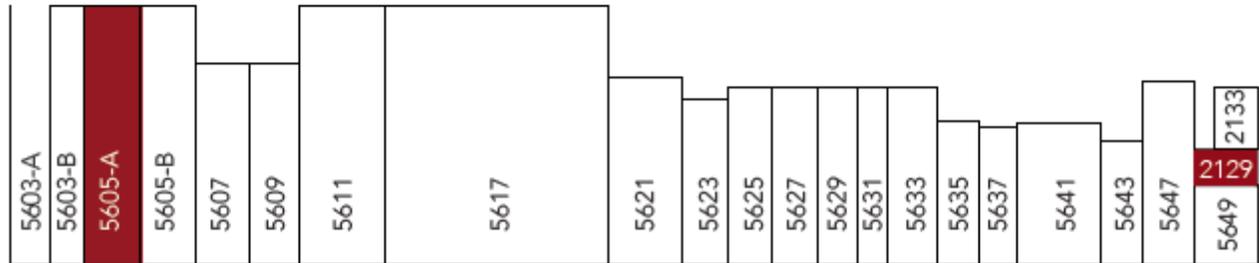
**NEW**

- Larger Space
- Same Convenient Location
- 2-3 Bathrooms
- More Offices
- Larger Meeting Space

## Gas Lite Square Shopping Center

5601 Rivers Avenue, North Charleston, SC 29406

**RETAIL SPACE  
FOR LEASE**



### SUITE TENANTS

5603-A	Charleston Imaging	5621	Dolphin Dental Group	5637	All Nails
5603-B	Kasada Beauty Supply	5623	Oriental Cuisine	5641	West Marine
<b>5605-A</b>	<b>AVAILABLE - 4,130 SF</b>	5625	Cora Physical Therapy	5643	Gas Lite Liquors
5605-B	LaundroLab	5627	SCDOT	5647	Ginza Sushi
5607	Salon Zoë	5629	Seafood Pot	5649	Boost
5609	Geico	5631	Blades	<b>2129</b>	<b>AVAILABLE - 570 SF</b>
5611	Alamo	5633	Spine Pain Center	2133	Enterprise
5617	Home Decor Outlets	5635	Americash Cash Loans		



# Stop & Pause for Questions



# EAST Updates

*A Planning & Environmental Linkages Study*



# I-526 LCC EAST Study Area

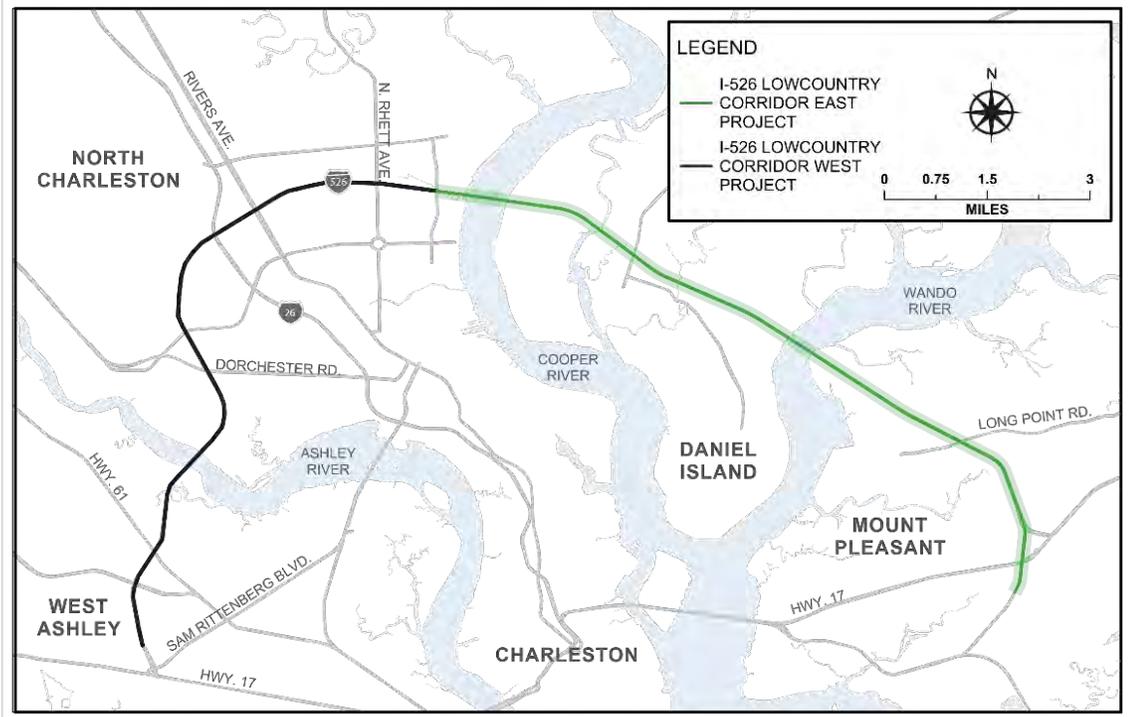
## Virginia Avenue to US 17

**10**   
total miles

**5**   
miles elevated structure

**5**   
interchanges

**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?

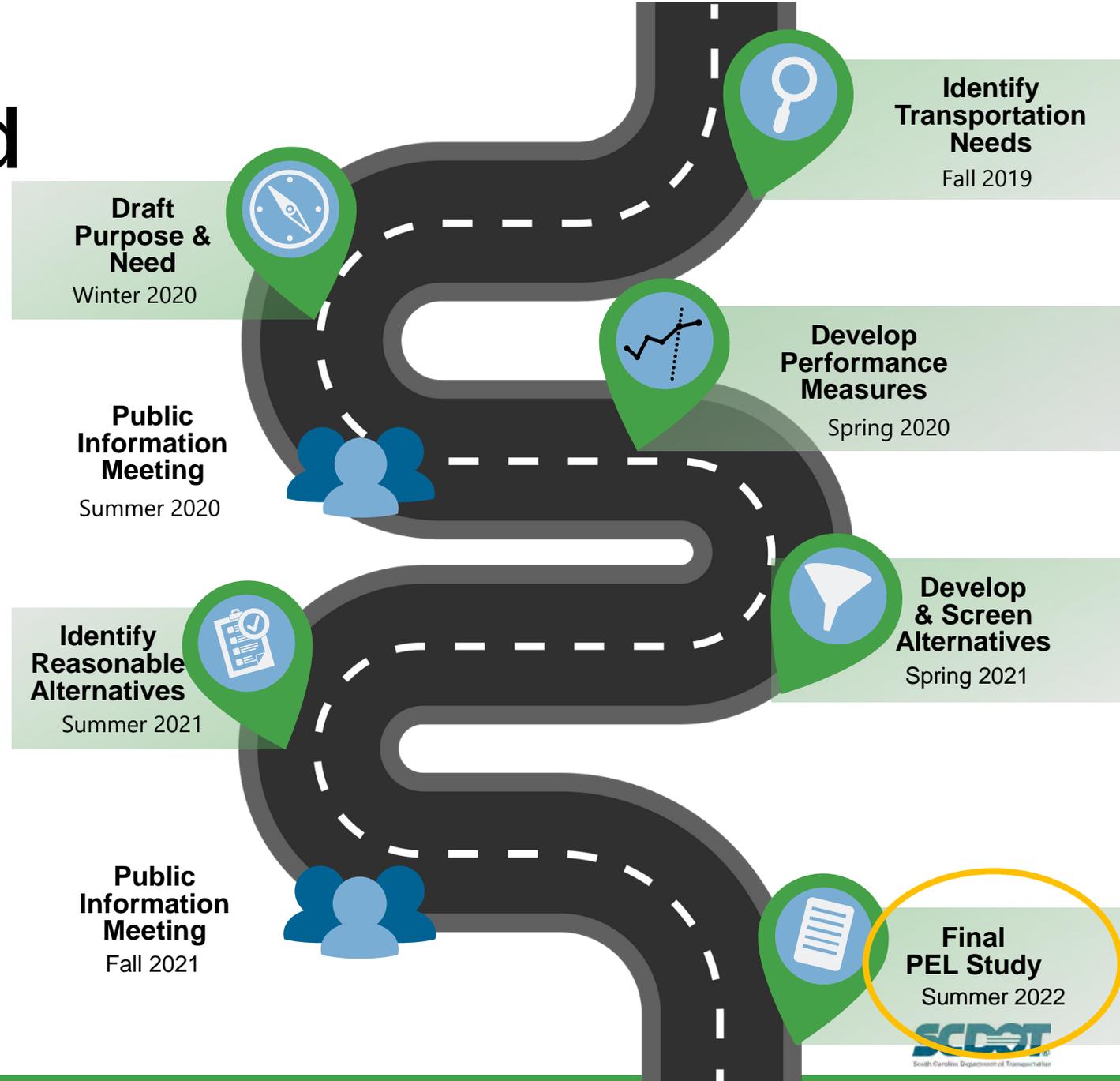


## Who Participates?



# PEL 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*
- Public Information Meeting  
*October 26 & 27, 2021*



## Project Purpose

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.

## Project Goals

- Compatibility:** Align with local land use plans & projects
- Demand:** Accommodate increased numbers of vehicles
- Seismic:** Design any new roads or bridges with 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 other modes such as carpool, transit, walk, or bike
- Technology:** Accommodate future transportation technologies for vehicles, system monitoring, driver information, and traffic operations

## Identified Needs

### Mobility

This is a busy corridor supporting 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:





# Public Meeting Summary



## How People Participated

### Project Website

[526LowcountryCorridor.com/eastvpim2021](https://526LowcountryCorridor.com/eastvpim2021)  
*Live, October 11, 2021*

The Public Information Meeting webpage contained all the materials you would have seen at the in-person meeting.

*A mailed public information meeting packet was available by request by calling 843.258.1135 or emailing [info@526LowcountryCorridor.com](mailto:info@526LowcountryCorridor.com).*

## How People Commented

### Project Website

[526LowcountryCorridor.com](https://526LowcountryCorridor.com)  
Fill out a comment form on the project website.

### Project Hotline

**843.258.1135 (Call Us)**  
Press "2" to leave a verbal comment. Comments will be limited to 2 minutes.

### In-person Public Meetings

**Tuesday, October 26, 2021 5-7 PM**  
R. L. Jones Center  
391 Egypt Road, Mount Pleasant, SC

**Wednesday, October 27, 2021 5-7 PM**  
Felix C. Davis Community Center  
4800 Park Circle, North Charleston, SC  
CARTA Routes 13 & 104

**Spanish translation services were available at all meetings.**

**Official Comment Period  
October 11 - December 1, 2021**

### Project Email

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

### Mail

**Joy Riley, PE, PMP, CPM, DBIA**  
**SC Department of Transportation**  
**Post Office Box 191**  
**955 Park Street, Room 401**  
**Columbia, SC 29202-0191**

# Comments Received

*Public Information Meeting 2: Fall 2021*

234 In-person Attendees

6,939 Web Visitors

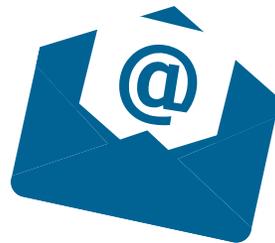
558 Total Comments

Official Comment Period:  
October 11 – December 1, 2021



Project Website

404



Emails &  
Letters

87



Written  
Comments

5

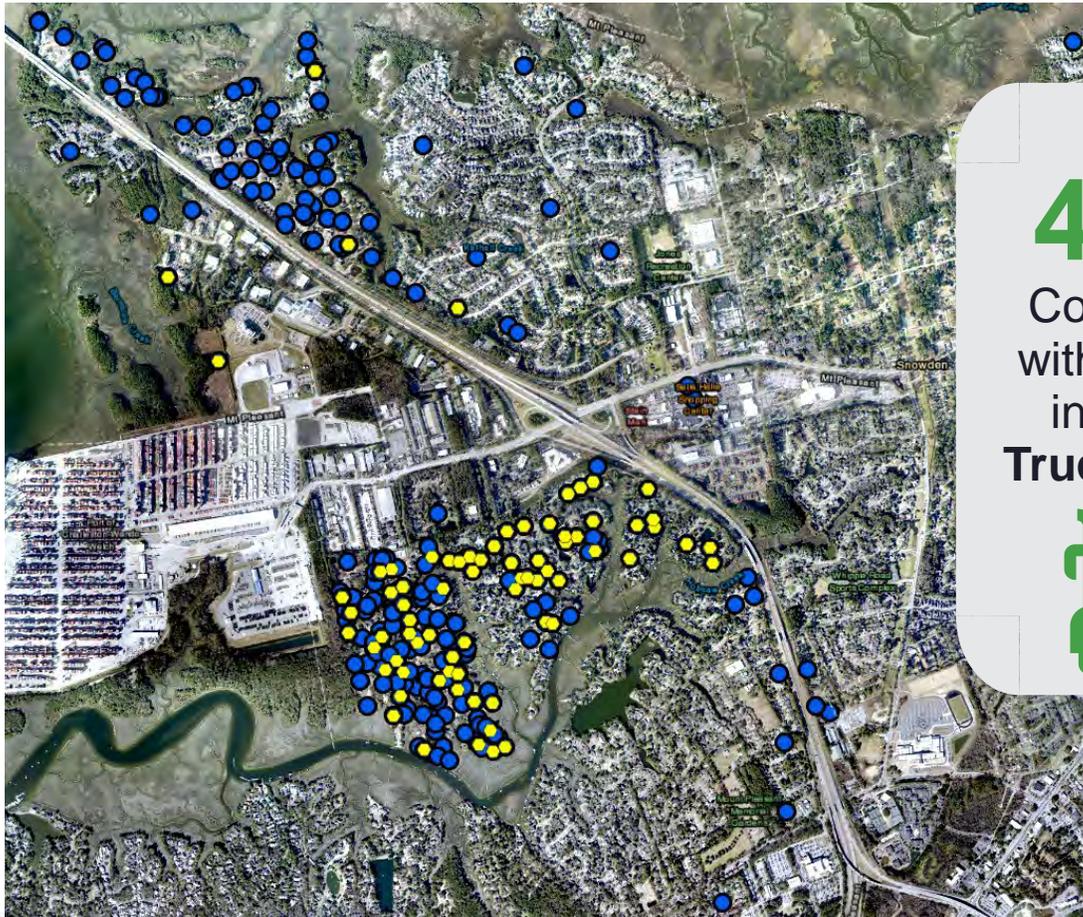


Voicemails

15

# Public Information Meeting 2: Public Input

*Public Information Meeting: Fall 2021*



## Top comments and concerns:

**45%**

Concerned with **Traffic**, including **Truck Traffic**



**23%**

Support **Separate Truck Access** to the Wando Port



**22%**

Concerned with **Safety**



**20%**

Concerned with **Neighborhood Impacts**



I-526 EAST PEL Public Comments



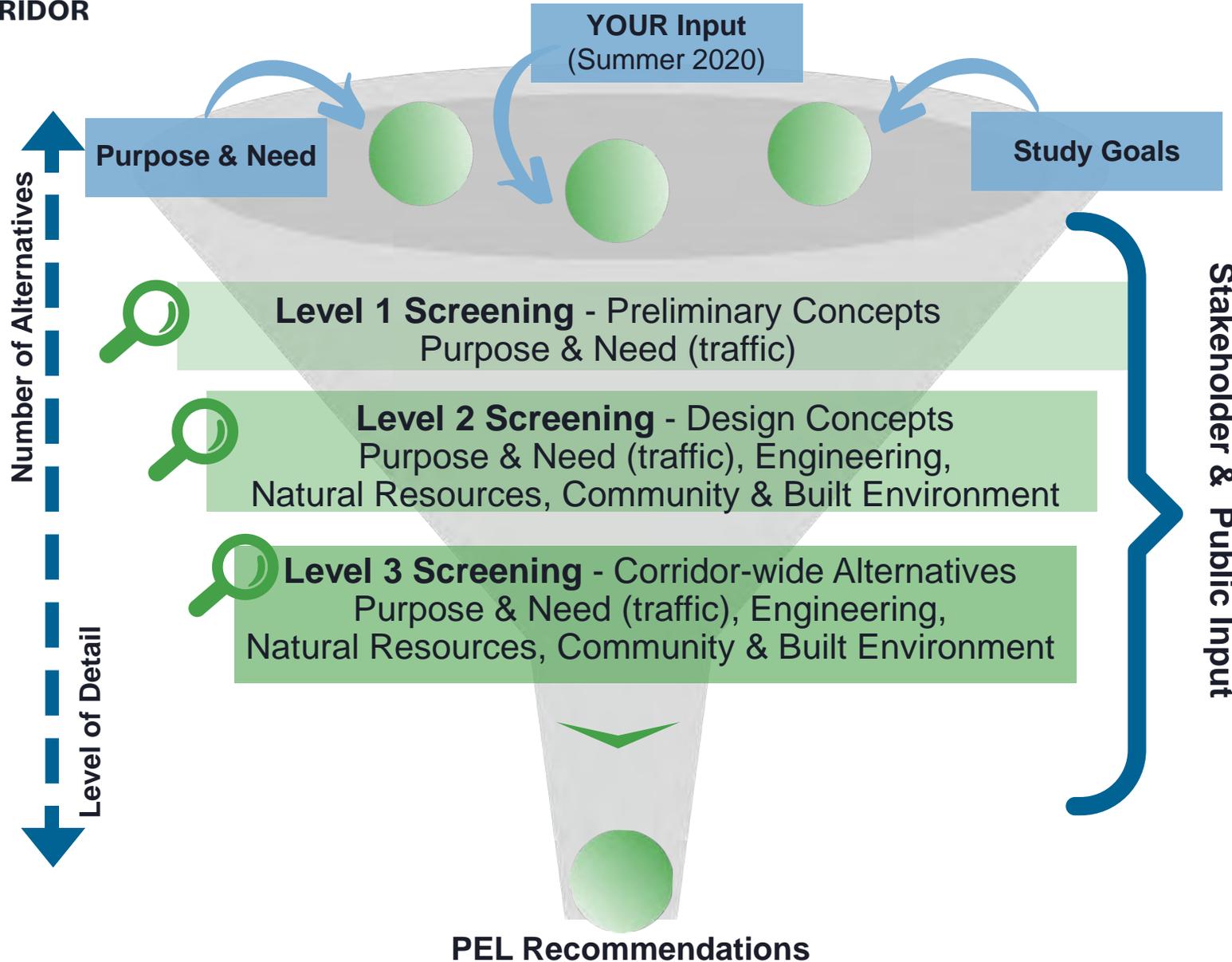
Specifically Support Separate Truck Access



# Where are we now?



# Alternatives Concepts Screening Process



## How were the alternative concepts evaluated?

The project team evaluated the alternatives through a three-step screening process to identify the reasonable alternatives that are presented today.

Each level of screening included a more detailed analysis of the alternatives. As the process progressed, poorly performing alternatives were removed from further review.

The resulting alternatives are proposed to be carried forward into the NEPA process.

# Your comments made a difference!

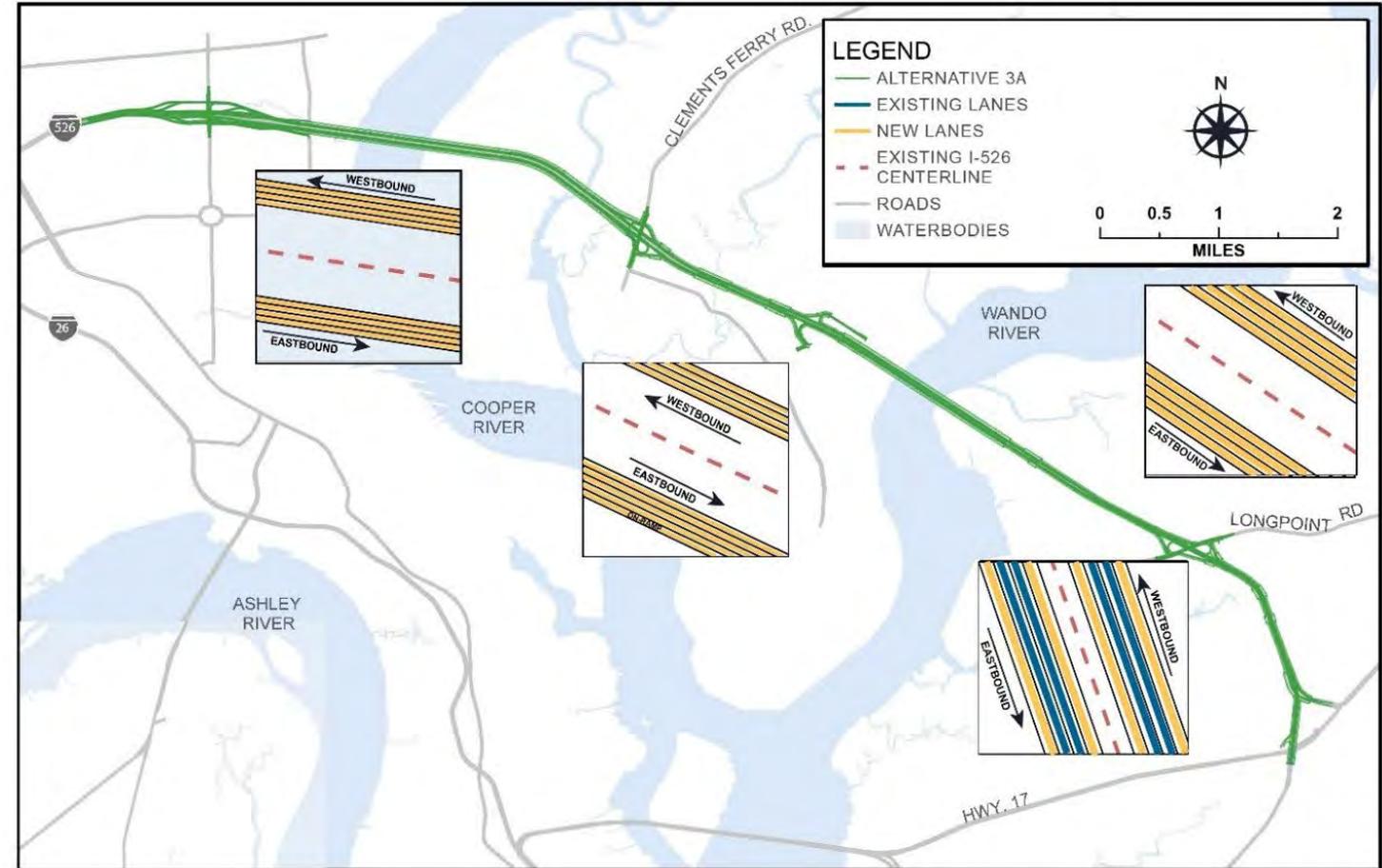
## We heard your concerns!

After the public information meeting, the project team evaluated additional options to improve the operational issues and reduce environmental and community impacts between the Wando River and Long Point Road.

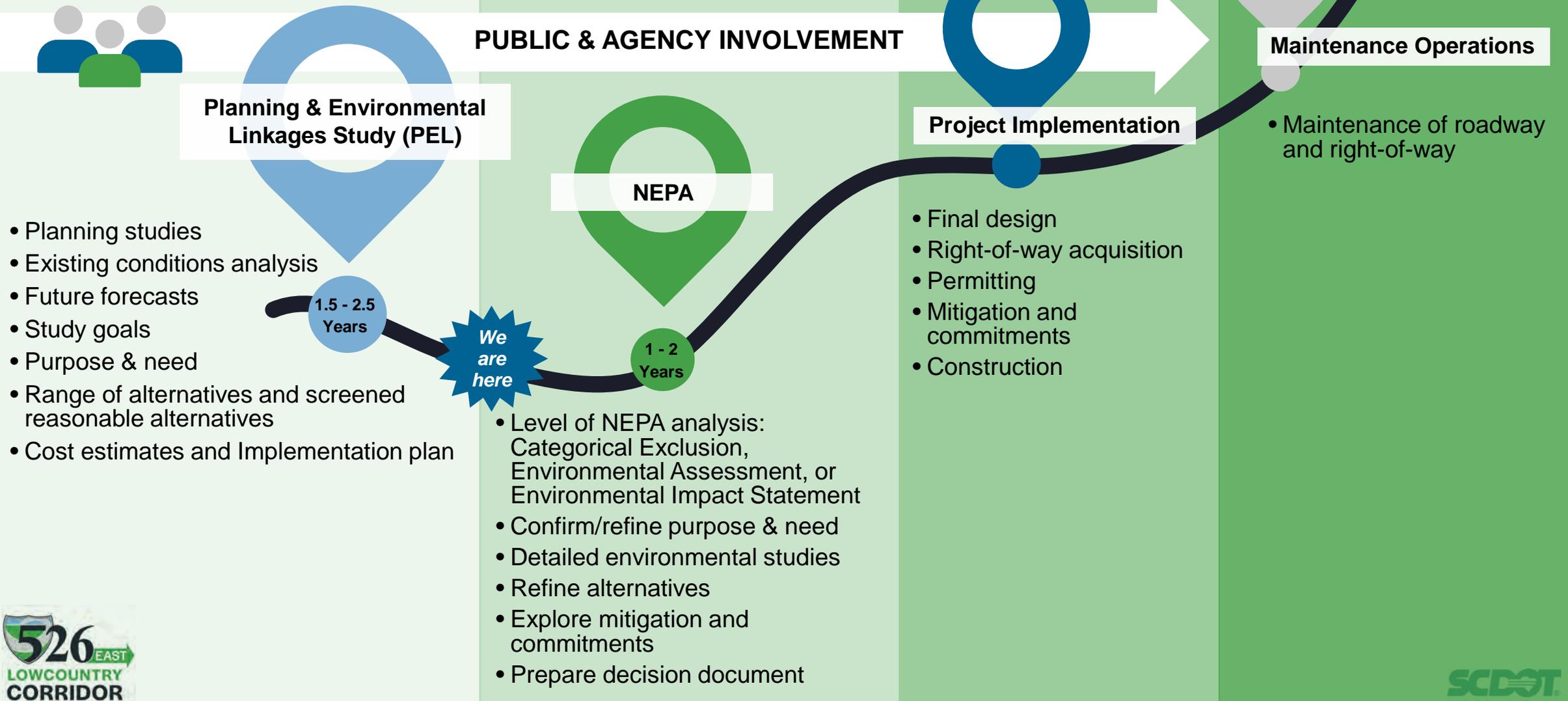
As a result, the team developed an additional alternative.

# New Alternative: Alternative 3A

- Replace Don Holt bridge with 2 new 4-lane bridges on either side of the existing bridge
- Replace Wando bridges with 2 new parallel 2-lane bridges, remove existing bridges, then widen newly built bridges to 4 lanes



# PEL & NEPA Process





# Stop & Pause for Questions



# I-526/Long Point Road Interchange Project

*An Environmental Assessment (EA)*

# Why are improvements needed?



**Traffic-related congestion on I-526**



**Population & economic growth**

- Residential & Commercial expansions, Port growth



**Interchange deficiencies**



**Public comment & concerns**

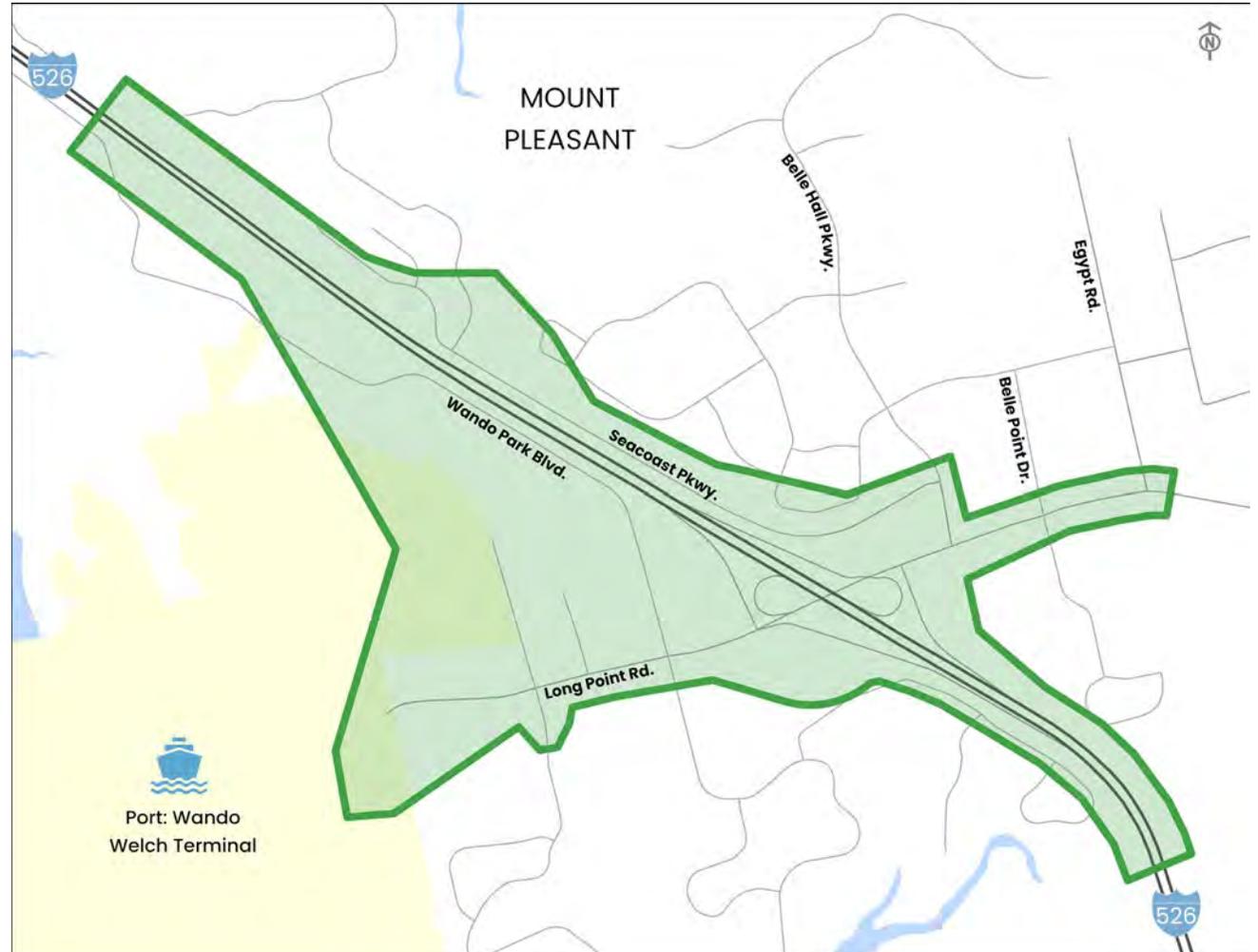
# Long Point Road Interchange Deficiencies

Existing interchange ramps have geometric deficiencies that do not accommodate existing & future traffic volumes & contribute to inadequate mobility and travel times.

- Inadequate shoulder widths
- Insufficient acceleration/deceleration ramp lengths
- Tightly curved ramps

# Long Point Road Interchange Study Area

- 2 miles along I-526
- 1.5 miles along Long Point Road
- Existing interchange: Partial cloverleaf
- 3 water crossings
  - Tributary to Rathall Creek
  - Tributary to Hobcaw Creek
  - Hobcaw Creek
- SCPA Wando Welch Terminal



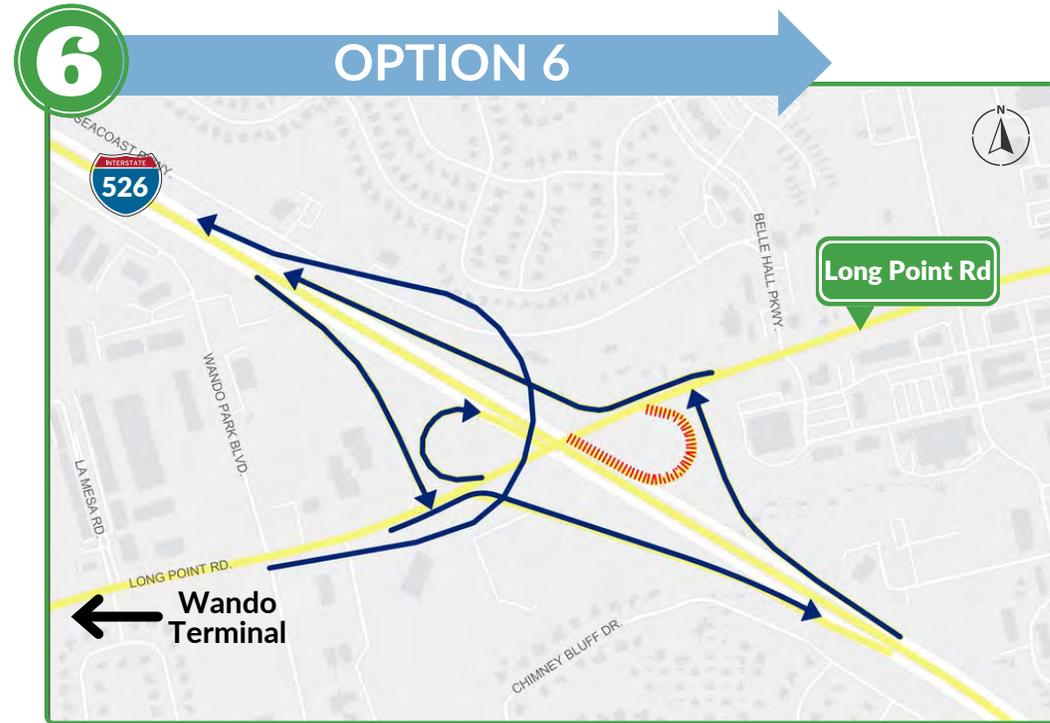
# Preliminary Interchange Concepts

*Shown at the Public Information Meeting 2: Fall 2021*



# Two New Interchange Concepts

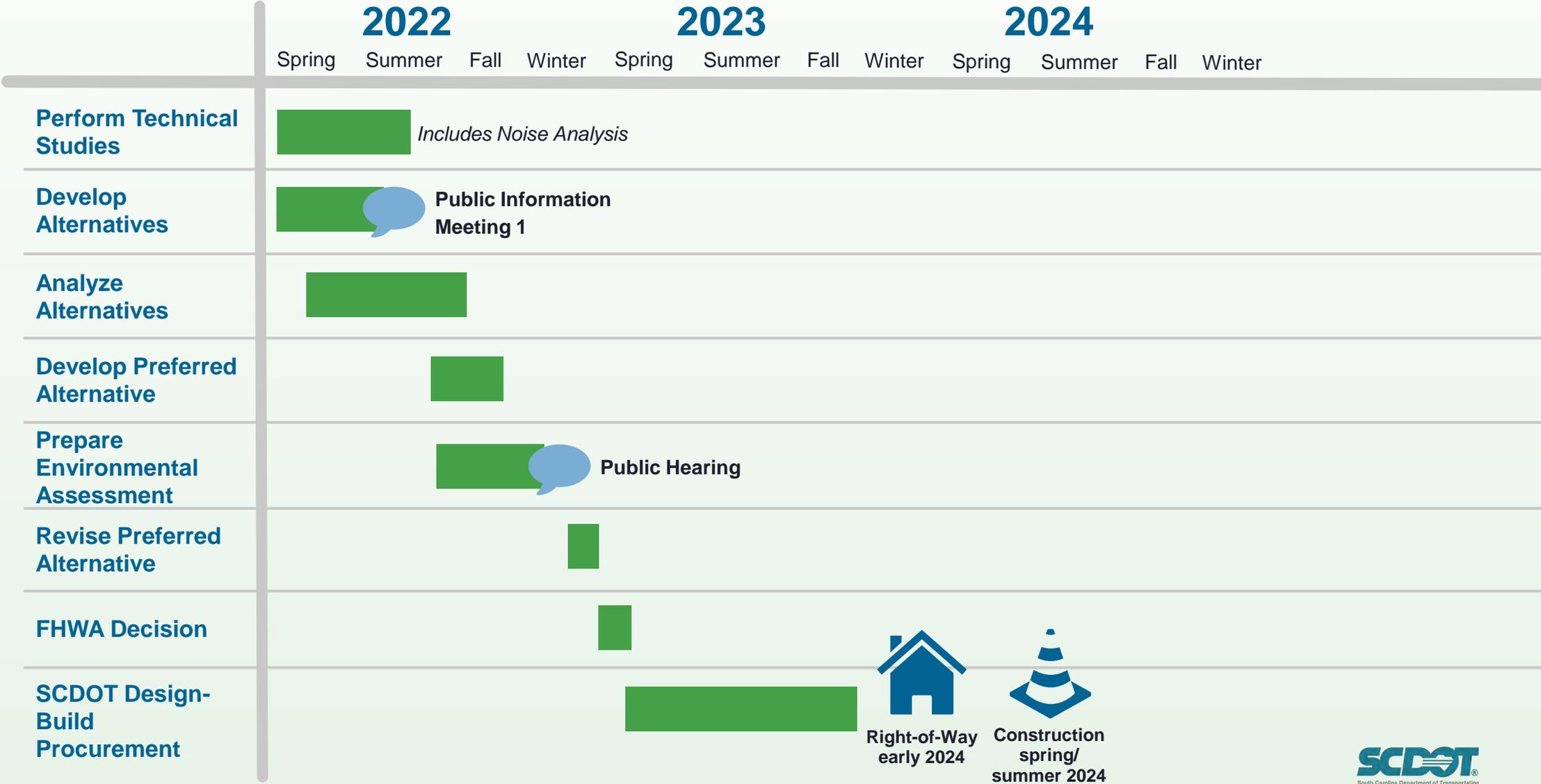
As of June 2022



**Legend:**

- ← Existing
- ← Option
- ▨ Removal

# Proposed Project Schedule



# Anticipated Public Information Meeting



## In-person Public Meeting Thursday, August 2, 2022

R. L. Jones Center  
391 Egypt Road, Mount Pleasant, SC



## *What can you expect to see?*

- How the PEL is transitioning to NEPA
- Traffic/truck growth in the study area
- Range of alternatives and screening process
- Where we are in the right-of-way and noise processes



# Stop & Pause for Questions

# Contact Information



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



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



@526Corridor



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



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



843.258.1135 (call or text)



Joy Riley, PE, PMP, DBIA  
SCDOT  
Project Manager

