



# MARK CLARK EXPRESSWAY COMPLETION PROJECT

{conditions of approval}

**Mark Clark Expressway Completion Project  
Conditions of Approval Report**

September 13, 2013

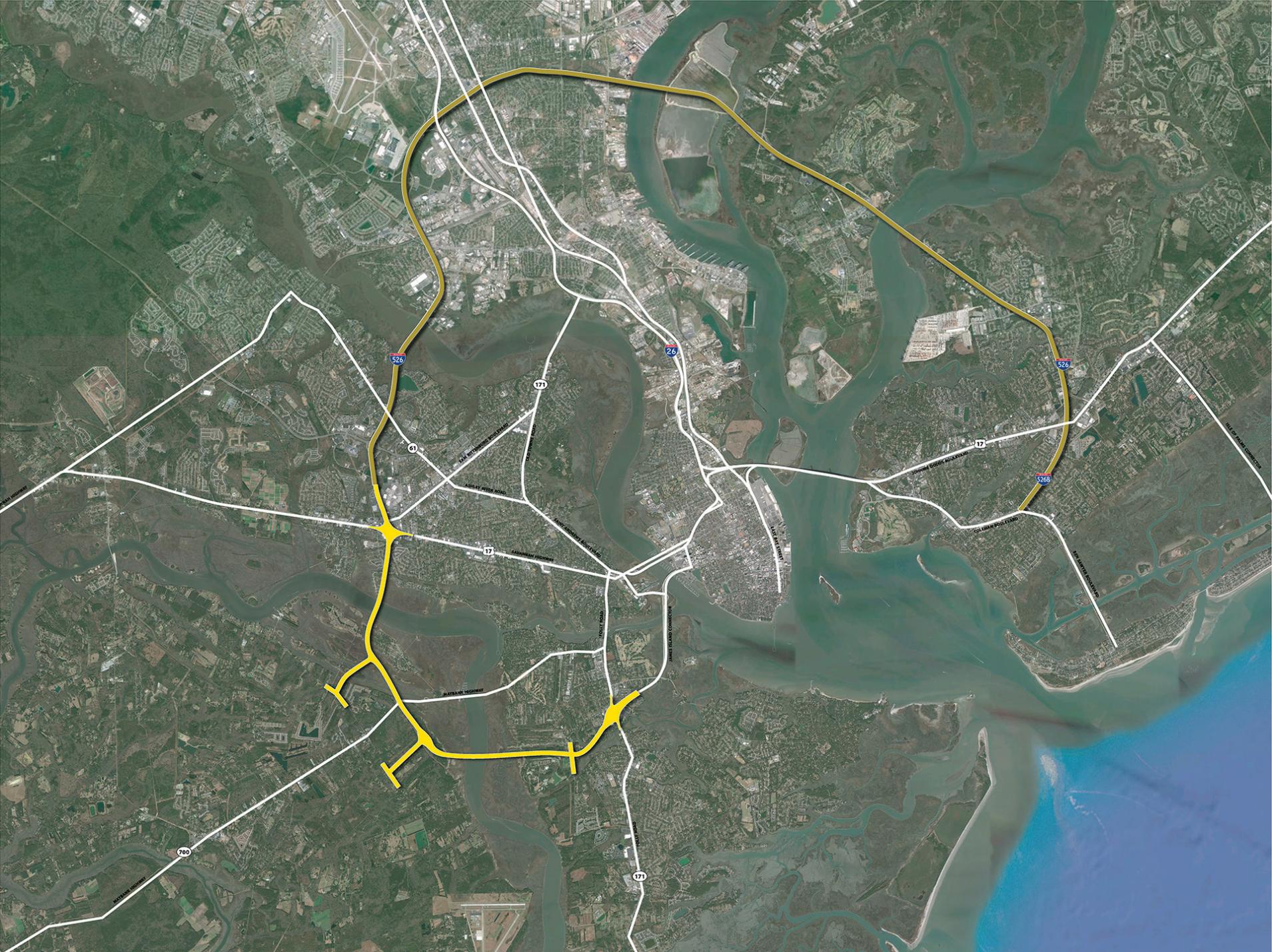
**Produced by**

Charleston County  
Lonnie Hamilton, III Public Services Building  
4045 Bridge View Drive  
North Charleston, SC 29405

**Research, Analysis, & Design by**

Davis & Floyd, Inc. in association with Michael Baker Corporation

Charleston County and its consultants have developed this report to address the six conditions of approval associated with the adopted resolution dated December 13, 2012, to proceed with the Mark Clark Expressway Completion Project. It provides Charleston County Council and the public with an overview of actions taken and results achieved to-date as well as the approach for managing all conditions throughout the life of the project.



Mark Clark Expressway Completion Project Conceptual

# MARK CLARK

{a history of its completion}

The original 1972 plan for the Mark Clark (I-526) proposed a “Charleston Inner Beltway” from Mount Pleasant to James Island, which included a connection between West Ashley, Johns Island, and James Island. In an effort to complete this plan, Charleston County voters approved a transportation half-cent sales tax in November 2004. Projects funded through that tax were used as a local match for funding for the completion of the Mark Clark Expressway from the South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank (SIB) in 2006. Following the approval of the intergovernmental agreement between the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and Charleston County in 2007, a new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process began in January 2008 to address the environmental impacts of the completion of the Mark Clark Expressway.

Developed in direct response to public and stakeholder comments compiled during the Draft EIS (DEIS) process, the SCDOT’s Recommended Preferred Alternative (Alternative G) was announced in August 2010. Alternative G extends from U.S. 17; crosses the Stono River twice to Johns and James Islands as a four-lane parkway facility with low speeds (i.e.

35 to 45 mph); includes a multi-use path along one side of the parkway for its entire length to accommodate bikes and pedestrians; and addresses potential impacts to public greenspace and communities.

Under careful consideration since the publication of the 2010 DEIS and public hearings, a resolution of Charleston County Council was adopted on December 13, 2012, with regard to moving forward with the Mark Clark Expressway Completion Project (MCE). Council voted to advance Alternative G through the Final EIS (FEIS) and Record of Decision, with six conditions of approval. The conditions respond to residents’ concerns voiced during a James Island site visit attended by council members in December of 2012. Those six conditions are listed on the following page.

# THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

CONDITION

1

STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REPORT ON THE POTENTIAL DIMINUTION IN VALUE TO ANY RESIDENCE WITHIN 1,000 FEET OF THE PROPOSED ALIGNMENT OF THE MCE.

CONDITION

2

STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REVISED PROPOSED MCE PROJECT PLAN THAT ELIMINATES THE AT-GRADE INTERSECTIONS AT RILEY ROAD AND UP ON THE HILL ROAD.

CONDITION

3

STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REVISED PROJECT PLAN THAT INSTITUTES SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS WALKING TO MURRAY-LASAINÉ SCHOOL AND OAKLAND ELEMENTARY.

CONDITION

4

STAFF MUST MAKE GOOD FAITH EFFORTS TO EVALUATE AND CONSIDER CLAIMS MADE BY THE RESIDENTS FOR COMPENSATION DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE MCE ON THEIR PROPERTY (EVEN IF THERE IS NO PHYSICAL TAKING OF THEIR PROPERTY AND WITHOUT THE NEED FOR FILING AN INVERSE CONDEMNATION ACTION).

CONDITION

5

STAFF WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS STUDY OF ROADS AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS FOR COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE ADJACENT TO OR WITHIN 1,000 FEET OF THE PROPOSED ALIGNMENT OF THE MCE. STAFF WILL REPORT TO COUNCIL ITS FINDINGS AND PRESENT A PROPOSED PLAN TO IMPROVE THE ROADS AND DRAINAGE IN THE IMPACTED COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

CONDITION

6

STAFF WILL EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRESERVE THE GREENSPACE ADJACENT TO THE RIGHT OF WAY OF THE MCE TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT BUFFER, NON-BUILDABLE AREA ALONG THE MCE.

# MEETING THE CONDITIONS

## {developing a work plan}

Upon adoption of the six conditions of approval, Charleston County developed a work plan to address each condition. Adhering to the existing milestones defined in the project schedule, staff used the next milestone date of Fall 2013 (Preparation of the FEIS) as a guide for prioritizing specific activities along a time line.

Conditions calling for a specific change to the proposed alignment were given precedence as modification would potentially affect the strategy for addressing the remaining conditions. Conditions 2 & 3 fell under this category. Next, staff examined the remaining Conditions 1, 4, 5, & 6. These conditions differ from the others in that each will be addressed along a continuum of activities. A plan has been developed which guarantees that the County has diligently addressed and allocated resources towards the fulfillment of each condition throughout the life of the project.

The following pages address and demonstrate fulfillment of each condition separately.

STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REPORT ON THE POTENTIAL DIMINUTION IN VALUE TO ANY RESIDENCE WITHIN 1,000 FEET OF THE PROPOSED ALIGNMENT OF THE MCE.

Real estate is dynamic – many factors can influence the value of homes in a given market. Location has long been touted as a primary driver in home choice with high importance placed on access to employment and neighborhood amenities, such as schools, shopping, parks, and recreation. These community characteristics combined with other economic aspects, including supply and demand for housing as well as the regional and national economies, make up the local real estate market. When local market conditions are joined with the unique features of an individual property, a fair market value can be determined. This is often done through the appraisal process, which is defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as an opinion of defined value of an adequately described property as of a specific date, supported by the presentation and analysis of relevant market information. The market value is the sale price that a willing and informed seller and a willing and informed buyer agree to for a particular property.

This response to Condition 1 will address the potential diminution in value to residences within 1,000 feet of the MCE's proposed alignment. Because any potential for change in value as a result of the project would occur in the future, it would not be prudent or feasible to conduct an appraisal of presumed changes in value to specific properties located within 1,000 feet of the MCE. Rather, this response will address how the MCE may influence the value of residences within proximity to the parkway in terms of both negative and positive market drivers of value.

A summary of national research on the subject of new roads and real estate values provides a basis for understanding the specific influences the MCE could have on home values. This is followed by a discussion on the opportunities identified through the DEIS and design process to minimize potential negative impacts to properties

located within close proximity to the MCE. Finally, historical trends in other neighborhoods in the Charleston region that have encountered similar circumstances as those communities within 1,000 feet of the MCE will provide a local context as to the potential for changes in home values.

#### SUMMARY of NATIONAL RESEARCH

Since the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 became law, America began a federal program of road building. This was followed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 to address the impact human activity could have on the environment. This law, along with others, seeks to balance the infrastructure needs of a growing economy and expanding population with the resulting impacts to the human and natural environment. One example is the impact to property owners within close proximity of a new road whose existing home values may be negatively impacted.

Negative impacts to property values from a new road, highway, expressway, or parkway can include traffic, noise, air quality, and visual impacts. Positive impacts that can result from this same action include increased mobility and accessibility, reduced traffic and commute times, economic development, and design elements that promote livability. It is the combination of these positive and negative externalities that determine whether properties within 1,000 feet of the MCE will have a net diminution or rise in value.

National research on this issue continues to disagree as to the effects a transportation action has on property values. In the [California DOT Community Impact Assessment, Volume 4 of the Caltrans Environmental Handbook, Appendix D: Transportation Effects on Property Values - 2011 Update](#), the challenge of measuring a roadway's impact on home values is described as follows:

Despite the fact that considerable research has been done over the past 30 years to determine the effect of highways on residential property values, there is no consensus on the answer. ***The difficulty in assessing the precise effect of freeways on property values can be attributed in large part to the fact that property values are a function of so many different variables.*** These can include nearby land uses, community services such as sewer and water, land use controls, topography, natural amenities, regional growth or decline, prevailing mortgage interest rates, availability of capital funds, and supply and demand in the local real estate market. With all of the these variables entering into the equation, separating the effect of the freeway alone, while keeping all of the other variables constant, is an extremely difficult, if not impossible, task.

The handbook summarizes the research stating that although a property within 500 feet of a freeway may not appreciate at the same rate as other properties, it does not necessarily mean that its value will decline. A case study in Phoenix did not reveal any negative impact on the property values abutting a freeway compared to other areas. This was likely attributed to the fact that the road was well integrated, with parks and other amenities designed to preserve the character of the community. Additionally, the handbook identifies that “two studies found strong evidence that potential loss in property values is frequently offset by appreciation resulting from the increased accessibility of the area. In those studies where the issue of gain due to increased accessibility was addressed, researchers found there was a net gain in abutters’ property values relative to properties in the control zone. Study authors attributed this increase in appreciation to the increased desirability of a neighborhood with improved access.”

The DEIS analysis reveals the MCE will save time for drivers in the region: up to 2,236 hours per day in West Ashley; 4,310 hours per day on Johns Island; and 1,276 hours per day in James Island. In a study written by Gary R. Allen in 1974 titled Critical Review of Community Effects of Highways Reflected by Property Values, Allen concluded that “a parcel of residential property may, after the completion of a new freeway, have a premium added because of a reduction in the time-

cost to the resident in traveling to and from work.” This supports the conclusion that accessibility is a relevant market driver for real estate values.

In this same report, Allen recognized that highway-generated noise and air pollutants are detractors from a property’s appeal. “The extent to which they detract will help determine, along with accessibility, whether property values rise, fall or remain the same when a limited access highway traverses a neighborhood.” The study also revealed that noise was the single most important source of annoyance from highways, with no significant annoyance found from dust, dirt, or other air pollutants. “Measurements of different types of air pollution were taken at varying distances from the highway. Also, household questionnaires were distributed among the inhabitants of each community to obtain comments on the amount of dust and dirt in the air. An analysis of the relationship between measured air pollution and perceived annoyance due to highway generated air pollutants did not show any significant relationship.”

Another report takes into account the transportation action’s construction cycle in relation to nearby homes. The 2003 Maryland State Highway Administration Research Report: Effects of Thoroughfares on Residential and Commercial Values in Two Cities recognizes that the effect of a new road in the long run may be positive; however, for a particular time period during construction and immediately after it may not. In the researchers’ literature review, a study of upgrading and widening highways across the state of Texas determined that the impacts on abutting or nearby businesses, residents and properties were only temporarily negative with regard to sales, property values and tax revenues. Another study reviewed concluded that the negative effect on residential properties in the immediate vicinity of a facility is short-term, but any loss in value from sales during construction are usually overcome by increasing property values after construction is completed. Consequently, a willing and informed buyer may place a higher value on accessibility over the impacts from noise or other externalities once a road is complete, and all impacts are fully understood.

As the research concludes, it is difficult to determine the true impact that a new roadway can have on home values since market conditions are influenced by multiple factors. In addition, the potential positive impacts from accessibility and mobility may outweigh negative impacts associated with proximity. Finally, it is important to note that much of the research is oriented toward the impact of *interstates* on home values; whereas, Alternative G is defined as a *parkway*. The impact minimization design elements applied to the MCE, such as lower posted speeds and a multi-use pedestrian and bike path, differentiate the two road types.

### ADDRESSING IMPACTS THROUGH DESIGN

NEPA's EIS process requires a project to identify, mitigate, and/or minimize negative externalities before they occur. Since the release of the DEIS in 2010 and following various public meetings, the County and the SCDOT have implemented design and engineering options that address public concerns regarding potential adverse impacts to property values from traffic, air quality, noise, and views, as shown in the following typical section exhibits.

## WEST ASHLEY & JOHNS ISLAND

{typical section}

The West Ashley and Johns Island alignment includes a 200-foot wide right of way with four travel lanes. This alignment will also have a 12-foot bike and pedestrian multi-use path that will connect to the West Ashley Greenway to support air quality initiatives. Plantings can provide visual barriers for adjacent properties. Bridge sections will transition to the current interstate and maintain connectivity for existing neighborhoods, with an overpass at East Shore Lane. The posted speed will be 45 mph, with 35 mph speeds posted on Johns Island connector roads A & B, minimizing noise impacts. The DEIS states by year 2035 noise levels would approach or exceed noise ambient criteria (NAC) for 66 occupied and five vacant residential structures for the entire project including West Ashley, Johns Island, and James Island. The DEIS did not determine the need for sound barriers; however, additional noise impact studies will be conducted as part of the FEIS.

West Ashley & Johns Island At-Grade Typical Section



## JAMES ISLAND

### {typical section}

The James Island alignment comprises a 225-foot wide right of way with posted speeds of 45 mph. At-grade and bridge sections both include four travel lanes and a 12-foot bike and pedestrian multi-use path which will complement regional connectivity and support air quality initiatives. The design also includes a 4-foot bike lane between Riverland Drive and Folly Road in each direction. Plantings can minimize visual impacts. Additionally, because the road will be posted with speeds of only 45 miles per hour, the noise impact will be reduced. The DEIS states by year 2035 noise levels would approach or exceed noise ambient criteria (NAC) for 66 occupied and five vacant residential structures for the entire project including West Ashley, Johns Island, and James Island. The DEIS did not determine the need for sound barriers; however, additional noise impact studies will be conducted as part of the FEIS.

James Island Bridge Typical Section (between Riverland Drive & Folly Road)



James Island At-Grade Typical Section (between Riverland Drive & Folly Road)



# 1,000 FT.

{what does it really mean?}

The Eiffel Tower is just shy of 1,000 feet tall. More familiar may be the three football fields or 11 NBA basketball courts that would come close to the distance of 1,000 feet. From school buffers to environmental regulations, the 1,000-foot rule can be found throughout various policies. It is an easily distinguishable rule of thumb. But what does it mean in terms of housing values and the MCE?

Most research related to the topic looks at housing abutting a major road, typically within 500 feet. For condominium owners, however, 1,000 feet has another meaning. Under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, it means a new approval process for condominium projects and insurance requirements for mortgages on individual condominium units as authorized under Section 203 (b) of the National Housing Act. It is the distance that condominium communities must be from a highway, freeway, or heavily traveled road in order to qualify for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) insurance that allows buyers to only put down 3.5 percent when buying a home.

The rule does not apply to single-family detached homes or townhomes not classified as a condominium. A condominium is defined as a form of fee ownership or long-term leasehold of separate units or portions of multi-unit buildings that provides for formal filing and recording of a divided interest in real property. A joint share in ownership of the common area is part of the mortgaged property, and therefore, constitutes a measure of the security backing on the mortgage loan. The rule was developed to reduce the inherent risk associated with insuring low down payment loans on condominiums, which have a higher risk of foreclosure.

Communities must meet rigorous environmental, financial, insurance, ownership, and occupancy requirements to be designated as a HUD-certified community. Environmental criteria that can disqualify a community include:

- :: Project located in a special flood hazard.
- :: Noise issues where project is within 1,000 feet of a highway, freeway, "heavily traveled road", 300 feet of a railroad, one mile of an airport or 5 miles of a military airfield.
- :: Project has unobstructed view or is within 2,000 feet of any facility handling or storing explosives or fire prone materials.
- :: Project located within 3,000 feet of landfill or site on EPA superfund list and certain others.
- :: Project located within a wetland.
- :: Project on National Register of Historic Places or is within a listed historic district.
- :: Any other condition that could adversely affect the health or safety of project residents.

For many condominium associations, the qualification process, record keeping, and financial requirements to qualify the community as a HUD-approved condominium community is a far greater burden than the loss of FHA insured mortgages, especially where conventional financing can still be obtained. An LA Times article written in 2012 states, "As a result of the previous (2009) FHA rules, just 2,100 of the estimated 25,000 condominium developments nationwide that were eligible for unit financing were recertified by late last year, according to the agency."

## THE SAVANNAH {representative community}

**The Savannah** is a condominium community in West Ashley at the intersection of Arlington Drive and Rondo Street, 800 feet south of US17 and west of the MCE. Originally built in 1969 as apartments, the community was converted to condominiums in 2001. The initial sale price per square foot was approximately \$78. The community is not listed as FHA certified on the HUD website.

Like most of the neighborhoods in the region, The Savannah neighborhood reached a peak price per square foot in 2007 at \$121. However, with the national real estate market crash beginning in 2008, values began to decline. In 2009, the price per square foot was \$97. This was also the year the revised HUD rules for condominiums were enacted. In 2010, three homes sold in the community, two of which were bank sales. This was followed by no homes sales in 2011 and one bank sale in 2012. Currently, tax records indicate that three homes have sold in 2013 ranging in price per square foot from \$59 to \$74. None of these homes were indicated as bank sales.

This change in value from the 2007 peak of the real estate market to 2013 is a decrease of 38 percent, which is less of a decline than the single-family homes in nearby Air Harbor as discussed later in this report. The FHA legislation is likely the contributing factor to the stagnant sales that occurred from 2010 through 2012, as financing for condominium communities was difficult. The renewed activity in 2013 is indicative of the increase in real estate activity following the real estate crash.

## LOCAL CONTEXT / HISTORICAL TRENDS

As national research suggests, despite good faith efforts to incorporate design elements intended to minimize negative effects that may result in a diminution of home values within 1,000 feet of the MCE, the true impact on home values cannot be ascertained until after the parkway is completed. One can, however, look regionally at historic trends that local neighborhoods experienced when faced with similar circumstances in the past, with the understanding that local markets can be impacted by multiple factors that may or may not be relevant to the future of home values adjacent to the MCE.

Three such examples from the Charleston region are as follows:

### EXAMPLE ONE

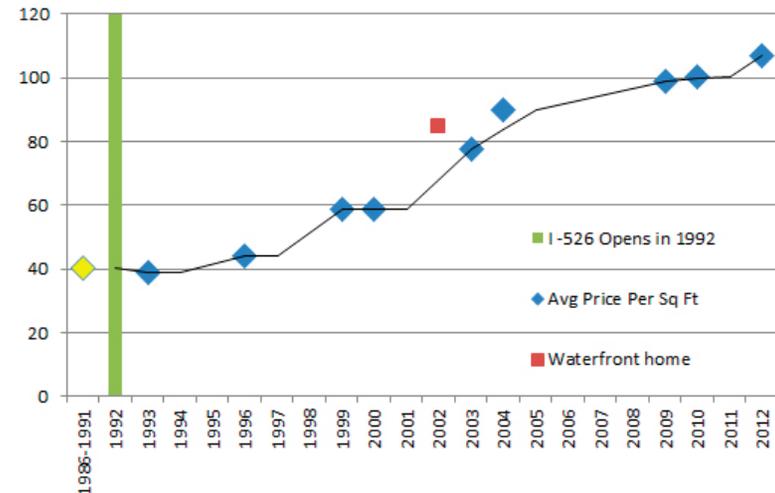
{abutting a major road}

As the previous research suggests, the accessibility benefits of a new road may in fact outweigh the negative externalities to homes abutting a major road. Although many factors contribute to home values, the potential impacts can be gleaned from a review of historical home prices in Mount Pleasant following the construction of I-526 near existing homes. So, for this example we used a cursory sampling of historical sales prices from the Charleston County Tax Assessors website of 10 homes in Cooper's Landing that today directly abut I-526.

**Cooper's Landing** is located in Mount Pleasant off of Whipple Road between Wakendaw Road and Long Point Road. The primary street in the community is Hidden Bridge Drive. Homes were built in the middle to late 1980's and include a mix of contemporary and traditional one and two story homes. Ten homes in the community share a boundary with I-526 with property lines 150 feet from the road centerline. All ten homes were built prior to the I-526 extension into Mount Pleasant in 1992, with construction years ranging from 1986 to 1990. One home is also waterfront with a dock. The initial

sales price per square foot averaged \$42.28. In 1993, one home sold at \$38.79; however, it increased by \$2 per square foot compared to its original sales price in 1990. In the late 1990's, the average price per square foot rose to \$58. Between 2000 and 2005, the price per square foot rose between \$77 and \$89, with one sale being the waterfront home. Home values have steadily increased despite the recent recession to over \$100 per square foot.

Cooper's Landing Neighborhood & Homes Sale Price Trends





West Ashley Greenway

## EXAMPLE TWO

{proximity to regional trails & bike paths}

The MCE will provide an important linkage for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout West Ashley, James Island, and Johns Island with the addition of a designated 12-foot multi-use path. The project's multi-use path will also connect to the James Island County Park's existing 4+ mile trail system. (More information about the regional benefits of this community asset is provided under Condition 6.) In addition to the benefits to the community as a whole, research indicates that home buyers want to be near multi-use trails.

As stated on [www.americantrails.org](http://www.americantrails.org), "Trail availability outranked 16 other options, including security, ball fields, golf courses, parks, and access to shopping or business centers," according to a 2002 National Association of Realtors/National Association of Home Builders survey. Only highway access was ranked as a more important amenity..."

**The West Ashley Greenway** is an 8-mile trail laid on a former rail line that extends from Albemarle Road to Main Road in West Ashley. The Greenway connects 16 neighborhoods, links three schools, and is located near bus stops, shopping centers, and points of interest within the city. The West Ashley neighborhoods surrounding the West Ashley Greenway include some of Charleston's first suburbs, with homes built in the 1930's and 1940's, such as Windermere, Avondale, and Byrnes Down. These neighborhoods have experienced revitalization, with home sales prices averaging above the median for West Ashley. This is likely due to its proximity to downtown and diverse community amenities such as the West Ashley Greenway.

## EXAMPLE THREE

### {proximity to a vibrant commercial center}

Livability, as defined by the FHWA, is about tying the quality and location of transportation facilities to broader opportunities such as access to good jobs, vibrant commercial centers, affordable housing, quality schools, and safer streets and roads. This increased attention to livable communities also suggests that home buyers want to have access to vibrant retail and entertainment areas.

With the completion of the Mark Clark Expressway comes increased access to the Citadel Mall and its surrounding commercial centers in West Ashley. Residents of James and Johns Islands will be able to save time and money traveling to this area. As a direct result of these factors, there will be the potential for a revitalization of this aging commercial area ultimately having the potential to improve the home values in surrounding neighborhoods of West Ashley.

The Citadel Mall opened in 1981 as one of the largest malls in the state with over one million square feet. Over the past decade, store vacancies have steadily increased and, as recent as September 10, 2013, The Post and Courier reported a possible foreclosure of the property. In 2009, a Post and Courier article stated that the Citadel Mall's vacancy rate was 25 percent (compared to 4 percent at Northwoods Mall in North Charleston). At the end of 2012, the entire West Ashley retail sub-market, which is the third largest in the region, had the highest vacancy rate at 11.75 percent. The East Cooper sub-market, which is the second largest retail market in the region, had the lowest vacancy rate at 6.29 percent. (Source: Colliers 2012 Retail Market Report) Abandoned storefronts and empty parking lots can have a negative effect on surrounding property values.

A renewed investment in the underutilized commercial areas around Citadel Mall that could occur with the MCE would not only curtail the negative impact that retail vacancies have on the surrounding neighborhoods, it would also add value to those neighborhoods by

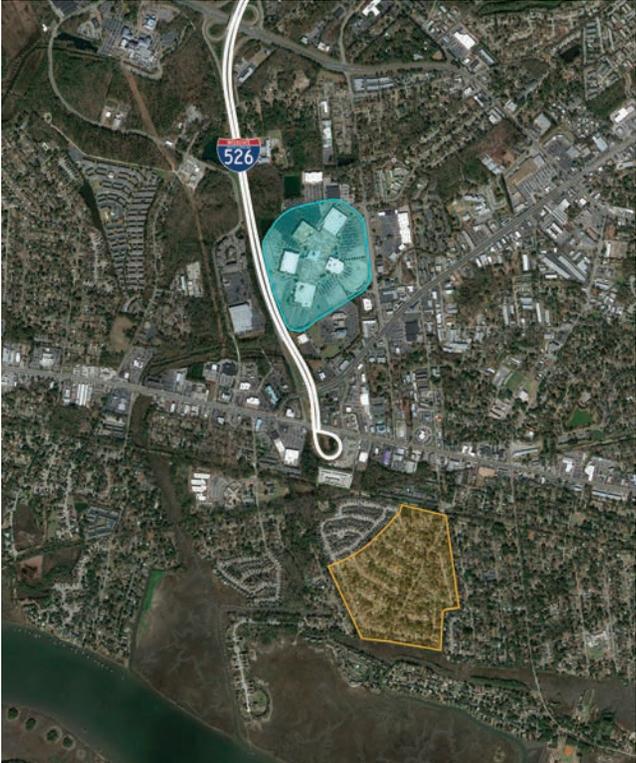
creating access to a vibrant retail market. Mount Pleasant Towne Centre, which opened in 1999, is a local example of a vibrant retail area that has served as a catalyst for economic activity near the terminus of I-526 in Mount Pleasant. To better understand the impacts of a declining versus vibrant commercial retail market, two neighborhoods are used for a comparison: Wando Lakes in the East Cooper retail sub-market and Air Harbor in the West Ashley retail sub-market. Both communities have proximity to I-526 and are within 2,000 to 4,000 feet of a major retail center. Again, it is important to note that this is a cursory assessment and other factors also contribute to value.

**Wando Lakes** is a neighborhood north of US17 and east of I-526 in Mount Pleasant. The neighborhood entrance is approximately 2,200 feet from I-526 and 2,000 feet from Mount Pleasant Towne Centre. The neighborhood includes single-family and multi-family homes built in the mid to late 1980's. A random sampling of single family homes located in the core of the neighborhood on Babington Way indicates steady appreciation in the 1980's and 1990's with a sharp increase surrounding the opening of Mount Pleasant Towne Centre. From 1999 to 2004, the average price per square foot increased 40 percent. Since the peak in 2006, which corresponds with the timing of the national real estate market crash, home values have declined 5 percent. Although other factors may contribute to the growth, the opening of Mount Pleasant Towne Centre may have contributed to the upward spike in value and a stable market after the 2007 national real estate market crash.

**Air Harbor** is a neighborhood in West Ashley south of US17 and east of the terminus of I-526. The community is approximately 2,200 feet from I-526 and 3,800 feet from the Citadel Mall commercial area. Homes were built from the late 1950's to the early 1970's. A sampling of home sales on neighborhood roads including Cessna, Piper, Stinson, Douglass, Curtiss, Swift, and Boeing indicate a steady increase in property values through 2007, which is consistent with the trend in Wando Lakes. Home values increased approximately 39

percent between 1999 and 2004. Since the peak in 2006, home values have decreased by 43 percent. This suggests that the underutilized commercial areas around Citadel Mall may be a contributing factor to the decline in home values.

Wando Lakes and Air Harbor both experienced positive increases at similar growth rates between 1999 and 2006, which was the year both communities averaged their highest price per square foot. In 2007, home values in both neighborhoods started to see a decline in value in response to the national real estate market crash. While many factors contribute to value, the homes in Wando Lakes only experienced a 5 percent decline and experienced an upward trend from 2012 to 2013. The Air Harbor neighborhood, however, experienced a 43 percent decline in value over this same time period. Thus, the proximity to Mount Pleasant Towne Centre may be a positive driver for home values in Wando Lakes, and the high retail vacancy in the Citadel Mall area in proximity to the Air Harbor neighborhood is likely a negative driver contributing to a decline in home values.



Yellow outline: Air Harbor Neighborhood    Teal outline: Citadel Mall



Yellow outline: Wando Lakes Neighborhood    Teal outline: Mount Pleasant Towne Centre

CONDITION

2

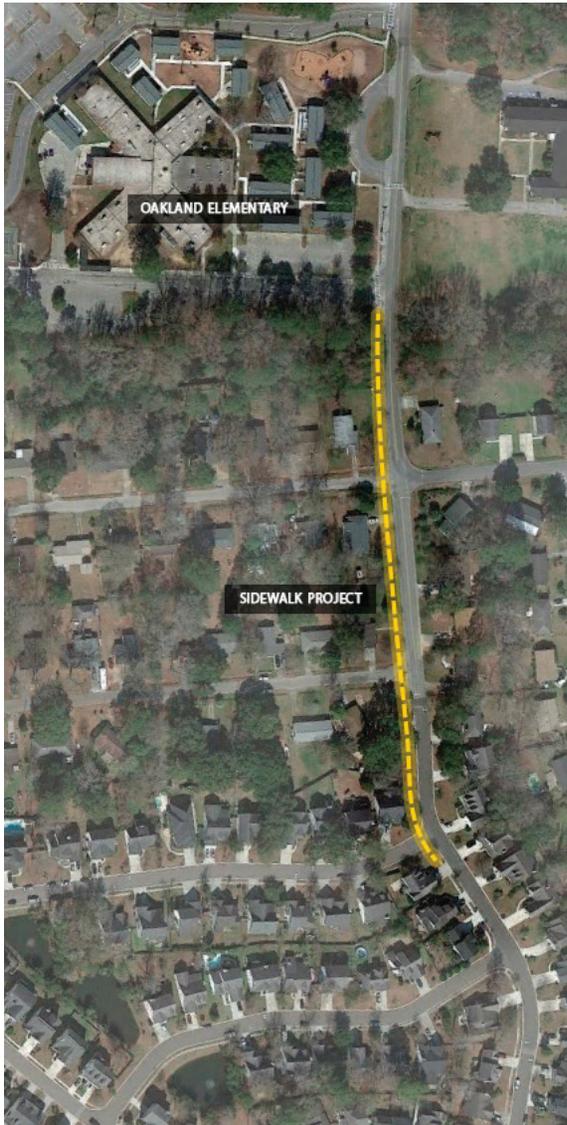
STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REVISED PROPOSED MCE PROJECT PLAN THAT ELIMINATES THE AT-GRADE INTERSECTIONS AT RILEY ROAD AND UP ON THE HILL ROAD.

Charleston County council members participated in a site visit to address residents' concerns regarding the proposed at-grade intersections at Riley Road and Up on the Hill Road. The residents stated preference for bridged crossings in both locations. As illustrated in the below rendering, Condition 2 has been completed and the final alignment plans for both roads will include the bridges.



Riley Road Bridge Crossing

STAFF MUST PROVIDE COUNCIL WITH A REVISED PROJECT PLAN THAT INSTITUTES SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS WALKING TO MURRAY-LASAINE AND OAKLAND ELEMENTARY.



Oakland Elementary Safety Precautions

Concern was expressed regarding safety near Murray-Lasaine School located off Riverland Drive on James Island and Oakland Elementary located off Arlington Drive in West Ashley. Residents requested a revised project plan instituting safety precautions near the two schools.

As illustrated to the left, 800-linear feet of sidewalk from Oakland Elementary to Stonecreek Drive has been designed and will be finished by early 2014 using Charleston County Transportation Committee (CTC) funds. Safety precautions near Murray-Lasaine School will also be addressed as shown in the below image. This improvement project will be included in the County's fiscal year 2015 Transportation Sales Tax Allocations Program.



Murray-Lasaine Safety Precautions

CONDITION

4

STAFF MUST MAKE GOOD FAITH EFFORTS TO EVALUATE AND CONSIDER CLAIMS MADE BY THE RESIDENTS FOR COMPENSATION DUE TO THE IMPACT OF THE MCE ON THEIR PROPERTY. (EVEN IF THERE IS NO PHYSICAL TAKING OF THEIR PROPERTY AND WITHOUT THE NEED FOR FILING AN INVERSE CONDEMNATION ACTION.)

The County understands that situations will arise where residents may feel their expectations were not met by the mitigation and/or minimization technique(s) implemented to address the MCE's environmental impacts. In those cases, residents can contact the County's community relations coordinator assigned to the MCE or County staff. A temporary office will be set up near the project site for the purpose of opening lines of communication between the County and the public. Residents may use this venue to voice their concerns and present their findings, foregoing an inverse condemnation action. Charleston County staff, and ultimately Council, will evaluate and consider claims on a case by case basis.



## COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

{johnnie dodds project}

Charleston County and the Town of Mount Pleasant created a community relations coordinator position for the Johnnie Dodds Boulevard Widening Project. From business to home owners, the community relations coordinator served as a direct point of contact for the public to inquire about impacts during construction. With an office located on the project site, the public had direct access to the community relations coordinator for the duration of the project.

STAFF WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS STUDY OF ROADS AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS FOR COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE ADJACENT TO OR WITHIN 1,000 FEET OF THE PROPOSED ALIGNMENT OF THE MCE. STAFF WILL REPORT TO COUNCIL ITS FINDINGS AND PRESENT A PROPOSED PLAN TO IMPROVE THE ROADS AND DRAINAGE IN THE IMPACTED COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

Communities are dynamic by nature. As a result, road and drainage needs are subject to change over time. Charleston County's Public Works Department is responsible for continually assessing the performance of its infrastructure assets and implementing upgrades and/or redesigns when required. Addressing these upgrades can be particularly challenging as roads and drainage basins are not confined to jurisdictional boundaries. The MCE spans across roadways and drainage basins managed by multiple entities including Charleston County, City of Charleston, Town of James Island, SCDOT, and private property owners. The County will coordinate with these entities to make the necessary improvements.

Some of the initial concerns raised by citizens with regard to the MCE include pedestrian safety, paving of dirt roads, and existing and future drainage and flooding. Recognizing the potential for impact to existing infrastructure in the communities around the proposed alignment of the MCE, staff has internally designated these areas as high priority. The MCE Design Build process will provide the opportunity to address some of the existing conditions as well as mitigate future impacts of the roadway. Additionally, the County recognizes some of the improvements can be completed as part of the regular program of projects for the Public Works Department. Thus, the County will conduct roadway and drainage studies at the appropriate phases throughout the project while continuing to prioritize potential improvement projects for neighborhoods in and around the project area.

The preliminary assessment of drainage, roadway, and pedestrian safety infrastructure needs as they relate to the MCE and warrant prioritization and further planning is presented for the West Ashley, James Island, and Johns Island areas separately.



Department of Public Works

P: (843) 202-7600

E: [pwcustomerservice@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:pwcustomerservice@charlestoncounty.org)

## WEST ASHLEY

Charleston County's top priority for drainage and roadway improvements in West Ashley both today and with regard to the MCE is the Citadel Mall area and neighborhoods to the east and south.



— MCE Right of Way — Drainage Systems

### {drainage}

The St. Andrew's Canal Drainage Basin is located in West Ashley and flows through three legs of the St. Andrew's Canal. The drainage basin includes stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces around Citadel Mall, from under I-526 near the Costco, and from the neighborhoods near Dupont Road, Orleans Road, and Sam Rittenburg Boulevard. Drainage in these areas has been a long term problem and the basin is identified as an area of concern. As such, any development project located within the drainage basin requires improvements to stormwater runoff rather than just maintaining the status quo. The MCE Design Build process will require improvements to this basin as part of the project. Additionally, opportunities beyond the MCE

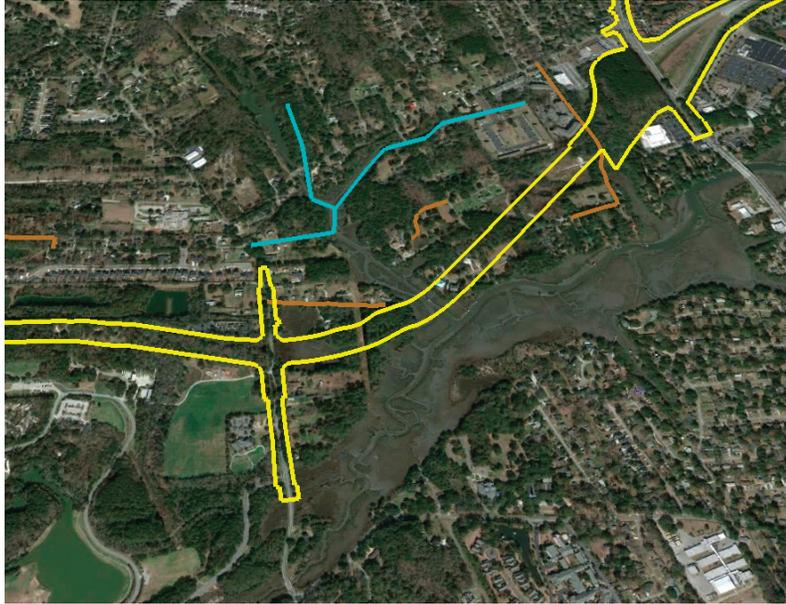
process could include Public Private Partnerships with property owners, such as the Citadel Mall, to decrease impervious surface, especially as the commercial areas begin to experience revitalization spurred by the project.

### {roadways + pedestrian safety}

Pedestrian safety and traffic is also a priority in this area, with the need to provide improved traffic flow, sidewalk facilities, and safe crossings for pedestrians on US 17, as well as to the Orleans/DuPont Road Community. The County has started the process of filling in sidewalk gaps in the area with funded sidewalk improvements on Arlington Drive that will connect the Stonecreek community to Oakland Elementary School. Improvements in these areas are a priority for the County, and a long range strategic plan will be conducted to identify sidewalks, crosswalks, and other improvements.

## JAMES ISLAND

Prioritized improvements to drainage and roadways on James Island in relation to the project are located in the vicinity of Riverland Drive between Camp Road and Central Park Road.



— MCE Right of Way — Drainage Systems — Earth Roads

### {drainage}

Three drainage areas on James Island are identified as a priority within proximity to the MCE. The County has already conducted work on Hollings Road to improve drainage, and improvements will continue in the area. The MCE will create additional opportunities to make improvements, and further assessments of drainage easements will be studied in conjunction with SCDOT, City of Charleston, Town of James Island, and private property owners, all of which have a stake in improvements on James Island. Drainage areas identified as a priority include:

:: Drainage system improvements to the Central Park Road Outfall System (Up on the Hill Road to the tidal creek): This project is important to reduce flooding to the community and road network, as well as to protect the water quality of Ellis Creek.

:: Drainage and bridge improvements at/on Central Park Road south of Fleming Road: This is a large tidal drainage area where road overtopping at Central Park Road frequently occurs at high tide. Flooding of residential areas is also frequent.

:: Drainage System and Outfall at Riverland Drive and Bradham Road: This project is needed to address flooding at the intersection, school, and residential areas. The CCSD has also requested this improvement.

### {roadways + pedestrian safety}

Unpaved roads and pedestrian safety are a primary concern identified by citizens on James Island. The MCE will provide the opportunity to address some of these needs, and further action may be taken as part of the county-wide program of projects. Public Works staff has conducted an initial assessment of unpaved roads in the area which include:

:: Bradham Road Community Road Improvements

:: Delaney Road Community Road Improvements

:: Hollings Road Community Road Improvements

Pedestrian safety and access from the MCE is being addressed both through the use of overpasses, as in the case of Up on the Hill and Riley Roads, and sidewalk improvements, such as Murray-Lasaine School. The County also recognizes the need for extended sidewalk improvements along Riverland Drive from Camp Road to Maybank Road, as well as the integration of sidewalk improvements into existing

facilities, such as planned improvements on Camp Road. The County will continue the process of roadway and sidewalk improvements on James Island in coordination with property owners, the Town of James Island, and other stakeholders.

## JOHNS ISLAND

Many of the priorities on Johns Island that exist today and with the MCE are within the vicinity of Maybank Road and River Road. It is expected that these drainage priorities will be remedied in the design and construction of the project.

### {drainage}

The following drainage projects have been identified for Johns Island:

:: The Jessy Elizabeth Drainage System and Outfall is a major basin draining the central portion of Johns Island. This outfall is of critical importance to the community. The basin spans the City of Charleston and Charleston County and is currently a priority for the County.

:: River Road at Maybank Drainage System is an additional area slated for improvements to reduce flooding at and near this major intersection which includes the area between Maybank Road and Canter Road, south of Maybank Road and east of River Road. The MCE will provide an opportunity for improvements to this area.

### {roadways + pedestrian safety}

Unpaved roads on Johns Island will have an opportunity for improvements with the MCE or to be prioritized as programmed Public Works improvements.

Public Works staff has conducted an initial assessment of unpaved roads in the area which include:



— MCE Right of Way — Drainage Systems — Earth Roads

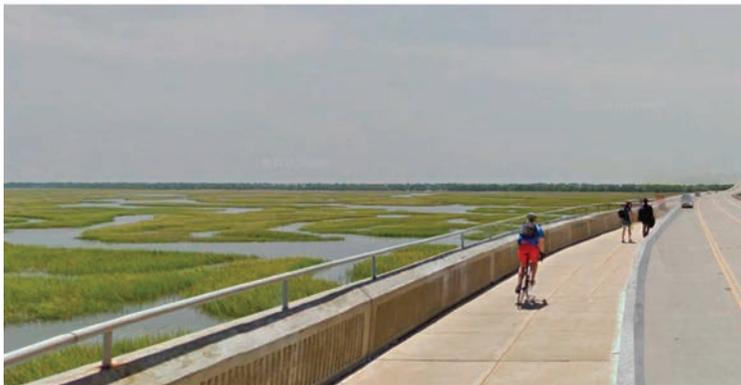
:: Ardwick Roads Community Road Improvements

:: Bluebird/Pineland Road Community Road Improvements

:: Jessy Elizabeth Road Community Road Improvements

Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and crosswalks will also be prioritized near the intersection of Maybank Road and River Road as well as the connector A & B intersections with the MCE, which will be addressed as part of the MCE Design Build and long range planning process in coordination with the City of Charleston.

STAFF WILL EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRESERVE THE GREENSPACE ADJACENT TO THE RIGHT OF WAY OF THE MCE TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT BUFFER, NON-BUILDABLE AREA ALONG THE MCE.



Multi-use Pedestrian & Bike Path Renderings



Greenbelt Program

P: (843) 202-7204

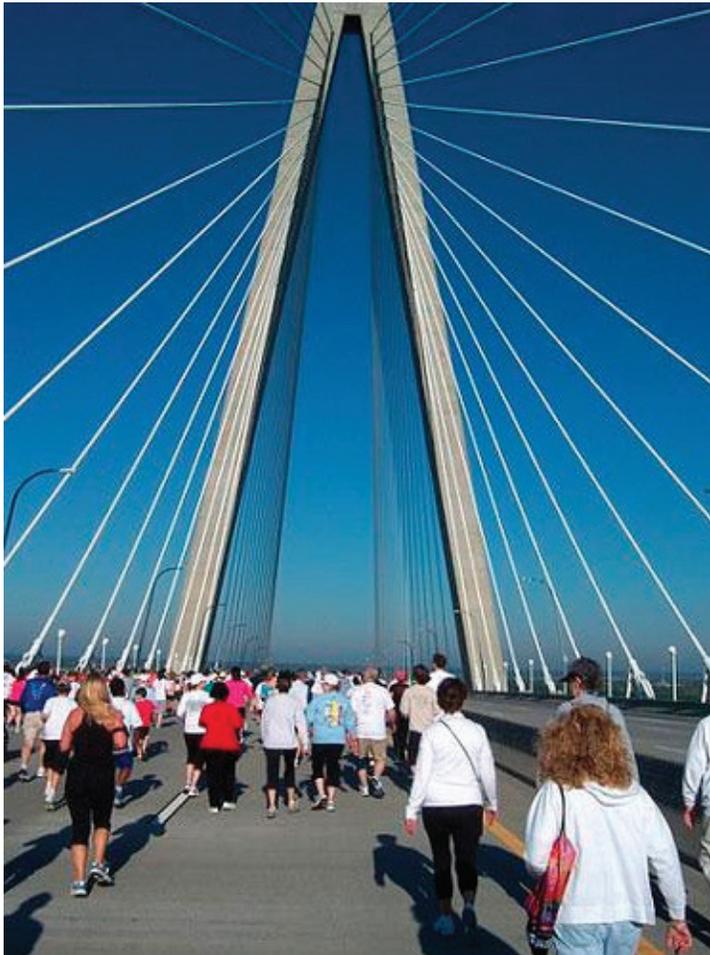
E: [cruft@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:cruft@charlestoncounty.org)

The preservation of greenspace in Charleston County is an ongoing effort of Charleston County Council led through the Charleston County Greenbelt Program whose vision states, “Greenspace needs to be linked from city to city; city to countryside; and countryside to countryside.”

In response to citizen comments regarding the use of their sales tax dollars allocated to the Greenbelt Program, a Comprehensive Greenbelt Plan was specifically crafted to anticipate growth and guide it into areas of the community where it should occur, and in a manner that balances resource conservation with land development.

The MCE will provide an important corridor in support of the Program’s planned hub and spoke system to provide access to parks and natural areas. The MCE will bring approximately 8 additional miles of multi-use bike and pedestrian facilities to Charleston County. Combined with the connection to the existing 8 miles on the West Ashley Greenway and the 24 miles planned for the Battery 2 Beach bike path from Isle of Palms to Folly Beach, this would create a 40+ mile regional multi-use network for bicyclists and pedestrians. The project’s multi-use path will also connect to the James Island County Park’s existing 4+ mile trail system, creating a valuable link for the citizens of West Ashley, Johns Island, and James Island that would otherwise have limited access to community assets, such as parks and greenspace.

Under the direction of the Charleston County Greenbelt Program, 85 *potential* properties have been identified along the MCE as *possible* greenbelt preservation parcels for consideration. Further discussions with Council members regarding the potential use of Greenbelt funds in connection with the project will be explored.



## AN ICONIC PATHWAY

{to connect an iconic region}

On any given day, the multi-use path on the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge is full of walkers, runners, and bikers taking in the scenic vistas the path provides. The 2.7 miles of multi-use path is a valuable regional amenity for both residents and visitors alike. Walking, running, and bicycling continue to be increasingly popular fitness activities. This is evident each year in April during the Cooper River Bridge Run when 40,000 runners from around the world travel to the area to capture the same view residents enjoy every day along the bridge. The estimated economic impact of the Cooper River Bridge Run in 2011 was \$18.3 million.

The 8-mile MCE multi-use path will be a vital link in the 40+ mile network of bike and pedestrian paths that will traverse the region's distinctive landscape, providing the opportunity for citizens and visitors to interact with and appreciate the region's natural history. Where other communities struggle to create regional pathways that define a place in piecemeal fashion, the MCE will complete an iconic pathway that joins the region's historic communities and natural landscape, while distinguishing the Charleston region as a model for other communities to follow.

## {moving forward together}

Charleston County has addressed the six conditions of approval associated with the adopted resolution dated December 13, 2012, to proceed with the Mark Clark Expressway Completion Project. This report provides Charleston County Council and the public with an overview of actions taken and results achieved to-date as well as the approach for managing all conditions throughout the life of the project.

The Mark Clark Expressway will take many years to complete. Charleston County is dedicated to a fair and transparent process that will result in a successful major infrastructure project that meets the needs of a growing Charleston community.

**MARK CLARK  
EXPRESSWAY  
COMPLETION PROJECT**

{conditions of approval}