

## **TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**March 25, 2025**

A meeting of the Traffic and Transportation Committee was held on this date, beginning at 3:31 p.m. in person in the Council Chambers at 80 Broad Street and over Zoom.

**Committee Members:** Councilmember Michael Seekings (Chair), Councilmember Karl Brady (Vice-Chair) 3:36 p.m., Councilmember William Dudley Gregorie 3:56 p.m., Councilmember Jim McBride, Councilmember Boyd Gregg, and Mayor William S. Cogswell

**Also Present:** Michael Mathis, Robert Somerville, Elizabeth Dieck, Josh Martin, Jason Kronsberg, Magalie Creech, Julia Copeland, Emily Pinkston, Katie Dahlheim, and Donna Constance

Chair Seekings called the meeting to order.

### **Invocation**

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence led by Chair Seekings.

### **Approval of the February 25, 2025, minutes**

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Councilmember Gregg, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the February 25, 2025, Traffic and Transportation meeting minutes.

### **Lowline Update**

Mayor Cogswell said the bid process for the Lowline Phase 1 was officially closed. They issued an intent to award the project and to edifice construction. They negotiated a contract with the Legal Department and planned to bring the proposed contract to the City Council meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup> for approval. If approved, work would start by the end of the year.

### **Approval of Rideshare Program Ordinance Amendment**

Ms. Pinkston said they were there to get approval for the two amended rideshare ordinances, which allowed food delivery drivers to use the rideshare zones and riders with disabilities to request an alternate pickup and drop-off location.

Chair Seekings asked if this also incorporated changes to the parking spaces and Calhoun Street.

Ms. Pinkston said that was correct.

Chair Seekings asked if they received any comments since their last presentation.

Ms. Pinkston said they did not.

Mayor Cogswell said he had met with several neighborhood associations in and around King Street, and the response was positive.

On a motion by Councilmember Gregg, seconded by Mayor Cogswell, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Rideshare Program Ordinance Amendment. This amendment allows food delivery drivers to use rideshare zones and riders with disabilities to request an alternate pickup and drop-off location.

#### **Application for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity - Old Village Transportation, LLC**

On a motion by Mayor Cogswell, seconded by Councilmember Gregg, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Old Village Transportation, LLC.

#### **Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax and Transportation Committee Project Updates Presentation**

Ms. Kelley said she was the engineering manager with Charleston County Public Works and was there to give an update on their Transportation Sales Tax and County Transportation Committee projects. She said they forgot to include one of their projects, the Brownwoods roundabout at River Road, which received \$1 million in funding from the state. They went through proposals and the County Council Finance to recommend a design consultant.

#### **Projects that were currently under construction**

##### **The Main Road Corridor 7A**

Widen Main Road between Bees Ferry Road and Chisolm Road, add a new interchange at the intersection with US-17, and include flyover ramps. Archer United Bank was awarded the contract, and the cost of this project was \$354.3 million.

##### **Maybank and Woodland Shores Complete Streets Project**

The installation of a midblock pedestrian crossing on Maybank Highway at the Pour House and sidewalks along Woodland Shores Drive. The contract was awarded to Golf Stream Construction for \$3.6 million. This would be in conjunction with Central Park Basin Drainage Improvements, since both projects would impact traffic along Riverland Drive. It included the installation of a culvert underneath Central Park Road and raising the elevation of the roadway. The project cost \$2.7 million.

#### **Projects currently advertised**

##### **Folly Road Bike/Pedestrian Improvements**

The project cost \$5.61 million and included installing a sidewalk along Folly Road from Ellis Creek to George Griffith Boulevard and restriping.

##### **Savage Road Sidewalk**

The installation was for a sidewalk between Etiwan Avenue, the first entrance to Castlewood, and between the second entrance to Castlewood and Henry Tecklenburg Drive. The cost of this was \$950,000.

### **Projects to be advertised**

#### **Ashley Avenue at Congress Street**

Pedestrian signals and curb bulb-outs would be installed to calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety. The cost was \$235,000. This project has been advertised and received no bids. This would be combined with Ashley Avenue at Huger Street and rebid in the third quarter of 2025. This project would be combined with Ashley Avenue at Huger Street to install pedestrian signals, crosswalks, and curb bulb-outs to provide traffic calming and increase pedestrian safety. The cost for this project was \$465,000.

#### **Courtenay Drive at Doughty Street Signal Upgrade**

To improve safety, pedestrian crossing signals and a crosswalk would be installed. The estimated construction cost was \$172,000.

#### **Stocker/Chadwick Drive Capacity Improvements**

This project would be combined with Courtenay Drive at Doughty Street, which involves capacity improvements, bicycles, and pedestrian upgrades to the Stocker and Chadwick intersection at Savannah Highway. The estimated cost was \$215,000.

Chair Seekings asked if these were funded projects.

Ms. Kelley said yes.

#### **Sycamore Avenue Bike and Pedestrian Improvements**

Install a sidewalk on SC-61 from West Ashley Greenway to Sycamore Avenue, to connect to a crossing improvement at SC-61 in Sycamore. The estimated cost was \$690,000.

#### **Ashley Hall at Sam Rittenberg Intersection Improvements**

The extension of turn lanes from Ashley Hall onto Sam Rittenberg with sidewalk extensions. The estimated cost was \$880,000.

### **Calhoun Street at the James Island Connector**

Widen and improve the intersection along Calhoun Street from the James Island Connector to Gadsden Street. The estimated cost was \$10.7 million.

Chair Seekings asked if they were installing a check valve at the base of the James Island connector.

Mr. Mathis said yes.

Chair Seekings asked if this had been bid on before.

Ms. Kelley said it was not.

#### **City Golf Course Crossing and Sidewalk Connection**

Install a signalized crossing of Maybank Highway at the Charleston Municipal Golf Course and include sidewalks along Maybank Highway to increase pedestrian safety. The estimated cost was \$770,000.

### **Columbus Street & America Street Curb Extensions & Pedestrian Improvements**

This would include an engineering study, installation of the midblock crossing, and curve extensions or rapid flashing beacons. This location had a midblock crossing, and the estimated cost was \$448,000.

### **East Bay Street Sidewalk**

The installation of a new sidewalk along East Bay from Charlotte Street to the existing sidewalk near 515 East Bay Street. The estimated cost was \$190,000.

### **Fleming Road Sidewalk**

This was the installation of 675 feet of a 5-foot sidewalk from Maybank Highway to Standard Way, and the estimated cost was \$700,000.

### **Fort Johnson Road at Camp Improvements**

The installation of a traffic circle at the intersection of Fort Johnson and Camp Road. The estimated cost was between \$5 and 6 million.

### **Fort Johnson Road at Secessionville Improvements**

The installation of a traffic signal at the intersection with dedicated turn lanes. The estimated cost was \$4.5 million. This would be combined with the Fort Johnson Road and Camp Road Project.

### **Oceanic Street Multi-Use Path**

The installation of a multi-use path from Skate Charleston Park to the proposed entrance at Magnolia Development, with an estimated cost, was \$590,000. This project would need to carry over funding to move it to construction.

### **Olde Towne Road and Pedestrian Improvements**

The construction of a 10-foot multi-use path would connect the entrance to the State Park to the Olde Towne Creek County Park sidewalk. The total cost was \$475,000.

### **The Old Towne Road Sidewalk**

The construction of a 10-foot multi-use path from St. Augustine Drive to Oldtown Creek County Park entrance. The cost was \$337,000.

### **Savannah Highway Capacity Improvements**

Intersection improvements on US-17 at Dupont Road and Stinson Drive, Wappoo Road, and Magnolia Road/Avondale Avenue to reduce congestion and improve safety. The cost for this project was \$15 million.

Chair Seekings asked what was required.

(Inaudible)

### **Country Club Road and Folly Road Pedestrian Improvements**

Installation of 630 linear feet of sidewalk along the east side of the Country Club between Folly Road and the mid-block crossing. The estimated cost was \$528,000.

### **Romney Street Bike Lane**

The installation of bike lanes on Romney Street from Meeting Street to Morrison Drive, and the estimated cost for this project was \$150,000. Bike lanes did not meet SCDOT specifications, and the design was modified to include sharrows.

### **Saint Philip Street and Coming Street Mid-Block Crossing**

Installing a signalized mid-block crossing for Saint Philip Street and Coming Street. The estimated cost was \$290,000.

### **Central Park Road at Riverland Drive**

The installation of a crosswalk, right turn lane, RRFBs, and widening the sidewalk to improve safety for all modes of transportation while limiting impacts to properties and grand trees. The cost was \$1.5 million.

### **Old Towne Transportation Improvements**

Improve Orange Grove at the Sam Rittenberg intersection, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The total cost was \$16.2 million.

### **Savannah Highway at Savage Road Improvements**

A right turn lane extension from Savage Road onto US-17, along with sidewalk improvements, and the total cost for this project was \$1.4 million.

### **Projects in Design**

#### **Mutual Drive Sidewalk**

The construction of 450 linear feet of 5-foot sidewalk along Mutual Drive from Cherokee Hall to US-17. The cost was \$300,000.

#### **Rutledge Avenue & Fishburne Street Extensions and Pedestrian Improvements**

An engineering study and installation of mid-block crossing countermeasures, including curb extensions and RRFBs. There was an existing mid-block crossing at this location. The total cost for this project was \$385,000.

#### **Maybank Highway Improvements: Maybank 4<sup>th</sup> Lane**

Add a second outbound lane on Maybank Highway off John's Island near the intersection of Maybank Highway and River Road to the Stono River Bridge.

#### **Northbridge Bike/Pedestrian Improvements**

The construction of a new bike and pedestrian bridge connecting Northbridge Park to Azalea Drive. The cost was \$46 million.

Councilmember McBride asked if they had the last \$1 million for the \$6 million needed for the roundabout at Brownswood River Intersection.

(Inaudible)

Chair Seekings asked if the county had thought of creative ways to get people to bid on projects that no one was bidding on.

Ms. Detoma said they were setting up a contractor meeting to encourage people to come. The sidewalk projects, small and large banks, could not meet their bonding requirements, so they were working with their Procurement Department to do a training session. This was to get people who knew blue-collar workers who might not get the bonds but wanted to do construction under \$3 million. They would allow those who did not have the bonding capacity but relied on their insurance to develop a program while they were being taught how to become bonded, and allow them to bid if they committed to taking those classes.

#### **River Road Improvements Johns Island Elementary School Update**

Mr. Borowy was the chief operating officer for the school district. He said the roadway surfaces and the school will open on August 12<sup>th</sup>. There were three sections to this project. One was that the school was sealed up and ready for flooring, the HVAC was 98% complete, water and sewage were in, and the curbing gutter around the school was completed. They had all the necessary permits for the roundabout and that section of road. The structures for the storm sewer were ordered, and the roundabout eventually would connect to River Road. The left turn and right turn were the third part of the project, which was the intersection of Brownswood and River. Left turn lanes were being added off of River onto Brownswood, and a right-hand turn lane off Brownswood under River. They had their land disturbance permit from the county and Saint John's water approval for the water line. Charleston Water received comments on the sewer line, and they would respond to those once they had their approval, which would move them to the last step of permit approvals. They needed to get the Department of Environmental Services, the construction permit, and a permit from the DOT, which was the utility permit. For the storm sewer, they were putting 1,000 linear feet of storm sewer piping on each side of the roundabout and 900 feet of storm sewer piping on River Road toward that intersection.

Councilmember McBride asked if that would allow more shoulders to be added to River Road.

Mr. Borowy said that was correct.

Councilmember McBride asked if the turn lanes for the Brownswood and River Road intersection would not be in time for school opening.

Mr. Borowy said they expected that work to be done before the start of school.

Councilmember McBride asked if several 100 feet of stormwater would be piped from that intersection and the roundabout.

Mr. Borowy said that was correct.

Councilmember McBride said it was important for the public to understand there was a concern for the neighborhood behind the school, on River Road, because of the sidewalks and speed mitigation. Coming out of Moonbeam, there were sidewalks in that neighborhood, and no sidewalks coming out of Claybrook Street.

Mayor Cogswell said when subdivisions were approved on Johns Island, the residents wanted it to remain rural. It was intentional not to have sidewalks because it was considered a state-like development and not a new urban development. Since Johns Island had become more urban, new subdivisions had sidewalks. A general timeline could also be provided for when that change occurred.

Councilmember McBride asked if the speed mitigation would take place after the school's opening.

Mr. Somerville said that speed mitigation was based on their Traffic Calming Program. They were waiting for the signed petition, which 75% of the residents were in favor of traffic calming. These were City streets, so the speed limit was 25 mph, and the petition was needed to install a traffic calming device.

Councilmember McBride asked if their recommendation would be to get the petition before the school opens or if they should wait until after.

Mr. Somerville said it would help if they could start getting that petition now to start the process. When the school opens, they would get the counts so they could have accurate data.

### **SCDOT Road Safety Audit Update**

Ms. Meetze was the project manager for the Traffic Safety Office at the SCDOT. Her colleagues were Mr. Shawn Salley and Mr. Brent Dillon. Four new projects were within the City limits: Folly Road, Septima P. Clark Parkway, Ashley River Road, and Savannah Highway. These were safety projects that were crash data-driven. If someone were in an accident, they would receive a form filled out by the responding officer. That information was documented and put into a database to be accessed and pulled. Once that information was pulled, they ran a list of roads and corridors within the state with high crash rates. One was for motor vehicles and one for bicycle and pedestrian crashes. The vehicular segments they looked at were the fatal and serious injury crashes. For the non-motorized bicycle and pedestrian, SC-61 ranked number 4, which was ranked based on crashes per mile. Ashley River Road experienced over 2,000 crashes, 4 fatalities, 18 pedestrian crashes, and 28 bicycle crashes. Savannah Highway encompassed six miles of improvements from Hughes Road to Wappoo Road, and over a five-year crash data period, there were 2,500 crashes, 18 fatalities, 26 pedestrians, and 8 bicycle crashes. Septima Clark Parkway, four miles from Coming Street to Lockwood Drive, which was from five-year crash data, there were over a thousand crashes, 4 fatalities, 15 of those were pedestrians, and 7 bicycle crashes. Folly Road, five miles from Old Folly Road to Old Folly Beach Road, had over 2,000 crashes, 6 fatalities, 15 pedestrian crashes, and 21 bicycle crashes. After the projects were identified, they came up with limits for these projects and dove deeper into the crash data, which was the Road Safety Assessment. This team was made up of stakeholders, the City, federal highways, local emergency services, and highway patrol. They also had boots on the ground where they would walk through the project corridor, they looked at the crash data and evaluated traffic movements, and came up with a report. When the report was finalized, they came up with proven countermeasures to reduce crashes, then were then brought to the public through a public information meeting.

Mr. Salley said that input was taken from the stakeholders, which was how they developed the Road Safety Assessment, which was turned into a project, and made into a concept. Those concepts were brought to the public for feedback on what they wanted to do if adjustments were made. The safety projects included pedestrian enhancements and recommendations to reduce

the worst-angle crashes. The public comments they received were compiled and evaluated, then revised based on those comments. They dove deeper into analyzing crash areas to reduce fatal injuries along those corridors. They designed a concept that would be applied to all four projects based on a best-case scenario from a safety perspective to maximize safety along the corridor. They had some concerns based on their updated concept, and in their re-evaluation, they removed some of the medians to make the project safer. They listened to the public and their feedback, and there were some sections where the medians were needed.

When an analysis was conducted, there was a section where they needed to keep the median because of the crashes through that corridor. The median was there to restrict those angle crashes. After they received the updated concepts, they went to the public, one of which was for Folly Road. A public meeting was planned on James Island to present the updated concepts to the public to get additional feedback. Once they got that feedback, they would move forward with the design. They had many concepts for these projects, mainly the medians, which were what people were most interested in. There would also be opportunities for those medians, such as landscaping, to beautify those medians and projects to improve safety.

Mayor Cogswell asked if the beautification components of the medians were part of the DOT bid process.

Mr. Salley said that was correct.

He said they wanted a safer project for the people in the corridor and to take feedback from everyone involved. Construction was set to begin in 2027, which gave them time to work on it, evaluate comments, and do a further crash analysis to see what adjustments needed to be made to the concrete medians.

Chair Seekings asked if they would be doing another public engagement session.

Mr. Salley said yes.

Chair Seekings asked about the anticipated construction date of the Septima Clark project, which was scheduled for 2027, and that it should be ready to go.

Mr. Salley said there was a possibility that it could be done before that, but they liked to lump construction projects together because they got more interest.

Chair Seekings said safety was paramount because they had rough incidents along those corridors.

Mr. Salley said these were not necessarily congesting projects, but a safety project.

With no further business, the Committee adjourned the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Clerk of Council's Office

Donna Constance