

BEAUFORT COUNTY CONNECTS

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BEAUFORT COUNTY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TASK FORCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beaufort County and its municipalities have seen exponential growth in recent decades and trends indicate growth will not slow down over the next ten years. This means the area will see more housing, more infrastructure, more jobs, and more traffic.

As communities and roadways grow increasingly congested and concerns over the environmental impacts of driving increase, **interest in walking and bicycling as a mode of transportation will grow.** With it, the need for transportation options that help reduce traffic congestion while improving access to economic hubs, community amenities, natural resources, and schools for all communities increases. And because development to accommodate growth is happening quickly, **pathway corridors need to be identified and secured as soon as possible.**

As the County and its municipalities prepare for future growth, it is imperative that coordinated planning for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure happens now.

The *Beaufort County Connects: Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021* is a **proactive planning tool** that supports improved access to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the County and its municipalities. It is the result of a year-long, collaborative effort of a Bicycle/Pedestrian Taskforce made up of members from Beaufort County, the City

of Beaufort, the Town of Port Royal, the Town of Bluffton, the Town of Hilton Head Island, the City of Hardeeville, Jasper County, the Lowcountry Council of Governments, community and advocacy groups, and bike and pedestrian citizen advocates. **Because of the regional collaboration that went into building the plan, it identifies bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure gaps and needs, recommends proactive policies, provides an implementation plan, and offers funding sources that apply to each jurisdiction and will improve the bicycle and pedestrian network throughout the county.**

Several initiatives went into building the plan, including a public surveying exercise, public mapping exercise, and input collection from each participating municipality. Nearly 2,000 members of the public responded to the survey and mapping exercises. **Over 60% of the respondents indicated access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities is an important factor in deciding where to live and work.** Yet, almost half of them reported that though they have an interest in cycling or walking, they often don't because of concerns about the lack of safe facilities and wayfinding. This same group reported wanting walking or biking to be their primary mode of transportation. Clearly, there is a need and desire for a better, more interconnected network of bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure throughout Beaufort County. **The**

objective of this plan is to provide Beaufort County residents with a connected, safe network that meets the needs of all of its diverse users.

During the mapping exercise, the needs of the community were identified. The top six areas reported as needing safe bicycle and pedestrian routes or improvements are:

1. Downtown Beaufort to the Spanish Moss Trail (Beaufort)
2. May River Road (Bluffton)
3. Sams Point Road/Brickyard Road/Middle Road (Lady's Island)
4. Buck Island Road between Bluffton Parkway and US 278 (Bluffton)
5. SC 170 connecting the Northern and Southern halves of Beaufort County
6. Main Street (Hilton Head Island)

Input gathered from the public and collaborative feedback between local jurisdictions developed three major themes that the plan seeks to address. **Creating more connections** between neighborhoods, economic hubs, civic areas, and existing bicycle and pedestrian trails. **Developing a Spine and Spur framework** for building a network where a primary spine route connects northern and southern Beaufort County and smaller spur routes connect the spine to destinations. And **targeting the "interested but concerned" group** of riders and walkers for outreach efforts and education to promote bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

In total, 139 miles of trails and sidewalks, costing approximately \$84 million to build, were identified and included in the

plan. The completed network will include four types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

- On-road facilities, like protected bike lanes
- Road-separated multi-use paths, like the Spanish Moss Trail
- Low volume/low speed bike-friendly streets
- Sidewalks

In order to successfully build the network, the plan recommends important policies that will ensure the primary themes are addressed and all residents and visitors in Beaufort County have access to safe bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Critical policies that will support successful implementation include:

1. Adoption of *Beaufort County Connects: Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2021* by resolution within each jurisdiction and incorporation into their respective Comprehensive Plans.
2. Creation of a staff position within Beaufort County government whose primary responsibility is to oversee the implementation of *Beaufort County Connects 2021* and collaborate with jurisdictions and local, state, and federal agencies to secure funding for and manage development of paths.
3. Consideration of a 2022 ballot initiative to re-impose the 1% capital project sales tax to continue to fund transportation improvements including complete streets and multi-use paths. Additionally, establishment of a regular schedule for future referendums to continue funding these initiatives.

4. Coordination with the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS) during the update to the Long Range Transportation Plan to incorporate the projects listed in *Beaufort County Connects 2021* and advocate for a target percentage of funding to be devoted to bike and pedestrian facilities.

Additionally, the plan calls for the creation of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to assist the County and County's bicycle and pedestrian coordinator in planning, funding, development, and implementation of the facilities and programs included in *Beaufort County Connects 2021* to result in increased safety and use of bicycle and pedestrian transportation and recreation.

Important funding sources have been identified to provide a firm financial foundation for the plan, including, but not limited to, federal discretionary grants, community development block grants, capital project sales tax, LATS, foundation grants, and local accommodations taxes. It is imperative that diverse sources of funding are sought and maintained to ensure a consistent revenue stream for developing the projects included in this plan.

Ultimately, *Beaufort County Connects 2021* is a bold, aggressive plan designed to provide a safe, interconnected, and efficient bicycle and pedestrian network for Beaufort County. It will require ongoing collaboration between all jurisdictions, advocacy groups, advisory

committees, and a coordinator to be successfully implemented. Fortunately, *Beaufort County Connects 2021* provides the routes, policies, programs, and funding sources to achieve the desired outcome – an enhanced quality of life, improved public health, economic access and opportunity, and equity for people of all races, genders, ages, abilities, and economic statuses throughout Beaufort County.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

WHY PLAN FOR PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS? —

There are things that immediately come to mind when one imagines the unique natural and built environments of Beaufort County – **sprawling salt marshes, rich local culture and history, canopy roads, and small-but-bustling downtowns.** In recent years, the beginnings of a connected multi-use pathway network have found a place on the list of amenities that make the County a highly sought after place to live and visit. The crowds of people that use the Spanish Moss Trail and the extensive pathway network on Hilton Head Island stand as proof that **people, residents and visitors alike, want access to a safe and connected bicycle and pedestrian network.**

“[Cycling] is by far my favorite activity [on] Hilton Head. I've never seen anything so remarkable...”
“...The trails are beautiful, diverse and functional. They're also safe and well-marked. **This is what it should be like in every community.**”

-Trip Advisor Review,
September 2020



The benefits of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure extend to all aspects of a community. From physical/mental health and social bonding, to tourism dollars, job creation, and emissions reductions, we can vastly improve the state of the region and the quality of life of its residents by taking bold, consistent steps to provide pathway access to all.

TRANSFORMING TRANSPORTATION

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are a vital component of Beaufort County's regional

transportation network. A connected network of multi-use paths promotes healthier lifestyles, improves real estate values, attracts knowledge based-industries, and **provides an alternative mode of transportation for all residents.**

This is a critical time to implement bike and pedestrian facilities:

- Traffic volumes on Lady's Island are increasing at a rate of 1.6% annually based on data from the last 10 years.
- On Sea Island Parkway near Meridian Road, traffic increased by 12% between 2009 and 2019; just east of the Lady's Island Drive intersection, traffic increased by 24%.
- On US 21 south of Laurel Bay Road, average daily traffic increased 16%.
- In Port Royal on the Russell Bell Bridge, average daily traffic increased 33%.
- In Bluffton, traffic increased by 20% on May River Road and by 35% on US 278.

It is now commonly understood that new or widened roads attract more traffic. This is a concept known as **"induced demand"** and is often

summarized with a quote usually attributed to the great American urbanist Lewis Mumford: **"Building more roads to prevent congestion is like a fat man loosening his belt to prevent obesity."** There has to be another way and fortunately, there is - focusing on multi-modal transportation in order to include transit, cycling, and walking. We need to change and broaden our focus from traffic management to mobility. And, it is important to remember that as we implement capital projects, **we need to build communities through transportation, not transportation through communities.**



THE NEED TO MOVE

Not-for-profit hospitals are required to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years. Beaufort Memorial Hospital (BMH) prepared a CHNA in 2016 and 2019. These documents provide important information on the current well-being of the community and health needs going forward.

South Carolina ranks number 12 in the nation for the rate of adult obesity. Not surprisingly then, obesity is a problem here in Beaufort County. Morbidity data collected for the County in 2013 indicated that 21% of the adult population was obese. By 2019, that number had increased to 23%--almost one in four adults. Excessive weight has been identified as a causal factor in the development of heart disease, diabetes,

hypertension, and stroke. Obesity is even more common in children. A 2018-2019 study at a Beaufort County middle school shows 34%, 44% and 43% of 3rd, 5th, and 8th

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), getting enough physical activity could prevent 1 in 10 premature deaths.

graders respectively are overweight or obese.

The problems associated with excessive weight are not going unnoticed. In 2016, BMH conducted a survey and asked respondents (542) what the five most significant health problems in their community were. Obesity or being overweight was the most frequently cited problem, with 64% of respondents indicating this as a significant health issue. Coming in second and third, 52% of respondents ranked diabetes as a major problem, and 51% said high blood pressure was a significant concern. Obesity is a contributing factor to both these serious health conditions.

The Hospital's 2019 CHNA asked a similar question regarding the community's top ("most pressing") health problems. Of the 1,683 respondents, 43% identified obesity as one of the top health issues in the County. Only the cost of health care was listed by more participants as a concern.

As noted in the Executive Summary of the 2019 report, while Beaufort County ranks much better than many counties in the state (i.e., the state that is 12th in the rate of adult obesity!), ". . .there are very definite areas of concern where intervention is needed to circumvent continued increases in morbidity and potential increases in mortality, especially from preventable causes."

The need for movement couldn't be clearer. It's time to get out the bike and ride!

HOW WALKING AND BIKING CAN IMPROVE OUR HEALTH



Benefits for Children

- Reduces risk of depression
- Improves aerobic fitness
- Improves muscular fitness
- Improves bone health
- Promotes healthy development and growth
- Improves attention and some measures of academic performance



Benefits for Adults

- Lowers risk of high blood pressure
- Lowers risk of stroke
- Improves aerobic fitness
- Improves mental health
- Improves cognitive function
- Reduces arthritis symptoms
- Prevents weight gain



Benefits for Healthy Aging

- Improves sleep
- Reduces risk of falling
- Improves balance
- Improves joint mobility
- Extends years of active life
- Helps prevent weak bones and muscle loss
- Delays onset of cognitive decline

Access Benefits

A connected bicycle and pedestrian network provides **safer, shorter trips to key destinations** for people who are unable or unwilling to drive. Increasing access to the network increases access to employment opportunities and daily necessities.

“Nearly **one-third of the U.S. population**—including children, older adults, people with disabilities, low income people, women, and rural residents—**are transportation disadvantaged** (e.g., they are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation).”
-American Public Health Association



Economic Benefits

A 2017 study found that cyclists spent \$83 billion on trip-related sales and \$97 billion in retail sales nationally. The study also found that tourism spending contributed to the creation of 848,000 jobs.

In 2018, the Bureau of Economic Analysis estimated the economic output of outdoor tourism to be \$734 billion, of which \$96 billion

can be attributed to bicycling retail sales.

In Beaufort, the Spanish Moss Trail attracts **40,000 annual visitors**, and **24% of those live beyond a 50-mile radius** of Beaufort, stimulating tourism and recreation-related spending.

Community Benefits



When we provide cyclists and pedestrians access to a trail network, we open up greater opportunities for access to history, culture, and nature and **improve quality of life** and sense of place for residents and visitors. Giving residents the ability to walk to work and stores can bolster employment opportunities and lessen financial constraints. Connected networks don't just link people to destinations, **they allow people to connect with each other.**

A study by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy stated greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. are expected to rise to 9.7 billion tons in 2030 from 7.2 billion tons in 2005. Scientists suggest annual emissions must be reduced by 1.2 billion, the same amount attributed to personal transportation each year, to address the effects of greenhouse gases. Connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities provide residents and visitors the ability to choose their mode of transportation for short trips, **reducing carbon emissions.**

Environmental Benefits



A SAFER ROUTE

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE MAKES CYCLING SAFER

The design of streets greatly influences the overall safety of cycling. The safest streets are those with cycling-specific infrastructure.

PROTECTED BIKE LANES POSE **90% LESS CHANCE OF INJURY** AS RIDING ON MAJOR STREETS WITH PARKING!

2016 data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration confirms that walkers and bikers make up 18.2% of all traffic fatalities. **Proactive policies, infrastructure planning, and education** are imperative to improving safety conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. For example, by implementing those elements, the state of Oregon experienced a 31% decrease in bicyclist fatalities and a 47% increase in bicyclist commuters from 2012-2016.

Improving safety conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists will be critical to promoting walking and bicycling in Beaufort County. Concerns over safety are justified. According to the 2019 South Carolina Traffic Collision Fact Book, one pedestrian is killed in the state every 2.2 days and one bicyclist every 13.5 days. In Beaufort County, during the three-year period between 2018 and 2020, nine pedestrians were killed and four cyclists died in crashes.

In 2021, South Carolina was ranked as the 7th most dangerous state in the United States for pedestrians as outlined in the report “Dangerous by Design” published by The National Complete Streets Coalition and Smart Growth America. This is a worsening of the state’s already poor rating in the 2019 report, when the state was ranked 10th. South Carolina’s continued place on the top ten list underscores the profound lack of pedestrian infrastructure in the state.

Between 2009 and 2017, South Carolina experienced over 9,000 crashes involving pedestrians and 1,112 pedestrian fatalities. Accidents did not affect the population equally. Although the state was approximately 27% African American at the time, 47% of those involved in pedestrian crashes were African American.



With regard to bicyclists, the report, “South Carolina Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Analysis 2009-2017” noted there were 146 bicycle fatalities statewide between 2009 and 2017. In the “Bike Friendly State Report Card” prepared by the League of American Bicyclists, South Carolina ranked low, at 42 out of the 50 states and with regard to fatalities for bike commuters, ranked 46 out of 50, where 50 is the worst. Locally, Beaufort County ranked third among all 46 counties in the state for most bicycle crashes per 1,000 people. Again, the impacts were not experienced evenly across the population. While African Americans made up only 27% of the population, they were involved in nearly 40% of the bicycle crashes over the nine-year period.

Pedestrian and bicycle crashes and fatalities have gone up considerably in recent years. Pedestrian fatalities alone have increased by 45% between 2010 and 2019, and 2019 saw the highest numbers of pedestrian deaths since 1990. Action will be needed at all levels of government--with participation from nonprofit and community groups--to address this growing safety concern. From building “complete streets,” making signalized intersection improvements, implementing a Vision Zero program to educate the public on safe driving and cycling techniques, to promoting walking and cycling events, much more can and needs to be done to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists in the County.

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PROJECT MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force is to **identify routes, recommend facility types, and suggest policies and ordinances** that will foster **safer, more accessible walking and bicycling** in Beaufort County for residents and visitors.

Objectives

- Establish walking and biking as **routine, efficient, safe, and equitable** options for both transportation and recreation.
- Expand the integrated network of sidewalks, multi-use paths, and on-street bicycle **connections** linking people to destinations like jobs, schools, parks, monuments, and adjacent communities.
- Enhance **quality of life, public health, economic opportunity, and equity** for people of all economic statuses, races, genders, ages, and abilities.

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK

Beaufort County, with its flat terrain and warm climate, has great potential to increase and improve opportunities for walking and cycling. While the county's historic communities of Beaufort, Bluffton, and Port Royal were compactly built with the pedestrian in mind, much of the growth in the last 50 years has been automobile centric, with low-density development and separated land uses. Yet, progress has recently been made to construct safe pedestrian and cycling routes to residential and retail areas and employment destinations.

Previous and Ongoing Regional Pathway Efforts

Hilton Head Island: Since the 1970s, the Town of Hilton Head Island has been a regional leader in

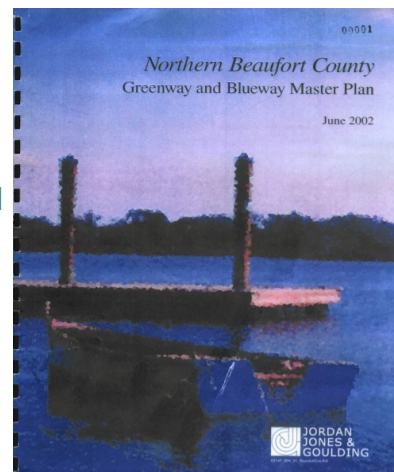


developing off-road multi-use paths, with over 60 miles of public paths and another 50 miles in gated communities. The paths connect the island's residential, commercial, and resort destinations and are a top amenity for residents and visitors.

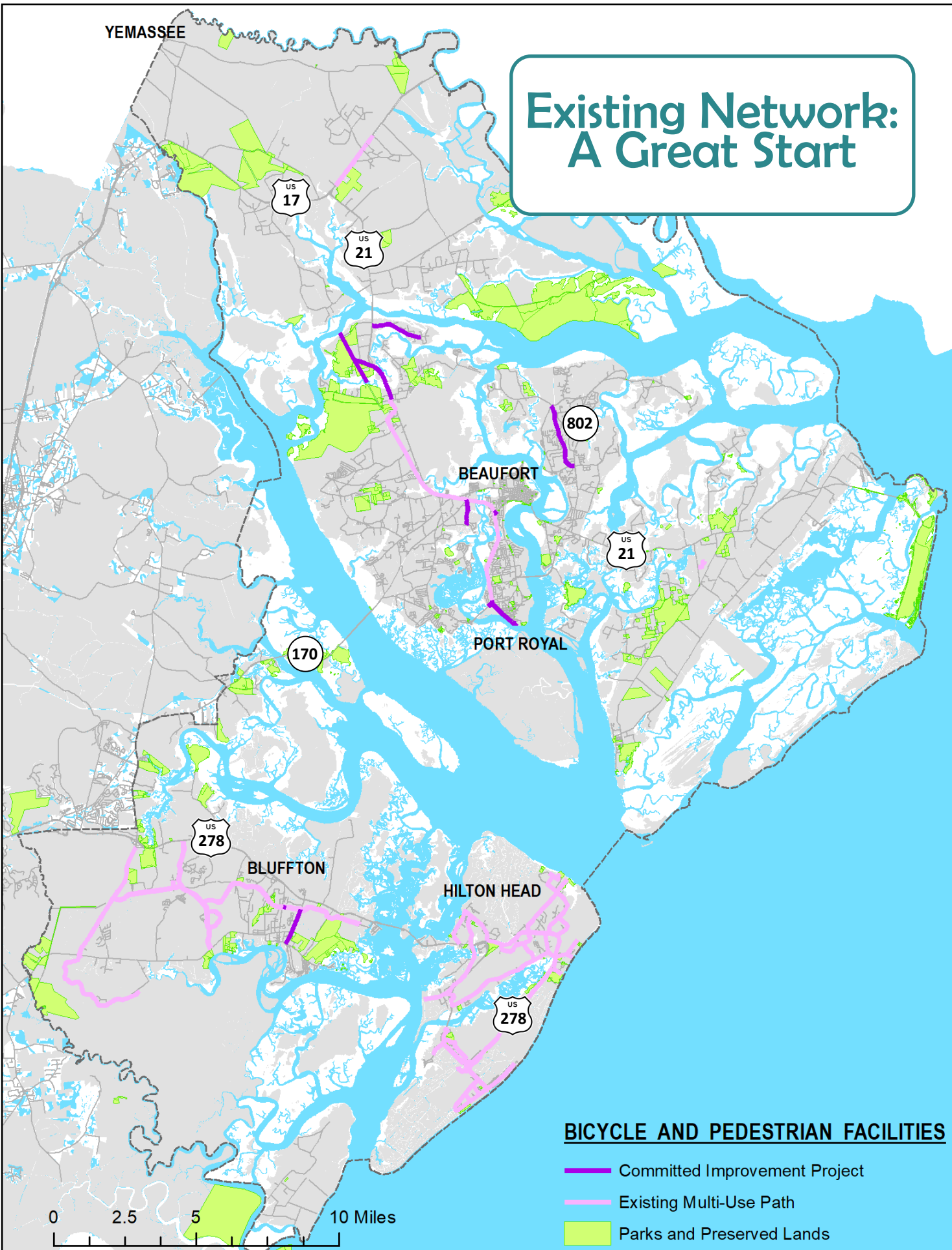
Southern Beaufort County: In the Bluffton area, over 22 miles of multi-use paths have been developed as part of the construction of the Buckwalter, Bluffton, and New Riverside Parkways, and the widening of SC -170, US-278 and SC-46. This network connects many residential areas with businesses, schools, and employment centers. In addition, the Town of Bluffton

has improved sidewalks to advance the walkability of Old Town Bluffton and to provide safe routes to area schools (Simmonsville, Buck Island, and Red Cedar streets).

Northern Beaufort County: In northern Beaufort County, approximately 10 miles of the Spanish Moss Trail have been constructed primarily on the right-of-way of the former Port Royal Railroad. Along with serving an important regional recreational need, the Spanish Moss Trail connects residential areas with businesses, retail and tourist destinations, and major employers, like the Marine Corps Air Station and Beaufort Memorial Hospital. Additional improvements include walkways over the Woods Memorial and McTeer Bridges and multi-use paths along Boundary Street.



Existing Network: A Great Start



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Parks and Preserved Lands

SPOTLIGHT: SPANISH MOSS TRAIL



You'll find history and nature everywhere in Beaufort County, even out on the trail. Beaufort County's Spanish Moss Trail follows the path of the historic Magnolia Line, chartered in 1856. Starting at the historic Kinghorn Warehouse (ca 1915) at the Depot trailhead, the Trail passes along marsh, over tidal creeks, and through hardwood forests. During a ride along its 10-mile length, you are as likely to see some of the area's abundant wildlife--dolphins, wading birds, and bald eagles--as you are other walkers and cyclists.

The Magnolia Line, constructed in 1870, ran south from Yemassee to Port Royal on the Beaufort River. The extension to Augusta, Georgia opened in 1873. The ownership of the railroad changed hands several times over the decades until 1985 when the

South Carolina State Ports Authority purchased the track and established a new Port Royal Railroad. Business along the line was minimal however, and operations ended in November 2003.



AJPierro Photography

In November 2009, Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority acquired the right-of-way to use as a utility corridor. In a visionary move in January 2011, the Authority granted a surface easement to Beaufort County to develop 16 miles of the corridor as a recreational trail to be named the Spanish Moss Trail.

In 2012, the Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail was founded by community leaders as a private non-profit corporation to advocate for the development of the Spanish Moss Trail. The Friends partnered with the PATH Foundation of Atlanta to develop a master plan for a 16-mile trail. PATH, an organization with 25 years of experience building over 300 miles of trails, outlined a phased plan to build a 12-foot wide concrete trail designed for the enjoyment of bikers, runners, walkers, and nature enthusiasts of all stages of life. The inaugural project, a one-mile section of trail between the Depot trailhead and Allison Road, was completed in November 2012.

After that, and with strong public support, it was “full steam ahead.” Today, ten miles of the Trail are open and used by over 50,000 residents and visitors a year. The trail provides a trip through a variety of Lowcountry habitats, from salt marsh, tidal creek, bottomland swamp, to hardwood forest. The trail traverses a variety of human habitats as well, from suburban residential neighborhoods, small industrial enclaves, to protected land around the Marine Corps Air Station.

The Trail is known for its views of the marsh, the bridges over tidal creeks, and glimpses of wildlife like

mink, winter ducks, roseate spoonbills, osprey, and of course, deer. The quirky, abandoned “Pickle Factory” provides a reminder of the area’s agricultural past.

The next phase of construction is the much-anticipated extension of the Trail to the Sands Beach in Port Royal and then from Clarendon Road to the Whale

Beautiful trail in excellent condition ... this has been one of the most enjoyable rides my wife and I have made in the US. Highly recommend it and suggest you take your time....

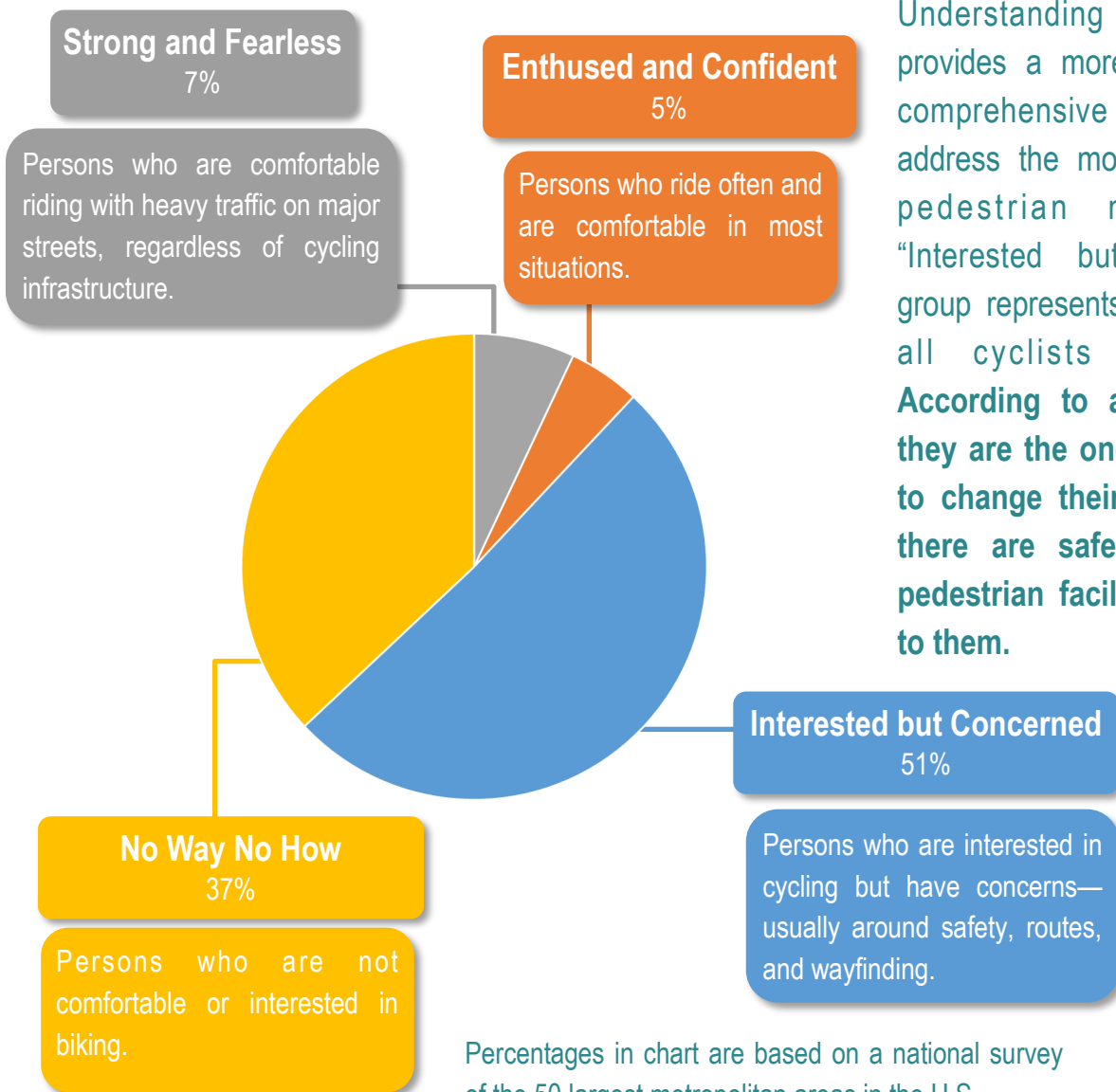
-Review from TrailLink

Branch River--bringing the Lowcountry a connected 16-mile Trail. A spur to historic Downtown Beaufort is currently being designed. As with so much of trail implementation, the downtown connector is a partnership effort between Beaufort County, the City of Beaufort, and The Friends.

Recognizing the gem that is the Spanish Moss Trail, in 2020, *Outside Magazine* named the Trail one of the ten best walking trails in America. Truly, the Spanish Moss Trail has become one of the County’s greatest assets.

USER TYPES

Cycling is increasing nationally as a transportation and recreation choice. From 2000 to 2019, bicycle commuting rates increased 58% nationally and 88% in communities that have invested heavily in bicycle infrastructure. When considering bicycle facilities, it is important to understand what types of investments have the greatest potential to promote cycling. To better understand the needs of cyclists, we relied on four commonly used cyclist categories based on comfort level and willingness to consider cycling a viable transportation mode.



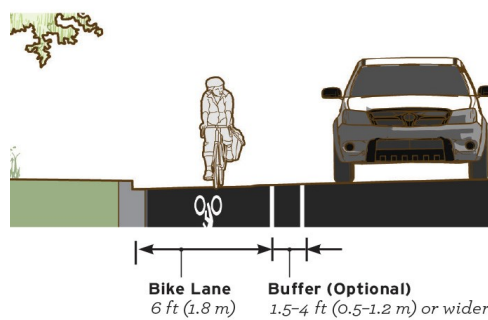
Understanding user types provides a more efficient and comprehensive network to address the most bicycle and pedestrian needs. The “Interested but Concerned” group represents about half of all cyclists nationwide. According to a 2016 study, they are the ones most likely to change their habits when there are safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities available to them.

Percentages in chart are based on a national survey of the 50 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S.

FACILITY TYPES

In order to meet the mission and objectives of this plan, emphasis must be placed on serving the needs of the “Interested but Concerned” group with a comprehensive network of multi-use paths and bike friendly streets. For the purposes of this plan, there are four general types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

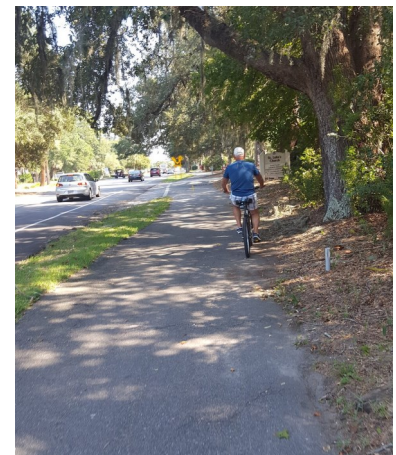
On-Road Facilities: On-road facilities, including shared lanes, paved shoulders, bike lanes, and protected bike lanes (“cycle tracks”), are primarily used by the “strong and fearless” and “enthused and confident” types of cyclists. While paved shoulders greatly improve safety, especially where



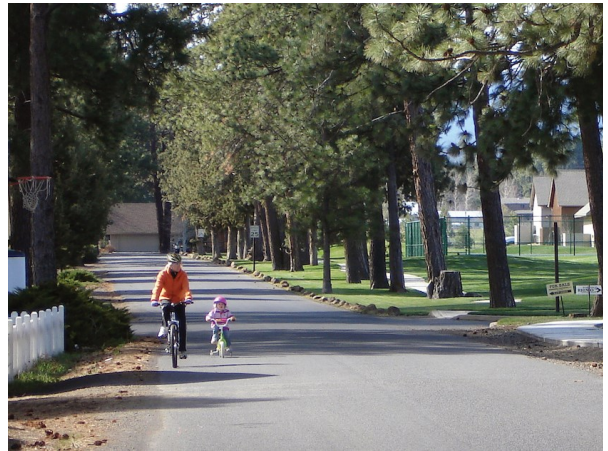
there are higher speeds or traffic volumes, inadequate shoulder width and presence of rumble strips frequently stand in the way for even the most fearless cyclists. Adequate, paved on-road facilities should be

targeted for rural and suburban areas. On lower speed urban streets, designated bike lanes have the potential to increase the number of “interested but concerned” cyclists.

Multi-Use Paths: Multi-use paths are pedestrian/bikeways that are typically separated from motorized traffic by an open space or barrier and are either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. When designed correctly, multi-use paths provide the greatest level of comfort and safety for cyclists and pedestrians and have the greatest potential to increase ridership among “interested but concerned” cyclists, including children and the elderly. They also provide safe facilities for cyclists and pedestrians with no other transportation choices.



Bike-Friendly Streets: Bike-friendly streets are low volume/low speed streets that provide a safe environment for bicyclists. Included in this category is the “Bicycle Boulevard”, which is optimized for bicycle travel with treatments such as traffic calming and traffic reduction, signage and pavement markings, and intersection crossings. These treatments allow through movements for cyclists while discouraging similar through trips by nonlocal motorized traffic. Maximum traffic speeds should not exceed 25 MPH.



Sidewalks: The primary purpose of sidewalks is to provide a safe path for pedestrians that is separated from vehicular traffic by on-street parking or a planting strip. Width of sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet in low density residential areas and increase in width in areas of high pedestrian traffic. Sidewalks should be prioritized where they provide safe and convenient access for pedestrians to schools, parks, retail, and services.

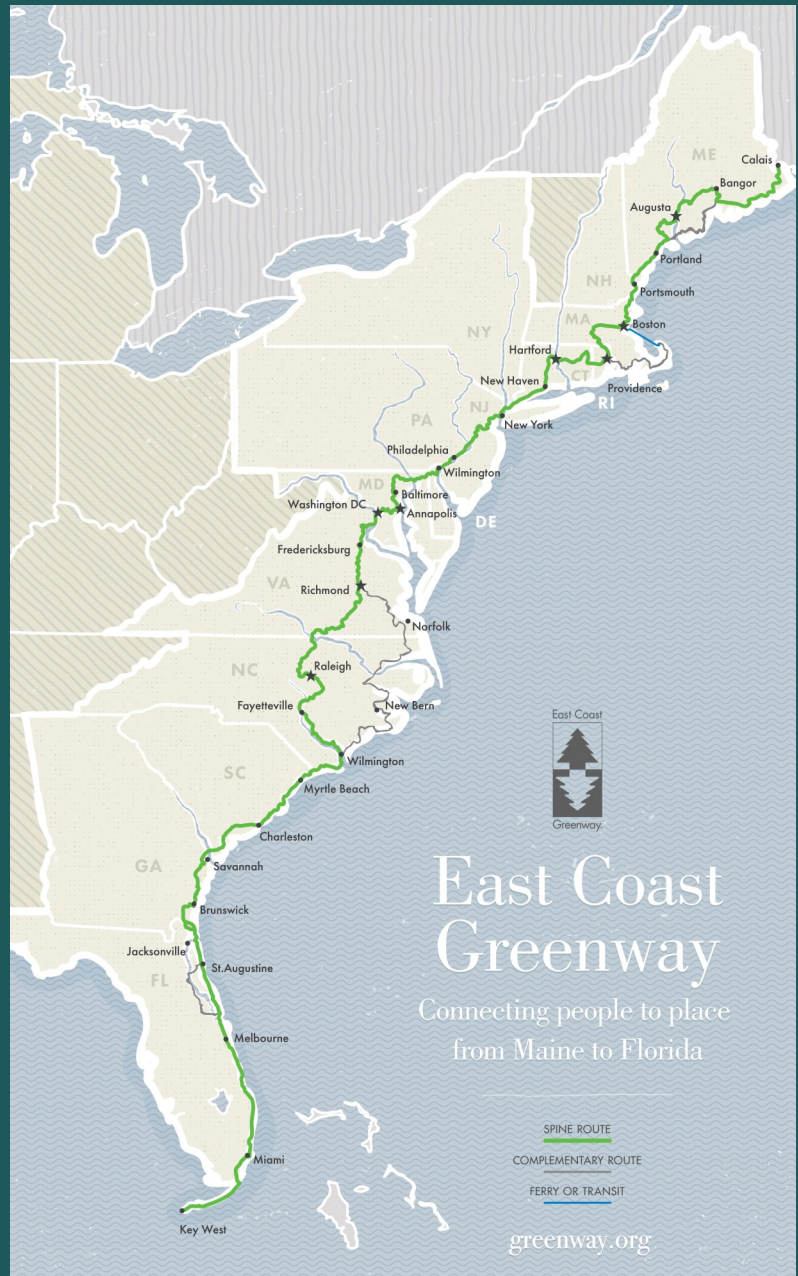
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SPOTLIGHT: EAST COAST GREENWAY

In coastal South Carolina, 20% of the spine route of the East Coast Greenway (ECG) has been completed as a paved, traffic-separated, multi-use path. Beaufort County features three completed segments of the ECG spine route: the Gardens Corner Greenway, the Spanish Moss Trail, and the SC-170 side path. Completed segments are those that meet the requirements described in the *Greenway Guide* (www.greenway.org/design-guide) and are typically 10-12' wide paved trails, also known as greenways, sidepaths, and multi-use paths.

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is an envisioned 3,000-mile, non-motorized trail system connecting cities, towns, and natural areas from Maine to Florida. The non-profit East Coast Greenway Alliance coordinates efforts to complete and promote the ECG.

When completed, the ECG will consist of a network of locally developed multi-use paths, rail-trails, and similarly non-motorized facilities, linked to form a continuous spine trail passing through more than 450 communities in fifteen coastal states and Washington DC.





Above: The multi-use path along SC 170 in Okatie is an approximately 4.5 mile segment of the ECG stretching from US 278 to SC 46.



Left: The Spanish Moss Trail makes up 10 miles of the ECG spine route through Beaufort County and will account for a total of 16 miles when fully developed.

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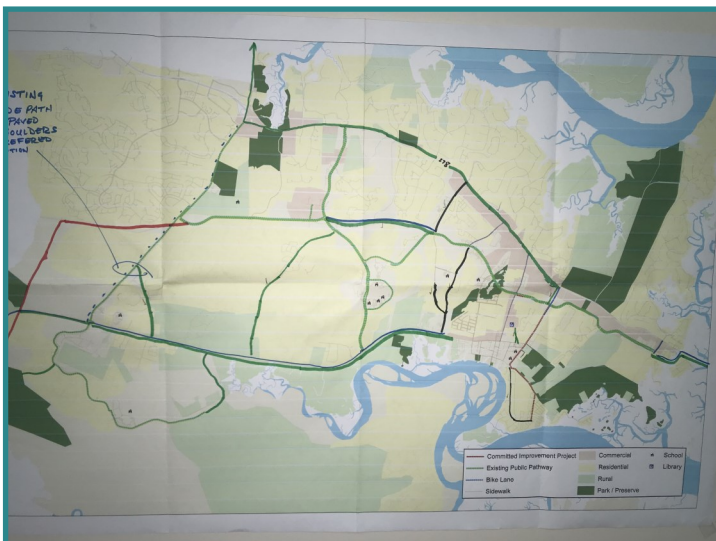
CHAPTER 2:

PROCESS AND PUBLIC INPUT

TASK FORCE PROCESS OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2019, Beaufort County Planning staff assembled a Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force comprised of local and regional planners representing various municipalities and organizations, as well as pathway and cycling advocates from across the County. The initial goal of this group was to **identify the most urgent needs for facilities in the existing bicycle and pedestrian network, recommend future projects to address those needs, and develop consistent policies for what types of bicycle and pedestrian facilities are appropriate for urban, suburban, and rural areas of the County.** The group soon decided this effort was critical enough to result in a stand-alone Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

The task force worked to identify the areas of greatest need in the existing network using maps of existing pathways, committed future pathways, and landmarks such as schools, parks, libraries, and major employers. The group then performed a mapping exercise and created a list of potential pathway projects to meet its objectives. Over the course of several months, the initial project list was reworked to address additional gaps and ensure efficiency of the proposed network.



Proposed facilities ranged from multi-use paths, to sidewalks, to protected bike lanes based on the needs of the community. Once the task force had an established list of projects, focus shifted to engaging the public.

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

In the summer of 2020, the County released an online survey to gain public input regarding citizens' walking and cycling habits and desires. The survey was available from the first week of July until the first week of August on the County website and was advertised by the participating municipalities and by advocacy groups including the Coastal Conservation League, the Sea Island Coalition, and Bike Walk Hilton Head Island. The survey consisted of two parts:

- A multiple-choice question and answer section; and
- A mapping exercise in which respondents were asked to indicate improvements or new facilities they would like to see.

A total of 1,946 people responded to the survey. Of the almost 2,000 respondents, 57% identified as female, 42% as male, with the remainder choosing not to identify as a particular gender. Over 70% of the respondents were adults over 55. Almost 42% were over 65.

In general, people feel safe walking in their neighborhood. When asked if they felt safe walking in their community, almost 80% of all participants responded yes. The areas where people did not feel safe walking were on Lady's Island, where almost 30% stated they did not feel safe walking, and in Burton, zip code 29906, where approximately 24% indicated they did not feel safe walking. Okatie and City of Beaufort respondents felt the most comfortable walking, with 89% in Okatie and 88% in Beaufort stating they felt safe walking in their neighborhood.

Residents feel a little less comfortable when on a bike, but in general, still feel safe. Slightly over 75% of those responding indicated they felt safe cycling in their community, while one in four people stated the opposite. Lady's Island was again the area where the highest percentage of respondents indicated they did not feel safe cycling (45.5%). The Burton area (zip code 29906) also

had a higher than average percentage of residents feeling uncomfortable riding (33%). In contrast, The Town of Hilton Head Island had the highest percent of respondents that felt safe riding (80%). This reflects the extensive investments the Town has made in bike paths and promoting Hilton Head as a Bike Friendly Community.

To encourage people to walk more, it is important to identify what impediments there might be to traveling on foot. Respondents were given a list of eight items and asked to identify which of these stopped them from walking as much as they'd like. The top three issues identified were:

- not enough sidewalks;
- motorists don't exercise caution; and
- the places they need to go are beyond walking distance.

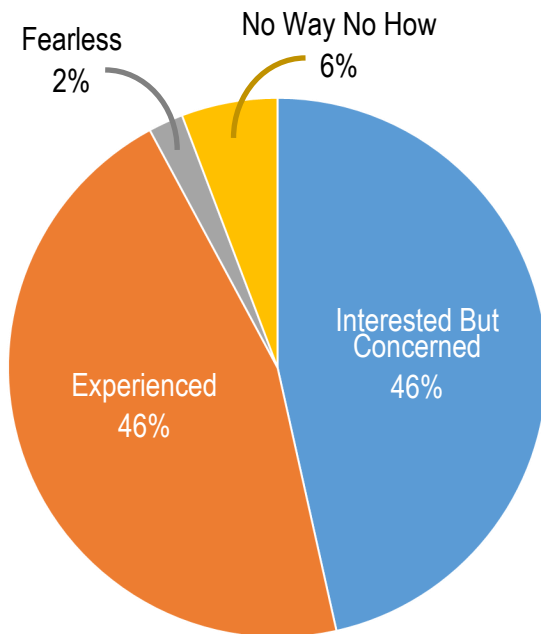
These findings have important implications for the County's comprehensive land use planning effort. Promoting a policy of "complete streets" at the state and local level will help ensure that new roads and road improvements provide safe, convenient places for pedestrians to walk. Making the design of streets "context sensitive" will help control vehicle speeds. Promoting mixed-use, walkable developments will put people close to shopping and services, and provide safe means of access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Issues that were not major impediments were inadequate accommodations for people with disabilities, lack of enforcement of traffic laws, and safety/security concerns.

Survey results indicate that investments in cycling infrastructure and cycling programs could have major payoffs. Only 6% of participants stated they had no interest in cycling. When asked to rate their experience and interest in cycling, 46% of participants stated they were interested in cycling but had concerns with safety, routes, and wayfinding. Expanding cycling infrastructure and targeting education and promotional events at this large segment of the population could greatly expand the cycling community

ADDITIONAL SURVEY FINDINGS

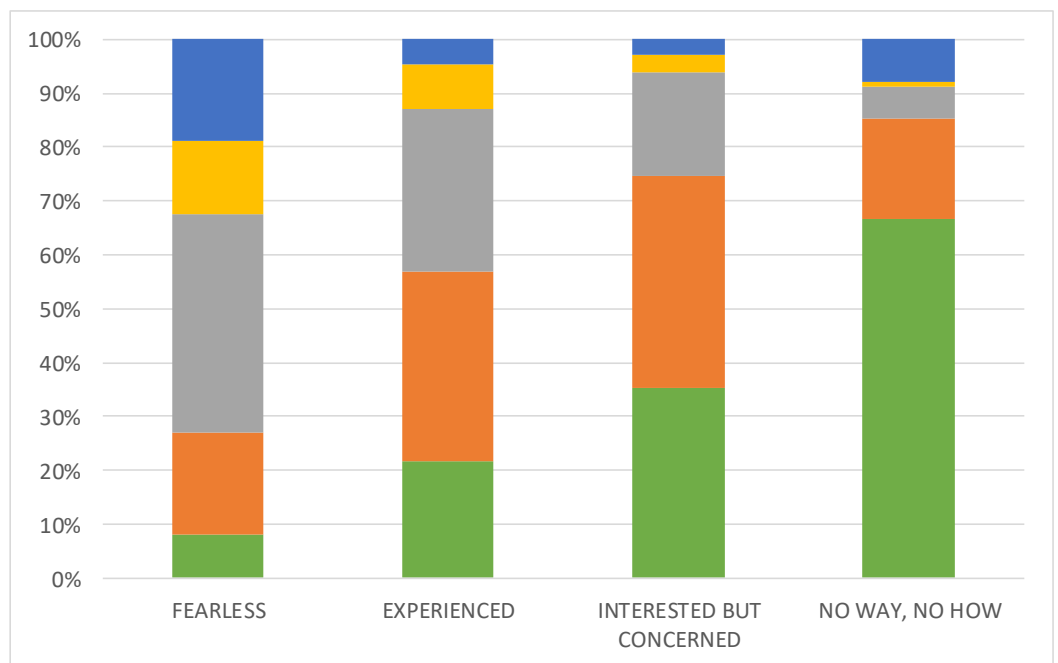
All survey respondents were asked questions about safety, comfort, and existing facilities:

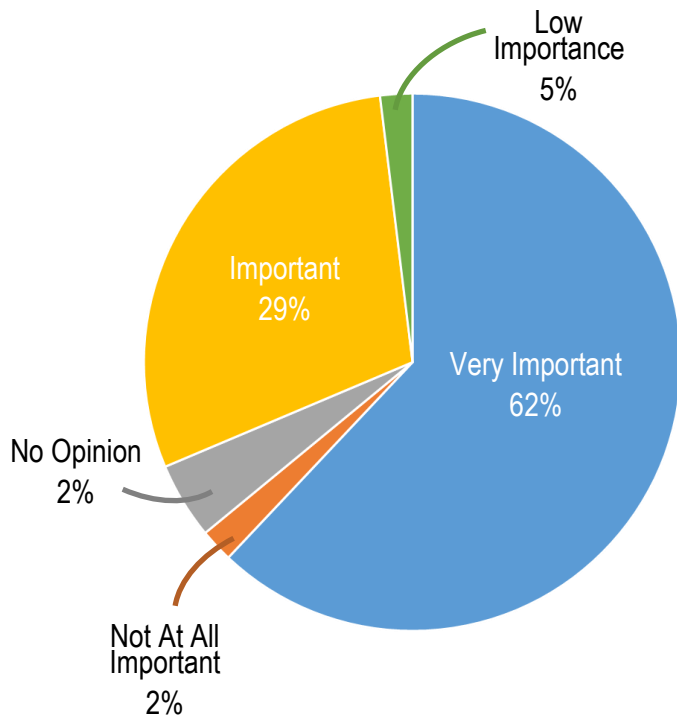


When asked to identify the type of cyclist closest to their own comfort level, over 46% of respondents self-identified as “Interested but Concerned.” **Almost 50% of that group would like walking or biking to be their primary mode of transportation.**

At what traffic speed do you feel unsafe riding a bicycle in mixed traffic (by cyclist type)?

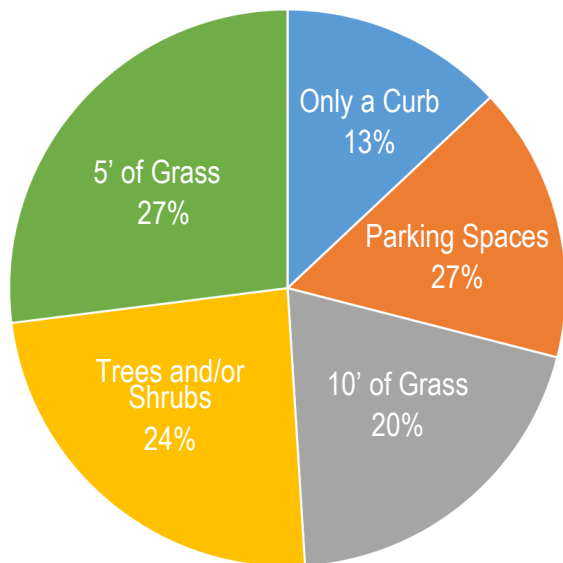
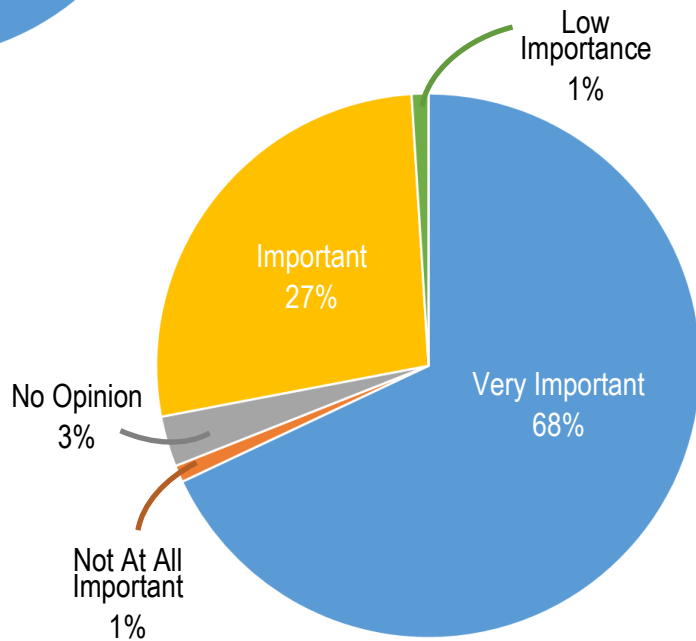
- Never Uncomfortable
- 55 MPH or higher
- 45 MPH or higher
- 35 MPH or higher
- 25 MPH or higher





How important are bikeability and/or walkability in your choice of where to live or work?

How important is it for county and local governments to invest in bicycle and pedestrian systems?



I feel safe when “insert option here” separates the sidewalk from the road.

MAPPING EXERCISE

FINDINGS

Next, respondents were asked to identify bicycle and pedestrian routes most in need of facilities and/or existing infrastructure in need of improvements. Respondents were also able to give written descriptions of their recommendations.



Responses in Northern Beaufort County focused on major corridors and connections between downtown Beaufort, the Town of Port Royal, and Lady's Island/St. Helena Island out to Hunting Island.

Similarly, Southern Beaufort County respondents frequently identified routes between established residential areas and newer commercial development, between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, and heading north on SC-170.



MAJOR THEMES

MAKING CONNECTIONS:

Respondents frequently mentioned connecting neighborhoods, commercial locations, civic areas, and existing bicycle and pedestrian trails.

SPINE AND SPUR:

Many responses suggested using certain portions of existing trails and planning efforts as a “backbone” or “spine” to the regional network. Several others mentioned creating “spurs” or “loops” from the spine out to destinations.

Other important themes included:

- Safety improvements.
- Wayfinding and signage for bicycle and pedestrian access.
- Education initiatives including a phone app with route-making capabilities, safety resources, and updates on regional bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts.

TOP MENTIONED ROUTES / IMPROVEMENTS

1. Connection from Spanish Moss Trail to Downtown Beaufort
2. May River Road
3. Sams Point Road / Brickyard Point Road / Middle Road
4. Buck Island Road between Bluffton Parkway and US 278
5. SC 170 connecting Northern and Southern Beaufort County
6. Main Street (Hilton Head Island)

CHAPTER 3:

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY

After collecting public input, the Task Force developed a process for prioritizing the proposed recommendations using the “Making Connections” and “Spine and Spur” themes resulting from the public input survey. Several precise criteria were also used in the decision-making process. Project prioritization does not preclude implementing projects on an opportunistic basis, where cost-efficiencies or new project partnerships become available.

Therefore, the results of the prioritization process are intended as a flexible framework for seeking funds to design and engineer the highest priority projects.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Making Connections:

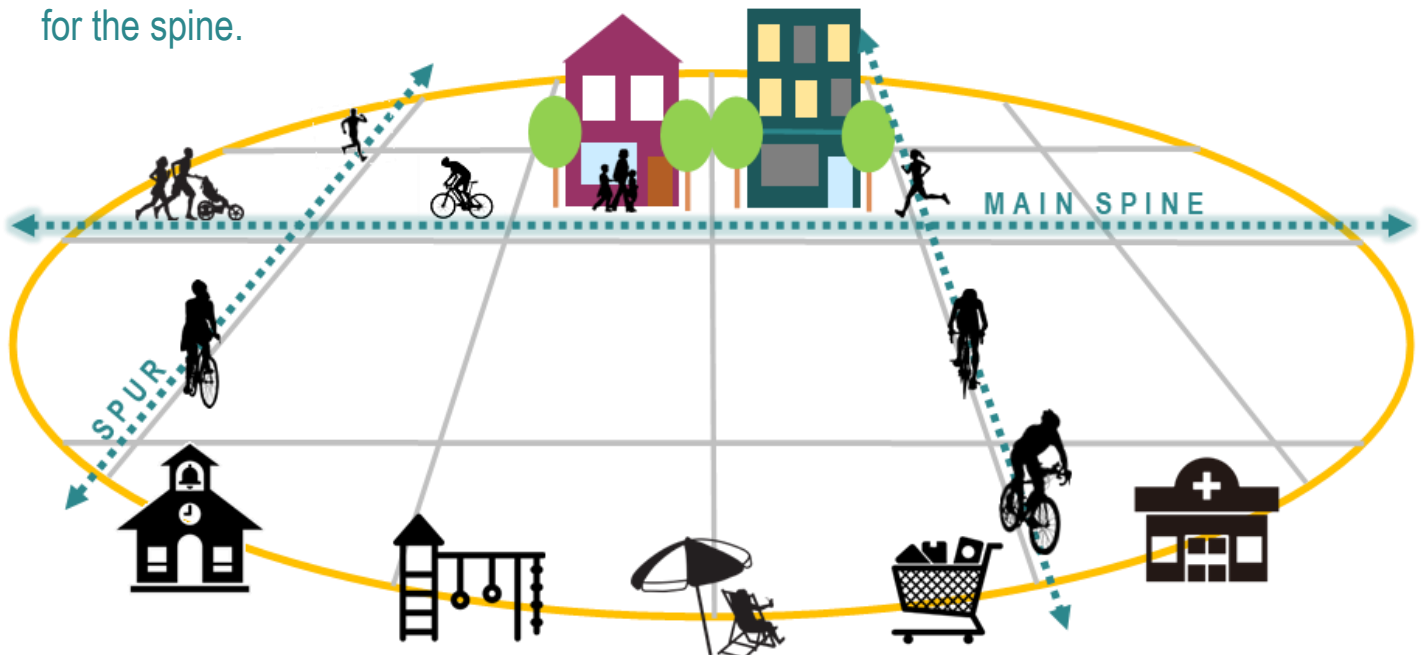
This plan aims to connect residents and visitors to jobs, schools, parks, shopping, nature, and other destinations in the region. Recommended projects have been prioritized on their merit in relation to this goal.

Target the “Interested but Concerned”:

46% of users in Beaufort County are “Interested but Concerned” and most likely to change their habits. Multi-use paths, signage, and educational opportunities through schools programs, pamphlets, or other publications are critical pieces of the puzzle in making more people feel “Enthused and Confident.”

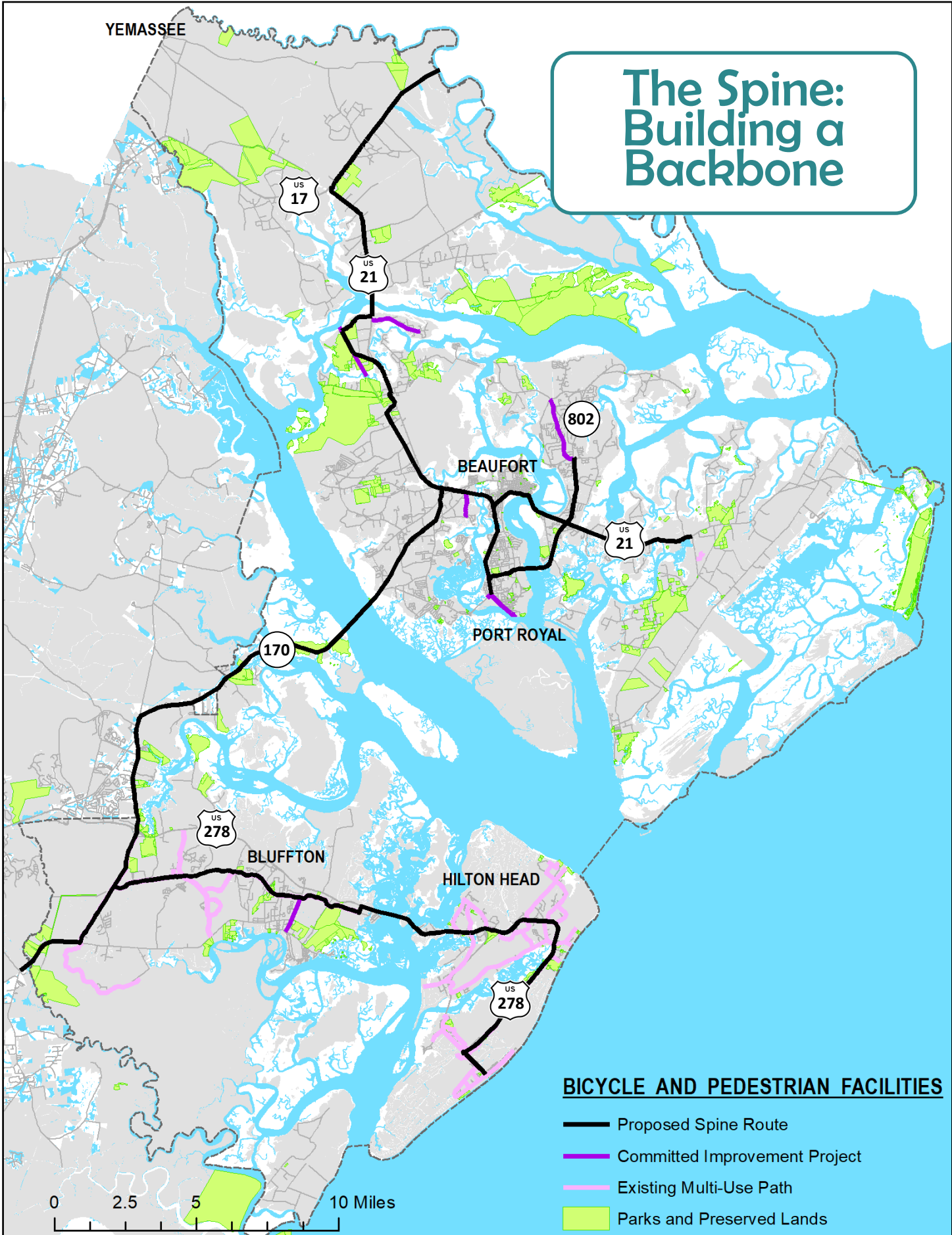
Spine and Spur Approach:

This approach identifies a central “spine” of the network and strives to add connected “spurs” that reach into communities and provide safe, efficient access to the existing network. Beaufort County has an existing pathway network in the Spanish Moss Trail, Bluffton Parkway, and throughout Hilton Head Island that should be used as the basis for the spine.



YEMASSEE

The Spine: Building a Backbone



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Parks and Preserved Lands

POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies supporting non-motorized travel are as important to improving walking and bicycling conditions as are engineering projects. Policies and programs are crucial in developing a culture where walking and bicycling are every day activities, and support for these transportation alternatives is institutionalized. Non-infrastructure recommendations fall into two categories--- policy recommendations that are implemented by County leadership and staff; and program recommendations, implemented by a variety of governmental and nonprofit partners.

These recommendations have been developed using the nationally recognized five “E’s” strategy for better walking and bicycling accommodation. This is a holistic approach to

pedestrian and bicycle planning that considers engineering, encouragement, education, and evaluation/planning activities implemented in an equitable fashion.

The Five “E’s” are:

Equity: A bicycle and walk-friendly community for everyone;

Engineering: Creating safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle facilities;

Education: Educating pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists to ride and drive;

Encouragement: Creating a strong multi-modal culture that welcomes and celebrates walking and biking; and

Evaluation & Planning: Planning for walking and bicycling as safe and viable transportation options.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Encourage each jurisdiction on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force to adopt Beaufort County Connects 2021 by resolution and incorporate the document into their respective comprehensive plans. **(Evaluation & Planning)**
- 2 Adopt the Immediate, Mid-, and Long Term project list in this plan. **(Engineering)**
- 3 Use the Prioritization Matrix in this plan to further evaluate each proposed project, ensuring that the implementation process focuses on projects of most merit to the connectivity of the regional bicycle and pedestrian network. **(Engineering)**
- 4 Develop a funding strategy and anticipated annual revenue stream for bicycle and pedestrian projects that includes Accommodations Tax, Guideshare funds, Capital Project Sales Tax, dedicated local funding, and state and federal grants. **(Evaluation & Planning)**
- 5 Create a staff position within the Beaufort County government whose primary responsibility is to oversee the implementation of the Beaufort County Connects 2021. **(Evaluation & Planning)**
- 6 Consider a 2022 ballot initiative to re-impose a 1% capital project sales tax to fund transportation improvements that include complete streets and multi-use paths and establish a regular schedule for future referendums. **(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)**
- 7 Encourage local jurisdictions to adopt a Complete Streets policy that requires all streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. All future transportation projects should adhere to the Complete Streets policy in an appropriate urban, suburban, or rural context. **(Equity, Engineering)**
- 8 Encourage municipalities and SCDOT to make Complete Streets policies mandatory in all new construction and repair projects. **(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)**
- 9 Identify streets where Shared Lane Markings (“sharrows”) should be added to improve conditions for bicyclists. Work with SCDOT, the County, and municipalities as appropriate to have these added. **(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)**
- 10 Work with Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS) during the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Beaufort County Connects 2021 and advocate for a target percentage of funding to be devoted to bicycle and pedestrian facilities. **(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)**

- 11** Identify rural roads with moderate to high traffic volumes where paved shoulders are needed. Work with SCDOT to include paved shoulders as part of road repaving. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 12** Establish an agreement with local utilities for use of utility corridors as walking and bicycling paths. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 13** Revise the Community Development Code to require that path corridors are reserved, dedicated, or constructed in new developments where path corridors are shown in an adopted plan or where a property connects to an existing or proposed greenway. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 14** Actively engage with the Beaufort County School District for their assistance in planning and implementing sidewalks and pathways so that children can walk or bike to school. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 15** Advocate for state funding for the Safe Routes to School Program in concert with the Beaufort County School District. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 16** Develop a non-profit organization to advocate for pathway projects in Beaufort County and work to raise private donations. ***(Encouragement, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 17** Work with the Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail to expand their role to advocate and raise private donations for pathway projects that connect to the trail. ***(Encouragement, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 18** Endorse the Vision Zero Policy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. ***(Equity)***
- 19** Install pedestrian facilities such as crosswalks, countdown signals, and curb ramps at all intersections where there is an existing sidewalk or planned sidewalk or trail. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 20** Provide raised medians or pedestrian refuge islands, where practical, at crosswalks on streets with more than three lanes, especially on streets with high volumes of traffic. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 21** Require bicycle parking in all new commercial, civic, government, and multi-family land uses. Encourage municipalities to have similar requirements. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 22** Work with the East Coast Greenway to develop a strategy to complete the East Coast Greenway trail through Beaufort County. ***(Evaluation & Planning)***
- 23** Encourage the SC Legislature to adopt a Safety Stop bill that allows bicyclists to treat a stop sign as a yield sign if the cyclist has slowed down to a speed that would allow them to stop if needed. Studies have shown that Safety Stops are safer and more efficient for the cyclist. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***
- 24** Encourage large employers to provide showers and clothes lockers at work to promote commuting by bike. ***(Equity, Evaluation & Planning)***

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to assist the County in the planning, funding, development, and implementation of facilities and programs that will result in the increased safety and use of bicycle and pedestrian travel as a mode of transportation and recreation. **(Education, Encouragement, Evaluation & Planning)**
- 2** Support or partner with municipalities on bike sharing and e-scooter programs in an effort to promote cycling and mobility. **(Equity, Encouragement)**
- 3** Sponsor, support, and/or promote national events that promote walking and cycling **(Education, Encouragement)**:
 - **National Bike Month.** National Bike Month is a chance to showcase the many benefits of bicycling and encourage more people to give biking a try.
 - **Bike-to-Work Day.** Bike-to-Work Day promotes the bicycle as an option for commuting to work by providing route information and tips for new bicycle commuters.
 - **Car-Free Day.** Car Free Day, an international day to celebrate getting around without cars, coincides with the beginning of the school year and is the perfect way to kick-off programs that promote bicycling and raise awareness for environmental issues.
- **Earth Day.** Earth Day can encourage residents to help the environment by bicycling to destinations and staying out of their cars and provides an excellent opportunity to educate people of all ages in the community.
- 4** Become a designated Walk Friendly Community. This program recognizes communities that have shown a commitment to improving and sustaining walkability and pedestrian safety through comprehensive programs, plans, and policies. **(Encouragement)**
- 5** Become a designated Bicycle Friendly Community. This program provides a roadmap to improving conditions for bicycling and guidance to help improve the community by providing safe accommodations for bicycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation. **(Encouragement)**
- 6** Consider participating in the Open Streets Program to temporarily open selected streets to pedestrians by closing them to cars. **(Education, Encouragement)**

- 7 Encourage and support events hosted by private non-profit groups that promote walking and cycling such as bike rodeos, weekend walkabouts, lunchtime bicycle rides, cycle the bridges, ride to beach, etc. **(Education, Encouragement)**
- 8 Support and partner with private nonprofit groups, such as Eat Smart Move More South Carolina, that focus on helping communities create healthy eating and active living options. **(Education, Encouragement)**
- 9 Develop an education program similar to Charleston's **Bike Right, Drive Right Campaign** to educate both bicyclists and motorists on safe and respectful sharing of our roads. **(Education)**
- 10 Develop a regional wayfinding program. **(Encouragement)**
- 11 Develop an interactive bike map that outlines bike routes and bike parking. **(Encouragement)**
- 12 Support the School District in implementing a Walk and Bike to School day. **(Education, Encouragement)**
- 13 Conduct county-wide pedestrian and bicycle counts on a regular basis. **(Evaluation & Planning)**
- 14 Encourage training courses for law enforcement officers on state and local laws for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to focus enforcement of speeding and failing to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and bicyclists, as

well as bicyclists and pedestrians failing to follow traffic signs and signals and wrong way riding on the road. **(Education)**

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The following agencies, institutions, and organizations have been identified as potential partners in implementing the Beaufort County Connects 2021:

Agencies and Institutions:

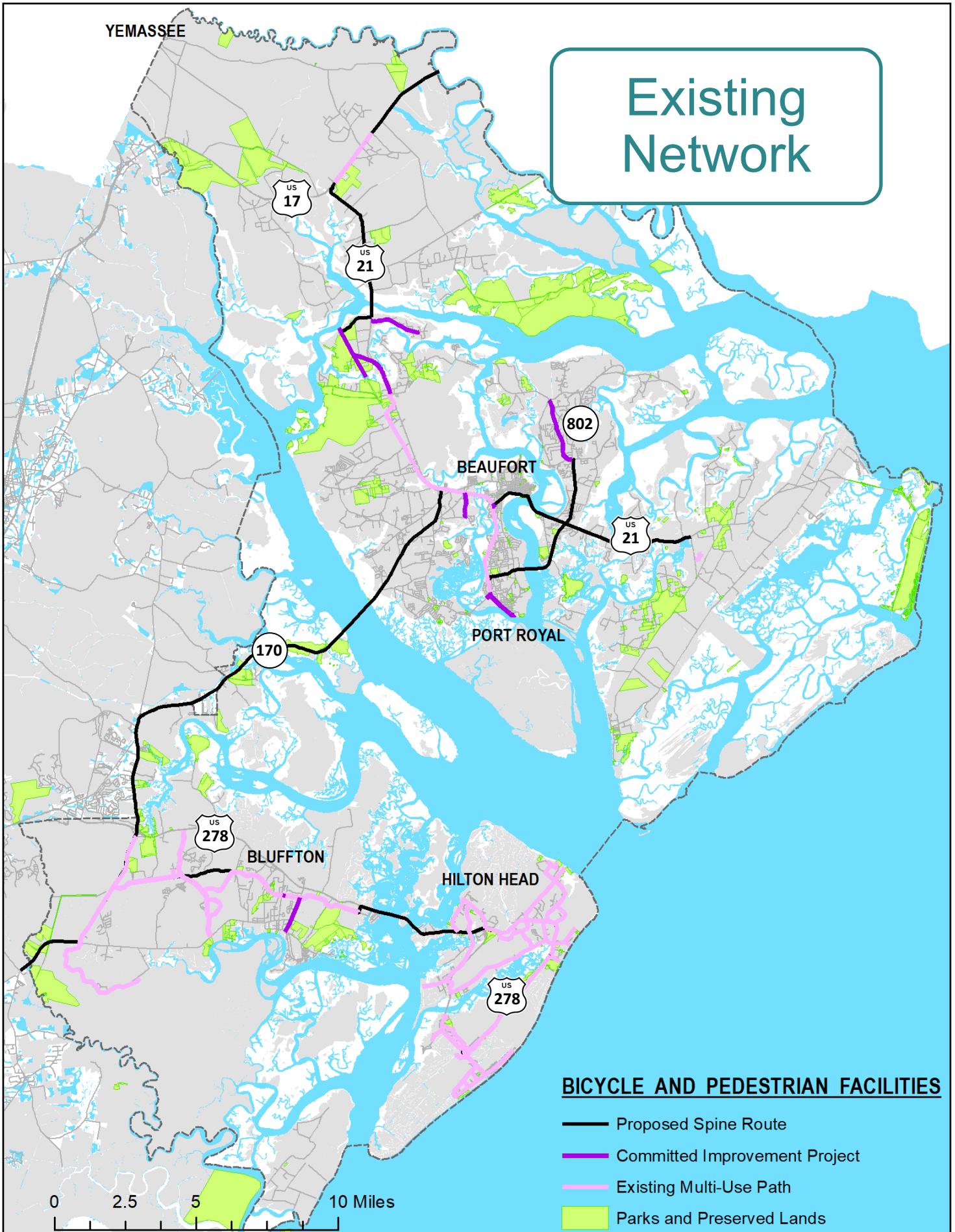
Department of Defense, SC DOT, SC DHEC, Beaufort County PALS, Beaufort County School District, Beaufort County Libraries, City of Beaufort Public Works, Town of Port Royal Public Works, Town of Bluffton Engineering, Town of Hilton Head Island, USCB, TCL, Palmetto Breeze, Beaufort Memorial Hospital, Hilton Head Regional Health Care, Coastal Carolina Hospital

Nonprofits: Eat Smart Move More South Carolina, Coastal Conservation League, Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail, Bike Walk HHI, YMCA, AARP, Diabetes Association, Palmetto Cycling Coalition, Sun City Cycling Club, Hilton Head Island Bicycling Club, EZ Riders Bicycle Club, Kickin' Asphalt Bicycle Club, Chain Gang Bicycle Club

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MAPPING A NETWORK

The next pages of this plan tell a story through maps. Beginning with the existing bicycle and pedestrian network in Beaufort County and proposed spine routes, each subsequent map visualizes how infrastructure improvements and new bicycle and pedestrian projects will expand upon the current network. Each project has merit as part of the “Spine” or a connected “Spur” of the network, and each is designated as one of three levels of priority: Immediate Term (0-5 years), Mid-Term (5-10 years), and Long Term (10+ years).



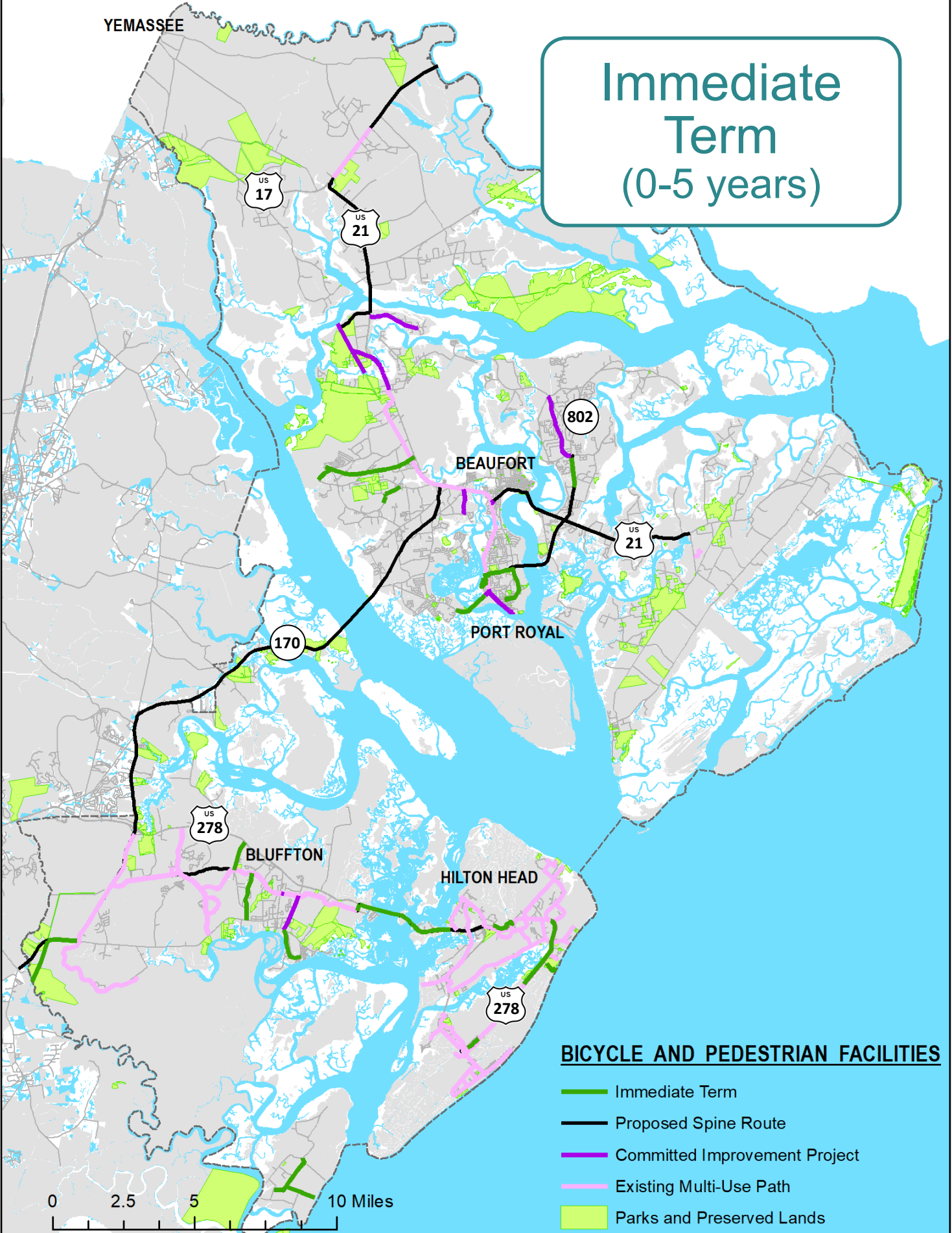
Existing Network

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Parks and Preserved Lands

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Immediate Term (0-5 years)

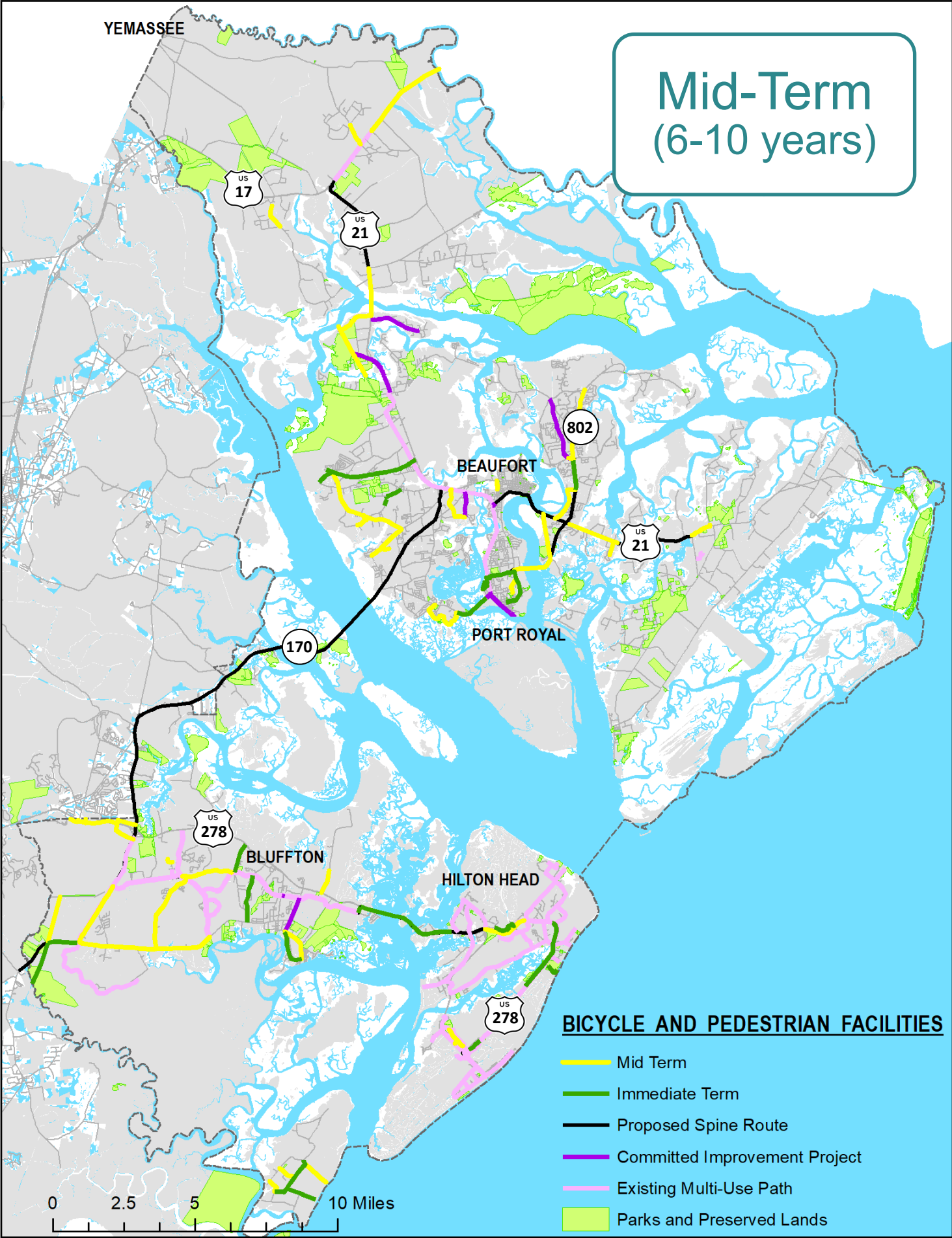


Project	Length (mi)	Approximate Costs	Operation (yearly)	Jurisdiction(s)
Spanish Moss Trail from Clarendon to Whale Branch	3.0	\$1,500,000	\$19,500	Beaufort County
Laurel Bay Rd	3.4	\$3,900,000	\$22,100	Beaufort County
Rugrack Rd from Joseph Shanklin Elementary to Laurel Bay Rd (Sidewalk)	0.5	\$150,000	\$3,250	Beaufort County
Pine Grove Rd / Burton Wells Rd	0.9	\$1,000,000	\$5,850	Beaufort County
Russell Bell Bridge from Spanish Moss Trail to Broad River Dr	1.3	\$650,000	\$8,450	Beaufort County, Port Royal
Waddell Rd /Battery Creek Rd / Riverside Dr from Ribaut Rd to Spanish Moss Trail (Bike Lane)	1.0	\$750,000	\$6,500	City of Beaufort, Town of Port Royal
Sams Point Rd from Wallace Rd to southern terminus of Middle Rd Pathway	1.1	\$550,000	\$7,150	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
Lady's Island Dr to Port Royal Elementary / Live Oaks Park via Old Shell Rd / 14th St	1.3	\$650,000	\$8,450	Beaufort County
New River Liner Trail from Hwy 46 south to New River (Paving)	1.5	\$750,000	\$9,750	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
SC-46 from New River Park to New River Linear Trail	0.6	\$300,000	\$3,900	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Buck Island Rd from Bluffton Pkwy to US-278	1.0	\$500,000	\$6,500	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Alljoy Rd	1.6	\$750,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
School Rd (Crush and run path)	1.6	\$584,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County
Beach Rd from School Rd to terminus (Crush and run path)	1.2	\$438,000	\$7,800	Beaufort County
Main Street from Wilborn Rd to Whooping Crane Way	1.1	\$1,200,000	\$6,875	Town of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County
Shelter Cove Lane from US 278 Bus to Shelter Cove Park	0.2	\$225,000	\$1,250	Town of Hilton Head Island
Woodhaven Drive/Lane, Phase I Boggy Gut Pathway	0.2	\$225,000	\$1,250	Town of Hilton Head Island
US 278 Bus E from Mathews Dr to Dillon Rd	1.1	\$1,200,000	\$6,875	Town of Hilton Head Island
Singleton Beach Rd from Chaplin Park to Collier Beach Park	0.4	\$300,000	\$2,500	Town of Hilton Head Island
US 278 Bus E from Arrow Rd to Village at Wexford	0.4	\$400,000	\$2,500	Town of Hilton Head Island
US 278 from Squire Pope Rd to Bridges (SCDOT Project)	1.5	N/A*	\$9,375	Town of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County
US 278 from Jenkins Island to Mainland (SCDOT Project)	1.8	N/A*	\$11,250	Town of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County
Chaplin Linear Park	1.2	\$2,150,000	\$9,825	Town of Hilton Head Island
TOTAL	27.9	\$18,172,000	\$181,700	

*Final alignment and facility improvements not known at this time

YEMASSEE

Mid-Term
(6-10 years)



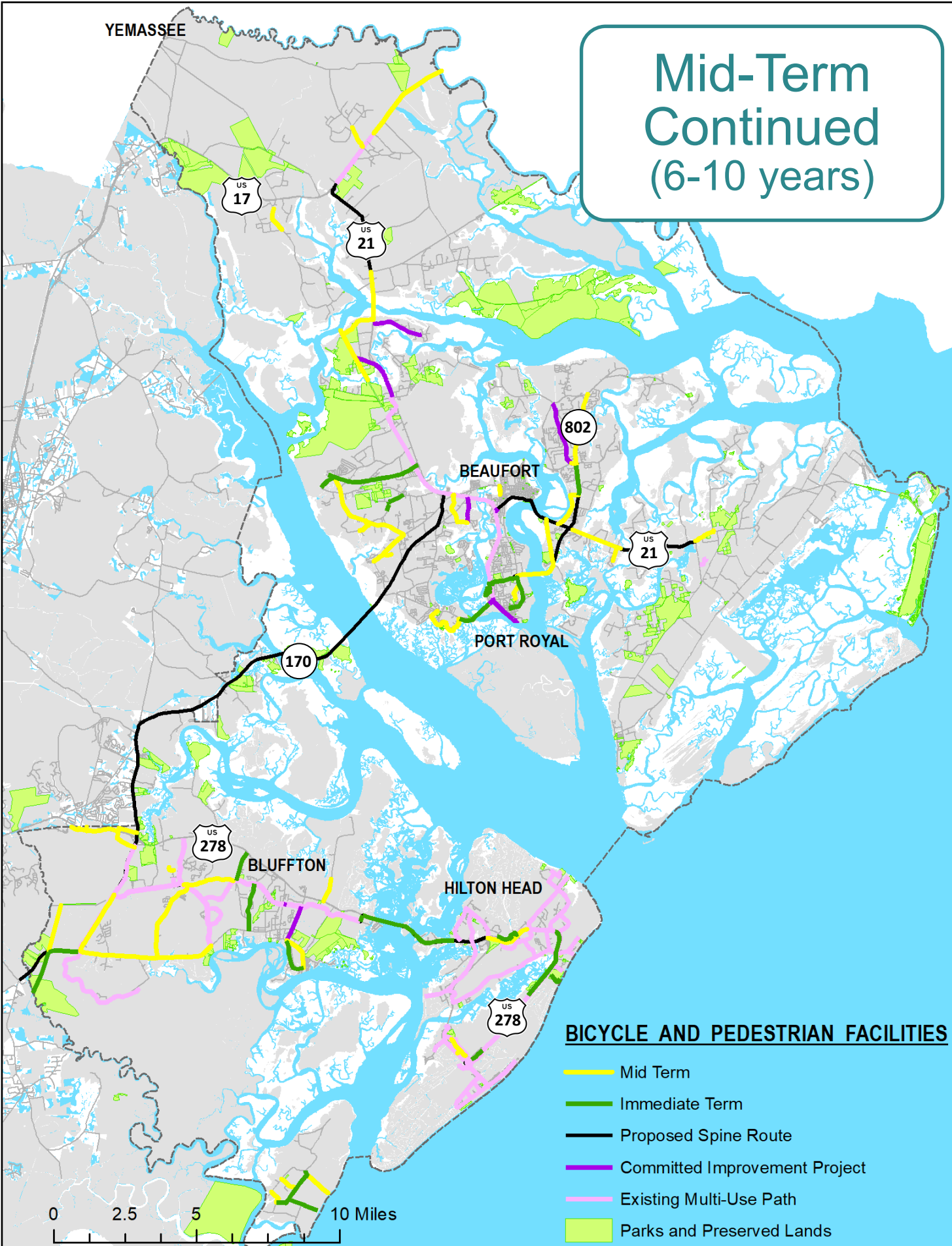
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Mid Term
- Immediate Term
- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Parks and Preserved Lands

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

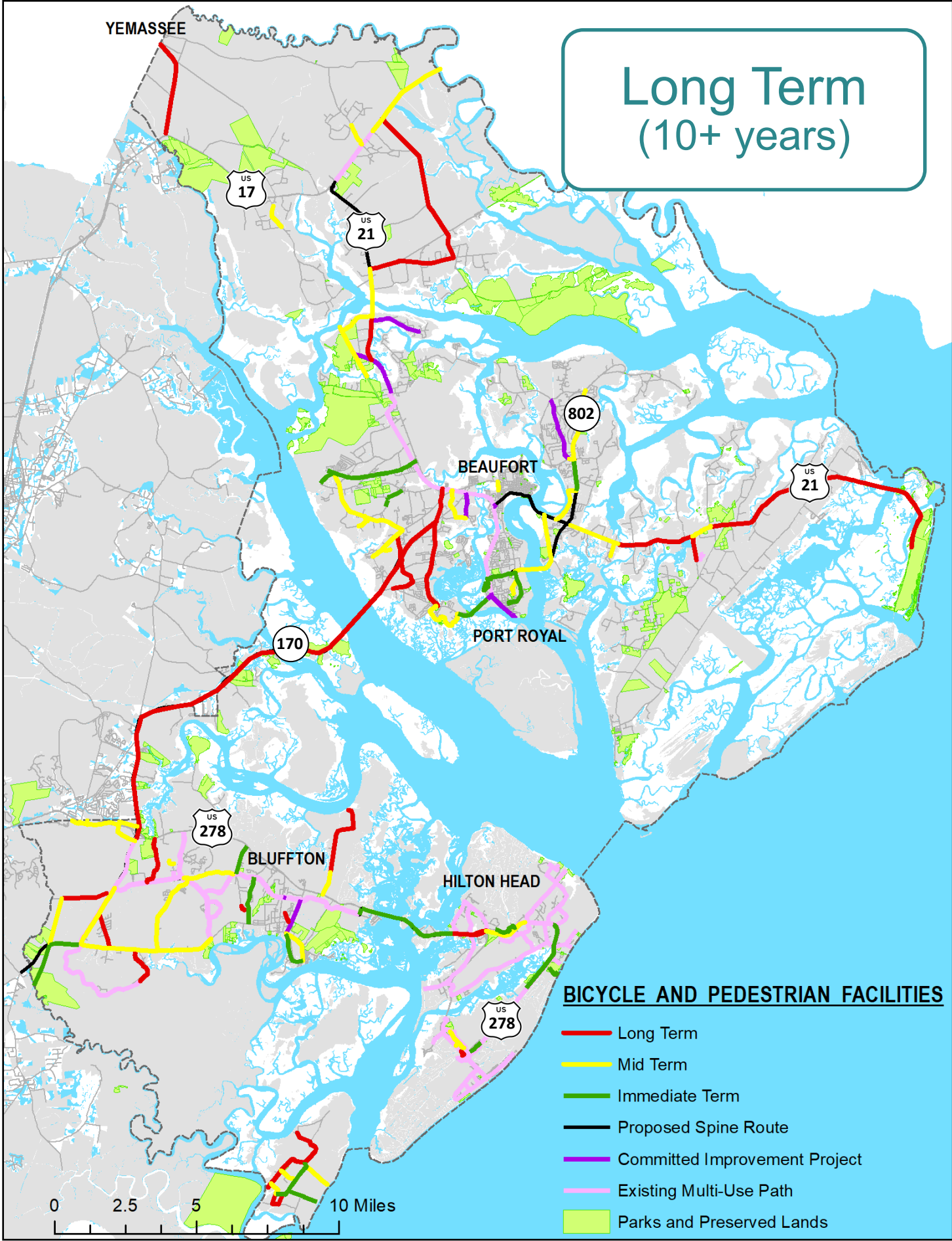
Project	Length (mi)	Approximate Costs	Operation (yearly)	Jurisdiction(s)
Big Estate Road from Hwy 17 to Big Estate Circle	1.4	\$2,000,000	\$9,100	Beaufort County
US-17 from Big Estate Rd to Harriet Tubman Bridge	3.0	\$1,000,000	\$19,500	Beaufort County
Seabrook Rd from US-21 to Spanish Moss Trail	1.3	\$1,000,000	\$8,450	Beaufort County
US-21 from Seabrook Rd to Keans Neck Rd	1.7	\$850,000	\$11,050	Beaufort County
US-21 from Detour Rd to Seabrook Rd (Sidewalk)	1.6	\$480,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County
Broad River Drive	1.7	\$2,000,000	\$11,050	Beaufort County, Town of Port Royal
Burton Wells Park to Habersham Market	0.5	\$250,000	\$3,250	Beaufort County
Wallace Rd and Sunset Blvd	1.5	\$750,000	\$9,750	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
Joe Frazier Rd from Broad River Blvd to Laurel Bay Rd	3.5	\$1,800,000	\$22,750	Beaufort County
Sams Point Rd from traffic circle to Springfield Rd	2.5	\$1,250,000	\$16,250	Beaufort County
Meridian Road	1.6	\$1,750,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
US-21 from Sams Point Way to Airport Cir	0.8	\$400,000	\$5,200	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
Chowan Creek Bluff from US-21 to Lady's Island Elementary (Sidewalk)	0.4	\$230,000	\$2,600	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
Marsh Road from Duke St o Boundary St (a portion to be boardwalk for marsh protection)	0.3	\$150,000	\$1,950	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
Burton Hill/Old Salem Road	1.4	\$2,000,000	\$9,100	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort
MLK Jr Blvd to St. Helena Elementary School	0.8	\$400,000	\$5,200	Beaufort County
Broad River Blvd/Riley Road	1.1	\$750,000	\$7,150	Beaufort County, Town of Port Royal
McTeer Bridge Protected Bike Lanes	1.0	\$300,000	\$6,250	Beaufort County
TOTAL	26.1	\$17,360,000	\$169,400	

Mid-Term Continued (6-10 years)



Project	Length (mi)	Approximate Costs	Operation (yearly)	Jurisdiction(s)
Naval Park to Cypress Wetlands	0.4	\$200,000	\$2,600	Town of Port Royal
Shell Point Rd from Broad River Dr to Savannah Hwy	1.6	\$800,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County, Town of Port Royal
Okatie Center Blvd N & S and US-278 from SC-170 to University Blvd	2.2	\$1,100,000	\$14,300	Beaufort County
Northbound side of SC-170 from SC-46 to Bluffton Pkwy	2.3	\$1,700,000	\$14,950	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
New River Linear Trail from SC-46 to Del Webb Trailhead (Paving)	1.8	\$900,000	\$11,700	Beaufort County
Old Miller Rd / Lake Point Dr Connection	0.4	\$3,000,000	\$2,600	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Sawmill Creek Rd (Sidewalk)	0.7	\$350,000	\$4,550	Beaufort County
SC-46 from traffic circle to Buckwalter Pkwy	4.8	\$2,400,000	\$31,200	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Ulmer Road/Shad Road	1.3	\$2,000,000	\$8,450	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
US 278 Bus E from Gardner Dr to Jarvis Park Dr	1.4	\$1,800,000	\$8,750	Town of Hilton Head Island
Arrow Rd R/W Pathway from Bristol Sports Arena to Target Rd	0.9	\$950,000	\$5,625	Town of Hilton Head Island
Archer Rd Pathway	0.2	\$200,000	\$1,250	Town of Hilton Head Island
Lagoon Rd/Ibis St Pathway from Avocet St to North Forest Beach Dr	0.8	\$800,000	\$4,690	Town of Hilton Head Island
Benjies Point Rd from School Rd to Haig Pt (Crush and run path)	0.5	\$182,500	\$3,125	Beaufort County
Church Rd (Crush and run path)	0.6	\$219,000	\$3,900	Beaufort County
Turtle Beach Rd from Oak Ridge Ln to terminus (Crush and run path)	1.0	\$365,000	\$6,500	Beaufort County
TOTAL	20.9	\$16,966,500	\$134,590	

Long Term (10+ years)

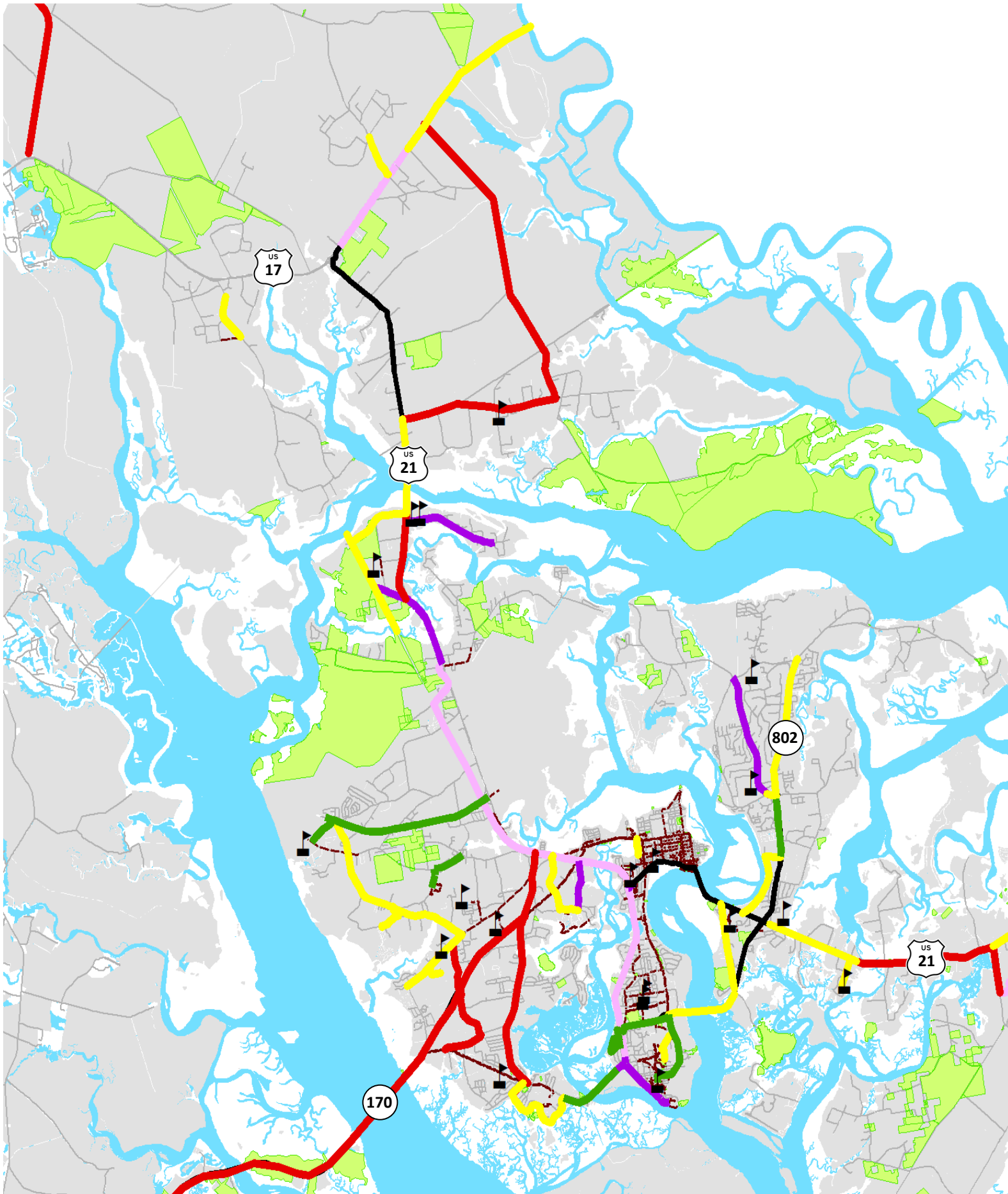


BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Long Term
- Mid Term
- Immediate Term
- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Parks and Preserved Lands

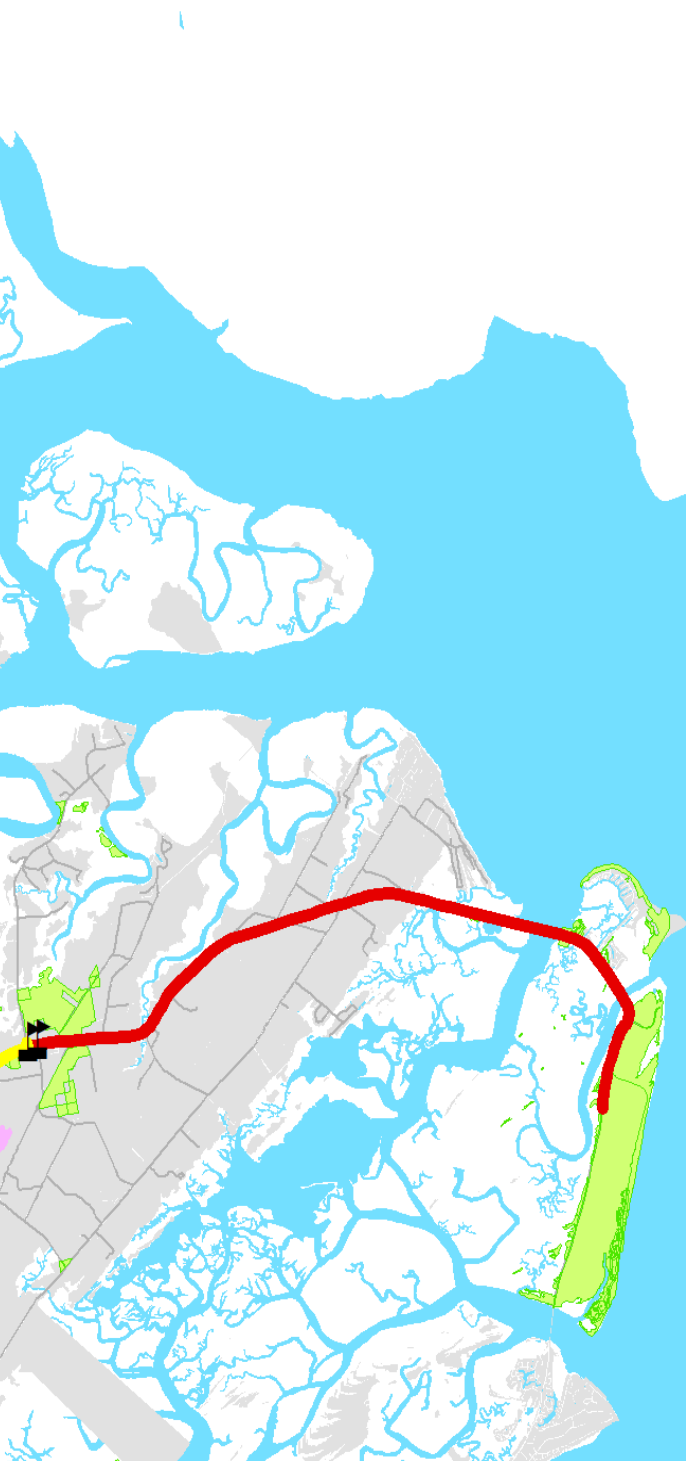
Project	Length (miles)	Approximate Costs	Operation (yearly)	Jurisdiction(s)
Castle Hall Rd from Wall St to US-17	3.5	\$1,750,000	\$22,750	Town of Yemassee
US-21 from Keans Neck Rd to US-17	3.3	\$1,700,000	\$21,450	Beaufort County
US-21 from Airport Cir to MLK Jr Blvd	3.7	\$1,850,000	\$24,050	Beaufort County
US-21 from St. Helena Elementary to Hunting Island Dr	9.5	\$4,750,000	\$61,750	Beaufort County
Parris Island Gtway from Savannah Hwy to US-21	4.3	\$2,200,000	\$27,950	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort, Town of Port Royal
SC-170 from Broad River Bridge to Spanish Moss Trail	5.4	\$2,700,000	\$35,100	Beaufort County, City of Beaufort, Town of Port Royal
Grober Hill Rd and Castle Rock Rd from Savannah Hwy to Broad River Blvd (Bike Lane)	2.6	\$780,000	\$16,900	Beaufort County, Town of Port Royal
SC-170 from Callawassie Dr to Broad River Bridge	4.8	\$2,400,000	\$31,200	Beaufort County, Jasper County
SC-170 from Cecil Reynolds Dr to Oldfield Way	4.0	\$2,000,000	\$26,000	Beaufort County, Jasper County
SC-170 from Oldfield Way to Callawassie Dr	3.8	\$1,900,000	\$24,700	Beaufort County, Jasper County
Gibbet Rd	1.3	\$650,000	\$8,450	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
From Old Palmetto Bluff Rd to SC-46	1.0	\$500,000	\$6,250	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
5A (Future Bluffton Pkwy)	1.8	\$900,000	\$11,700	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Hampton Pkwy from Bluffton Pkwy to US-278	1.7	\$850,000	\$11,050	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
From Bruin Rd to Bluffton Community Library via Hawkes Rd	0.3	\$150,000	\$1,950	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
From Future Bluffton Pkwy to US-278	1.6	\$800,000	\$10,400	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
Sawmill Creek Rd from US-278 to Trask Boat Landing (Bike Lane)	3.5	\$262,500	\$22,750	Beaufort County
Island West / Buckwalter Place Connector Path	0.3	\$150,000	\$1,950	Beaufort County, Town of Bluffton
US 278 from Gumtree to Squire Pope Rd	1.0	\$1,200,000	\$6,250	Town of Hilton Head Island
US 278/US 278 Bus from Sea Pines Circle to Welcome Center	0.3	\$150,000	\$1,875	Town of Hilton Head Island
Jonesville Rd	1.1	\$1,250,000	\$6,875	Town of Hilton Head Island
Martinangele Rd Easement to Prospect Rd to Benjies Pt Rd to School Rd (Crush and run path)	1.0	\$365,000	\$6,250	Beaufort County
Cooper River Landing Rd and Haig Point Rd from Freeport Marina to Daufuskie Island Boat Landing (Bike Lane)	3.5	\$1,750,000	\$22,750	Beaufort County
TOTAL	63.3	\$31,007,500	\$410,350	

*Final alignment and facility improvements not known at this time



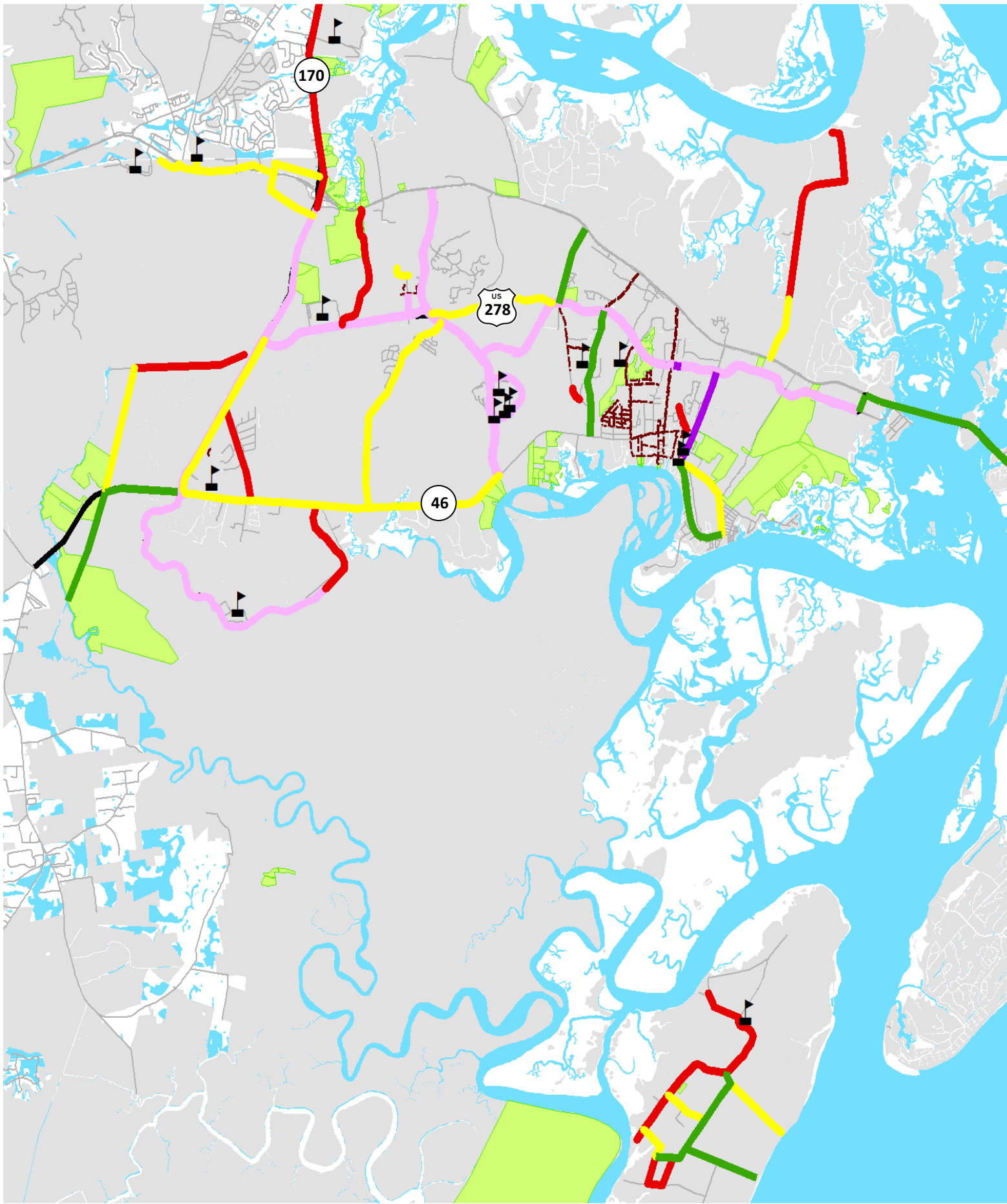
NORTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY

The pathway network in Northern Beaufort County begins at the north end of the County on the Gardens Corner Greenway, which is part of the East Coast Greenway. From there, pedestrians and cyclists will be able to safely travel the US 21 corridor into historic Downtown Beaufort. In town, users can explore the City of Beaufort and the Town of Port Royal on local roads or via the Spanish Moss Trail. The completed pathway network will take residents and visitors from the Waterfront Park in Beaufort, across the Woods Memorial Bridge to the multi-purpose pathways on Lady's Island. Cyclists and pedestrians will then be able to continue across St. Helena Island, and on to Hunting Island State Park. Returning to Beaufort, users can rejoin the East Coast Greenway, now adjoining the SC 170 corridor, and cross the Broad River Bridge into Southern Beaufort County.



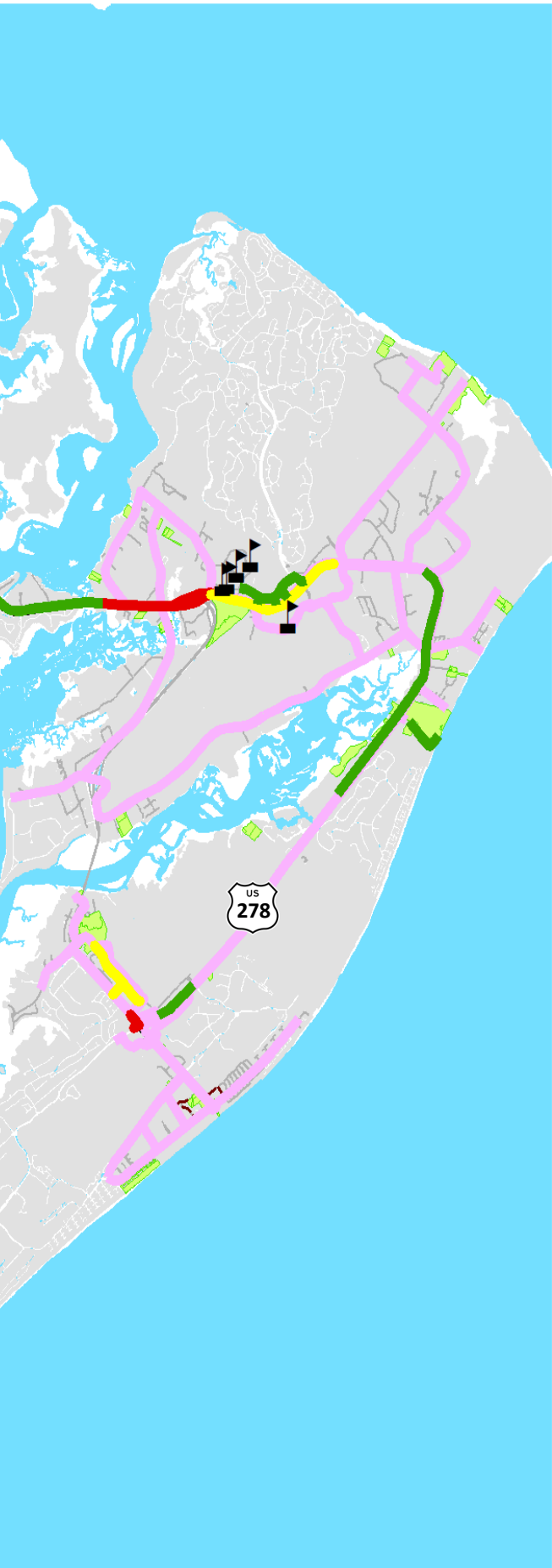
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

-  Long Term
-  Mid-Term
-  Immediate Term
-  Proposed Spine Route
-  Committed Improvement Project
-  Existing Multi-Use Path
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Schools
-  Parks and Preserved Lands



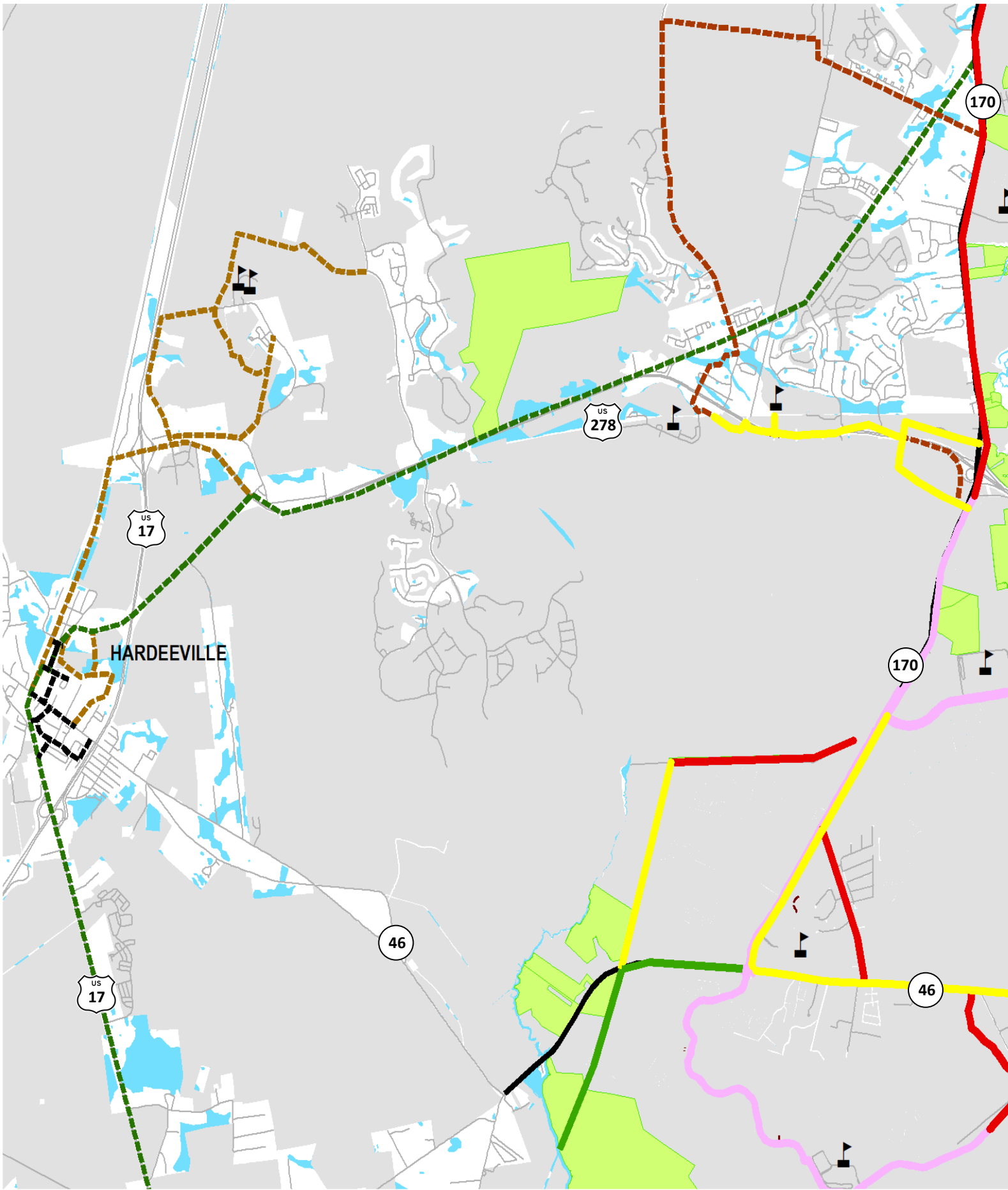
SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY

The network continues into Southern Beaufort County over the Broad River Bridge on the East Coast Greenway along SC 170. The trail continues through Okatie before crossing US 278. From there, users can continue on the East Coast Greenway to Savannah. Before crossing into Jasper County, users can take a side trip along the New River Linear Trail. Bikers and walkers interested in continuing their Beaufort County explorations will want to turn east onto the Bluffton Parkway multi-use path. Old Town Bluffton will be accessed from the path along Burnt Church Road. While in Old Town, a walk (or ride) through Brighton Beach is a must-do. Back on the Bluffton Parkway Side Path, the Town of Hilton Head is just over the J. Byrnes Bridge. On Hilton Head, over 60 miles of trails crisscrossing the island await pedestrians and bicyclists in this Gold-rated “Bicycle Friendly Community.”



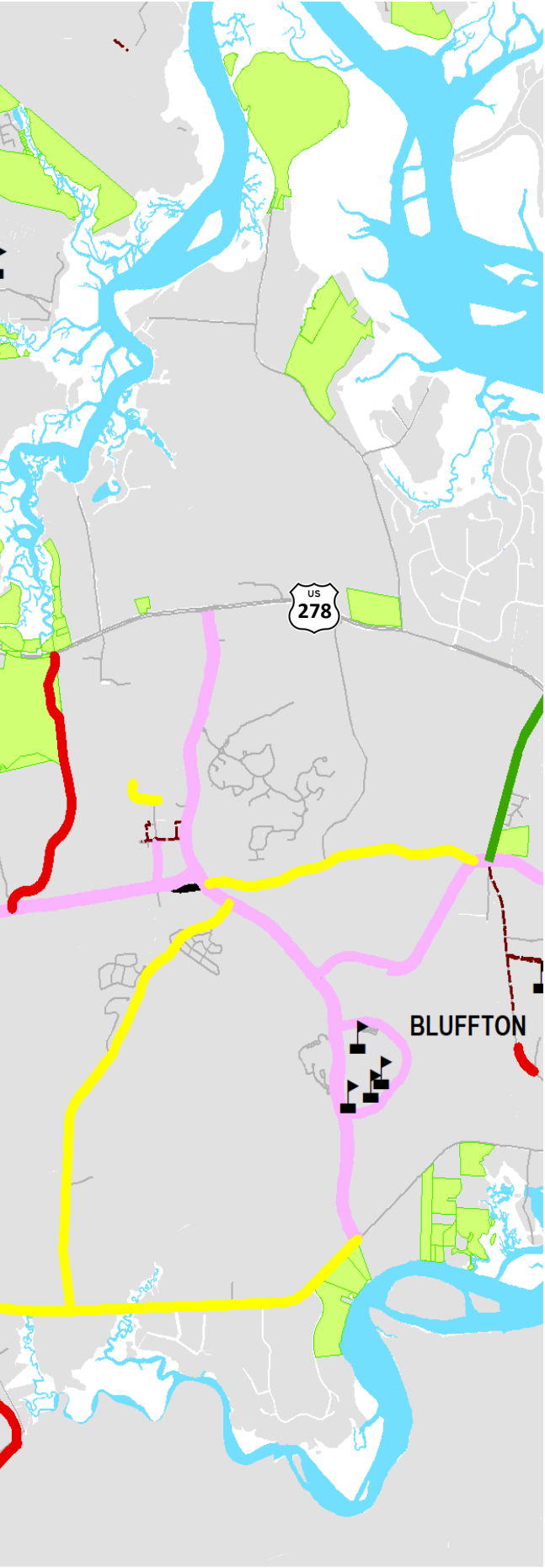
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Long Term
- Mid-Term
- Immediate Term
- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- - - Existing Sidewalks
- Schools
- Parks and Preserved Lands



JASPER COUNTY CONNECTIONS

The success of this plan relies on regional cooperation between Jasper County, Beaufort County, and Hardeeville. Shared facilities begin at Snake Rd and SC 170 along the East Coast Greenway. At Argent Blvd, bikers and walkers can branch off into Jasper County along the proposed Hardeeville extension of the East Coast Greenway. From there, they can visit destinations like Sergent Jasper Park, downtown Hardeeville, and the Hardeeville Recreation Complex before continuing south to Georgia. At Short Cut Rd on SC 170, students and professors living along the corridor can use the proposed Sand Shark Trail to access both the TCL New River and the USC Bluffton campuses. Additional connections to the campuses are north and south of US 278 on Okatie Center Blvd N & S. This same network will tie into the Coastal Carolina Hospital, providing staff, visitors, and patients access to jobs and medical services.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- - - - Hardeeville Proposed Sand Shark Trail
- - - - Hardeeville Proposed East Coast Greenway
- - - - Hardeeville Proposed Sergent Jasper Trail
- - - - Hardeeville Proposed Sidewalks
- Long Term
- Mid Term
- Immediate Term
- Proposed Spine Route
- Committed Improvement Project
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Schools
- Parks and Preserved Lands

PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

This prioritization matrix should be used by the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator and any future oversight committee to further evaluate each project, ensuring that the implementation process focuses on projects of most merit to the connectivity of the regional bicycle and pedestrian network over the long-term life of this document.

Criteria	Definition	Rank	Measurement
Connectivity	Does the project overcome barriers or fill gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network?	High	Project closes gap between existing facilities
		Low	Project does not close gap between existing facilities
Safety	Does the project provide an immediate safety improvement where collision data, speed, and/or street design indicate potential safety concerns?	High	Project location has a significant crash history, high speeds, and a street design that indicates a potential safety concern
		Medium	Project location has two of the following qualities: a significant crash history, high speeds, and a street design that indicates a potential safety concern
		Low	Project location has one of the following qualities: a significant crash history, high speeds, or a street design that indicates a potential safety concern
Accessibility	Does the project modify a completely non-accessible route or enhance accessibility along routes that already have some level of access?	High	Project provides or enhances access along a route with no or limited access
		Low	Project does not provide or enhance access along a route with no or limited access

Criteria	Definition	Rank	Measurement
Demand	Is it likely that walkers and bikers will use the facility? Will the project attract new walking and biking trips for existing destinations?	High	Project will attract new trips, and it is likely walkers and bikers will use the facility
		Low	Project will attract new trips, or it is likely that walkers and bikers will use the facility
Ease of Implementation	Does the project require easements, property acquisition, or additional right of way? Does the project have jurisdictional/stakeholder support? Is the project a strong contender for grant funding?	High	Project is feasible, has political/stakeholder support, and is a strong contender for grant funding
		Medium	Project has two of the following qualities: is feasible, has political support, and is a strong contender for grant funding
		Low	Project has one of the following qualities: is feasible, has political support, and is a strong contender for grant funding
Cost	What are the capital, operating, and maintenance costs of the improvement?	High	Construction and operating costs over 10 years are <\$750,000
		Medium	Construction and operating costs over 10 years are between \$750,000 and \$1,250,000
		Low	Construction and operating costs over 10 years are >\$1,250,000
Equity	Does the project improve access for underserved populations?	High	Improves access for underserved populations
		Low	Does not improve access for underserved populations

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

This table outlines sources of funding for pathway projects in Beaufort County. The recommended bicycle and pedestrian coordinator will use Chapter 4 of this plan as a guideline for prioritizing and funding projects. Many projects will require several funding sources from multiple levels of government (federal, state, local) and private sources.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE	POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE	PROJECT TYPES
Local Accommodations Tax	Up to \$500,000	Small projects, local matches for grants
Capital Project Sales Tax	Up to \$1 million annually (assume successful referendum every 10 years with \$10 million dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects)	Large projects, small projects
LATS	Up to \$3 million annually (assume small % to fund bicycle and pedestrian projects in County)	Small projects
LCOG Federal Transportation Dollars	Assume small % of annual Guideshare funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects in County	Small projects in Sheldon or St. Helena Island
SCPRT Recreational Trails Program	\$50,000 (assume successful \$100,000 grant every two years)	Very small projects, trailheads, other enhancements
SCDOT Transportation Alternative Program	\$250,000 (assume successful grant every two years)	Small projects
Private Funding	N/A	Matching local grants, maintenance, enhancement
RAISE Discretionary Grants	2019 avg. award: \$17.4 million 2020 max.: \$25 million/project	Largest projects
AARP Livable Communities Grants	Average in 2018: \$10,000	Very small projects
Foundation Grants	N/A	Diverse projects and programs
Community Development Block Grant	\$200,000 - \$500,000	Medium projects

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CHAPTER 4:

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Each jurisdiction represented on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force should be encouraged to adopt the Beaufort County Connects 2021 by resolution and incorporate the document into their respective comprehensive plans.	Adopt the Immediate, Mid-, and Long Term project list in this plan.	Use the Prioritization Matrix in this plan to further evaluate each proposed project, ensuring that the implementation process focuses on projects of most merit to the connectivity of the regional bicycle and pedestrian network.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Short	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Council, Municipalities, LATS	County Council, Municipalities, LATS, Nonprofits	County Planning & Zoning Department, County Engineering Municipalities, LATS
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Develop a funding strategy and anticipated annual revenue stream for bicycle and pedestrian projects that includes Accommodations Tax, Guideshare funds, Capital Project Sales Tax, dedicated local funding, and state and federal grants.	Create a staff position within the Beaufort County government whose primary responsibility is to oversee the implementation of the Beaufort County Connects 2021.	Consider a 2022 ballot initiative to re-impose a 1% capital project sales tax to fund transportation improvements that include complete streets and multi-use paths and establish a regular schedule for future referendums.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Short	Short
PARTNER(S)	County Council, Municipalities, LATS	County Council	County Council, Municipalities
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Encourage each local jurisdiction to adopt a Complete Streets policy that requires all streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.	Encourage municipalities and SCDOT to make Complete Streets policies mandatory in all new construction and repair projects.	Identify streets where Shared Lane Markings (“sharrows”) should be added to improve conditions for bicyclists. Work with SCDOT, the County, and municipalities as appropriate to have these added.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Ongoing	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Council, Municipalities, LATS	County Planning & Zoning Department, County Engineering, Municipalities, SCDOT, Nonprofits	County Planning & Zoning Department, County Engineering, Municipalities, SCDOT, Nonprofits
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Work with LATS during the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian projects in Beaufort County Connects 2021 and advocate for a target percentage of funding to be devoted to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Identify rural roads with moderate to high traffic volumes where paved shoulders are needed. Work with SCDOT to include paved shoulders as part of road repaving.	Establish an agreement with local utilities for use of utility corridors as walking and bicycling paths.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Short	Mid-
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning Department, LATS, Municipalities	Beaufort County Engineering, Beaufort County Planning & Zoning, SCDOT	County Council, Municipalities, SCDOT, Dominion Energy
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Revise the Community Development Code to require that path corridors are reserved, dedicated, or constructed in new developments where path corridors are shown in an adopted plan or where a property connects to an existing or proposed greenway.	Actively engage with the Beaufort County School District for their assistance in planning and implementing sidewalks and pathways so that children can walk or bike to school.	Advocate for state funding for the Safe Routes to School Program in concert with the Beaufort County School District.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Ongoing	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning Department, County Council	School District, County Planning & Zoning Department, County Engineering, Municipalities	County Planning & Zoning Department, County Engineering, Municipalities, SCDOT, School District, LATS
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Develop a non-profit organization to advocate for pathway projects in Beaufort County and work to raise private donations.	Work with the Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail to expand their role to advocate and raise private donations for pathway projects that connect to the trail.	Endorse the Vision Zero Policy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.
INVESTMENT	Low	Medium	Low
TIME FRAME	Mid-	Ongoing	Short
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning, Municipalities	Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail, County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering	County Council, Mayors, County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, Local Law Enforcement Agencies
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Install pedestrian facilities such as crosswalks, countdown signals, and curb ramps at all intersections where there is an existing sidewalk or planned sidewalk or trail.	Provide raised medians or pedestrian refuge islands, where practical, at crosswalks on streets with more than three lanes, especially on streets with high volumes of traffic.	Require bicycle parking in all new commercial, civic, government, and multi-family land uses. Encourage municipalities to have similar requirements.
INVESTMENT	Medium	Medium	Low
TIME FRAME	Mid-	Mid-	Short
PARTNER(S)	County Engineering, SCDOT, Municipal Engineering Departments	County Engineering, SCDOT, Municipal Engineering Departments	County Planning & Zoning Department, Municipalities
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Work with the East Coast Greenway to develop a strategy to complete the East Coast Greenway trail through Beaufort County.	Encourage the SC Legislature to adopt a Safety Stop bill that allows bicyclists to treat a stop sign as a yield sign if the cyclist has slowed down to a speed that would allow them to stop if needed.	Encourage large employers to provide showers and clothes lockers at work to promote commuting by bike.
INVESTMENT	Medium	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Ongoing	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, SCDOT, East Coast Greenway Alliance, LATS	Local Delegates, Advocacy Groups	Advocacy Groups
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to assist the County in the planning, funding, development, and implementation of facilities and programs that will result in the increased safety and use of bicycle and pedestrian travel as a mode of transportation	Support or partner with municipalities on bike sharing and e-scooter programs in an effort to promote cycling and mobility.	Sponsor, support, and/or promote national events that promote walking and cycling: National Bike Month, Bike-to-Work Day, Car-Free Day, Earth Day
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Short	Ongoing	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering	County Planning & Zoning, Municipalities	County Planning & Zoning, Municipalities, Nonprofits
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Become a designated Walk Friendly Community.	Become a designated Bicycle Friendly Community.	Consider participating in the Open Streets Program to temporarily open selected streets to pedestrians by closing them to cars.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Mid-	Mid-	Mid-
PARTNER(S)	County Council, County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, Nonprofits	County Council, County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, Nonprofits	County Council, County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, Nonprofits
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Encourage and support events hosted by private non-profit groups that promote walking and cycling such as bike rodeos, weekend walkabouts, lunchtime bicycle rides, cycle the bridges, ride to beach, etc.	Support and partner with private nonprofit groups, such as Eat Smart Move More South Carolina, that focus on helping communities create healthy eating and active living options.	Develop an education program similar to Charleston's Bike Right, Drive Right Campaign to educate both bicyclists and motorists on safe and respectful sharing of our roads.
INVESTMENT	Low	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
PARTNER(S)	County Council, County Planning & Zoning, Municipalities, Nonprofits, School District, Beaufort Memorial Hospital	County Council, County Planning & Zoning, Municipalities, Nonprofits, School District, Beaufort Memorial Hospital	Local Law Enforcement Agencies, Nonprofits, School District
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	Develop a regional wayfinding program.	Develop an interactive bike map that outlines bike routes and bike parking.	Support the School District in implementing a Walk and Bike to School day.
INVESTMENT	Medium	Low	Low
TIME FRAME	Mid-	Mid-	Short
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering, SCDOT,	County Planning & Zoning, County GIS, SCDOT, Municipalities	County Planning & Zoning, School District, Local Law Enforcement
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

RECOMMENDATION	Conduct county-wide pedestrian and bicycle counts on a regular basis.	Encourage training courses for law enforcement officers on state and local laws for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.	
INVESTMENT	Medium	Low	
TIME FRAME	Ongoing	Short	
PARTNER(S)	County Planning & Zoning, County Engineering	County Planning & Zoning, Local Law Enforcement Agencies	
INITIATED			
COMPLETE			

