



**COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY
BEAUFORT COUNTY TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
113 Industrial Village Road, 29906
Post Office Drawer 1228, Beaufort, SC 29901-1228
Telephone: 843-255-2940 Fax: (843) 522-0520**

June 3, 2015

RE: Jenkins Island Access Management System Stakeholder Meeting

Dear Mr. / Ms. Invitee:

You have been identified as a stakeholder for the above-mentioned project and we need your local experience, input, and ideas to develop a creative solution.

Beaufort County has identified the need to improve access management and safety while maintaining operational efficiency along the US 278 corridor on Jenkins Island. The preliminary study area for the project includes US 278 along Jenkins Island, from the termini of the bridges from Pinckney Island to the beginning of the causeway onto Hilton Head Island, for a length of approximately 5,500 linear feet. Three median cross-overs: Blue Heron Point Road, Windmill Harbour Entrance, and Jenkins Island Road are currently serving adjacent communities. The scope of the project includes development of an optimum solution through alternative analysis, and in concert with environmental constraints, to provide a safe and efficient access to local communities with minimum disruption to “through” traffic on US 278. The project shall also develop a Purpose & Need, in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in order to properly prepare the project for its next stage of development.

Beaufort County has hired a consulting team led by HDR | ICA and Ward-Edwards, Inc. to study existing and future traffic, alternative analyses, and environmental constraints.

While our study team is qualified to gather, analyze and present the data, your experience in the study area will help us understand the people and the current issues behind the data. We would also welcome any recommendations / visions for the study area.

Having your input at this stage of the study process is very important. I hope you or a designated representative will join us in the Hilton Head Island Library Meeting Room on June 16th, 2015 from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The library is located at 11 Beach City Road, Hilton Head Island.

Sincerely,

Colin Kinton, PE
Director of Transportation Engineering

CK/mjh

cc: Gary Kubic

HDR SIGN IN

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Jenkins Island Access Management Project Stakeholder Meeting



Welcome

The purpose of today's meeting is to discuss the details of the proposed traffic improvements along US 278 on Jenkins Island, answer your questions and receive comments. A map of the project study area is located on the reverse side of this handout.

study area for the project includes US 278 along Jenkins Island, from the termini of the bridges from Pinckney Island to the beginning of the causeway onto Hilton Head Island, for a length of approximately 5,500 linear feet. US 278 in the vicinity of the study area is a four-lane divided principal arterial serving approximately 52,000 vehicles per day (according to SCDOT 2013 ADT counts). Three median cross-overs: Blue Heron Point Road, Windmill Harbour Entrance, and Jenkins Island Road are currently serving the local, adjacent communities with limited or full access control on US 278.

Project Goals:

- To provide a safe and efficient access to local communities with minimum disruption to "through" traffic on US 278
- To offer an optimum solution through alternative analysis that minimizes environmental impact
- To develop a Purpose & Need statement, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

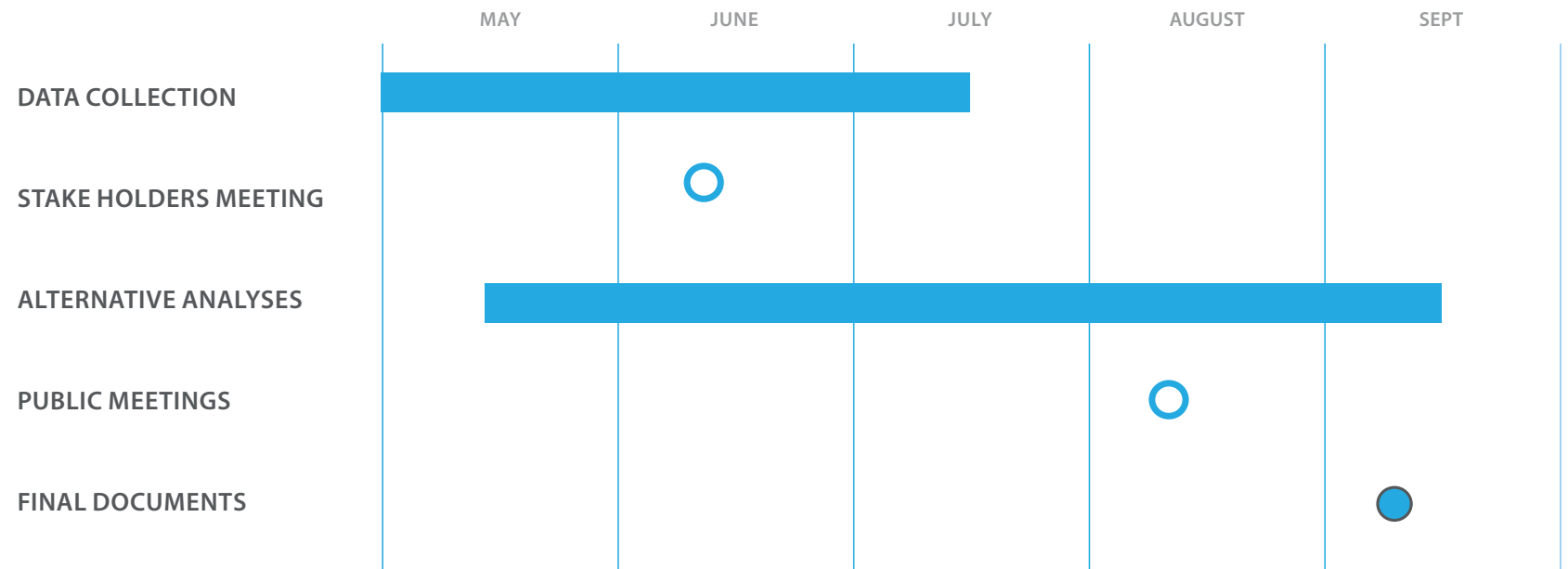
Background

Staff formerly developed a conceptual plan to completely close all three unsignalized median crossovers on US 278 on Jenkins Island by constructing a frontage road beginning at Jenkins Road on the northern side of US 278, traversing the Town's Jenkins Island parcel, and intersecting Blue Heron Point Road. In 2011, at the request of the Town and County, the roadway improvement project was included in SCDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Since inclusion in the STIP, the State has managed the project and provided \$1,400,000 in funding.

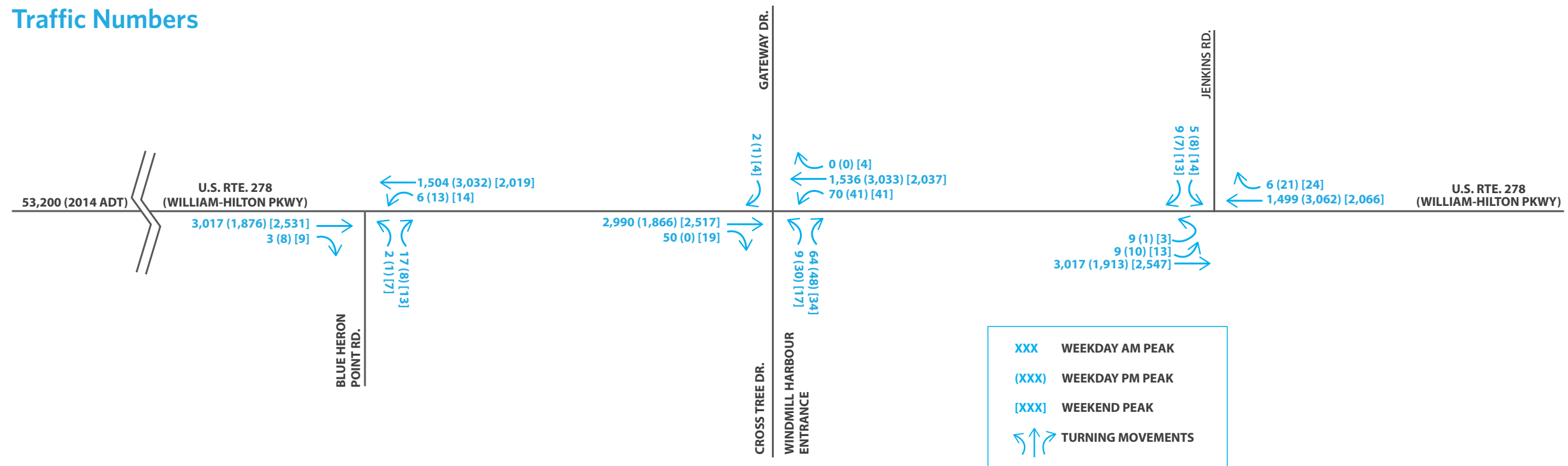
Project Purpose

Beaufort County and South Carolina Department of Transportation are working together to enhance and improve access management and safety while maintaining operational efficiency along the US 278 corridor on Jenkins Island. The preliminary

Schedule



Traffic Numbers





Jenkins Island Access Management System Project | Stakeholder Meeting



Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

Project: Jenkins Island Access Management Project

Subject: Project Stakeholder Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2015

Location: Hilton Head Island Library Meeting Room, 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Attendees: Gary Kubic – Beaufort County
Cynthia Bensch – Beaufort County Council
Rick Caporale – Beaufort County Council
Colin Kinton – Beaufort County
Lt. Col. Neil Baxley – Beaufort County Sheriff's Office
Master Sergeant Jason Covington - Beaufort County Sheriff's Office
Steve Riley – Town of Hilton Head Island
Darrin Shoemaker – Town of Hilton Head Island

Jim Ludlow – Mariners Cove Club
John Bentley – Hilton Head Harbor RV Resort
Sarina Bentley – Hilton Head Harbor RV Resort
Michael Garrigan – Windmill Harbour
Ernie Lindblad – Windmill Harbour
Chris McCorkendale - Blue Heron Point
Rob Moore – Blue Heron Point
Randy Bellmann – HDR|ICA
Ben Lewis – HDR|ICA
Sadrul Ula – HDR|ICA
Jessica Mackey – HDR
Blair Wade – HDR
Greg Baisch – Ward Edwards
Eric Hoover – Ward Edwards

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Facilitator</i>
1	Meeting Begins at 4:30 p.m. Introductions	Ben Lewis
2	Review of Scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preliminary NEPA documentation• Review utilities, traffic data, environmental concerns (wetlands/JD)• Alternative analysis• Concept designs	Ben Lewis
3	Preliminary Environmental Screening Colin Kinton: Request for explanation of NEPA <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blair: Explained that National Environmental Policy Act requires projects with federal funding or federal permits to evaluate impact of project on natural and human environment. Since we don't have a funding source for this project yet, the County is screening the project for environmental constraints. The goal is be compliant with NEPA in case the project receives federal funding. Michael Garrigan: Why project study area extends to marsh past Jenkins Island Rd? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blair: Bigger study area to encompass potential environmental constraints and avoid re-assessment of area	Blair Wade
4	Traffic <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daytime and weekend studies being conducted• Team will evaluate past studies• Evaluate alternatives for solution	Sadrul Ula

- Peak is mid-morning eastbound
- U-Turn movements on Jenkins Island Road
- Not enough gap to make left turn

Gary Kubic: Asked about how the Bluffton Parkway Flyover is anticipated to change the traffic pattern. How will the gap timing be managed with traffic lights?

- General group concern reduction in gap times that will be caused by the construction of Bluffton Pkwy Fly-over and the signal at Buckingham Plantation / Moss Creek
- Sadrul: will evaluate alternatives using future traffic modeling including Bluffton Parkway flyover

HH Harbor RV Resort: What are peak hours used in traffic study?

- Sadrul: Weekday AM Peak = 8 to 9 a.m.; PM Peak = 4 to 5 p.m.; Weekend 3 to 4 p.m. Will also consider seasonal/summer traffic

Ernie Lindblad: Currently breaks in traffic because of Moss Creek light. Understands the Moss Creek Light and new light at Bluffton Parkway/Buckingham Plantation Drive will be timed so they are alternately green. Concern this will eliminate gap in traffic that allows turning movements. Saturdays in summer, traffic backs up on US 278 and nearly impossible to enter/exit Jenkins Island

- Colin: Lights will be coordinated to ease merging concerns on US 278 at flyover

Michael Garrigan: Make sure we get SCDOT traffic data documenting how traffic has increased over the years

- Will do for future traffic projections

HH Harbor RV Resort: Their peak traffic times do not necessarily reflect peak volumes of normal traffic operations. Need to consider 10 a.m. check-in for RV Park in traffic studies. Their peak traffic is between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. They have 101 boat slips. 18 wheeler restaurant deliveries.

5 Public Involvement Activities

- Stakeholder Meeting
- Community Meetings
 - Public meetings will be held in August with neighborhoods.
 - Will send out a Survey Monkey questionnaire to residents prior to and at community meetings to gather data.
 - Goal of meeting today is to understand what questions should be asked and best way to communicate with residents.

Jesica Mackey & Greg Baisch

Recommended questions for On-line Survey:

- What is your opinion of cross-over closures?
- How far are you willing to travel to make right turns?
- How much land will Windmill Harbor give up?

Team should obtain letters HOAs and residents have sent to SCDOT

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS / VISION: during this time, the meeting was opened to comments from the stakeholders.

6 What are current problems / issues that you see?

- Constant traffic flows – very limited existing gap times
- Line of sight issues
 - Blue Heron Intersection – limited sight looking to the right around curve
 - Windmill Harbor Intersection – limited sight looking left around

Jesica Mackey

curve

- Median vegetation limits the line of sight
- Speed of through traffic on Jenkins Island (from Bluffton & Hilton Head)
- Left turn out of neighborhoods
- U-turns at rush hour, primarily at Jenkins Island Road
- Lack of shoulders on Hog or Jenkins Island
- Increased vehicle accidents
 - At intersections
 - Run off road collisions coming around curve at Blue Heron Point
- Slowing traffic for school buses at Windmill Harbour can cause delays, rear end collisions; school bus turning movements are delayed and unsafe
- Increasing median age of residents that live on Jenkins Island (particularly Windmill Harbor)
 - Older residents may have more difficulty making split-second decisions
- U-turns are easy for passenger vehicles, but need to consider turning movements of larger vehicles
- RV, boat trailer, 18-wheeler deliveries to restaurant at campground – need to consider these vehicles and their turning movements in alternatives
 - May not be able to make the sharp turns as proposed by previous frontage road option.

Between Moss Creek and Squire Pope Road, US 278 is 2 lanes, while the rest of 278 is 3 lanes. What issues does that cause and how does it affect project?

- Colin Kinton: US 278 is operating at capacity and is constrained by 2 lanes in area
- Darrin Shoemaker: Ramifications of 2 lanes include increased accidents, difficulty in speed/traffic control.

Gary Kubic: high volume of traffic on a narrow corridor causes high frequency of accidents; speed coming off bridge is an issue; need crash mitigation and need shoulders to move accidents over

Lt. Col. Neil Baxley: Emergency vehicles travel to Jenkins Island from Bluffton. Alternatives should keep these needs in mind regarding accident mitigation strategies

Greg Baisch: Are there considerations for bicycle/pedestrian traffic? Observed several cyclists prior to meeting. Currently no shoulder.

<p>7 What possible recommendations for improvement do you envision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current project to construct 900 ft acceleration lane on US 278 eastbound from Windmill Harbor. Will shift left turn lane into Windmill Harbor to improve line of sight.• HH Harbor RV Resort: RVs at HHI RV Resort on Jenkins Island Rd<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Recommend to keep the median cross-over open at Jenkins Island Road○ Concerned access road is built along Blue Heron Point and RVs making right turn into Blue Heron Point – RVs may back up on US 278 bridge over Mackay Creek○ Existing left turn lane works; few complaints from RVers○ Consider light at Jenkins Island Road with left turn signal○ Very few left hand turns from Jenkins Island Drive to HHI• Discussion of future lanes on US 278 / widening of bridge – what affect on future through traffic?• Rob Moore: closing medians allows through traffic until bridges can be widened to 3 lanes.• Gary Kubic: Widening of bridge and US 278 on Jenkins Island is not on DOT	<p>Jesica Mackey</p>
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long range plan for the next 10-15 years. There is currently no funding for engineering required for this widening.

- Councilwoman Bensch: convert median to travel lane and add a light at Jenkins Island Rd.
- Colin Kinton: Modified super street
 - Traffic only stops for left turn movement
 - Construct “bulb” to accommodate large vehicle U-turns
 - Traffic signals would be required for this option; Darrin Shoemaker stated signals would cause delays in through traffic, also stated the median may not be large enough for large vehicles
 - Stakeholders seemed to have a somewhat open opinion of the U-turn alternative
- Sadrul: previous SCDOT studies have found that traffic signals are unwarranted and/or too close to US 278 bridge over Mackay Creek.
- Ernie Lindblad: supports four right hand turn option with frontage or access road
- Rob Moore: Recommendations for grade separation/tunnels across US 278.
- HHI Harbor RV Resort: Recommendation for grade separation/flyover at Windmill Harbor/Gateway
- Rob Moore: Blue Heron Point concern over constructing 4 right hand turns alternatives
 - Recommend not constructing a frontage road that ties to Blue Heron Pt
 - Area has lots of constraints, including wetlands and utility lines
 - Concern over increased traffic in Blue Heron Point.
 - He has concerns about noise, safety, security if neighborhood is used for thoroughfare.
 - Recommend using alternative where land is more available with less constraints
- Ernie Lindblad: Right hand turn lane option is practical and financially feasible; Windmill Harbor would move entrance
- Colin Kinton: Long-term solution might be costly and require a lot of time; County may need to consider imperfect/partial solutions that could be phased and/or inexpensive in near term
- Rob Moore: team should evaluate the impact of the 4 right hand term on home values, aesthetics.
- Mike Garrigan/Ernie Lindblad: Safety should be considered first and recommend 4 right hand turn lane option
- HHI RV Resort - Support acceleration lane from Jenkins Island road onto US 278 westbound. Would accommodate RVs turning right out of RV park onto US 278.
- Notes from project maps (additionally from those stated above)
 - D. Shoemaker: The gated Windmill Harbour access to Blue Heron Pt road needs to be maintained
 - D. Shoemaker: If alternative access provided, the section of Gateway Dr. (from US 278 to powerline) could be removed

8 What potential environmental impacts concern you?

- Blue Heron Point is actually located on Hog Island, which is separate from Jenkins Island
- Blue Heron Point Road is original alignment of US 278
- Gary Kubic – when 278 was widened and improved, SCDOT put 2-60” pipes under US 278 between creeks and marshes.
 - Culverts have not been maintained and are clogged. They are not providing flushing of water between Hog Island and Jenkins Island.
 - Concern that poor function has caused siltation issues at HHI RV marina. Personal docks have restricted use based on tides due to

Jessica Mackey &
Blair Wade

blocked flow of water.

- Are these pipes sufficient and can they be cleaned?
- Gary Rubric: suggestion if frontage road is built, consider extending culverts and improving functionality under new road. Reduced cost compared to constructing bridge over marsh and would improve tidal connection.
- Group was asked about resident concerns over tree removal if necessary for alternatives. Residents not overly concerned with the loss of trees to provide a solution to access problems.
- Rob Moore: concern over health of wetlands
- HHI RV Resort: alternative should use power easement for potential alternative to minimize potential environmental impacts.

Next Steps: Community meetings

Jesica Mackey

- Windmill Harbour has meeting room and email lists for residents
- RV Campground: has 75 person meeting room; best to communicate via fliers and email
- Blue Heron Point: can use RV meeting room; best to communicate via fliers and emails
- Mariner's Cove Club requests separate meeting
- Make sure residents have 2 week notice of meetings

Councilwoman Bensch will discuss project at county council forum and have made this project priority for sales tax referendum

Meeting Adjourns at 6:30 p.m.