

MEETING SUMMARY

I-26 Fixed Guideway Alternatives Analysis

Public Meetings – April 20-22, 2015

PURPOSE: I-26 Fixed Guideway Alternatives Analysis (Public Meeting #2)

ATTENDANCE: Sign-In sheets available upon request

Presentation Outline:

- I. Project Overview
 - II. Comprehensive Operational Analysis
 - III. I-26 Alternatives Analysis
 - a. Pre-Screening
 - b. Conceptual Alignments
 - c. Transit Modes
 - IV. Screening Priorities
 - V. Station Area Planning
 - VI. Next Steps
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Meeting Summary:

The second round of I-26 Fixed Guideway Alternative Analysis public meetings was held in April, 2015 in Summerville, North Charleston and Charleston at the following meeting locations:

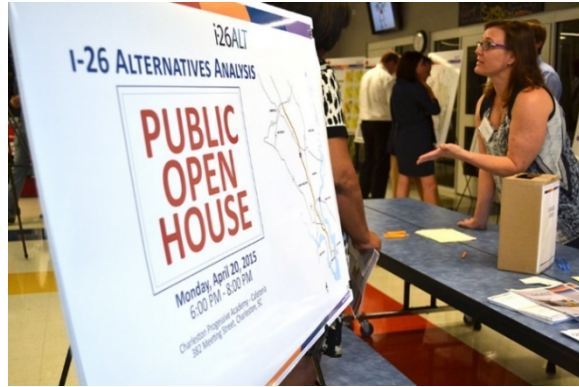
1. ***Downtown Charleston*** –
Charleston Progressive Academy
April 20, 2015
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
2. ***Summerville*** –
Bethany United Methodist Church
April 21, 2015
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
3. ***North Charleston*** –
North Charleston High School
April 22, 2015
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

A total of 84 persons attended these meetings: Summerville (32), North Charleston (21) and Charleston (31).

Building on input from the first round of public meetings and community outreach, these public meetings focused on existing transit, transit alternatives, environmental and community goals, land use, and funding alternatives. Emphasis was placed on creating a public dialogue about the presented topic areas and encouraged the public to voice their opinion on what they envisioned for the region today as well as 20 years in the future.

The following provides an overview of the project stations:

- **Station 1: Planning Process** – Provided general project information and overall purpose of the project. Supporting material included a project fact sheet, project newsletter (March, 2015), informational brochure (English and Spanish versions), and general comment cards for community feedback.
- **Station 2: Existing Transit** – Provided an opportunity for participants to comment on the current/existing transit system. This station solicited input from participants on how they utilize the current transit system, as well as opportunities for improvement. A Comprehensive Operational Analysis Transit Questionnaire was provided to guide conversation and prompt input to questions concerning current level of service (route frequency, scheduled operating time, and weekday/weekend service); route connections (recommended route segment modifications); route efficiency (combining or splitting routes); route alignments (transit stop additions or removal); identification of route markets (extension of existing or introduction of new routes); potential transfer centers and bus stops (transfer centers and hub locations, need for shelter/bench or other amenities); and overall transit priorities (short, mid- and long term).
- **Station 3: Transit Alternatives** – Provided summary information on the transit modes under consideration (commuter rail, bus rapid transit (BRT), and light rail transit (LRT)), and the alignments along which each mode could potentially operate in the region. This station provided participants with the opportunity to vote for their preferred transit mode and alignment. Feedback from this exercise provided preliminary insight into which modes/alignments are most favored by the community and why.
- **Station 4: Environmental and Community Goals** – The community goals were presented for public comment. Supporting material included a composite map of the area's environmental and historic resources (wetlands, historic sites and districts, protected lands, etc.), and identification of transit dependent groups (minorities, disabled, zero vehicle households, elderly, youth, college aged, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations).
- **Station 5: Land Use** – Provided a summary map of the current land use along the I-26 corridor, a synthesis map of areas identified in other planning studies (current/future) that support high capacity transit, and a map of proposed station area typologies which identified four TOD station area types with their accompanying densities and land uses.
- **Station 6: Funding Alternatives** – Provided an overview of potential funding sources for fixed guideway projects. Participants were encouraged to comment on how they might fund a proposed fixed guideway system.



Downtown Charleston Public Meeting



North Charleston Public Meeting Presentation

Each station was staffed by facilitators from the BCDCOG and/or the Davis & Floyd study team. Representatives from CARTA were also present to answer questions as needed.

Feedback and Comments:

The following provides the most prominent themes and insights arising from the three public meetings. A comprehensive list of all comments made at each meeting location can be found in the individual meeting summaries recorded.

Comments:

- Transit services need to be expanded to the Summerville, Goose Creek, and Moncks Corner areas.
- Consideration needs to be given on how the system could be extended to other corridors like Mount Pleasant, West Ashley, and James Island in the future.
- Transit service need to be more frequent and well timed to accommodate transfers.
- Charlotte's LRT system has produced great revitalization/development opportunities for the city. (This can be applied here in Charleston)
- CARTA should have a local route to Summerville.
- Need to improve pedestrian access to current routes and stop locations (facilities and infrastructure surrounding stop locations).
- The current CARTA service needs to be better advertised. The public needs to be better informed about the current bus system and how to use the system and the facilities.
- Schedules and maps need to be easier to read, and should be posted or made available at all shelters.
- The Rivers Avenue Corridor should be strongly considered because people along that corridor greatly depend on the existing bus system. It also passes through the Neck communities that have high populations without access to personal vehicles and offers many of them required access to jobs on the peninsula.
- Major roadways such as Savannah Highway, Dorchester Road, Rivers Avenue, US 17 (Mount Pleasant) should utilize signal priority to move the buses more efficiently along the roadways.
- US 52 needs express service from Goose Creek into North Charleston and Downtown Charleston.
- CARTA needs to develop more business partnerships to help fund the system.
- Partnerships with the school system need to be explored to offer service to juniors/seniors.
- Consider the use of water taxis in the region.
- Some attendees noted that rail would be a nice option, but they would support an alternative that can be implemented relatively quickly.
- More park-and-ride options should be made available to users.
- Parking in Downtown Charleston has become difficult.
- Future system should be flexible and able to adapt as needs evolve.

Transit Survey:

Participants were also provided with a transit survey to determine current transit use and attitudes toward service. The survey provided preliminary insight into public support for a fixed

guideway system. Of the participants giving feedback the following results/comments were recorded:

- Most participants did not use transit because they are unaware of the service offered (schedule times, fares, where routes go, how to use, etc.), service times are not convenient, service is unreliable or not frequent enough, don't have enough late night service, buses don't offer service to employment areas, access to/from routes are limited.
- Persons would consider using transit if service was reliable (on time) and frequent, provided better night and weekend service, had accessible routes, and included service to Summerville and beach area; if buses had their own lane, service was BRT or light rail, or more direct/express service.
- Of the 32 participants providing feedback on the transit mode they would ride, 29 would use commuter rail, 26 would use bus rapid transit, 30 would use light rail transit, and 20 would utilize park-and-ride/express bus service.

Transit Alternatives Votes:

Each meeting attendee was provided with one dot to place on the boards with their preferred mode/corridor; based on the information provided at the meeting. A total of 46 votes were collected and summarized in the table below. BRT on US 78/US52 received the most votes, at 18.

Alignment	Mode	Corridor	Description	Charleston	Summerville	North Charleston	Total
Alignment 1	BRT	SCE&G-Utility Corridor	SCE&G/Azalea to 78/52		6		6
Alignment 2	LRT	SCE&G-Utility Corridor	SCE&G/Azalea to 78/52	1	1	1	3
Alignment 3	BRT	Dorchester Road	Old Trolley, Dorchester to 78/52				0
Alignment 4	LRT	Dorchester Road	Old Trolley, Dorchester to 78/52		1	1	2
Alignment 5	CR	Norfolk Southern	Norfolk Southern Rail Line from 17A to Mt Pleasant		3		3
Alignment 6	BRT	US 78/US52	US 78 & US52	5	5	8	18
Alignment 7	LRT	US 78/US52	US 78 & US52	2	3	4	9
Alignment 8	BRT/CMR	US78/CSX	BRT-US 78; CR - CSX		3		3
Alignment 9	BRT	176/Santee Cooper	176 to Santee Cooper/SCE&G				0
Alignment 10	LRT	176/Santee Cooper	176 to Santee Cooper/SCE&G		1	1	2
Alignment 11	BRT	US52	176 to US 52				0
Alignment 12	LRT	US 52	176 to US52				0
Alignment 13	BRT/CR	176/52/CSX	BRT-176/52; CR CSX				0
I26	BRT	I-26	I26				0
I26	LRT	I-26	I26				0
Total				8	23	15	46