

**A RESOLUTION**

**TO ADDRESS BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND PUBLIC TRANSIT ACCESS FOR THE US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S (USDOT) FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA) AND SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S (SCDOT) I-526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR (LCC) EAST AND WEST PROJECTS**

WHEREAS, the existing I-526 LCC corridor is ranked as one of SCDOT's top priorities, with state and federal transportation agencies now evaluating its current and future transportation demands, with each segment proceeding through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process; and,

WHEREAS, the SCDOT has consistently asserted that widening the corridor for motor vehicles alone will not solve its congestion issues, but no design alternative produced so far incorporates bicycle, pedestrian or transit infrastructure; and,

WHEREAS, the project team has identified transit-dependent communities adjacent to the corridor, and has also collected public comments and survey responses regarding regional concerns about bike, pedestrian and public transit accommodations; and

WHEREAS, the FHWA has "long-standing support of pedestrian and bicycle transportation through policies, planning, and funding" and has created flexible design guidance for pedestrian/bicycle inclusion in projects, encouraging transportation agencies to go beyond minimum standards to provide safe and convenient facilities for these modes, not being "an afterthought" in roadway design but rather "as equals with other transportation modes;" and,

WHEREAS, the USDOT issued a 2010 Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations, Regulations, and Recommendations, the purpose of which is "to reflect the Department's support for the development of fully integrated active transportation networks" with their design being part of Federal-aid project developments, naming transportation agencies as the planners, funders, and implementing body for walking and bicycling networks, including linkages to transit; and,

WHEREAS, the USDOT 2010 Policy Statement relies on the authority under the United States Code and Code of Federal Regulations that "describe how bicyclists and pedestrians of all abilities should be involved throughout the planning process, should not be adversely affected by other transportation projects" with particular encouragement for bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on bridge projects, including limited-access bridges; and,

WHEREAS, the USDOT provides "procedures relating to the provision of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on Federal-aid projects, and Federal participation in the cost of these accommodations and projects" and the Secretary may withhold approval for projects that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists; and,

WHEREAS, the SCDOT Commission approved a 2003 resolution affirming that bicycling and walking accommodations should be a routine part of the Department's planning, design, construction and operating activities, and will be included in the everyday operations of its transportation system; and,

WHEREAS, the SCDOT Multi-Modal Transportation Plan asserts SCDOT's recognition of the benefit of safe and convenient walking and bicycling accommodations, as well as transit, and also notes South Carolina's rising rates of bicycle and pedestrian crashes and fatalities with particular commitment to "doing everything possible to improve those statistics;" and,

WHEREAS, the SCDOT Multi-Modal Transportation Plan recognizes that SCDOT must work collaboratively with their Municipal Planning Organization (MPO) and Council of Government (COG) partners to ensure the multimodal transportation system is preserved, modernized, integrated, and expanded to provide improved mobility options and access to all South Carolinians, visitors, businesses, and industries, and specifically should "Improve efforts to leverage federal dollars to address multimodal needs;" and,

WHEREAS, a multitude of approved regional and local plans include bike, pedestrian and transit accommodations along the I-526 LCC, including: WalkBike Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester (BCD) (2017), Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Government's (BCDCOG) Regional Transit Framework Plan (2018), BCDCOG's Park and Ride Study (2018), BCDCOG's 2040 Long-Range Transportation Update (LRTP) (2019), City of Charleston's Plan West Ashley (2019), Town of Mount Pleasant's Comprehensive Plan (2020 - first reading); and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHATS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION'S TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE, THAT:

The CHATS Policy Committee supports and formally requests SCDOT and FHWA include connected bicycle, pedestrian and public transit infrastructure in the design, funding and installation of both the LCC EAST and WEST projects, including each EAST and WEST chosen preferred alternative design produced from the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement processes, and that both state and federal agencies absorb the costs for installation of such bicycle, pedestrian and public transit infrastructure as integral parts of the projects in order to mitigate congestion and environmental impacts, while increasing safety, public health, equitable access to employment, education and daily needs, and enhancing quality of life for all in the Charleston region.

READ AND ADOPTED the 5th day of October 2020.

  
George Bailey, Chairman

Certified true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments on October 5, 2020.

  
Ronald E. Mitchum, Executive Director