

# A Bold Vision for Transportation and Greenspace in Charleston County:

## Our recommendations for the next Transportation Sales Tax program



An opportunity to make Charleston County even better.

With the potential 2026 half-cent Transportation Sales Tax (TST) referendum, our community has an opportunity to build a transportation future that meets our explosive population growth with a modernized approach.

To do this, we must make transportation and greenspace investments that make life better by providing safe connections to friends and neighbors, access to employment opportunities and services, and opportunities to exercise and recreate in nature. Most importantly, we must ensure that these benefits extend to all people in the community.



Photo credits (left to right): BCDCOG, Waggoner & Ball, City of Charleston

As advocacy groups connected with the public, we believe that a bold multimodal vision for the future of the County's TST Program will transform our community's growth challenges into opportunities to improve quality of life for all who live and work in Charleston County for many generations to come.

Flip over to see our principles for the next TST program

We have compiled our vision into six principles that we think should guide the next TST:

Principle	Description	Potential Actions
<p><b>1. Everyone deserves to make it home safely.</b></p>	<p>Improving safety should be the primary consideration for priority projects outlined in the next TST referendum.</p> <p>Make dedicated funding available for safety projects outlined in BCDCOG and various municipalities' Safety Action Plans and SCDOT's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update TST priority project and/or annual allocation assessment matrices to prioritize highly ranked projects contained in Safe Streets for All Action Plan in BCDCOG's Safety Action Plan (SAP) and/or jurisdictional SAPs.</li> <li>• List improving safety for all modes as a primary purpose of every TST project.</li> <li>• Develop and track goals and metrics associated with reducing fatal and serious injury crashes for all modes of transportation and regularly report progress.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Transportation and greenspace investments should prioritize smart land use principles to reduce sprawl and expand access to Greenbelt sites.</b></p>	<p>Increase funding for the County Greenbelt Program and dedicate additional funding to connectivity and access to Greenbelt properties.</p> <p>Considering greenspace investments are highly effective at limiting future traffic congestion, leverage transportation and greenspace investments along with policy tools like land use and zoning reforms to stop sprawl and protect the natural environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenbelt program allocations should represent a substantial percentage of total TST revenues.</li> <li>• Create a set-aside funding source for improvements and amenities associated with trail, greenway, and greenbelt corridors projects.</li> <li>• Pending state legislative action, pursue concurrency policies that require new development to properly account for traffic generation and public service costs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Prioritize freedom of choice for all modes of transportation, not just single-occupancy vehicle trips.</b></p>	<p>Over-reliance on transportation investments that exclusively serve motor vehicle travel leaves out a significant portion of our population that cannot drive or do not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>By focusing on expanding transportation options, the next TST can connect more people to jobs, services, schools and medical care, improving our local economy and quality of life for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize Bicycle and Pedestrian Level of Service in TST project evaluation.</li> <li>• Increase CARTA allocation of TST revenue to fund implementation of the Regional Transit Framework Plan to improve efficiency and serve more people.</li> <li>• Administer bike/ped TST funds based on a comprehensive countywide bike, pedestrian, and trails master plan and an associated phased capital improvement plan.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>4. Prioritize projects with the highest long-term return on investment for the community over costly and time intensive projects that offer short-term congestion relief.</b></p>	<p>We no longer have the space, time, or resources to rely on road widening as the only tool to solve traffic congestion.</p> <p>Instead, we should support many strategies working in tandem including policies that support mode shift, funding to take advantage of emerging signal technologies, and land use reform such as "missing middle" zoning reforms and policies that promote infill development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate TST projects using metrics beyond traffic level of service, such as anticipated safety benefits, environmental impacts, bicycle and pedestrian level of service, and adjacent land use.</li> <li>• Focus on smaller, faster projects like intersection improvements, roundabouts, curb extensions and shared use pathways and rely on SCDOT to manage and finance large roadway capacity and freight projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Fix what we have: dedicate more resources to maintenance and upgrading existing infrastructure.</b></p>	<p>Increase funding for road maintenance to meet existing needs. Use low-cost approaches like repaving and restriping lanes to make the best use of the available road right-of-way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a separate dedicated maintenance fund for trails, shared-use pathways, sidewalks, and bicycle infrastructure.</li> <li>• Increase funding for repaving/restriping and utilize repaving/restriping opportunities to improve safety and connectivity for all road users.</li> <li>• Create a funding stream for development and maintenance of green stormwater infrastructure as enhancements to transportation projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Base transportation investments on data, not politics.</b></p>	<p>Project prioritization and administration of the TST program should follow the data – ensuring that investments are made based on how effectively they improve safety and fill gaps in the transportation system.</p> <p>Methodology for scoring TST projects included in a referendum should be shared with the public to ensure trust and accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and share the methodology and scoring criteria for selecting priority projects listed in the TST referendum.</li> <li>• Establish the current ad hoc TST Committee of County Council as a permanent committee charged with monitoring the TST program and reporting progress.</li> <li>• Create performance metrics and goals for the TST program around safety, connectivity, quality of life, and others and regularly report progress.</li> </ul>