

# Proposed Improvements to Designated Truck Routes and Broad Street Camden, South Carolina

## Public Hearing

Camden High School Commons Area

Tuesday, July 10, 2012, 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Project No. SU28(001), File No. 28.040309

TIGER II Planning Grant 3

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

The purpose of the proposed project is:

- *To reduce truck traffic on Broad Street between York Street and DeKalb Street in downtown Camden, SC.*
- *To create a more pedestrian-friendly environment on Broad Street (US 521) between York Street (S-45) and DeKalb Street (US 1/601) in downtown Camden, Kershaw County, South Carolina.*



The purpose derives from the City of Camden's Vision Plan and Comprehensive Plan which recommend improving livability, strengthening the core commercial district, enhancing the physical image, and removing pass through truck traffic from the downtown district.

### WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THE PROJECT?

Improvements are needed because the existing truck routes have bridge load restrictions, traffic delays, and operational deficiencies which limit or prohibit heavy truck use and because Broad Street (US 521), Camden's north/south thoroughfare, has four narrow travel lanes, parallel parking, and narrow sidewalks which limit pedestrian use and truck operations in the downtown business district. Current conditions along Broad Street are more conducive to accommodating through traffic than to serving local businesses, residents, and visitors to Camden.

### WHAT IS THE PROPOSED PROJECT?

In order to meet the aforementioned purpose and need, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT or Department), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes to improve the existing designated US Highway 521 and US Highway 1 truck routes (Figure 1). Improving the truck routes will replace a structurally deficient bridge, reduce delays, improve safety, and otherwise encourage trucks to use the truck routes instead of going through downtown Camden. Such improvements will allow the City of Camden to implement its proposed Broad Street Road Diet (BSRD), which is intended to create a more livable, pedestrian-friendly environment by reducing travel lanes (from four to two), adding turn lanes, increasing sidewalk widths, and creating a more walkable and inviting streetscape that balances the need for pedestrian and vehicular access and is scaled more appropriately for the downtown district along US 521 (Broad Street) from S-45 (York Street) to US 601/US 1/SC 34 (DeKalb Street) (Figure 2 and Figure 3).



## WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE PUBLIC HEARING?

At the Public Information Meeting on January 24, 2012, the project team presented various alternatives of the proposed improvements. Since the Public Information Meeting, SCDOT considered the comments received, researched additional alternatives, and continued to study the impacts, benefits, and costs of each alternative. The project team used public and stakeholder input and information gathered while preparing technical studies to develop a preferred alternative and to prepare the Environmental Assessment (EA), or report. SCDOT and FHWA approved the EA on June 13, 2012. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to present the Preferred Alternative and the EA so that the public can ask questions and provide additional input. We appreciate your attendance at this meeting and look forward to the opportunity to serve you throughout the development of this very important project.



## WHAT IS THE FORMAT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING?

The public hearing will be an informal, open-house style meeting and will take place at Camden High School from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. At 6:30 p.m., the SCDOT will make a brief, formal presentation about the project's purpose and need, schedule, and potential impacts to the environment. Immediately following the presentation, citizens may make formal, verbal comments regarding the proposed project, which will be recorded by a certified stenographer. Anyone who wishes to verbally comment must sign up between 6:00 p.m. and 6:25 p.m. upon entering the public hearing. Each comment will be limited to two minutes and may not be transferred to other individuals. At the conclusion of the formal comment period, the informal portion of the public hearing will continue until 8:00 p.m. Large aerial displays of the entire project and environmental documentation of the projects impacts will be available for viewing, and project team members will be present to discuss the project with interested citizens on an individual basis. Citizens may ask questions and provide comments regarding the possible social, economic, and environmental effects of the project during this time.



You are encouraged to provide written comments on the forms provided so that SCDOT will have a written record of your concerns or suggestions. Comment forms may be placed in the comment box or mailed to:

**William (Tyke) Redfearn, P.E.**  
**SCDOT Assistant Program Manager**  
**955 Park Street –RM 508**  
**P.O. Box 191**  
**Columbia, SC 29201**

Please ensure all mailed comment forms are post marked by July 26, 2012. All written comments will be responded to and made part of the official public hearing file.

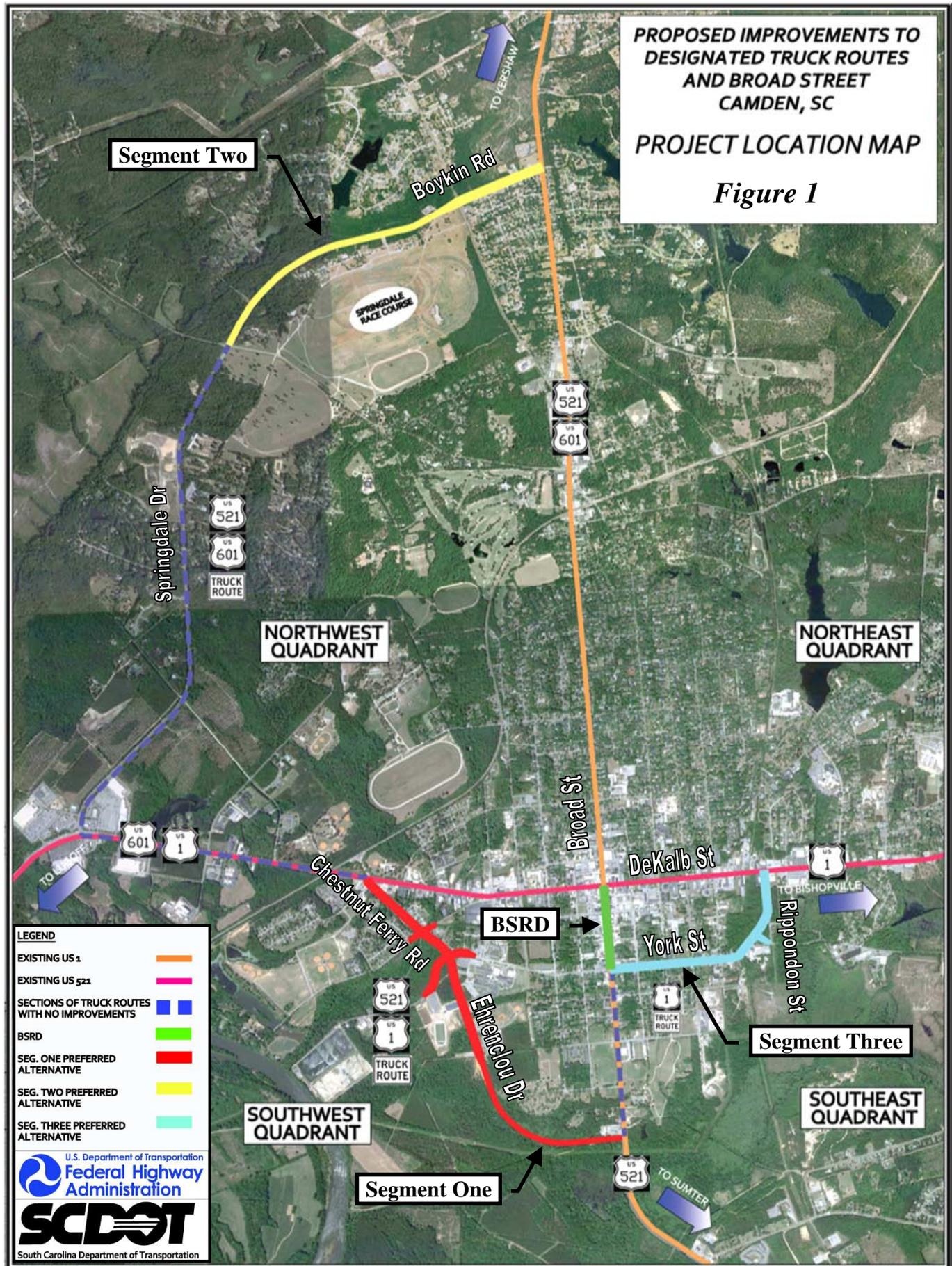


**Santee-Lynches**  
Regional Council  
of Governments



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

# PROJECT LOCATION

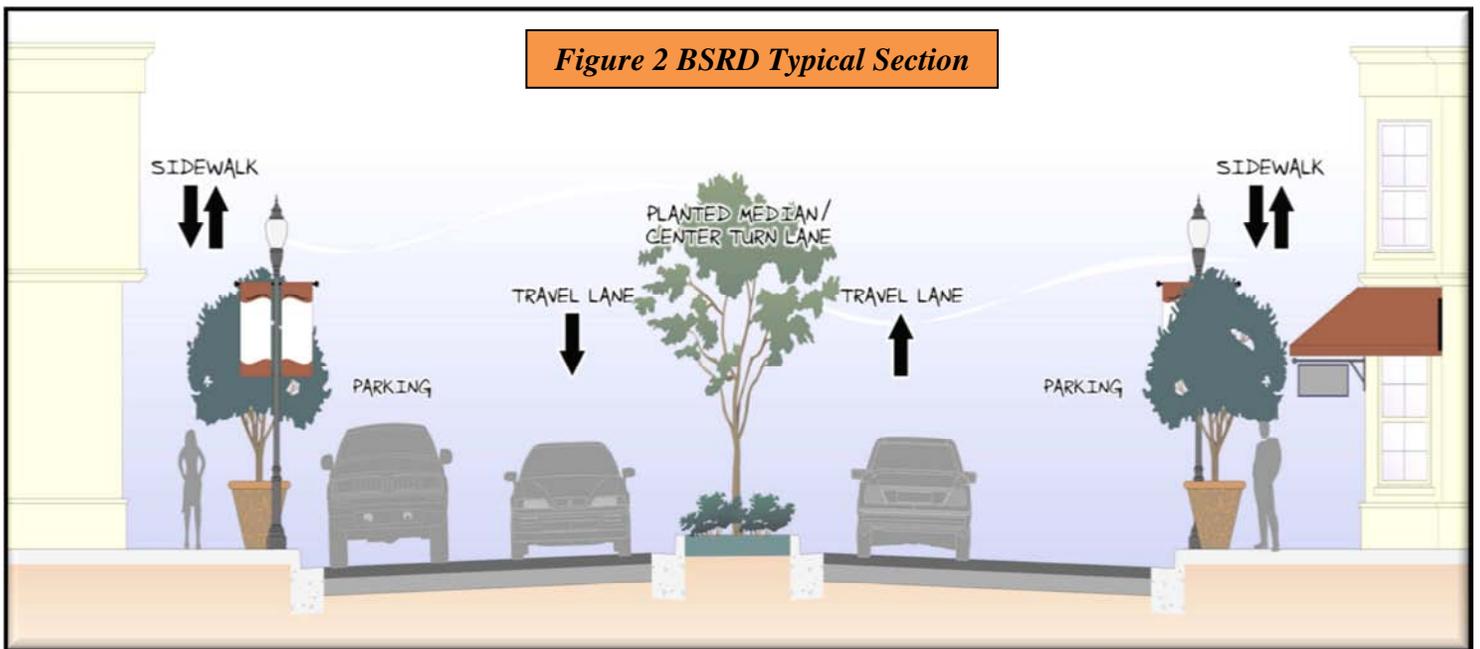


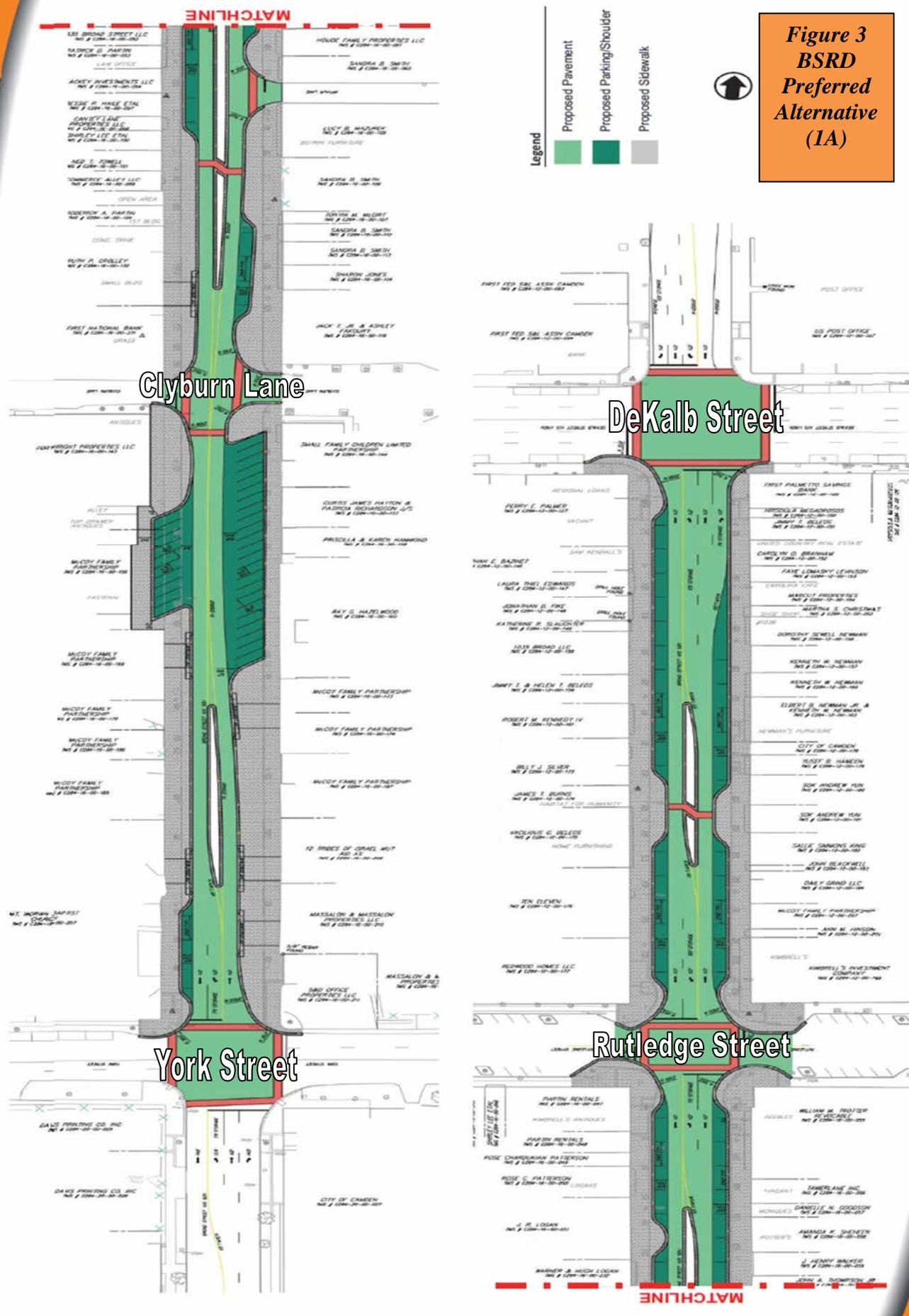
## WHAT IS THE PROPOSED BROAD STREET ROAD DIET?



Broad Street functions as the main north/south street of Camden. It is a designated US Highway (US 521) and is a principal arterial roadway linking I-20 and areas north of Camden. Currently, the approximately 0.36 mile section of Broad Street between York Street and DeKalb Street has four 11-foot travel lanes plus parallel parking and sidewalks on each side. The Preferred Alternative for the BSRD project (Figure 2 and Figure 3) will reduce the travel lanes to two 12-foot travel lanes with parking on both sides of Broad Street/US 521 between York Street and Dekalb Street. Some parking will be converted from parallel parking to angled parking. Additionally, left turn lanes in both the east and west directions will be added at intersections. The sidewalk widths will be expanded and raised medians will be provided in some locations. Streetscape and landscape design will be utilized on this section of Broad Street to encourage pedestrian and street level retail activity.

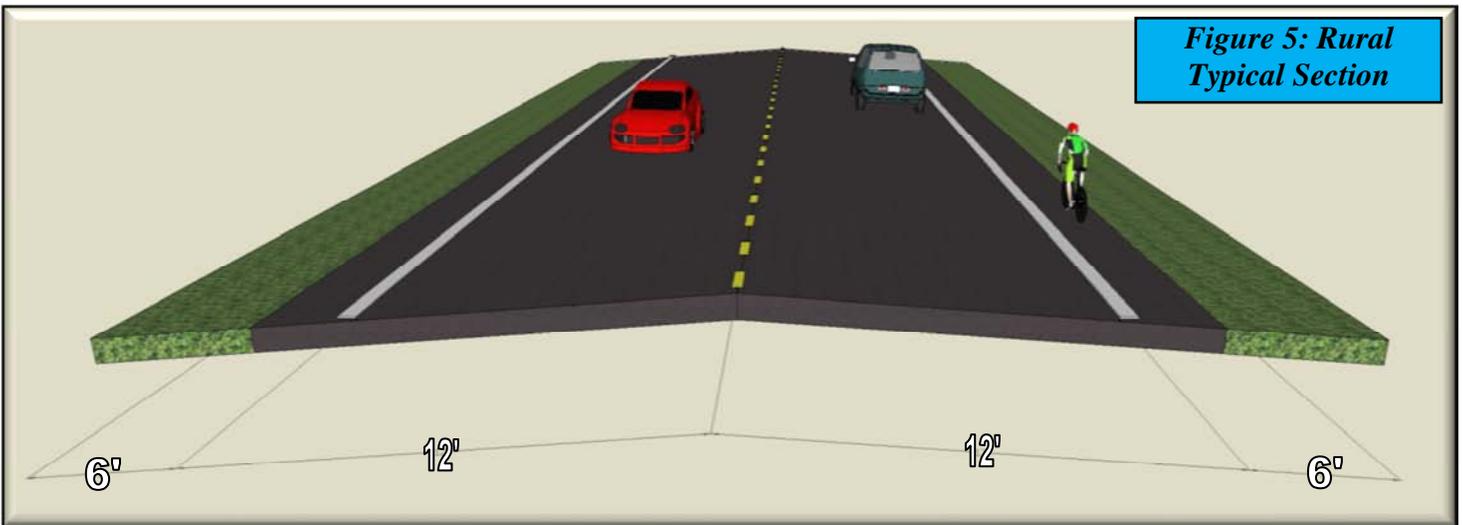
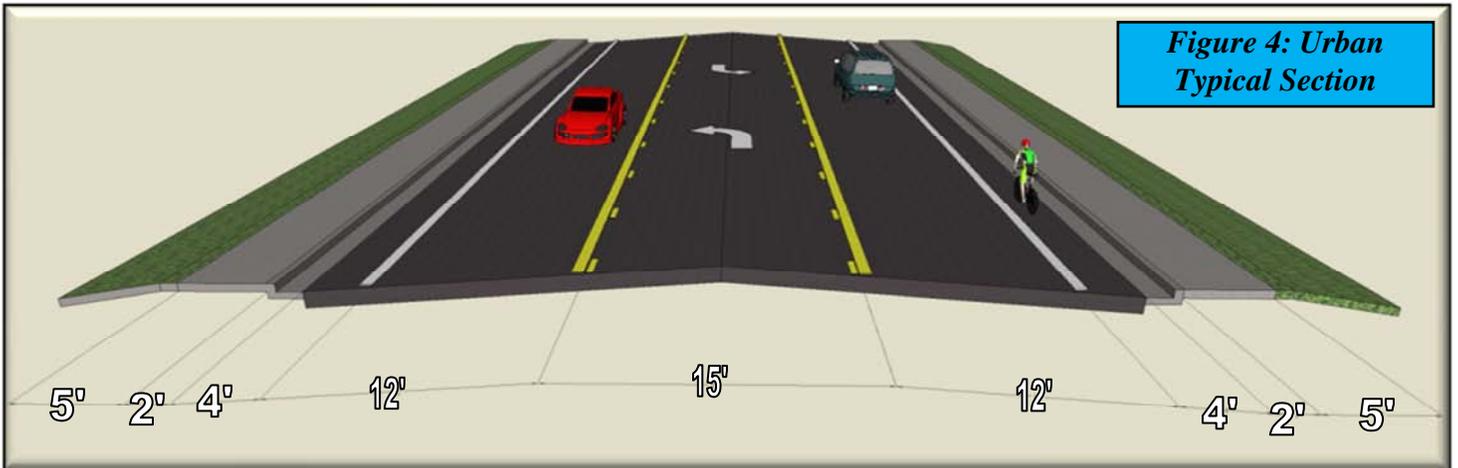
**Alternative 1A** was selected as the preferred design because it meets the purpose and need of the project by creating a more pedestrian-friendly downtown, provides the most parking of any alternative considered (and more than the existing condition) and will be able to maintain or improve existing traffic flow when implemented in conjunction with the truck route improvements.





## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED TRUCK ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS?

The proposed typical sections of the improved truck routes will have two travel lanes in each direction with a center turn lane in developed portions of the alignment. In urban areas there will be bike lanes, sidewalks and earth shoulders (Figure 4). In rural areas with little to no adjacent development turn bays will be added for specific side streets and paved shoulders will be added in order to provide for bicyclists and assist with emergency use.



The Preferred Alternative for the truck route improvements is comprised of three segments: Segment One (Alt. SW-1.4: Ehrenclou to Chestnut Ferry) in the Southwest Quadrant, Segment Two (Alt. NW-3: Boykin Road) in the Northwest Quadrant, Segment Three (Alt. SE-2: York to Rippondon) in the Southeast Quadrant as shown on Figure 1.

### Segment One (Alt. SW-1.4: Ehrenclou to Chestnut Ferry)

Proposed improvements to Segment One include adding an eastbound right turn lane on Ehrenclou Drive at its intersection with US 521 and adding a center two way turn lane, sidewalks, bike lanes, curb, and gutter in developed areas of the alignment. The project will only add a paved shoulder through the undeveloped/wetland areas. Improvements include reconfiguration of the Ehrenclou Drive, York Street, Chestnut Ferry Road, intersection near Camden High School and replacement of the structurally deficient bridge over Bolton Branch Creek on Chestnut Ferry as well as the replacement of a second bridge over Bolton Branch Creek on Old River Road.

### **Segment Two (Alt. NW-3: Boykin Road)**

Proposed improvements to Segment Two include the addition of a paved shoulder along Boykin Road between Knights Hill Road and Liberty Hill Road and auxiliary left turn lanes at Sunnyhill Drive and the Springdale Recycling Center for eastbound traffic. Between Liberty Hill Road (SC 97) and N. Broad Street (US 521/US 601), improvements include adding a center two way turn lane, bike lanes, sidewalks, curb, and gutter along Boykin Road. Improvements to the intersection of Boykin Road with US 521/US 601 will include the addition of dedicated left turn lanes for all approaches, a southbound right turn lane on US 521/US 601, and signalization with traffic lights.

### **Segment Three (Alt. SE-2: York to Rippondon)**

Improvements to Segment Three include providing a westbound left turn lane on York Street at the intersection of US 521 and adding a center two way turn lane, sidewalks, bike lanes, curb, and gutter. Dedicated left turn lanes will be provided on York Street at its intersection with Mill Street. The preferred alternative includes shifting the existing truck route to Rippondon Street instead of Mill Street and includes reconfiguring the intersection and alignment of York Street with Rippondon Street as well as improvements to the intersection of Rippondon Street with US 1/DeKalb Street.

## **WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT ON THE HUMAN AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT?**

The proposed project is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts on the human and natural environment. The project will not have adverse impacts on historic districts, historic sites, or archaeological resources since most improvements will take place within existing disturbed road rights-of-ways. Less than half an acre of wetlands will be impacted by the project. Up to two commercial buildings and four single-family homes anticipated to be displaced by the project at the intersection of Chestnut Ferry Road and Old River Road. Residents along the west side of Chestnut Ferry Road may experience an increase in traffic related noise due to traffic shifting closer to homes; however this was done to avoid displacements on the west side of Chestnut Ferry Road and noise abatement measures were determined not to be feasible.

## **HOW MUCH WILL THE PROJECT COST AND HOW WILL IT BE FUNDED?**

SCDOT estimates approximately \$16.16 Million to construct all proposed Truck Route improvements. In cooperation with the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments (SLRCOG), FHWA and SCDOT appropriated funds from FHWA's Surface Transportation Program to be used for the truck route project.

The City of Camden estimates that approximately \$3.25 million is needed to construct the Broad Street (US 521) Road Diet. The City of Camden acquired a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II Grant from FHWA for funding to plan and design the BSRD. Funding for construction, however, is not yet identified.

## **WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED PROJECT SCHEDULE?**

- Environmental process expected to be complete August 2012
- Detailed design to begin following environmental approval and is expected to be complete late 2013
- Right-of-Way acquisition could begin in late 2012 and complete in 2014
- Truck Route construction could begin in 2014 and be completed in 2016
- BSRD construction could begin after the Truck Route improvements are complete

## WHAT IF NEW RIGHT OF WAY IS REQUIRED FROM MY PROPERTY?

Once the right of way plans are completed, an agent with SCDOT will be assigned to the project. At times, SCDOT will contract with an experienced rights of way consultant company to perform the rights of way services. Consultant companies and their agents are regularly monitored by SCDOT staff. The agent's first job is conducting title research to determine the ownership of each parcel of land shown on the plans. The agent will then contact the property owner to verify the ownership and property lines and to explain how construction of the project will affect the property. In some instances SCDOT is allowed by the Federal Highway Administration to make offers based on estimates of fair market value without having an appraisal prepared. If the property value is below the threshold for estimate offers, the agent may present an offer for the needed right of way during the first contact. In the event that the property estimate exceeds the designated threshold, an appraisal will be ordered to establish the offer of just compensation. The acquisition agent will make these offers in writing. If an appraisal is required, the appraiser shall provide an opportunity for the landowner to be present when the property is inspected with the landowner being entitled to a copy of the appraisal.

Right of Way Acquisition will follow the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 which ensures the fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced as a result of a Federal or Federally-assisted project. Details of the acquisition procedures can be found in the brochure "Highways and You", which is available upon request and at the Public Hearing. Relocation benefits are explained in the brochure and consist of moving expenses and replacement housing payments. No person that occupies real property will be required to move from a dwelling, business, or farm without at least 90 days notice of the vacate date.

The following is SCDOT's policy on replacement housing:

- The Federal Highway Administration will be given specific written assurance that comparable replacement housing will be available or provided for before the initial written approval or endorsement of any project is requested.
- Construction authorization will not be requested until comparable replacement housing has been made available to all affected persons.
- SCDOT acknowledges that all housing must be fair housing and must be offered to all affected persons regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

## TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

SCDOT, in response to the nondiscrimination requirement set forth by the federal regulations issued by the United States Department of Transportation to effectuate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, complies with all regulations in this regard. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against because of race, color religion, sex, age, handicap/disabilities or national origin under a program receiving Federal Aid, has the right to file a complaint with the SCDOT. The complaint shall be filed with the Title VI Program Compliance Coordinator at 803-737-1372. The complaint should be submitted no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged act of discrimination. The complaint should outline as completely as possible the facts and circumstances of the incident.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on this project, you may contact SCDOT Assistant Program Manager, Tyke Redfearn, at the address provided, at 803-737-1430, and/or online at [http://www.scdot.org/inside/public\\_hearings.aspx](http://www.scdot.org/inside/public_hearings.aspx)

