

A Technical Assistance Panel Report

HIGHWAY 29: A CORRIDOR STUDY

GREER, SOUTH CAROLINA

Finding Solutions | Building Consensus | Generating Momentum



Highway 29: A Corridor Study

Sponsored by: Upstate Forever

January 14 - 15, 2015



What are Technical Assistance Panels

TAPs provide expert and objective strategic advice to sponsoring organizations on complex land-use and development issues. TAPs link public agencies and nonprofit organizations to seasoned real estate, planning, financing, marketing and technical experts through ULI district councils. TAPs are part of ULI's Advisory Services program which has assisted more than 500 communities worldwide since 1947.

How do TAPS Work

Sponsors request the services of a TAP with regard to a specific issue that can be addressed by a panel of experts in one or two days. The District Council assists the sponsor in refining the scope of the assignment and convenes a panel to address those specific issues. The sponsor works within ULI guidelines to provide background information to ULI panelists prior to the panel's convening. When convened, members of the TAP view the subject site, hear from public and private stakeholders, and then deliberate on the assigned issues. At the conclusion of its work, the panel presents an oral report to stakeholders; that is followed by a written report within approximately six weeks.

What do TAPs Cost

TAP fees depend on the size of the scope, length of the panel and the detail of the final report, but typically fees run between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Each TAP is different and fees are negotiated individually. Panel members donate their time and are only reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses such as overnight lodging and transportation to attend the TAP. To ensure objectivity, panel members cannot be involved in matters pending before the sponsor, be working for the sponsor, or solicit work from the sponsor during the panel's assignment period.



Panelists present recommendations and findings to the public at Greer City Hall

The Panel Process

TAP Panel Selection

The ULI South Carolina District Council was invited by Upstate Forever to form a Technical Assistance Panel to study U.S. Highway 29 between Spartanburg and Greenville and recommend steps to transform the highway into a Transit-Ready Corridor. The District Council considered Upstate Forever's goals for the TAP and selected seven panelists based on their expertise.

Sponsor Presentation

The TAP panelists assembled at City Hall in Greer, the approximate midpoint of the 23-mile corridor on Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015, for a presentation by the TAP sponsor. The presentation was made by several Upstate Forever staff members.

Tour of Study Area and Environs

Following the sponsor presentation, TAP panelists toured by van the entire length of the 23-mile corridor from the city limits of Spartanburg at U.S. 29 and I-26 to the city limits of Greenville at U.S. 29 and S.C. 291. The panel also toured some areas on the south side of the corridor, including the communities of Taylors, Greer, Duncan and Lyman.

Stakeholder Interviews

The afternoon of Jan. 14 and the morning of Jan. 15, panelists met with community stakeholders including elected officials, transit officials, civic and community leaders, business and property owners, and developers. An open town-hall input session was held the evening of Jan. 14.

Panel Deliberations

The panel held two working sessions, the first on Wednesday evening following the sponsor presentation, site tour, stakeholder interviews and town-hall meeting; and the second on Thursday upon the conclusion of stakeholder interviews and a second input session with the TAP sponsor. During these sessions, panelists reviewed the significant findings, addressed the focus areas, identified opportunities and challenges, developed recommendations and prepared a PowerPoint presentation that addressed the questions posed by the sponsor, Upstate Forever.

Public Presentation

The panel presented its PowerPoint presentation of findings and recommendations at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, in an open session to the TAP sponsors, community stakeholders and interested public in the Greer City Hall. Panelists then took questions and comments from the audience.

Report Preparation and Release

The TAP, under the leadership of the ULI South Carolina District Council, prepared this report on its conclusions and recommendations. It presented the report to the sponsors in February 2015.

Highway 29: A Corridor Study Technical Assistance Panel

JANUARY 14 - 15, 2015 | GREER, SOUTH CAROLINA

The Urban Land Institute South Carolina
205 1/2 King Street
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

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SPONSOR & ULI PARTICIPANTS



SPONSORS

- **UPSTATE FOREVER**, in partnership with the **GREATER GREENVILLE ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS**

PANEL CHAIR

- **Tracy Hegler**, Richland County
Columbia, SC

PANEL MEMBERS

- **Jeff Baxter**, Cityvolve
Charleston, SC
- **Christiane Farrell**, Town of Mount Pleasant
Mount Pleasant, SC
- **Eleni Glekas**, Clement Crawford & Thornhill
Charleston, SC
- **Josh Martin**, Director of Planning & Strategy
Washington, DC
- **Thad Wilson**, Municap
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Urban Land Institute's South Carolina District Council, the Highway 29 TAP convened at City Hall in Greer on Jan. 14 and 15, 2015, bringing together community leaders, stakeholders and a panel of planning, design and development professionals for a day- and-a-half session focused on efforts to transform the 23 miles of U.S. Highway 29 from the Spartanburg city limits to the Greenville city limits into a transit ready corridor.

Once a principal East Coast route, the current Highway 29 route was built between 1943 and 1946. Interstate 85 fully opened in South Carolina in 1962, largely rerouting most of Highway 29's traffic; however an ever increasing volume of traffic is felt to be using Highway 29 as an alternative to the congestion on I-85.

The 23-mile corridor includes a 10 mile-long section from Spartanburg's city limits to Greer, and a 13-mile-long section from the Greenville city limits to Greer. The section from Spartanburg to Greer is relatively undeveloped; however its proximity to BMW, Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport and the South Carolina Inland Port offers significant development opportunities. While pockets of newer development, including some residential, have popped up much of the highway's commercial property has fallen into disrepair over the years and some undesirable reuses have occurred.

At present, the highway does not operate optimally, most notably the stretch between Greer and Greenville, which in addition to being visually unappealing and inefficient for automobiles, is a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists and existing transit riders who must cross the highway.

Upstate Forever, a nonprofit organization that promotes environmentally sustainable development, engaged the Urban Land Institute South Carolina District Council to form a Technical Assistance Panel and to consider these questions:

1. What is the best way to develop housing options along the Highway 29 corridor to support transit and pedestrian/bicycle activity in the future?
2. How do we retrofit the existing infrastructure to support transit?
3. What are policy changes – including incentive programs and removal of barriers to transit and pedestrian-supportive development – that will support mixed-use development and increased density where appropriate and result in a “transit-ready” corridor?
4. How do we prioritize infrastructure investments?

The TAP prepared its recommendations based on a review of the briefing materials, a debriefing with staff from Upstate Forever, a tour of the study area, extensive interviews with stakeholders, and a town-hall meeting attended by some 50 interested parties. Panel deliberations included an analysis of challenges and opportunities, determining key focus areas and recommendations.

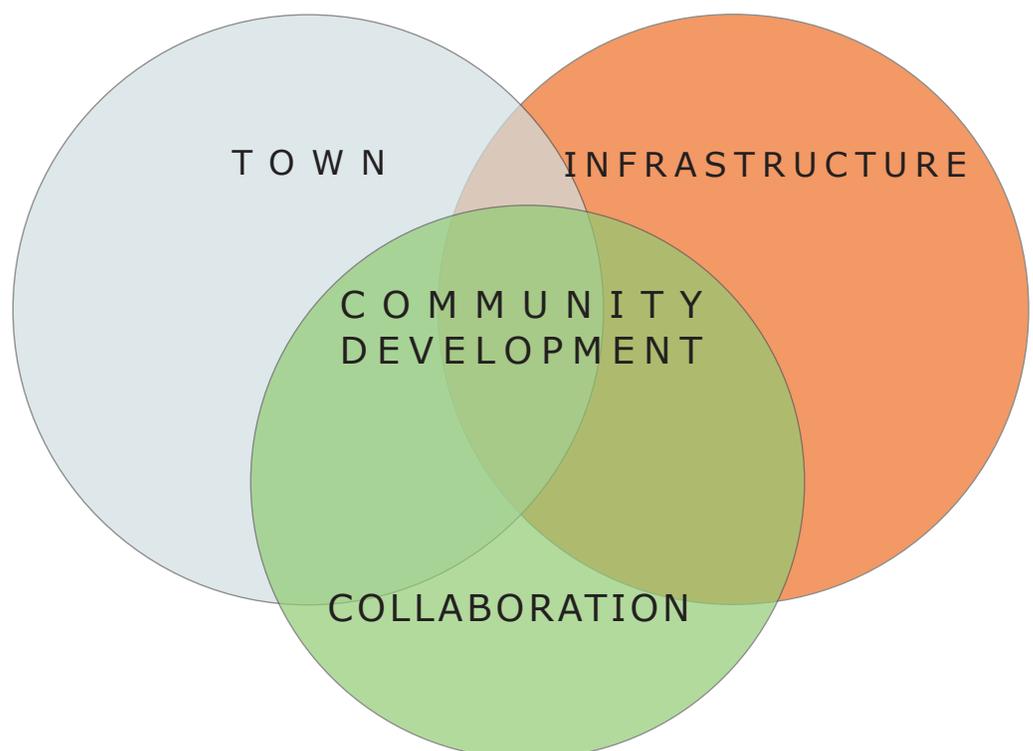
After considering all of the input, the panel saw a need to reframe the issue based on the reality of Highway 29 as a high-volume superhighway. While Highway 29 is an important connecting highway, the panel believes the primary focus for transforming the highway should be on the towns along the corridor. The panel views the corridor as an important supporting piece for the towns with the question being: "How do we connect these towns to the corridor?" The panel determined that the central issue of how to turn the 23-mile stretch of Highway 29 between Spartanburg and Greenville into a transit ready corridor needed to focus on:

- Town Centric Development
- Highway 29 Support for the Towns
- Enhancement of Critical Connections to and across Highway 29

The panel believes that the approach should be town centric with Highway 29 seen as a supporting piece that will mature over time. The immediate focus should be to grow and increase the density of the towns and better connect them to Highway 29 so they can more easily access transit as it develops on the corridor. Rather than taking away from efforts to focus on Highway 29, this should have the opposite impact by catalyzing change and setting the stage for more extensive multimodal options.

Based on its reframing of the issue, the Panel focused its recommendations in three areas and then divided the recommendations in each of those areas into short, mid and long-term efforts. The three focus areas are:

- Towns Along the Corridor
- Infrastructure Along and Connecting to the Corridor
- Collaboration of Partners Along the Corridor



Towns

In addressing the best way to develop housing options along the Highway 29 corridor to support transit in the future, the panel recommends that the focus shift from attempts to develop additional housing directly on Highway 29 to an emphasis on town nodal development, including the unincorporated Taylors community. During its tour and interviews with stakeholders, the panel found pockets of density already in the towns that could be grown to support transit on the corridor. There is an opportunity to leverage the historic downtowns and the distinctive nature of those communities. Market research shows that more people prefer the unique attributes that town centers provide.

Infrastructure

Safe multimodal connectivity and accessibility is necessary for a transit-ready corridor. The panel observed glaring infrastructure deficiencies where transit currently exists along the corridor. Improvements are needed to keep traffic flowing at a reasonable rate of speed and to make the corridor safer for pedestrians and cyclists when they need to access it. Multimodal connectivity is needed along the length of Highway 29. There is not a single solution to move traffic more efficiently along the entire length of the corridor and cost prohibitive to invest in bike and pedestrian infrastructure along the entire length of the corridor. The municipalities should focus on strategic interventions that provide dedicated and reliable connections from the town centers to the highway and traffic calming measures for safe pedestrian crossings.

Collaboration

Transforming Highway 29's 23 miles through multiple jurisdictions will require a tremendous effort of coordination & collaboration. Turning Highway 29 into a transit ready corridor will require a single master plan to which all of the jurisdictions are committed. Initially, Upstate Forever is encouraged to take the lead and bring together the prospective partners, but leadership should be determined by the collaborative.

BACKGROUND & SCOPE

U.S. 29 was established in 1927 as an original East Coast U.S. route and it ran through both Greer and Duncan. The current route, which bypasses both of those downtowns, was built between 1943 and 1946, and stretches from Spartanburg to Greenville. Interstate 85 fully opened in South Carolina in 1962, largely rerouting most of Highway 29's traffic. At present, the highway does not operate optimally, most notably the stretch between Greer and Greenville, which in addition to being visually unappealing and inefficient for automobile travel is a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists and transit riders.

The corridor consists of a 10-mile long stretch from Spartanburg's city limits to Greer to a 13-mile stretch from the Greenville city limits to Greer. The Greer to Spartanburg section is relatively under developed; however its proximity to BMW, Greenville Spartanburg International Airport and the South Carolina Inland Port offers significant development opportunities.

The Greenville to Greer stretch is characterized by strip center development, big-box stores, car dealerships and restaurants. Disconnected sidewalks and neighborhoods support an auto-centric culture. This stretch is expected to continue to develop rapidly as Greer's population is expected to grow to 39,000 and Greenville is expected to reach 85,000 by 2040.

Upstate Forever, founded in 1998 with a mission "to promote sensible growth and protect special places in the Upstate region of South Carolina," performed its own analysis of the Highway 29 Corridor in 2014 focusing on "Existing and Future Land Use and Transportation Contexts, Assets, Deficiencies and Recommendations." That report provides an in-depth look at Highway 29 and its issues and was provided to the TAP Panel as part of the briefing material.

With the assistance of partners including the Mary Black Foundation, John I. Smith Charities, and the Greater Greenville Association of Realtors, Upstate Forever engaged the Urban Land Institute South Carolina District Council to form a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to study the 23-mile corridor and recommend ways to transform it into a Transit-Ready Corridor. Questions to be addressed by the panel were:

1. What is the best way to develop housing options along the Highway 29 corridor to support transit and pedestrian/bicycle activity in the future?
2. How do we retrofit the existing infrastructure to support transit?
3. What are policy changes – including incentive programs and removal of barriers to transit and pedestrian-supportive development – that will support mixed-use development and increased density where appropriate and result in a "transit-ready" corridor?
4. How do we prioritize infrastructure investments?

STAKEHOLDER INPUT AND KEY ISSUES

Following a briefing by Upstate Forever staff, a tour of the Highway 29 Corridor and interviews with numerous stakeholders, including an open town-hall meeting to gather public input, the panel identified several key issues with direct relevance to the questions posed for the TAP:

Nature of the Highway

U.S. Highway 29 is a high-volume superhighway, 7-8 lanes in some sections. Stakeholders noted that the heaviest volumes occur along the stretch of highway from Greer / Taylors into Greenville. SCDOT has expressed intention to utilize Highway 29 as an alternate route to I-85 to mitigate congestion during major construction events. Stakeholders expressed concern for pedestrians and cyclists and there is some desire for streetscaping and traffic calming measures. But any effort to retool Highway 29 and make it transit ready must take into consideration the basic nature of the roadway: Highway 29 is a superhighway that will benefit from strategic infrastructure investments along the densest portions of the corridor.

While pockets of newer development, including some residential, have popped up, much of the highway's commercial property has fallen into disrepair over the years and some undesirable reuses have occurred. Much of the commercial development along the corridor is on the Greenville-Greer leg with opportunity for Greenfield development on the Spartanburg County side. Stakeholders voiced a desire for additional upscale commercial development along the corridor, and noted that the new Upward Sports development on the Spartanburg County side offers opportunity, but a lack of infrastructure can be a barrier. Because the highway traverses several towns and two counties – Spartanburg and Greenville – with seemingly different approaches to zoning and land use (Spartanburg has no zoning while Greenville employs zoning as a tool), achieving a consistency of development along the entire 23 miles of the corridor is a difficult challenge.

The panel didn't note any obvious areas to start a dense, mixed-use project on the corridor itself. In the near term, the panel sees the highway remaining just that, a highway.

Lack of Transit

Stakeholders noted that existing transit along the Highway 29 Corridor is extremely limited. Greenlink, the fixed route system which serves Greenville County, only has service as far as Taylors, although a master plan calls for the creation of express service to Greer by 2017. But the Spartanburg County portion of the corridor, some 10 miles, currently has no fixed-route service. Several stakeholders expressed a desire to make the Highway 29 Corridor transit ready, but noted obstacles to achieving that goal, including the current limited state of transit in the corridor, the need for a critical mass for ridership, and concern that even if transit were available people would not use it. Stakeholders were also concerned with what they perceived as a lack of political will on the part of the Greenville and Spartanburg counties governments to support transit. Greenville County Council would not be in favor of funding large transit projects, one stakeholder said, and Spartanburg is even less inclined.

In addition to the lack of transit on the corridor, stakeholders also pointed to issues with the existing transit infrastructure and access to it. Greenlink bus shelters often sit

in relatively inaccessible areas with no sidewalks and no crosswalks from the opposite side of the highway. The current conditions do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) one stakeholder said, so that people who need to use transit cannot actually get to it.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

The 2014 report by Upstate Forever detailed the poor state of both bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the corridor and this was noted by the panelists and several stakeholders as well. For pedestrians, the issue is largely the poor condition of existing sidewalks, with many gaps, large numbers of curb cuts and inadequate crosswalks across what is a very busy highway. As has been previously noted, stakeholders also pointed to the lack of pedestrian connectivity to the few transit stops in the corridor. Getting to a bus stop can be extremely challenging. The 2014 report noted, and the panel observed during its tour, that pedestrians have created their own paths (goat paths) in worn down areas indicating where pedestrians are walking even though there are no sidewalks.

Some stakeholders would like to see the corridor made safer for cyclists, and one stakeholder advocated adding protected bike lanes separated from the highway by a barrier. Others suggested that a parallel bike route with connectivity to nodes along Highway 29 could be developed. One stakeholder noted that bikes on Highway 29 would be fine, “as long as they are on the front of a bus.”

Image

Once the principal route linking Spartanburg and Greenville not only to the rest of the Upstate but also to much of the East Coast, Highway 29 was an early superhighway. But with the advent of the interstate highway system and particularly I-85 in the Upstate, Highway 29’s image as a major arterial faded and development moved adjacent to the new interstate system, and along with it, government attention. Split between Spartanburg and Greenville counties and traversing some half dozen communities, the corridor has suffered from a lack of focus and attention. Asked about Highway 29’s identity, one stakeholder said, “There isn’t one. It’s not about 29, it’s about where 29 can take you.” The communities that lie on the corridor – Greer, Lyman, Duncan, Wellford, Taylors – have done little to mark the corridor, capitalize on their assets, and distinguish one section from the next. Although their town centers do not extend to Highway 29, most are in very close proximity. “You don’t have any sense you are in Greer when you travel 29,” one stakeholder said. The communities on 29 need to hit on their identities harder, said another.

Stakeholders pointed out that Greer has been among the most progressive communities in trying to deal with issues along Highway 29, including creating a comprehensive lighting program and utilizing a TIF, or Tax Increment Financing district, to provide funding for infrastructure improvements. While TIFs have been successful within the cities and towns along the corridor, stakeholders indicated there would be greater resistance in the unincorporated areas along the corridor. The counties are less inclined to utilize TIFs.

Connectivity

In addition to the lack of identity on the corridor, connectivity to the corridor from

“
We must
hang together,
gentlemen, else
we shall most
assuredly hang
separately.”

--Benjamin Franklin
to the Continental Congress
before signing the Declaration
of Independence.

the towns and communities, especially for transit, is an issue. Most of the current density to support transit lies at either end of the corridor in Greenville and Spartanburg. Greer is the densest community along the study area. At present, Greer has the population density to support one-third of a bus. Stakeholders pointed to a need for more and improved sidewalks and bicycle connections into the corridor. While there are relatively few formal bike/ped connections, there are desire lines / goat paths indicating where residents would like to see connections such as sidewalks and bike paths.

Lack of Coordination

The greatest impediment to progress along the Highway 29 Corridor can be traced to the highway's geography. As previously noted, the 23 mile stretch of road spans multiple jurisdictions with competing interests and priorities. It includes large tracts of land in unincorporated areas in Greenville and Spartanburg Counties. It passes through four towns – Wellford, Lyman, Duncan and Greer. Taylors is unincorporated but has a strong community action organization called Taylors Town Square which is focused on moving the community forward. In addition, the corridor is covered by two separate Metropolitan Planning Organizations or MPOs, the Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS) and the Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study (GPATS), and neither of the MPOs are run by the regional Appalachian Council of Governments. In Charleston, Columbia and Myrtle Beach, the MPO resides within the COG. In smaller urban areas, the MPO typically resides with the county or municipality. Stakeholders pointed out there have been some efforts by the MPOs at cooperation involving transit studies, but noted that neither county government is in favor of funding large transit projects. There is a “we take care of ourselves” mentality, one stakeholder said. Another said he believes the politicians are behind the public in terms of forward thinking.

OBSERVATIONS & FINDINGS

Based on the briefing, tour, stakeholder interviews, and input from the town-hall meeting, the Panel developed a list of Challenges and Opportunities

P o t e n t i a l P a r t n e r s

Counties

Greenville County
Spartanburg County

Municipalities

Greenville
Spartanburg
Lyman
Duncan
Wellford
Greer

Transit Operators

Greenlink /
The Greenville Transit

Authority

SPARTA

Governmental Entities

Appalachian COG
SCDOT

Interested Parties

Taylor's Town Square
Bike Walk Greenville
Partners for Active Living
Greater Greenville

Association of Realtors

Homebuilders

Association

Town-Hall Meeting

In addition to individual interviews with various stakeholders, panelists also heard from a wide range of interested parties during an open town-hall meeting attended by some 50 people. Among the comments:

- Highway 29 needs sidewalks and turn lanes
- Traffic lights needed to be synchronized
- Traffic circles would keep traffic moving and help air quality
- A bus is needed between Greenville and Spartanburg
- Greenlink by itself is not the answer
- Need to address bike and pedestrian safety along with public transit
- Can we ask the businesses to support transit riders
- Need to increase taxes for the roads
- Cyclists have a problem crossing 29
- More housing is needed in the area along the corridor
- Need to take a look at land use policies along the corridor
- Financing is the greatest challenge

Challenges

- U.S. 29 is a superhighway carrying a high volume of daily traffic
- No unique identity along the corridor – no distinction between communities
- Limited mobility options for elderly and differently-abled
- Poor street crossings
- Lack of aesthetics along the corridor
- Large number of distinct communities and counties
- Length of corridor
- Imminent increase in traffic from I-85

Opportunities

- Bringing the focus back to the historical downtowns
- Seven distinct communities
- Two counties
- Good local precedents
- Engaged citizens
- Great capacity
- Good network connections

Adaptive Traffic Signalization

A traffic management strategy in which traffic signal timing changes, or adapts, based on actual traffic demand.



- \$4.5 million project involves 35 traffic signals
- 40,000 vehicles a day on average at many intersections
- Fewer stops, shorter commutes, cleaner air
- An estimated \$1 million saving per corridor/per year in time and fuel

REFRAMING THE ISSUE

The panel's biggest takeaway is that Highway 29 is an important connecting highway but that the primary focus should be on the towns along the corridor. The panel views the corridor as a supporting piece for the towns with the question being, "How do we connect the towns to the corridor and future transit?" The panel believes that the approach should be town centric with Highway 29 seen as a supporting piece that will mature over time. The immediate focus should be to grow and densify the towns and better connect them to Highway 29. Rather than taking away from efforts to focus on Highway 29, this should have the opposite impact by catalyzing change and setting the stage for more extensive multimodal options.

The 23-mile corridor connects the two largest municipalities in the Upstate: Greenville and Spartanburg. Excluding these municipalities, Greer is the densest town along the corridor. At present, the density in Greer can support one-third of a bus. Without substantial financial subsidies, current conditions cannot support expanded service; however, it might be prudent to examine incremental expansion on the Greenville to Taylors route to Greer.

The panel determined that the central issue of how to turn the 23-mile stretch of Highway 29 between Spartanburg and Greenville into a transit ready corridor needed to be reframed to focus on:

- Town Centric Development
- Highway 29 Support for the Towns
- Enhancement of Critical Connections to and across Highway 29

Based on its reframing of the issue, the Panel focused its recommendations in three areas and then divided the recommendations in each of those areas into short, mid and long-term efforts. The three focus areas are:

- Towns Along the Corridor
- Infrastructure Along and Connecting to the Corridor
- Collaboration of Partners Along the Corridor



Framework growth plan maps alternative travel route through town centers this include bike lanes and additional sidewalks.

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Towns

In addressing the best way to develop housing options along the Highway 29 corridor to support transit in the future, the panel recommends that the focus shift from attempts to develop additional housing directly on Highway 29 to an emphasis on town nodal development, including the unincorporated Taylors community. During its tour and interviews with stakeholders, the panel found pockets of density already in the towns that could be grown to support transit on the corridor. Those communities have an opportunity to leverage their historic downtowns and distinctive nature. Market research shows that more people prefer the unique attributes that town centers provide.

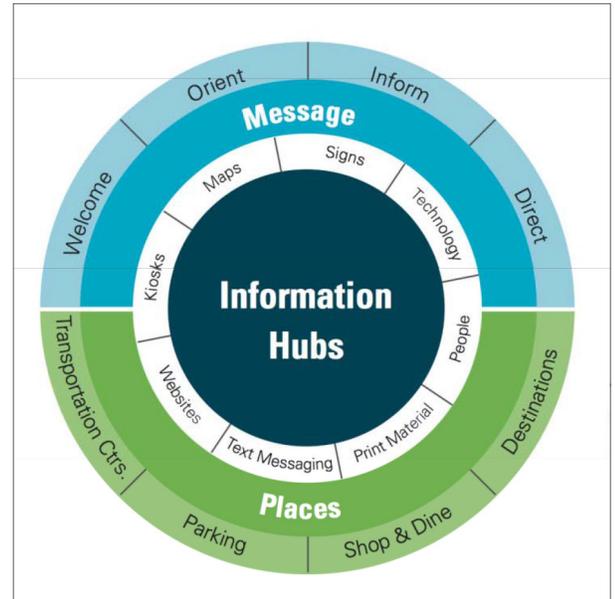
Recommendations

Short Term (present – 1 Year)

- Revisit Land Use and Zoning (in Towns and on Highway 29) to encourage development that supports increased density, mixed use development, permitted land use and rewrite the zoning code to create a comprehensive vision for future development along Highway 29.
- Articulate Identity
 - Implement Design Guidelines (Architecture and Landscaping)
 - Determine & Leverage Community Uniqueness
 - Signage
 - Marketing
- Establish a process for assessing impacts of developments on Highway 29 so that towns do not bear the brunt of costs. The counties and municipalities might consider development impact assessment fees which require the private sector to help fund infrastructure improvements.

Long-Term (present – 10+ years)

- Implementation and Construction of:
 - Lighting
 - Landscaping
 - Signage
 - Bike/Pedestrian paths



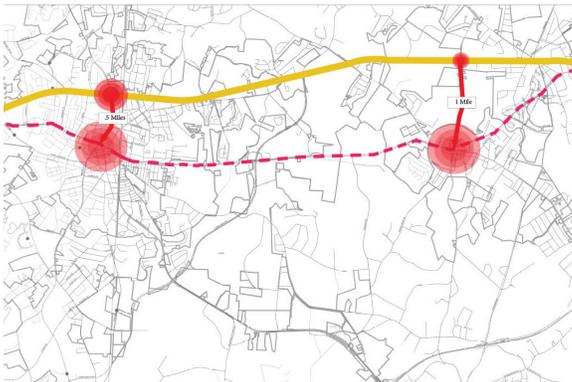
1. Create exterior lighting guidelines for neighborhoods, parks, buildings and streetscapes.
2. Update zoning and design review documents to include energy efficient lighting and associated incentives.
3. Identify lighting goals (i.e. safety, identifying pedestrian connections and aesthetics).

Develop a signage and lighting strategy to enhance public safety and aesthetics.

Framework Growth PLAN



Greenville to Taylors



Taylors to Duncan



Duncan to Spartanburg

Infrastructure

Safe multimodal connectivity and accessibility is necessary for a transit-ready corridor. The panel found that even if transit were currently available along the length of the corridor, there are several glaring infrastructure needs. Improvements are needed to keep traffic flowing at a reasonable rate of speed and to make the corridor safer for pedestrians and cyclists when they need to access it. Multi-modal connectivity is needed along the length of Highway 29. There is not a one size fits all solution for the entire length of the corridor. With a collective vision and plan, strategic interventions including bicycle amenities, streetscape improvements and connections from the towns to the corridor will provide users with increased mobility options.

Recommendations

Short Term (present – 1 Year)

- Take an active role in the Traffic Synchronization implementation.
 - Understand the benefits and manage public education and outreach;
 - Integrate the synchronization into a larger strategic plan for the corridor
- Improve Pedestrian Crosswalks at major retail and residential nodes
 - Identify the principle routes connecting town centers with Highway 29;
 - Provide safe gathering areas for pedestrians at key highway crossings;
 - Reduce crossing width at key intersections

Mid Term (present – 5 years)

- Fill in Sidewalk Gaps, especially as relates to connectivity to bus shelters
- Develop Bicycle/Pedestrian connections from the towns to 29 that correspond with the location of future bus depots.
- Develop a Parallel Bike Path that would offer cyclists connections to nodes along 29 without placing bikes directly on a superhighway
- Construct Bus Pull-Outs on 29 so as not to stop traffic

Long-Term (present – 10+ years)

- Utilizing the key connections between the towns and Highway 29, strategically locate bus depots and Park and Ride Lots
- Reduce the Number of Curb Cuts.
 - Develop guidelines for new development (i.e.



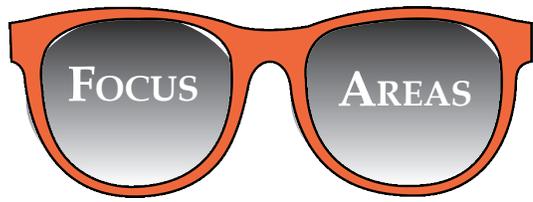
- curb cuts shall not occur within 150' of one another.
- Provide property owners with internal circulation options
- Develop design guidelines for commercial driveways
- Define maximum width, signage and landscape guidelines
- Add Water and Sewer Improvements within the municipalities rather than the unincorporated areas to encourage growth where density exists.

Collaboration

Transforming Highway 29's 23 miles through multiple jurisdictions will require a tremendous effort of coordination & collaboration. Turning Highway 29 into a transit ready corridor will require a single master plan to which all of the jurisdictions are committed. Initially, Upstate Forever is encouraged to take the lead and bring together the prospective partners, but leadership should be determined by the collaborative.

- The Need: A single Master Plan focused on:
 - Expansion of Transit
 - Connectivity to Transit
 - Commercial Development
 - Residential Development
 - Infrastructure Maintenance
- Prospective Partners
 - Counties
 - Greenville County
 - Spartanburg County
 - Municipalities & Communities
 - Greenville
 - Spartanburg
 - Lyman
 - Duncan
 - Wellford
 - Greer
 - Taylors
 - Transit Operators
 - Greenlink / The Greenville Transit Authority
 - SPARTA
 - Governmental Entities
 - Appalachian Council of Governments
 - SCDOT

RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS



A single master plan that addresses...

Expansion of Transit

Connectivity to Transit

Commercial Development

Residential Development

Infrastructure Maintenance

Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (MPO)

Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study (MPO)

Interested Parties

Bike Walk Greenville

Partners for Active Living

Greater Greenville Association of Realtors

Homebuilders Association

Recommendations

Short Term (present – 1 Year)

- Create a Highway 29 Collaborative or Working Group
- Call Meeting of Prospective Partners - Upstate Forever
- Understand Each Group's Motivation
- Define the Group's Charge
- Determine:
 - Leadership
 - Meeting Schedule - (Monthly / Quarterly)
 - Meeting Location -- (Rotate through jurisdictions)

Mid Term (present – 5 years)

- Build Collaborative Capacity
 - Develop Plan for Creating Master Plan
 - Develop Funding Options
 - Create Master Plan

Long-Term (present – 10+ years)

- Seek Approval and Buy-In from All Partners
- Monitor Implementation

Financing

We live in a time of limited funding resources. There is a threat that investments could be diluted by trying to improve the entire 23-mile stretch. Therefore, the panel recommends that any funding be focused to improve biking, walking and accessibility within the town centers where a more human-scale fabric exists. The panel suggested several possible financing avenues for various projects along the corridor:

Sources and Tools Include:

- Real Property Tax Revenues
- Local Option Sales Tax for Transportation
- Grants
- Special Assessment Districts
- Tax Increment Finance Districts

Tax Increment Finance District
Tool to Fund Public Improvements

Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFs) have become a popular tool for paying for public improvements in many jurisdictions and in fact Greer has already used a TIF along its section of the corridor. TIFs:

- Capture the increase in real property taxes in a defined area to help fund specific, desired improvements
- Could be utilized to:
 - Fund improvements at a specific intersection on Highway 29
 - Fund improvements across a broad area (e.g., greenway parallel to Highway 29)
 - Fund improvements in a town center
 - Incentivize desired redevelopment opportunity (e.g., old Exide plant)
- No effect on taxpayers; no decrease in existing tax revenues to governing entities

Example of Tax Increment Financing

Assume a Pine Ridge Road Redevelopment

Public Investment

- \$2,000,000 investment in public improvements (including but not limited to parks and open space, road improvements, bike lanes, water & sewer and sidewalks)
- \$200,000 in annual debt service on a 20 year public borrowing @ 6%

Private Investment

- 100,000 square feet of commercial space built

Tax Revenue

- \$10,000,000 of appraised taxable value
- \$216,000 of incremental tax revenue



THE PANELISTS BIOGRAPHIES



JEFF BAXTER, CO-FOUNDER, CITYVOLVE, NORTH CHARLESTON

Jeff Baxter is a leader in the field of real estate and sustainable development. Before co-founding Cityvolve, Jeff served as the Director of Development for The Noisette Company the master developer for the Navy Yard at Noisette in North Charleston, SC. For close to a decade, Jeff has overseen various planning and redevelopment efforts that include development management, property management, leasing and sales, historic preservation, low-income housing tax credits, and LEED certification at the Navy Yard. Jeff managed and edited the creation of The Noisette Company's 2001-2007 Sustainability Report and oversaw the certification process for the Navy Yard's LEED Neighborhood Development certification—the first in South Carolina. Over the course of his career, Jeff has pursued a passion for tackling complicated redevelopment projects. Jeff was a member of the winning team from Harvard University in the 2003 Urban Land Institute/Gerald

Hines Student Urban Design Competition. The competition challenged teams to create a plan for the redevelopment of an underutilized area of Washington DC in the vicinity of South Capital Street and Anacostia waterfront. During graduate school, Jeff spent a year researching the City of Detroit and potential redevelopment strategies under the direction of Alex Krieger and Matt Kiefer. Following the research project, Jeff co-edited and published *Detroit, A Year-Long Study Examining the City at an Important Moment in its History*. Jeff is an active member in the Urban Land Institute and currently serves on the Executive Committee of the South Carolina District Council. He is an adjunct professor at the College of Charleston and is serving as a Commissioner and Vice Chairman of the North Charleston Housing Authority. Jeff is a LEED accredited professional. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a Bachelors degree in Landscape Architecture and Harvard University with a Masters of Landscape Architecture.

Christiane Farrell, Director of Planning, Town of Mount Pleasant



Ms. Farrell is the Director of Planning and Development for the Town of Mount Pleasant. She has worked for the Town for the Town since 1999 and has served as the Director since 2009. Ms. Farrell graduated from the College of Charleston where she also received a Master Degree in Public Administration. During her time fifteen years with the town, in addition to duties and responsibilities to Town Council and the various Boards and Commissions, Ms. Farrell has been involved in a number of special projects and plans to include the adoption of the Urban Corridor zoning district, a Master Bike and Pedestrian plan, Workforce Housing efforts, Comprehensive Plans, and numerous outreach efforts that encourage and improve communication with the public.



Eleni Glekas, Development Associate, Clement Crawford & Thornhill, Charleston

Eleni Glekas is an urban planner with specialization in sustainability, development and historic preservation. She holds a BA in History from George Mason University, MS in City and Regional Planning from Pratt Institute and a MS in Conservation of Monuments and Sites from the Raymond Lemaire International Center for Conservation at KU Leuven in Belgium where she specialized in heritage-based and sustainable planning techniques. Eleni also holds professional training certificates in Form Based Codes and masonry conservation. She is a member of the Urban Land Institute and also serves on the board of the US Green Building Council-South Carolina Chapter.



Tracy Hegler, Director of Planning, Richland County

Ms. Tracy Hegler is the Planning Director for the Planning and Development Services Department in Richland County, SC, which is home to the State’s capital city and a population of over 390,000. Prior to that, Tracy served as a Senior Project Manager with Hall Planning & Engineering, Inc., developing designs and reports for multi-modal transportation programs. Her work centered on traditional neighborhood design principles, with development structure identified first, and then transportation solutions crafted to fit the specific, desired context. Before joining HPE, she worked with the Florida Space Authority as the Manager of Spaceport Transportation Planning and then Director of Planning and Spaceport Transportation. Here she was responsible for developing a Five Year Work Program for the state of Florida’s space-related transportation needs and assisted in coordinating with NASA/Kennedy Space Center and

the USAF/Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on the long-range comprehensive master planning for the Cape Canaveral Spaceport.

Tracy holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of South Carolina in Sociology and a master’s degree from Florida State University in Urban and Regional Planning.



Grant Jackson, Principal, GrantJax Communications, Columbia

C. Grant Jackson is a private consultant for economic & community development, strategic planning and communications. Prior to forming GrantJax Communications, he served as Senior Vice President for Community Development for the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce from 2008 to 2013.

Grant joined the chamber following a long career as a newspaper journalist. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Mercer University in Macon, GA, and a Master of Arts in journalism from the University of Missouri. He is a graduate of ULI’s Center for Sustainable Leadership and was involved in planning and execution for the 2011 Columbia Connectivity ULI Technical Assistance Panel: Linking Main Street and the Vista, and in the ULI National Advisory Services Panel in 2013 on Columbia: Strategies for a Connected

City.

Josh Martin, Principal, Director of Planning & Strategy, Turnberry Consulting US, AICP, CNU-A, Washington D.C.

Named as one of the top 30 young professional urban planners in 2009 by Next American City, Josh Martin possesses nearly fourteen (14) years of public, private, and non-profit sector urban planning experience. As Director of Planning & Strategy at Turnberry Consulting US, Josh has led numerous strategic development projects including urban infill projects; development feasibility and financial studies; retail and commercial schemes; regional and community master plans; and the implementation of the retrofit of suburbia. Nearly seven (7) years of Josh's professional experience resides within the City of Charleston (SC) and Charleston Region as a whole. Josh served as the City of Charleston's first-ever Director of Planning, Preservation, and Economic Innovation under the direct supervision of Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Currently, as a private sector consultant to developers, private property owners, and real estate investment entities Josh operates within the realms of urban planning, urban design, project management (consultant team management), entitlements including vast experience and success in the US, UK, and Canada. As a result, Josh maintains an inimitable understanding of the development review, public outreach, and entitlement processes involved with land regulation as well as codifying master planning efforts via innovative zoning mechanisms that yield the places envisioned during the master planning efforts. Josh's unique approach to coding and incentivizing physical redevelopment involves tools that are easy for the public sector to administer and easy for the private sector to understand thus creating "business-friendly" redevelopment areas in towns, districts, and cities alike. Professionally, Martin has been consistently active in the Congress for the New Urbanism, American Planning Association, Urban Land Institute, Next American City, and the Seaside Institute.

Who is ULI

ULI was founded in 1936 as a nonprofit institute to facilitate the open exchange of ideas and information among local, national, and international real estate industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. Today it has more than 37,000 members worldwide.

ULI does not lobby or act as an advocate for any single industry. The Institute is committed to providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities through the experience of its members.

It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

ULI South Carolina

ULI South Carolina was founded in 2005 to support the larger mission of ULI. The District Council has some 500 members across the state who are working to support the mission by growing leadership, weaving the state together and creating a blueprint for statewide growth.



Panel Members from Left to right: Grant Jackson, Josh Martin, Tracy Hegler (chair), Eleni Glekas, Jeff Baxter, Christianne Farrell and Thad Wilson



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