WHAT IS A CATALYST AREA?

Catalyst areas are activity centers where regional and/or local goods and services and housing are concentrated. There will be a variety of activity centers within the Neck area, each containing diverse elements that cater to the varying needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Catalyst areas serve as focal points of the community. They are transportation hubs where vehicular and pedestrian networks converge to create high levels of accessibility and connectivity and comfortable and convenient transportation options for a wide range of users.

Catalyst areas offer a high level of accessibility.

- They are connected to a local street grid.
- They introduce higher performing transit networks.
- They have good regional visibility and roadway access.

Catalyst areas provide a unique and distinctive sense of place that strengthen the community and facilitate social interaction.

Catalyst Site Development

Community Activity Centers can include employment centers, shopping centers, entertainment centers and neighborhood centers.

SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH

Catalyst areas can help make the Neck area not only an attractive and quality environment, but a highly competitive center for new investment in the region.

- They are **strategically located** to provide services to existing neighborhoods as well as support regional economic growth.
- The development of catalyst areas will **attract new construction and investment to the Neck area** that has the opportunity to create long term sustainable growth for the region.
- Catalyst areas will be different sizes to **fit the appropriate community scale and serve the needs of surrounding neighborhoods**. Focusing development in these areas first will help spur additional growth and economic vitality throughout the Neck area.

BENEFITS OF CATALYST AREAS

Catalyst areas offer several tangible benefits including:

- Potential to support a mix of uses and complementary new development/redevelopment because of their geographic location and transportation network,
- Function as a hub for improved transit service and location for future passenger rail or Bus Rapid Transit stations. Catalyst areas provide a logical spacing and organizational structure for transit to serve the region and the Neck area better,
- Infuse both new sites and redevelopment with the Neck area's distinctive character,
- Attract high demand and innovative businesses, and
- Create livable neighborhoods.

THE EIGHT CATALYST AREAS

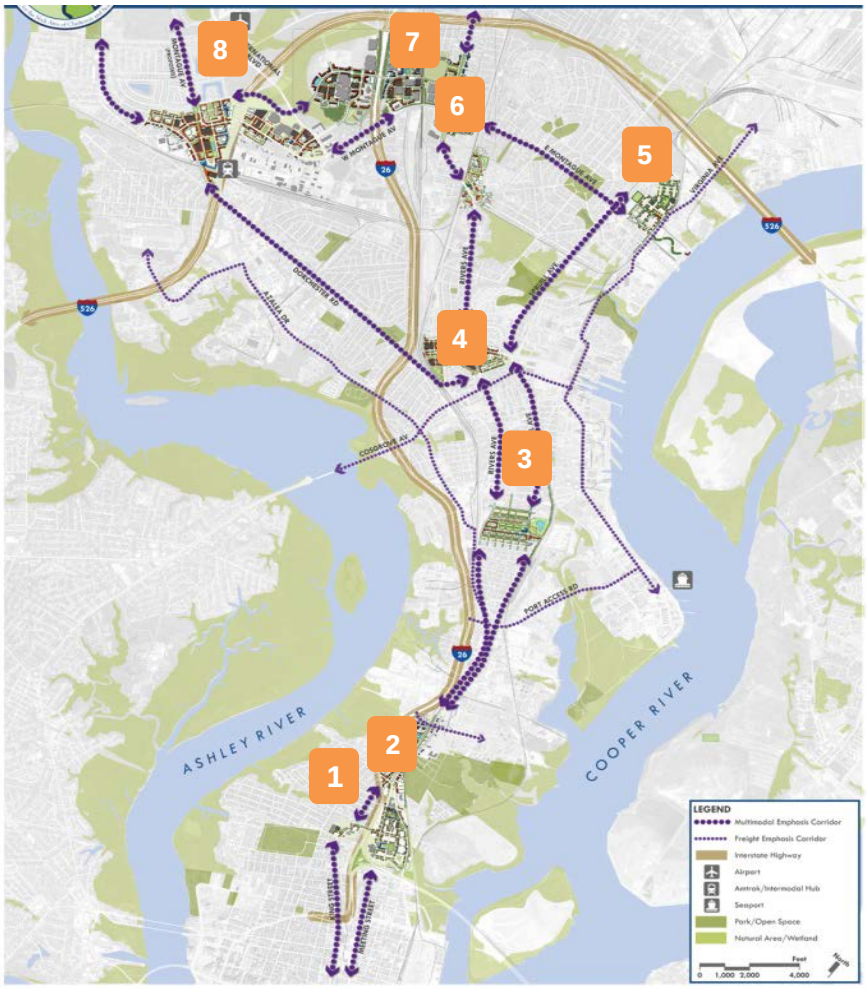
The Master Plan identifies eight catalyst areas.

While some areas may transition to other uses over time, this general layout of districts will help guide catalyst development opportunities as part of an organized system.

The Eight Catalyst Areas:

1. South of Mount Pleasant Street
2. North of Mount Pleasant Street
3. Stromboli Corridor
4. Shipwatch Square
5. Olde North Charleston
6. Amtrak Station
7. Mall Drive
8. Convention Center

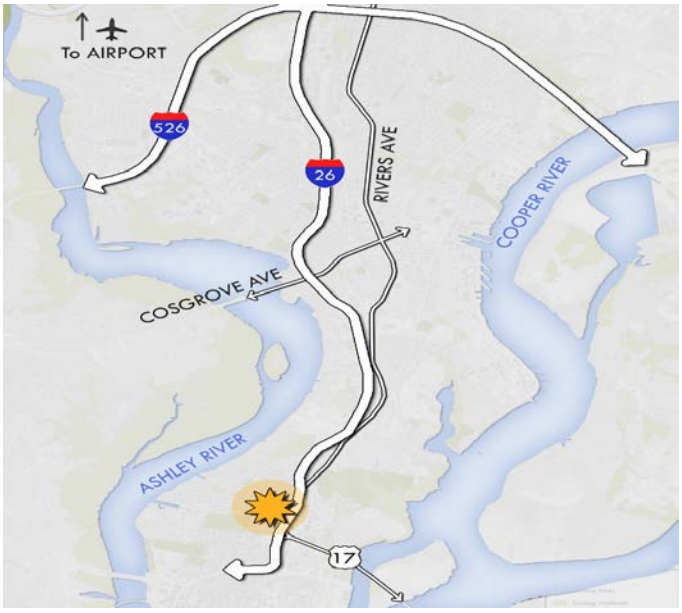
Location of Catalyst Areas



SETTING

The South of Mount Pleasant Street catalyst area is located just **north of downtown Charleston** and the established residential neighborhoods that surround the Citadel and Hampton Park.

- It is still part of the well-connected grid street system that originates in the historic district, providing access to downtown from points north along the peninsula that run through the heart of this catalyst area.
- Both I-26 and US 17 have exits that provide direct access to major roadways within the catalyst area.



Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

This catalyst area is located within the Gateway District of the Charleston Digital Corridor.

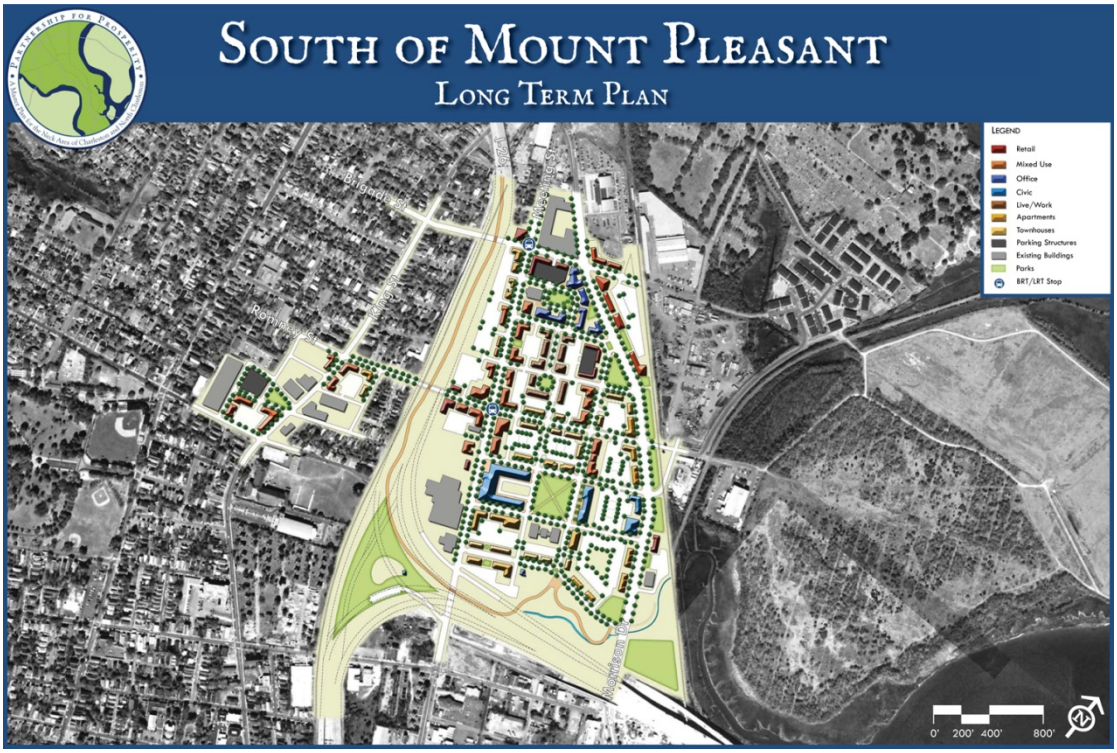
- This initiative offers **incentives, resources, and support to entrepreneurs** and professionals in an effort to facilitate a business and social environment where technology companies can thrive.
- With companies like **Radiate Technologies** and **Equiscript LLC** already established in areas along the fringes of the catalyst area, the Charleston Digital Corridor is actively marketing sites on Meeting Street to prospective occupants.
- The City and the BCDCOG can **build on this established marketing network** to further promote and develop catalyst opportunities along both Meeting Street and Morrison Street.

Future sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT AREA

Building heights in the southern portion of the catalyst area are envisioned as mid-rise (3-5 stories), similar to the scale of the Cool Blow building, with one or two landmark buildings at seven to nine stories in order to **visually rise above the elevated interstate sections** located along the perimeter of the area. This height would allow views of the Ashley and Cooper Rivers and also be an orienting feature for travelers entering Charleston. In the northern portion of the catalyst area, building heights are envisioned as low-rise (1-3 stories) to act as a **transition and complement** to the scale of existing uses.

- **New transit stops** for a future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT) system are planned for the intersections of Meeting Street at Brigade Street and Romney Street.
- An extension of the existing shared use path under I-26 and Low Line will **improve accessibility** for non-auto travel modes.
- The gridded street system **facilitates pedestrian and bicycle connections** to transit and destinations within the catalyst area.



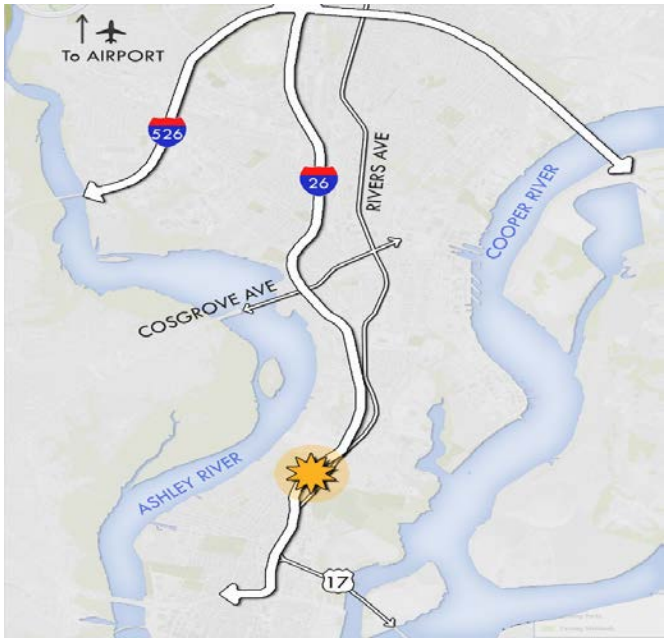
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **850 residential dwelling units** and **1,000,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area.

SETTING

The **North of Mount Pleasant Street catalyst area** is a transitional district. While the southern fringe still contains remnants of the gridded street network projecting north from downtown Charleston, this residential area soon gives way to commercial and light industrial uses between I-26 and King Street, ending the pattern of street connectivity.

- The narrow wedge of land between King and Meeting Streets contains railroad tracks and a mix of residential and small commercial lots, while on the east side of Meeting Street, Magnolia Cemetery provides a large open space.
- There are a number of historic structures in this catalyst area that should be preserved or redeveloped with appropriate uses.



Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

With this area **envisioned to continue as a transitional district** with a mix of both residential and non-residential uses, catalyst opportunities for both types of uses should be promoted, as well as public uses to help **promote economic opportunity** and provide needed community services for the area residents.

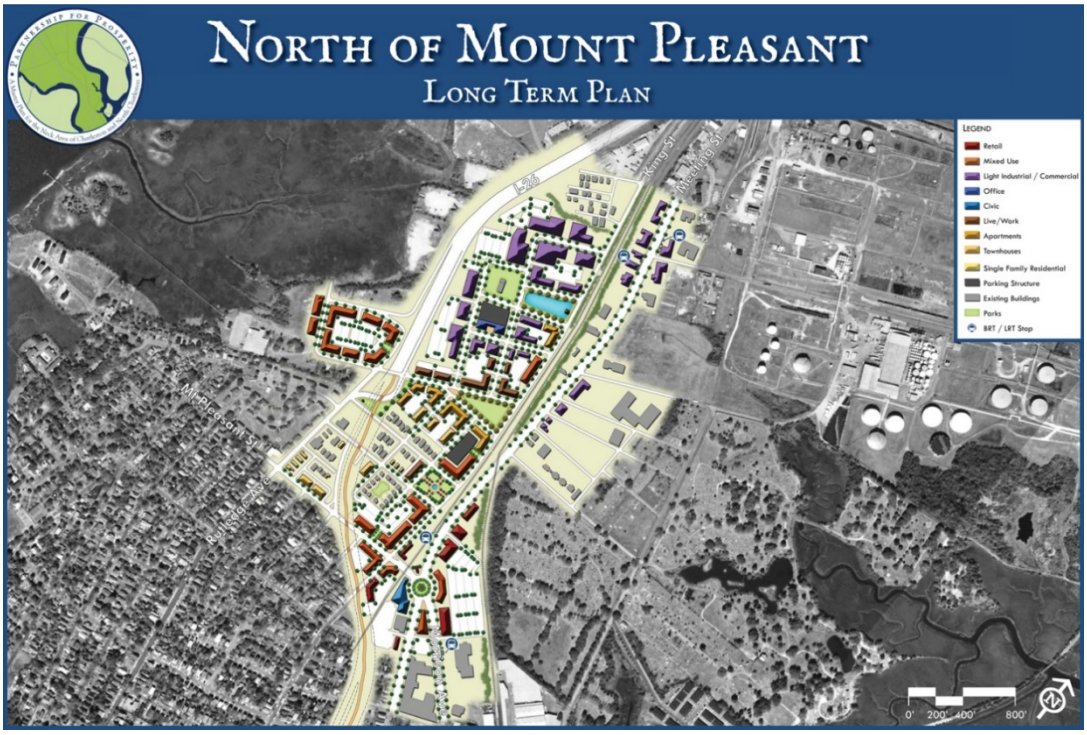
- Residential development should be accompanied by **open space and recreational facilities** that are greatly lacking in this part of the Neck area.
- There are several vacant or underutilized properties along King Street that could **provide development sites** and **create new neighborhood destinations**.

North of Mount Pleasant Future Sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The heart of this catalyst area will be the Meeting Street/Mount Pleasant Street intersection – buildings in this area are envisioned as mid-rise (5-7 stories) with higher density uses centered on a transit core for future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT) systems. This **high level of accessibility** and **connectivity** is expected to **enhance the prospects for development** and spur greater levels of activity in this location.

- Other areas will be mid-rise (3-5 stories), transitioning down to low-rise (1-3 stories) adjacent to existing uses, especially to the north near open space areas and industrial uses.
- Another transit stop is planned for Meeting Street at Greenleaf Street to **enhance accessibility** from the north end of the catalyst area to other destinations along the Neck area's multimodal spine that runs along the peninsula.



DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **400 residential dwelling units and 700,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area. Residential product developed for each phase of the catalyst area transition should include a **variety of housing options for low income seniors** in the event the Joseph Floyd Manor is redeveloped for other uses.

SETTING

The **Stromboli Corridor catalyst area** currently consists primarily of large lot industrial uses and container storage areas that effectively separate the Five Mile and Windsor neighborhoods between Carner Avenue and Spruill Avenue.

- There are some residential, commercial and civic uses along the southern (Hampton Avenue) and northern (Jacksonville Road) fringes of the catalyst area, as well as vacant residential lots scattered throughout.
- Stromboli Avenue is closed between Column Street and Carner Avenue. Park South, an underutilized City of North Charleston recreation facility, is located on the east side of Spruill Avenue between Stromboli Avenue and Jacksonville Road.

Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

This area is envisioned as a **community activity center**, **local services node** and **focal point for social gathering and interaction**, catalyst opportunities should be oriented toward civic uses such as a community center, workforce training, health care amenities, education facilities and other programs that help promote economic opportunity and prosperity and provide needed community services for neighborhood residents.

- There are several large underutilized properties along Stromboli Avenue that could serve as **community anchors**, providing neighborhood destinations and facilitating multimodal connections between existing residential areas to the north and south.

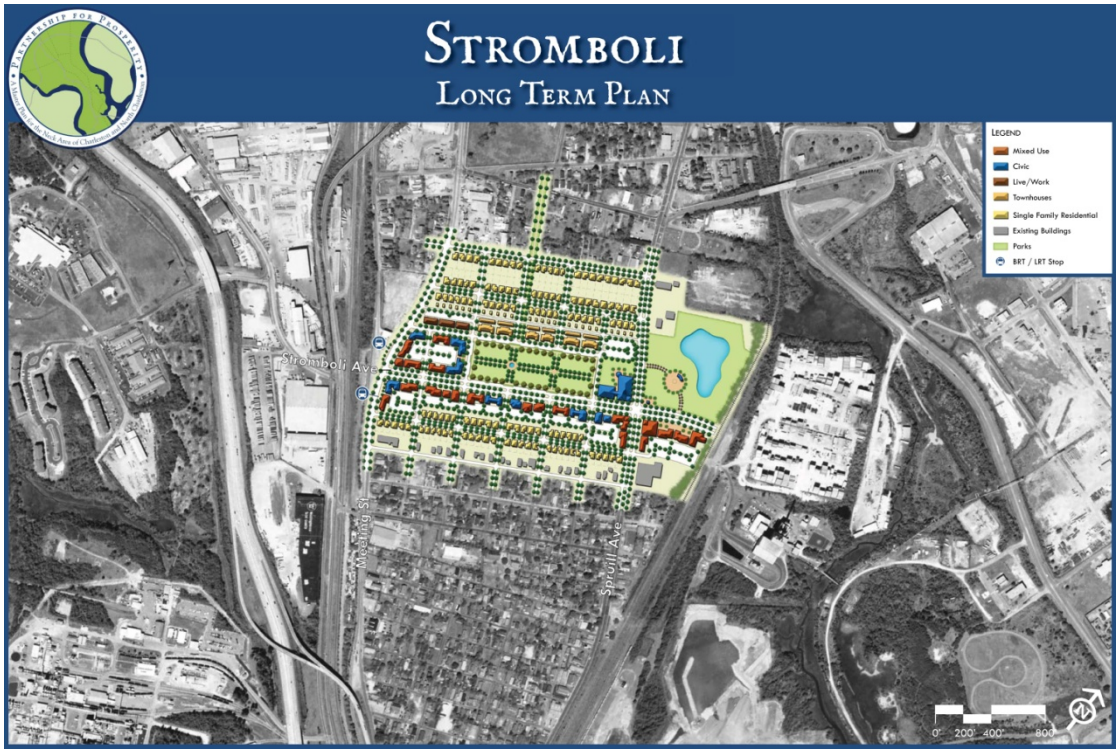
Stromboli Corridor Present

Stromboli Corridor Future

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Buildings in this catalyst area are envisioned primarily as low-rise (1-2 stories) to **complement the existing residential character of the area** and adjacent uses. Buildings on the key Stromboli Avenue intersection corners of Carner Avenue and Spruill Avenue could rise to 3-4 stories to act as **gateway elements and focal points**.

- A transit stop is planned for Stromboli Avenue at Carner Avenue to **connect** the neighborhood residents to the larger transportation spine of the Neck area and facilitate access to community services.



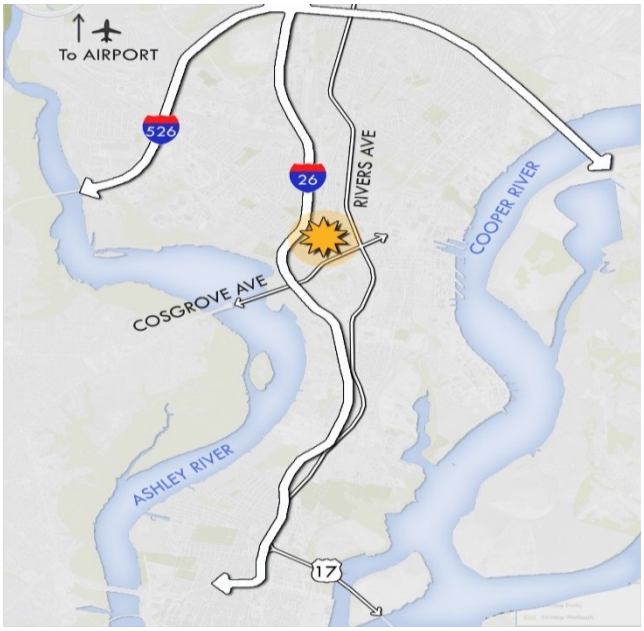
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **300 residential dwelling units and 280,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area, which is consistent with preliminary program numbers for the Stromboli area from the LAMC Final Plan. Non-residential uses as envisioned in this Concept Plan include **150,000 square feet of retail; 50,000 square feet of commercial/office;** and **80,000 square feet of civic/institutional.**

SETTING

The **Shipwatch Square catalyst area** is a core activity node of the community. Centered on Rivers Avenue, this area once thrived as a result of military activities at the Charleston Naval Complex and drew people from all parts of the Neck.

- At the Rivers/McMillan intersection, once a main entrance into the former Naval Complex, two shopping centers and a hospital sit underutilized, closed or demolished.
- A variety of small lot commercial uses, residences, and civic uses surround the intersection.
- Reynolds Avenue, another entrance into the former Naval Complex, now contains local commercial uses, offices and several churches.

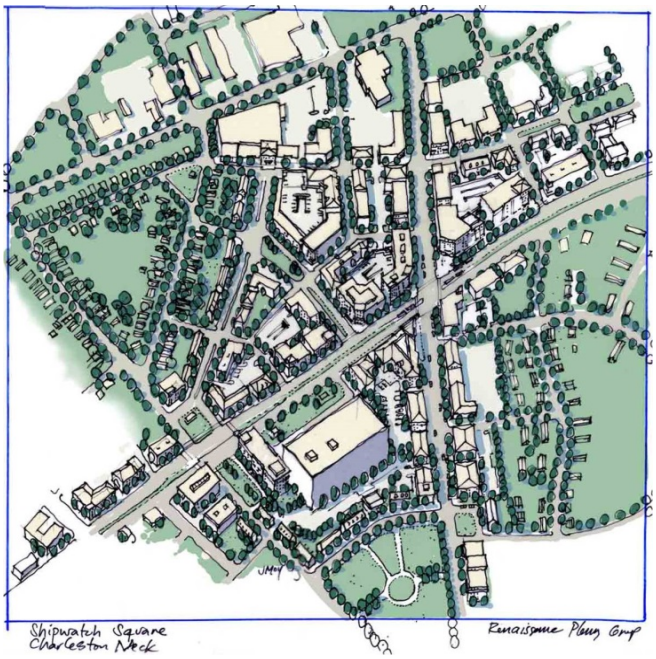


Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

This area has traditionally been a **community activity center**, offering goods and services to people from all portions of the Neck area, as well as military personnel living elsewhere. Its central location along the Rivers Avenue spine provides an easily accessible and highly visible location.

- This intersection can provide the catalyst opportunities that begin the **revitalization** of this area. With the demolition of the old Shipwatch Square complete, this site is ready for new development.
- A **mixed use core** that includes a grocery store and drug store, along with open space for use by new residents and those of adjacent neighborhoods, can provide much-needed commercial activity and social interaction and help spur other retail and civic uses in the area.

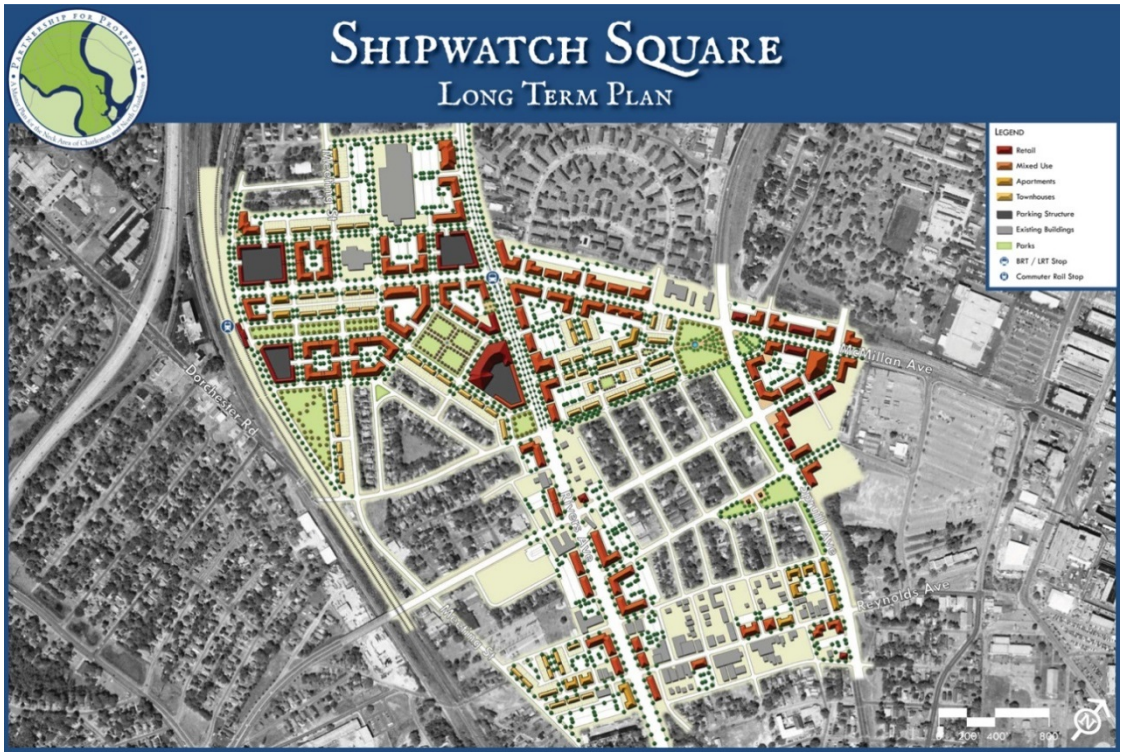


Shipwatch Square Future Sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The **Rivers/McMillan intersection** is the core of this catalyst area and building heights around this area are envisioned as mid-rise (5-7 stories), similar to that of the existing navy hospital.

- Development in the core area will **capitalize on the regional and local connectivity** provided by new transit service – a planned commuter rail station, a planned BRT/LRT station, and an expanded and relocated CARTA Super Stop for local bus service.
- From this core, buildings will transition into mid-rise (3-5 stories) and low-rise (1-3 stories) further out to complement existing uses and neighborhoods. While Rivers Avenue is an important freight route within the Neck area, the Master Plan recommends a number of improvements and actions meant to **balance the competing needs of users** of this key roadway.



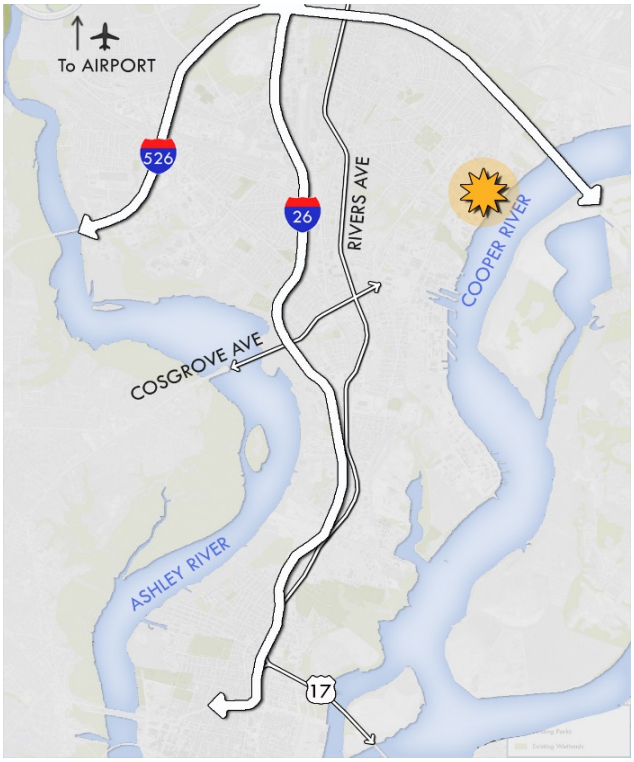
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **500 residential dwelling units and 700,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area.

SETTING

The **Olde North Charleston catalyst area** is a neighborhood activity center. Situated between the residential lots around Park Circle and the industrial uses along the Cooper River, this area developed in the early 1900's as a business district.

- Montague Avenue and several blocks to the north, primarily between Jenkins Avenue and Virginia Avenue, still function as a **neighborhood commercial core**, with residential and civic uses to the north and south.
- Over the last decade, the revitalization of Olde North Charleston and the Park Circle neighborhood into a desirable destination has become a tremendous success story for the City and an example for the Neck area. That success serves as an **impetus for improvements and investment** in adjacent neighborhoods.



Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

Even though this is an established area with a long and rich history, there are still catalyst opportunities along Montague Avenue that can **spur new growth** along this main street corridor.

- There are several vacant parcels that can be developed with a mix of workplace, neighborhood commercial or residential uses that can **effectively complete the street face**.
- This new development, along with other underutilized buildings, can introduce vertical mixed uses to **expand housing choices** and provide needed goods and services.

Olde North Charleston Virginia Avenue Future Sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The Building heights in this catalyst area are envisioned to be low-rise (1-3 stories) to match the existing character and street face and complement the residential scale.

- Multimodal accessibility continues to be provided through local bus service, but access by other modes will be enhanced by the addition of a **planned multi-use trail** for pedestrians and bicyclists alongside a reconfigured Virginia Avenue, as well as new **sidewalks and bike lanes or sharrows**.
- Virginia Avenue is an important **"through route"** for freight movement, but also will be designed to safely accommodate non-automobile travel in a separated right-of-way.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **250 residential dwelling units and 700,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area, along with civic and open space that provides residents access to the Cooper River.

SETTING

The **Amtrak Station catalyst area** is a neighborhood center. Located off Rivers Avenue just north of Durant Avenue, this area is bordered to the north by the Liberty Hill neighborhood; to the east by the Mixson development - planned to include residential units, shops and civic spaces; and to the west by CSX railroad tracks.

- The historic train station and adjacent parking lots anchor the area, which also includes light industrial, commercial and civic uses.
- Gaynor Street connects the catalyst area to Montague Avenue on the north and Rivers Avenue and Durant Avenue on the south.

Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

With the upcoming planned relocation of Amtrak service to a new Intermodal Station, **preservation of the existing historic train station site** can serve as a catalyst opportunity.

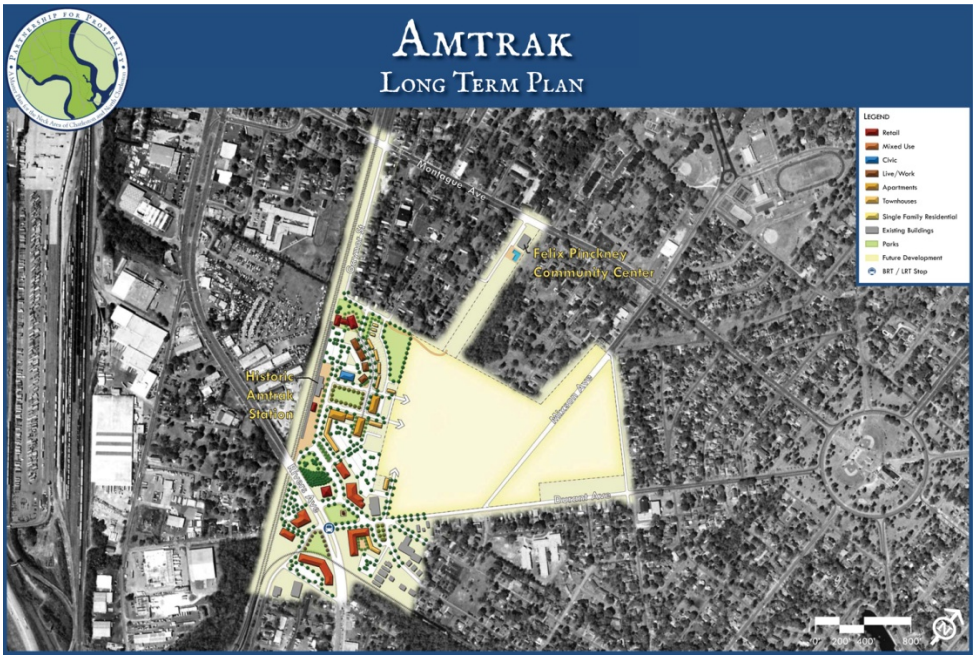
- The structure itself can be **renovated** to provide much needed community meeting space and office space
- The outside areas, now used for parking and loading, can be **converted to green spaces** that can be used for community events and recreation, helping integrate this area into the fabric of the Liberty Hill neighborhood
- The site would continue under ownership of CSX, and would be leased for its new purpose(s) with separation from the rail tracks, which will **remain active for freight traffic**.

Amtrak Station

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Building heights in this catalyst area should be low-rise (1-3 stories) to complement the historic Amtrak Station, not overpower it. This scale will also complement the adjacent Mixson development. However, due to the difference in elevation between Gaynor Street and Rivers Avenue, some mid-rise (3-5 stories) buildings may be needed to provide visibility and focal points.

- Rivers Avenue provides **accessibility to the rest of the Neck area** and points beyond the peninsula through enhanced bus service, while improvements in local connectivity enhance the circulation between the catalyst area and the neighborhoods that surround it.
- If the Intermodal Station is located in this catalyst area, the **look and feel of the Rivers/Durant intersection changes** as the catalyst area is now a regional gateway instead of a neighborhood center.
- Roadway modifications may be needed to **accommodate the expanded variety of transportation services** that will be accessing the area. Existing neighborhood areas will need enhanced buffering from the impacts of the additional vehicular activities.



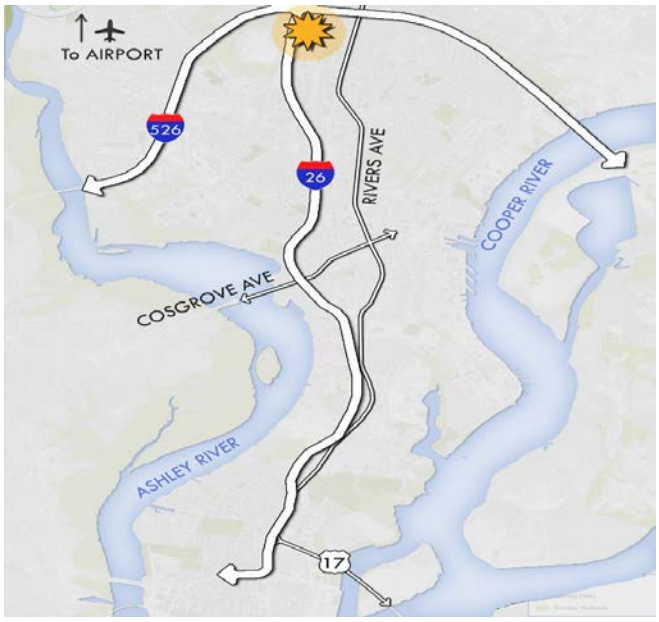
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **400 residential dwelling units and 50,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area. If the Intermodal Station is moved to this catalyst area, the amount of non-residential uses increases and **shifts from neighborhood-oriented to community-oriented** to provide the retail services and amenities needed by commuters and travelers.

SETTING

The **Mall Drive catalyst area** is a regional activity center. I-26 bisects the area and intersects I-526 directly to the north. Rivers Avenue, Montague Avenue and International Boulevard, each with exits from either I-26 or I-526, complete the framework for this important area.

- The western portion of the catalyst area, sitting directly north of the Convention Center campus, is primarily a commercial district with small lot and big box retail, hotels and restaurants.
- The eastern portion of the catalyst area consists of a mix of civic, commercial and light industrial uses, including the City of North Charleston Municipal Complex.



Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

The Mall Drive area is part of a larger area dubbed the "Gateway Entertainment District." With its gateway visibility, this area presents an **opportunity to become an urban center** with offices, retail, multi-family residential and related uses functioning as a well-connected core node.

There are two broad catalyst opportunities:

- The first is to begin **mixed use development** in the City Hall area, centered on the potential commuter rail station location.
- The second catalyst opportunity is the empty City Council building. This site **occupies a prominent location**, positioning itself nicely to actively participate in the transformation of this core area.

Entertainment District Future Sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Building heights in the City Hall area are envisioned to be mid-rise (3-5 stories), with higher mid-rise (5-7 stories) around the commuter rail transit core. In the Tanger Outlet area, buildings will be low-rise (1-3 stories), with some mid-rise (3-5 stories) as focal points. Along Rivers Avenue and Montague Avenue, buildings will be low-rise (1-3 stories) transitioning into the existing neighborhoods.

- Connectivity within the catalyst area will be enhanced by a **new circulator street** that essentially extends Mall Drive across I-26, uniting the two halves of the area.
- The regional access and visibility provided by I-26 and Rivers Avenue, combined with airport proximity and rail transit access, can make this catalyst area a **prime target** for future redevelopment.

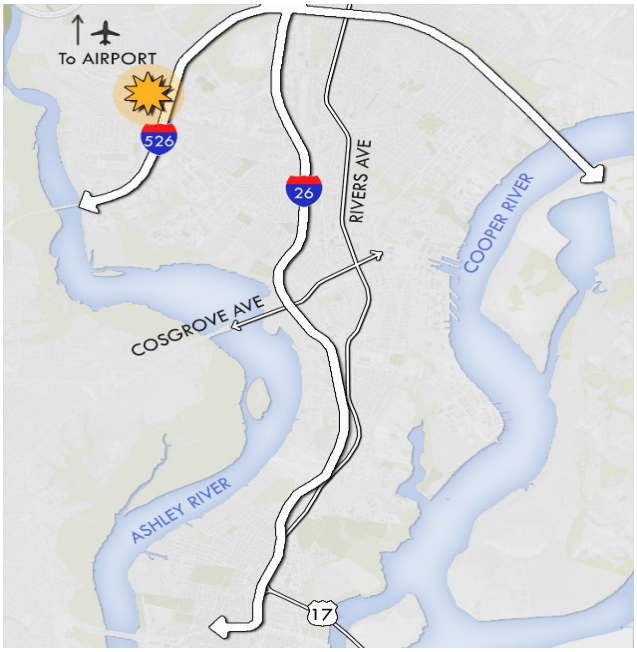
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **2,000,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area, as well as select corporate/short term/transient housing options.

SETTING

The **Convention Center catalyst area** functions as a regional gateway. This area is easily accessible from all parts of Charleston as well as from regional destinations.

- The Charleston International Airport and Boeing manufacturing plant are located directly to the north and west and are **major economic drivers** that influence this catalyst area.
- The North Charleston Coliseum, Performing Arts Center, Charleston Area Convention Center and commercial uses form a **campus-style core** that serves as a regional draw.
- The planned Intermodal Station is **accessible by both road and rail.**



Vicinity Map

CATALYST OPPORTUNITIES

The catalyst opportunity that will help start development and redevelopment in this area is **construction of the Intermodal Station.** The completion of this facility will bring a variety of users to this area, both those commuting locally and those coming in from other locales via Amtrak, Greyhound or the Charleston International Airport.

- This project sets the tone for the entire catalyst area and begins the transformation to a **mixed use regional activity center.**
- If the Intermodal Station moves from this area to the Amtrak Station area, the area designated for this activity can be used as an **employment core** without changing the basic dynamics of the catalyst area.

Convention Center Area Future Sketch

FORM AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Building heights in the western portion of the catalyst area (west of I-526) are envisioned as low-rise (1-3 stories) that transition into existing neighborhoods, with mid-rise buildings (3-5 stories) around the Intermodal Station core area. In the eastern portion of the catalyst area (east of I-526), buildings are envisioned as mid-rise (3-7 stories), complementing the mass and height of the Coliseum complex.

- This portion of the catalyst area will benefit from **connectivity to the Mall Drive area** via a new circulator shuttle bus system along the extended Centre Pointe Drive across I-26 to Mall Drive.
- This will link the Intermodal Station area to the **regional accessibility** provided by the new commuter rail and BRT/LRT transit systems running along the Neck's multimodal spine.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The preliminary planning level program derived from the Long Term Concept Plan shows that approximately **450 residential dwelling units and 2,000,000 square feet of non-residential uses** could be accommodated in this catalyst area.