Draft

DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan

A collaborative planning effort of the residents of the DuPont-Wappoo Community, area business owners, stakeholders, the City of Charleston, and Charleston County

CHARLESTON COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

April 22, 2016 Draft

DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan

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DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan

1. Plan Overview

The DuPont | Wapoo Community Plan project area generally includes the area bounded by Sam Rittenberg Boulevard, Wappoo Road, and Savannah Highway, as shown in more detail on the map on the next page. Approximately half of the properties in the project area are in the City of Charleston and the other half are in unincorporated Charleston County. The DuPont | Wappoo Community originally contained plantations, which became truck farms in the early 1900s, and then developed as suburbs following World War II. Many of the land uses and structures that have developed over time are becoming, or will soon become, obsolete making the area ripe for redevelopment.

Both Charleston County Council and the City of Charleston Council recognized the issues facing the community and directed their respective staff members to collaborate with each other and the community to address the fragmented land use and zoning designations, deteriorating traffic conditions and aging transportation infrastructure, severe drainage issues, the desire of residents to create a neighborhood center that is cohesive with the greater West Ashley Area, and the need to create predictable development patterns for the growth and redevelopment that will occur in the future.

The DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan is the outcome of that objective and is the result of a year-long collaborative planning process including input from hundreds of residents, business owners, stakeholders, and representatives from non-profit organizations and governmental agencies. The Plan describes the public participation process and includes a series of recommended implementation strategies formulated to address the issues identified by the community and achieve their vision for the area. A summary of the public comments gathered during the public participation process can be found in the Appendix.

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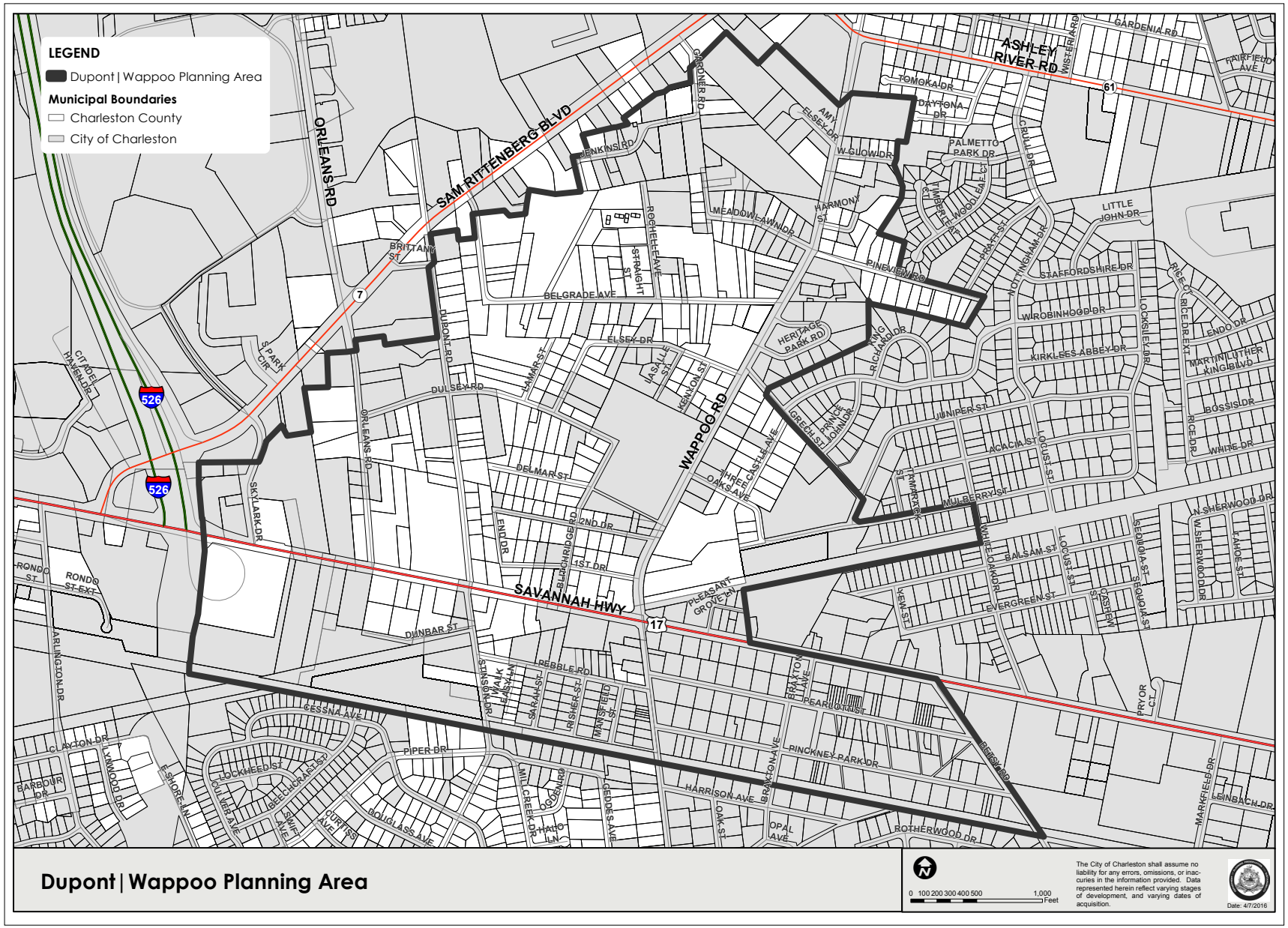
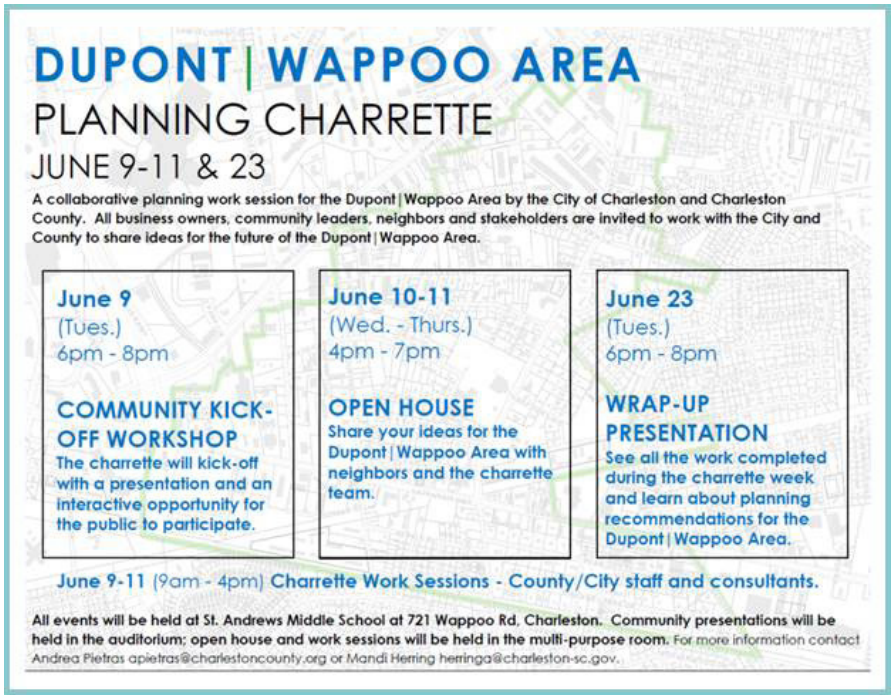


2. Public Participation

The project began with a four-day public workshop (June 9 - 11, 2015) hosted by Charleston County and the City of Charleston at St. Andrews Middle School (see the flier pictured to the right). A project kick-off meeting was held on June 9, at which time the public was invited to share their concerns and ideas for the area. On June 10 and 11, the public was invited to attend open house sessions to share ideas and see the planning work in progress. Attendees gave input on land use, multi-modal transportation improvements, drainage and stormwater issues, economic development and community needs, as well as design and development standards. County and City planning staff also met with stakeholders (drainage and transportation experts, business leaders, etc.) to gather input to present to the community during the workshop process, and conducted windshield surveys of the area.

On June 23, the public was invited to attend a wrap-up meeting where the results of the charrette were presented along with planning recommendations and next steps; and additional public input was also gathered.

Following the June 23 meeting, County and City representatives coordinated to draft a new overlay/zoning district that addresses the land use, zoning, and design needs identified by the public. They also worked with other agencies and organizations to identify potential solutions to transportation, drainage, and community issues. On January 27, 2016, Charleston County and the City of Charleston hosted another community meeting to present the proposed new overlay/zoning district for the Dupont | Wappoo Community; give updates regarding traffic and transportation, drainage and stormwater, economic development, revitalization, and other community elements; discuss proposed implementation strategies and next steps; and gather additional feedback from the public.



Notifications for all public meetings and workshops were sent to all area property owners, residents, businesses, stakeholders, and interested parties and press releases were sent to all media outlets. Almost 650 people attended one or more of the public workshops/input sessions. The information gathered from the public is summarized in the Appendix and is organized by topic, including:

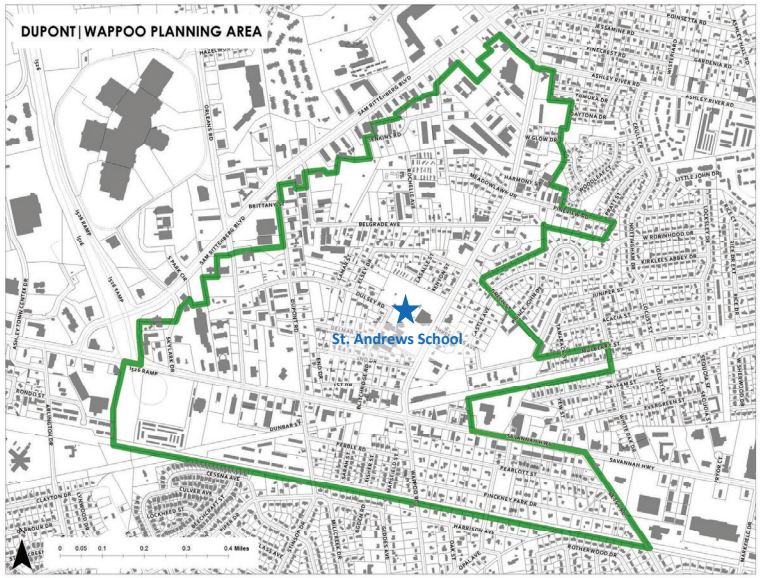
- Community Elements;
- Land Use, Zoning, and Design Standards;
- Economic Development and Revitalization;
- Traffic and Transportation;
- Drainage and Stormwater; and
- Streetscape/Beautification.

DUPONT | WAPPOO AREA

COMMUNITY MEETING
January 27, 6:00 PM

St. Andrews Middle School Auditorium (721 Wappoo Rd)

The public is invited to this follow-up community meeting co-hosted by the City of Charleston and Charleston County. City and County representatives will present a proposed new zoning overlay for the area as well as updates regarding traffic and transportation, drainage, land use, design standards and other community elements identified during the June 2015 workshops.



For more information contact Andrea Pietras apietras@charlestoncounty.org or Mandi Herring herringa@charleston-sc.gov or visit www.charleston-sc.gov/projects.

3. Plan Implementation Strategies

Listed below are the recommended implementation strategies to address the issues identified by the community and achieve their vision for the area.

1. Adopt the DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan, corresponding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and amendments to comprehensive plans and zoning and land development regulations ordinances, including but not limited to overlay zoning districts and zoning district changes, as applicable *(timeframe: complete adoption process within 6 to 12 months). *See page 7 for the draft Overlay Zoning District map as of April 8, 2016 and page 8 for examples of development currently existing in the area that the community would like to see emulated and that the Overlay Zoning District regulations are intended to encourage.*

2. Prioritize the projects included in numbers 3 through 8 below *(timeframe: begin within 6 to 12 months).*

3. Community Elements Strategies

- Work with property owners and applicable agencies to revitalize and beautify the intersection of Wappoo Road and Savannah Highway *(see page 9 for an example of how the area could be redeveloped to implement this strategy).* This strategy includes, but is not limited to:
  - Pulling the buildings up to the roads to give the area a unique and memorable character;
  - Planting street trees;
  - Adding a median;
  - Connecting the West Ashley Greenway and West Ashley Bikeway; and
  - Ensuring the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Work with local non-profit organizations and area residents to host community events.
- Create a DuPont | Wappoo Community brand through a community driven visioning process to enhance West Ashley's image, and highlight pride points such as West Ashley's strong senst of community, great neighborhoods, local businesses, and unique parks and public spaces.
- Identify a location and lauch a West Ashley Farmers Market.
- Construct a West Ashley Senior's Center.
- Provide greater citizen support through staff availability, outreach, etc.

4. Land Use, Zoning, and Design Standards Strategies

- Monitor and evaluate updated zoning ordinances and amend as needed.

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5. Economic Development and Revitalization

- Investigate methods to incentivize existing businesses to revitalize the exteriors of their buildings.
- Increase outreach efforts to commercial real estate brokers to share West Ashley plans and reviatlization efforts.
- Increase business development and retail recruitment efforts.
- Encourage infill redevelopment by:
  - Supporting local businesses;
  - Assisting businesses in finding great locations in West Ashley and navigating city/county permitting processes; and
  - Facilitating professional connections and helping to identify financial resources.

6. Traffic and Transportation

- Conduct a comprehensive transportation study for West Ashley.
- Continue to actively pursue traffic and trasnportation improvements such as intersection improvements for Savannah Highway/Wappoo Road, Savannah Highway/DuPont Road, and Svannah Highway/Orleans Road.
- Optimize traffic signal timing and continue to monitor, evaluate, and adjust as needed.
- Approach the BCDCOG about a multi-modal study for Savannah Highway.
- Coordinate with CARTA to upgrade existing bus stops to include shelters, sitting areas, etc. and add new bus stops with the same amenities.
- Begin implementation of the City of Charleston's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the area. **The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan can be found on page 12.*
- Coordinate with the appropriate transportation authority to address pedestrian safety issues, including but not limited to the lack of a crosswalk at the DuPont Rd/Stinson Rd and Savannah Hwy intersection.
- Work with area residents to pursue scenic road designations for Wappoo Road (south of Savannah Hwy) and Betsy Road.

7. Drainage and Stormwater

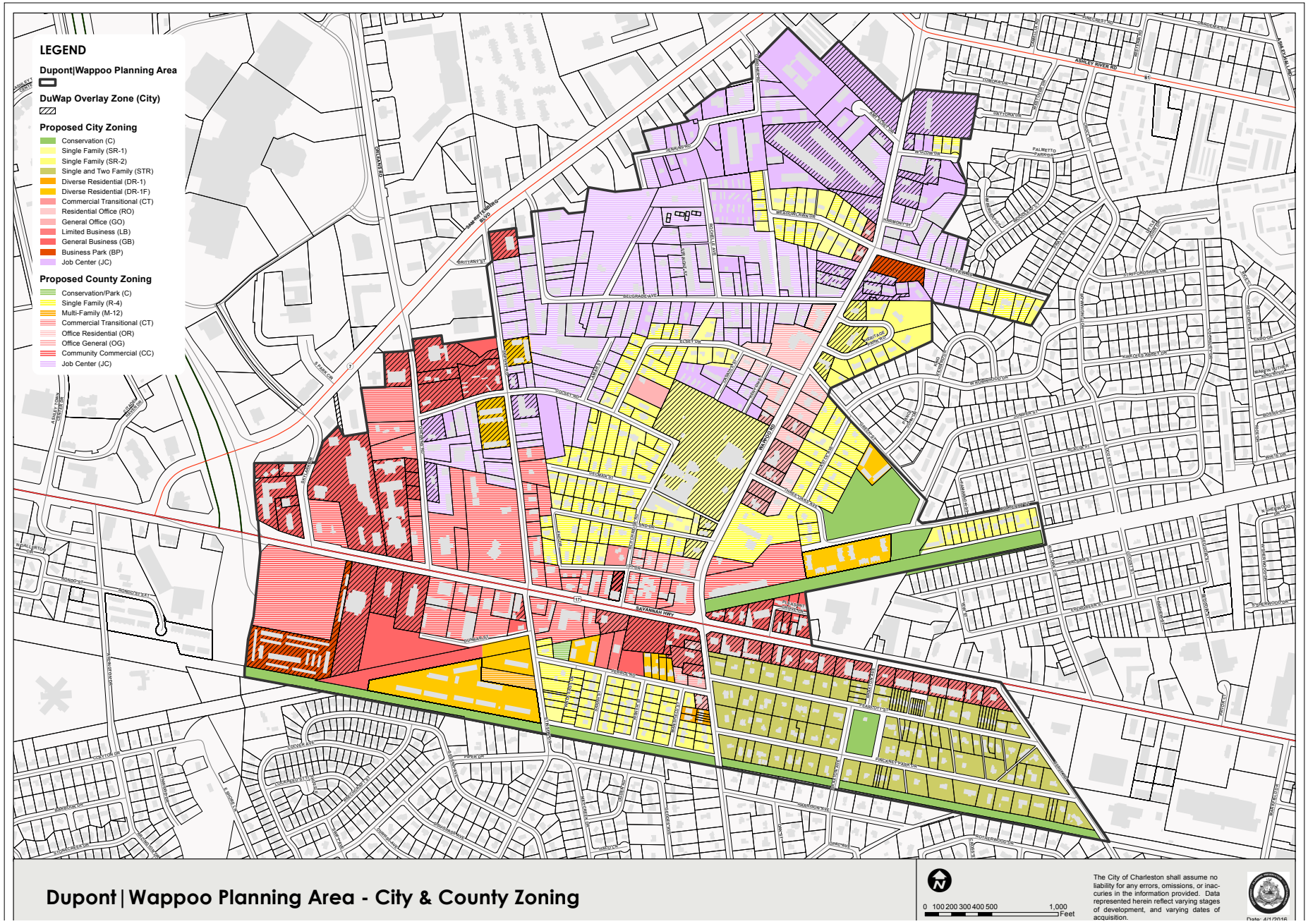
- City of Charleston and Charleston County coordinate conduct a joint drainage study.
- City and County prioritize and create an action plan to address the strategies recommended by the drainage study.
- Clean drains and gutter/bike lanes, and institute regular street sweeping.

8. Streetscape/Beautification

- Plant trees in the Savannah Highway right-of-way from Orleans Road to Betsy Road. **See pages 10 - 11 for examples of how this strategy could improve the character of the community.*
- Coordinate with the appropriate transportation authority to address maintenance of vegetation in rights-of-way.

9. Manage and maintain the Plan, and keep the community updated on progress *(timeframe: on-going)*.

10. Evaluate and update the Plan at least once every five years with community input *(timeframe: on-going)*.



Dupont | Wappoo Planning Area - City & County Zoning

The map above shows the proposed zoning for both the incorporated and unincorporated properties within the project area. This map was created on April 8, 2016.

The pictures above are examples of development currently existing in the area that the community would like to see emulated.

Wappoo Rd/Savannah Hwy Intersection

The picture on the left shows the current condition of the intersection of Wappoo Rd and Savannah Highway. The picture below shows a vision plan for how the area could be redeveloped to address many of the public's concerns including beautifying the intersection, connecting the Greenway and Bikeway, ensuring the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, and pulling the buildings up to the roads to give the area a unique and memorable character.

Existing conditions at the Wappoo Rd/Savannah Hwy intersection.

Savannah Highway Possibilities

The picture on the left shows the current conditions along Savannah Highway. The picture below shows how the area could be redeveloped to address the public's desire to improve this streetscape and create community character through the planting of Palmetto trees in the right-of-way.

Savannah Highway Street Tree Possibilities

The picture below shows the potential locations for street trees in the Savannah Hwy right-of-way (stars indicate potential locations).

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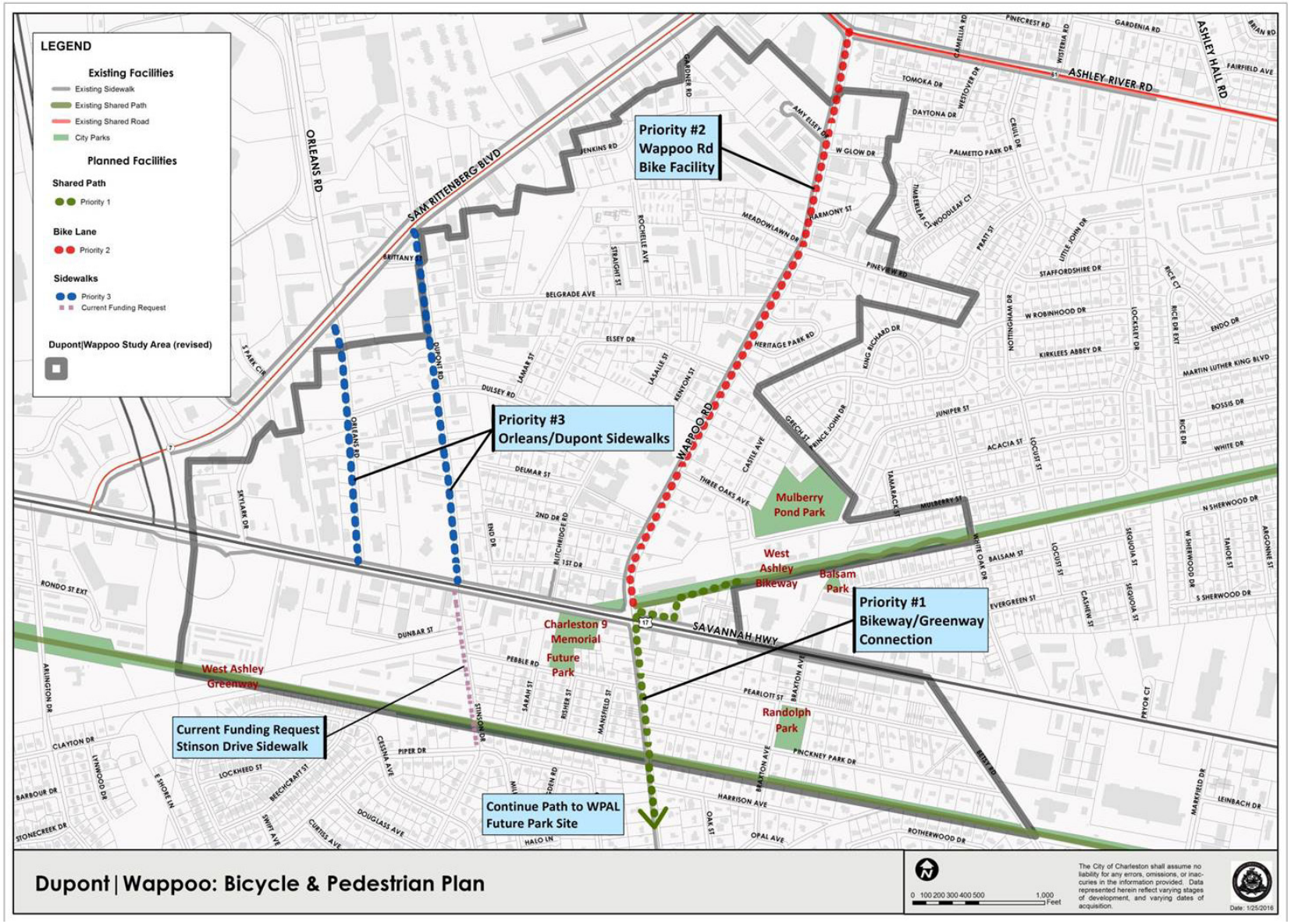
Bike and Pedestrian Plan

The map below shows the City of Charleston's plan for improvements to bike and pedestrian facilities.



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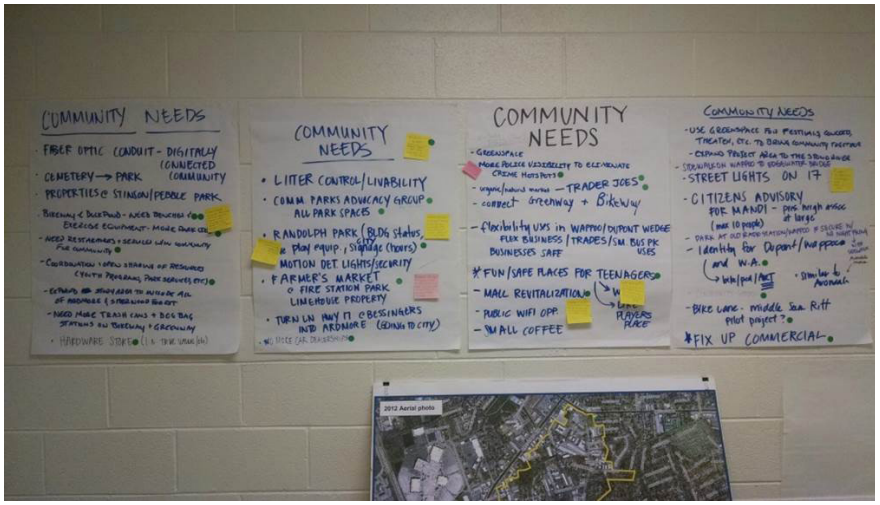
A-1. Community Elements



The following community element needs were identified by the public during the public workshops/input sesssions:

- Increase coordination/consistency between City & County;
- Improve safety and livability through increased police, livability, and code enforcement, and by offering additional citizen support and neighbohood services;
- Improve the West Ashley Greenway, West Ashley Bikeway, Randolph Park, and duck pond and provide additional public spaces and park improvements;
- Provide fiber optic conduit to create a digitally connected community;
- Provide more community places for residents such as a senior center, fun, safe places for teenagers, community events, farmers markets, etc.; and
- Improve the sense of place and strengthen the community identity.

In addition to the community element input gathered at the DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan workshops, the City of Charleston conducted a West Ashley Community Perceptions Survye to better understand perceptions of West Ashley and the qualities that make West Ashley unique. The survey took place during the month of August 2015 and yielded 3200+ unique survey responses. The survey was made available to West Ashley community members via email, the City's website, and social media; paper copies were available at local libraries, recreation sites, and community meetings. The City will coordinate with the County to utilize this important citizen input to create a community driven visioning process to enhance West Ashley's image, and highlight pride points such as West Ashley's strong senst of community, great neighborhoods, local businesses, and unique parks and public spaces.

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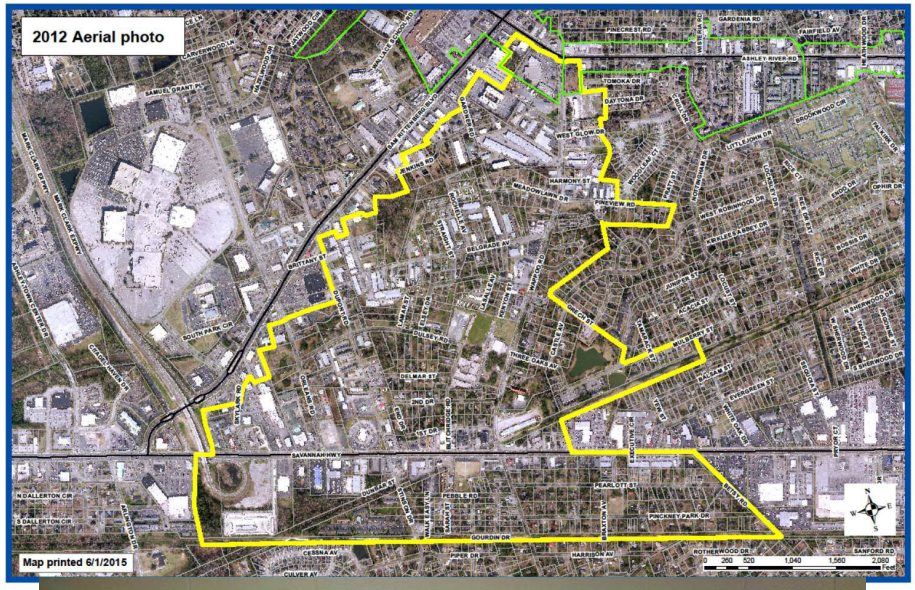
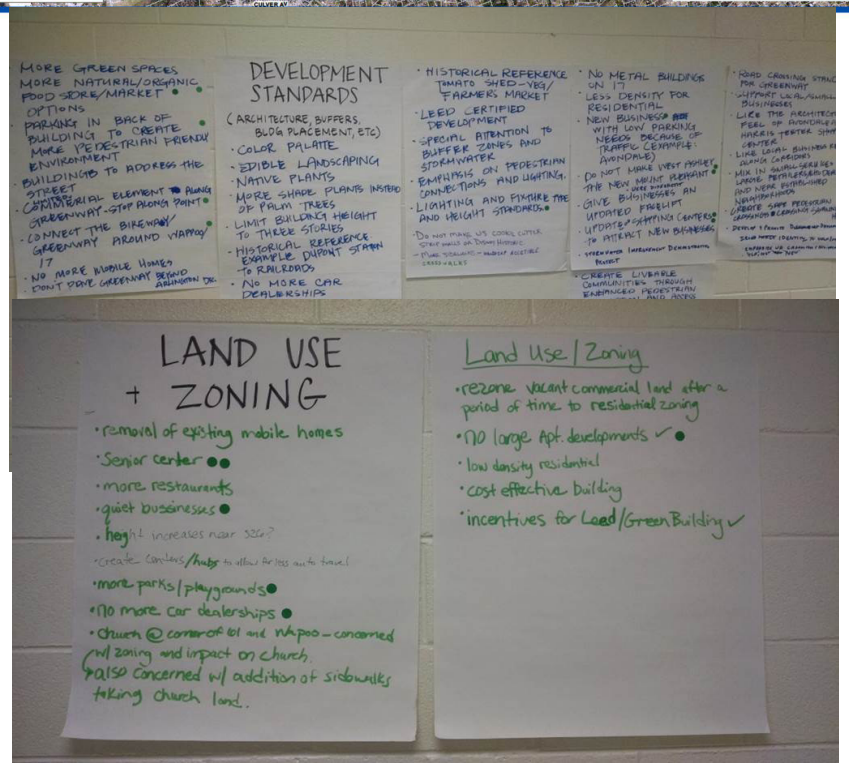
A-2. Land Use, Zoning, and Design Standards

The public identified the following land use, zoning, and design standard needs during the public workshops/input sesssions:

- Adopt consistent land use, zoning, and design standards between the City and County that facilitate more authentic development;
- Create livable communities through enhanced pedestrian circulation and access service (restaurants, small businesses, stores);
- Create safe and connected pedestrian/bicycle accesses;
- Improve architectural requirements, but allow for cost effective building materials;
- Prohibit metal buildings on Savannah Highway;
- Limit building height to three stories with height increases allowed near I-526;
- Require buffers and landscaping;
- Require that development be low impact and pay special attention to buffer zones and storm water runoff;
- Require buildings to address the street;
- Require that parking be located at the back of buildings to create a more pedestrian friendly environment;
- Address public realm/right-of-way elements (street trees and street lights);
- Allow Flexibility of uses in Wappoo/DuPont Wedge, Flex Business/ Trades/Small Business Park uses; and
- Prohibit large apartment developments and car dealerships.





A-3. Economic Development and Revitalization

The major items the community identified regarding economic development and revitalization included:

- Recruit businesses that serve residents' needs (personal services, natural/organic food stores, coffee shops, etc.);
- Support and encourage local/small businesses (local hardware stores and restaurants);
- Upgrade/utilize old shopping centers and the mall;
- Provide incentives for redevelopment of commercial properties;
- Create centers/hubs for less vehicle travel;
- Provide a Farmer's Market;
- Ensure the safety of area businesses;
- Provide incentives for redevelopment of commercial properties;
- Limit the expansion of large car dealerships within the community; and
- Link the West Ashley Greenway to nearby neighborhood commercial areas through wayfinding signage.

A-4. Traffic and Transportation

The community identified the following regarding traffic and transportation:

- Reduce traffic congestion on Savannah Highway;
- Provide street lights, street trees, and medians on Savannah Highway;
- Trim and prune trees along the streets;
- Improve pedestrian safety by installing crosswalks at intersections and by providing more sidewalks (Wappoo Rd to Edgewater Bridge, and Pebble, Elsey, Dulsey, DuPont, Stinson, and Orleans Rd);
- Beautify the Wappoo Road/Savannah Highway intersection;
- Provide a park and ride location in the area;
- Provide safe bus stop locations and safe routes to bus stops (sidewalks) located on DuPont Rd for childrens' safety;
- Connect the West Ashley Bikeway and West Ashley Greeenway; and
- Improve signal synchronization along Savannah Highway.

Intersection of Wappoo Road and Savannah Highway

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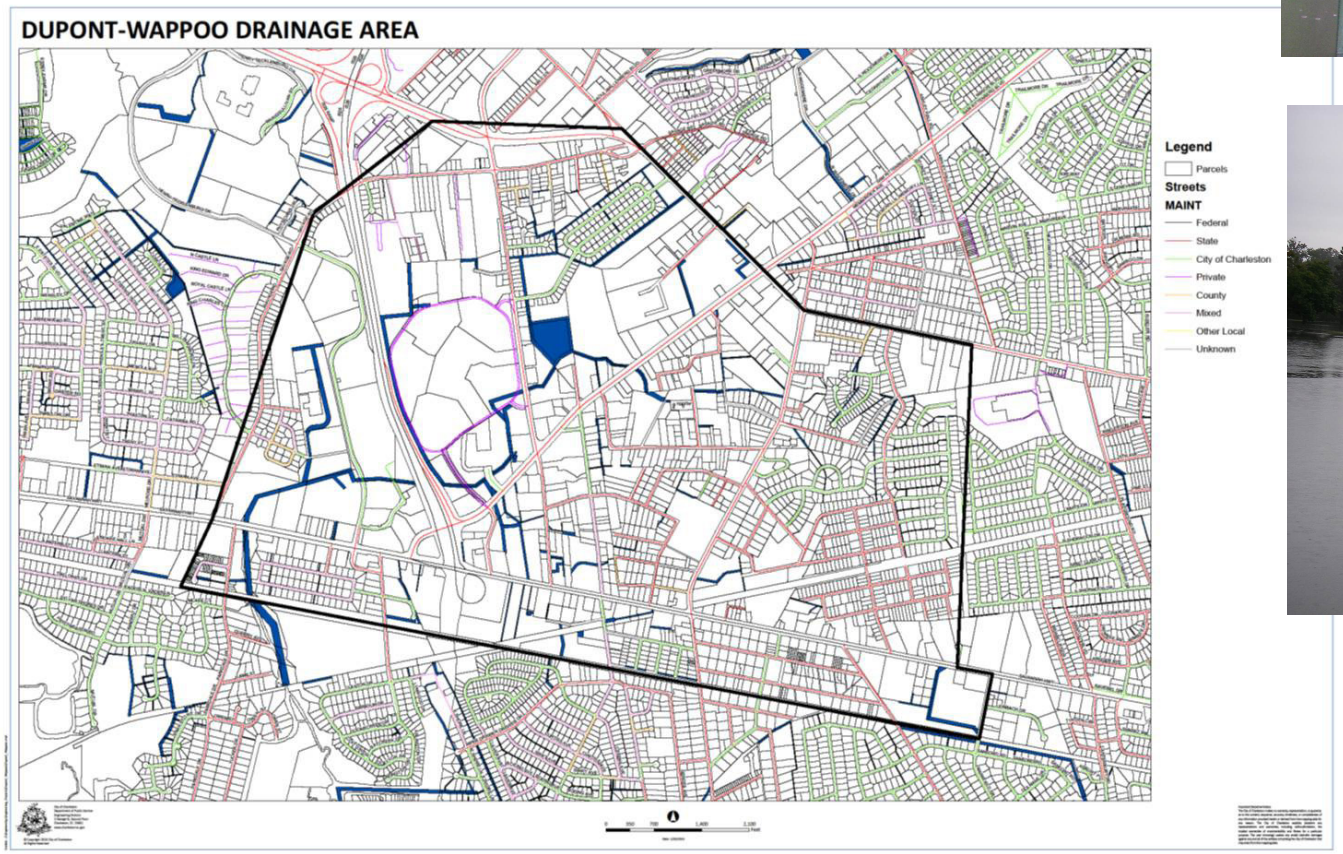
A-5. Drainage and Stormwater

The major items the community identified regarding drainage and stormwater included:

- Conduct an area-wide drainage study;
- Turn stormwater facilities into amenities;
- Provide incentives for green infrastructure/stormwater facilities;
- Create storwater demonstration projects;
- Use the Half Cent Sales Tax to fund regional stormwater improvements; and
- Require on-site drainage improvements or fee-in-lieu-of options.



A-6. Streetscape/Beautification

The community identified the following regarding streetscape/beautification needs:

- Bury power lines;
- Request SCDOT to maintain the right-of-way, especially near 526;
- Install safe pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Create safe, handicap accessible pedestrian/bicycle access (sidewalks) and crossings; and
- Add landscaping and trees along streets.