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COMMUNICATIONS

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## **City, Partners Break Ground on Ashley River Crossing**

**Charleston, S.C.**—Federal, state, county and city officials gathered alongside Mayor John Tecklenburg this morning to break ground on the Ashley River Crossing, a forthcoming standalone bridge that will provide a safe connection for bicyclists and pedestrians traveling between West Ashley and downtown Charleston.

When completed, the bridge will connect to the 8.5-mile West Ashley Greenway, serving as a missing link for the East Coast Greenway that connects Florida to Maine. Additionally, the project will provide intersection improvements on Lockwood Boulevard, the Greenway at Folly Road Boulevard and Wesley Drive, and Wappoo Road.

Funding for the project was provided by a number of sources, including a USDOT 2019 BUILD Grant, USDOT Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Block Grant, USDOT Transportation Alternative Program funds, SCDOT Highway Funds, and contributions from the city of Charleston, Charleston County, the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments and the Medical University of South Carolina.

The project is expected to reach substantial completion in 2027.

Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg said, “This morning’s groundbreaking is a powerful example of what we can accomplish when we work together. Today, we’re closer than ever to providing a safe connection across the Ashley River and it wouldn’t have been possible without the steadfast support of our federal, state, county and local partners. This historic project will transform how we move throughout the region, and I look forward to continuing to work alongside stakeholders at all levels to make it happen.”

Federal Highway Administration Associate Administrator for Highway Policy and External Affairs Keith Benjamin said, “The Federal Highway Administration is proud to partner with South Carolina DOT, the city of Charleston and countless community advocates who have had a voice in advancing the Ashley River Crossing Project. This historic, bob-tail swing bicycle and pedestrian bridge is the key to unlocking safe and equitable mobility throughout the tri-county area, and we are pleased to authorize the Notice to Proceed to begin construction on this transformative project.”

SCDOT Secretary of Transportation Christy Hall said, “At SCDOT, safety is our number one priority and we remain committed to improving the road and bridge network in our state for all road users. I am pleased to see these enhancements move forward, providing a safe connection across the Ashley River for bicyclists and pedestrians. This project is a great example of officials at all levels of government working together to advance critical infrastructure improvements for the people of South Carolina.”

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Executive Director Ron Mitchum said, “This key regional infrastructure effort highlights the importance of collaboration at all levels of government. Today’s groundbreaking clearly illustrates that planning, partnership and prosperity are alive and well in the Lowcountry.”

Charleston Moves Executive Director Katie Zimmerman said, “The Ashley River Crossing and its connections will bridge a major gap in equitable mobility, setting the tone that our region is serious about investing in transportation choices that improve quality of life for all citizens. This is a critical step in building safe, enjoyable and affordable access to education, recreation, employment and health care on both sides of the river, and in reducing harmful emissions that damage our health and environment.”

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