


Harnessing the Power of Infrastructure Investment to Address Equity and Inclusion



Outline

- Inclusion Moment
- Why Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Matter?
- Environmental Justice
- Justice 40 Initiative
- Building Industry Diversity
- Closing





Inclusion Moment: Inclusive Meetings

- **During your next meeting**, think about actions you can take to help foster a more inclusive workplace.
- **Ideas to help you** hold more inclusive meetings:
 - **Ensure** everyone has a chance to speak
 - **Be open** to new perspectives
 - **Consider** a “no-interruption” rule to ensure that everyone is being heard
 - **Intentionally seek** out ideas/insights from people who may not look like you
 - **Ensure** those that are joining remotely have the **opportunity to participate**

Inclusion is a choice. Your choice.

Why Equity and Inclusion in Infrastructure Matter?

- It is assumed that infrastructure investment will trigger economic growth and that this will reach/benefit the poorest
- There has historically been little recognition that infrastructure may harm or have negative effects
- Righting the wrongs of the past
- Create opportunities for minority owned businesses

What is Environmental Justice?

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- *The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and*
- *Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.*

EPA Definition

Highlights of Environmental Justice at EPA

- 1994 - President Clinton Issues Executive Order 12898 Federal Actions to Address EJ in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations
- 2003 – EPA Offices began implementing EJ Action Plans
- 2010 EPA introduced Plan EJ 2014
- 2015 EJSCREEN Mapping Tool

Justice40 Initiative

- Biden-Harris Administration's **Justice40** initiative
 - Goal of delivering 40 percent of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to disadvantaged communities
 - Tracks performance
 - Establishment of an Environmental Justice Scorecard
 - Formalizes President Biden's commitment to make environmental justice a part of the mission of every agency
 - Requires advising on ways to update Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994.
 - Requires development of a Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool, building off EPA's EJSCREEN, to inform equitable decision making across the federal government

Environmental Justice in Action

- Projects impacted by FHWA/NEPA are being held to higher EJ Outreach efforts
- Example project
 - South Carolina DOT – I-526 West in Charleston County, SC

Project Introduction

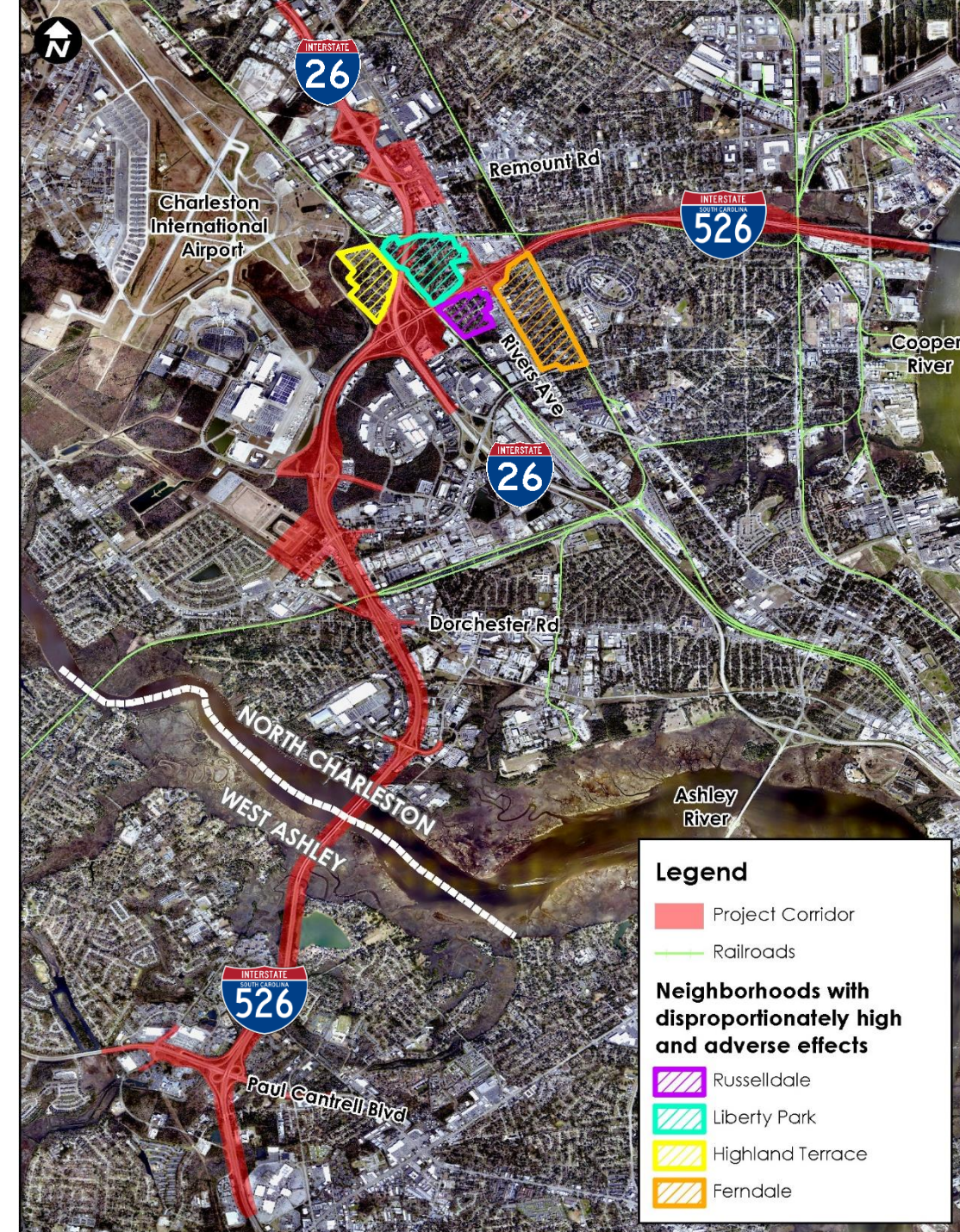
I-526 LCC WEST is located in Charleston County, SC

Purpose & Need

- I-526 is one of South Carolina's most congested interstate segments
- Growth in population and employment
- Decreased mobility and increased congestion
- Existing/projected traffic conditions
- Geometric Deficiencies

Impact History

- The construction of I-26, and the addition of I-526 in the late 1980s, resulted in back-to-back neighborhood divisions in North Charleston
- Inadequate buffers or setbacks
- Negatively impacted community cohesion
- Created a barrier effect

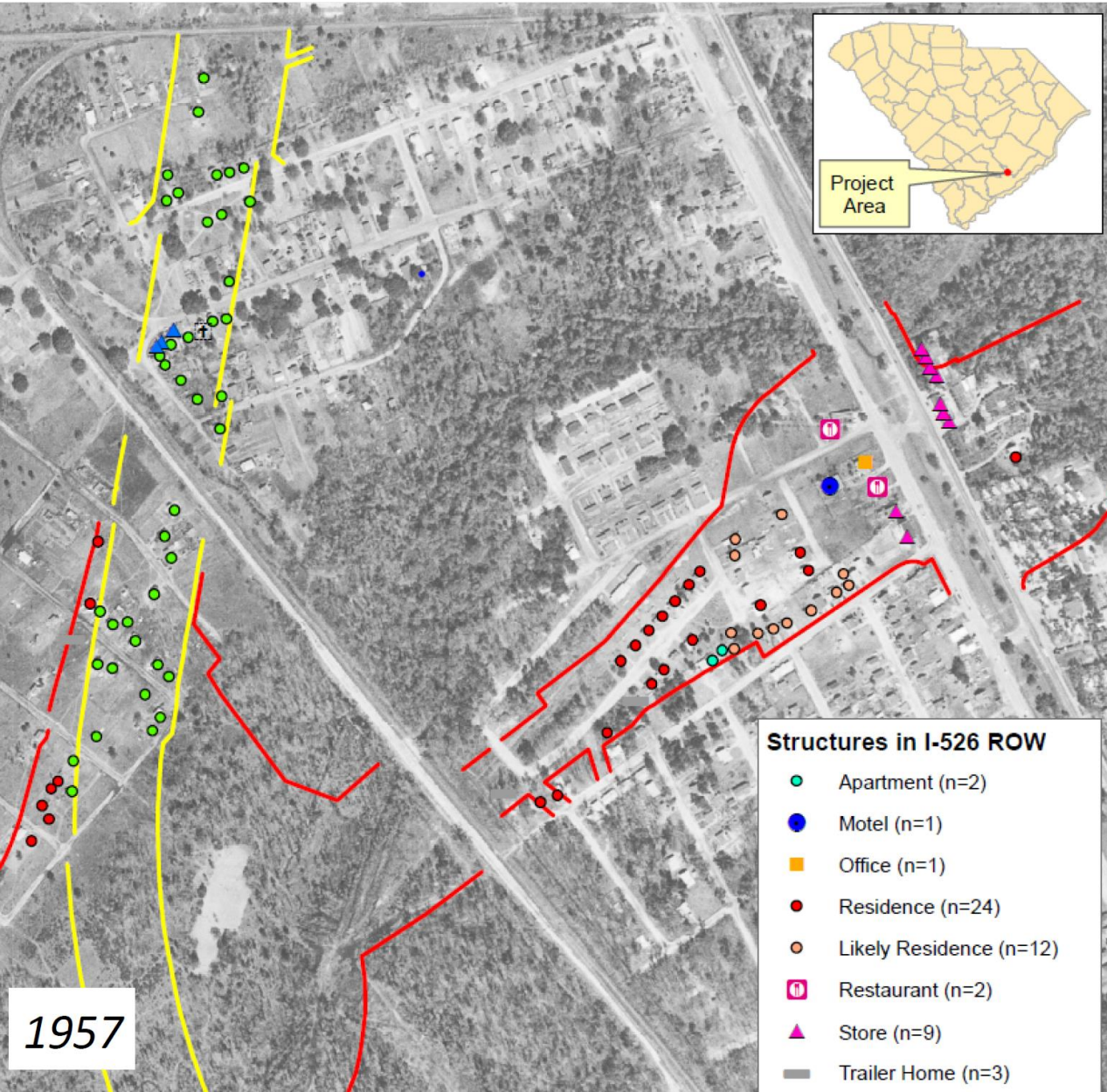


Measuring EJ Impacts

- **Accessibility** – to jobs, shopping, etc.; transit service, pedestrian access, bicycle access
- **Mobility** – traffic congestion, travel times
- **Safety** – vehicle/bicycle crashes, pedestrian injuries & fatalities, personal security
- **Displacement** – residences, businesses, public amenities
- **Equity** – investments, costs, maintenance
- **Environmental** – air quality, vibration, noise
- **Social** – community cohesion/disruption, isolation
- **Aesthetics** – diminution of, landscaping, lighting

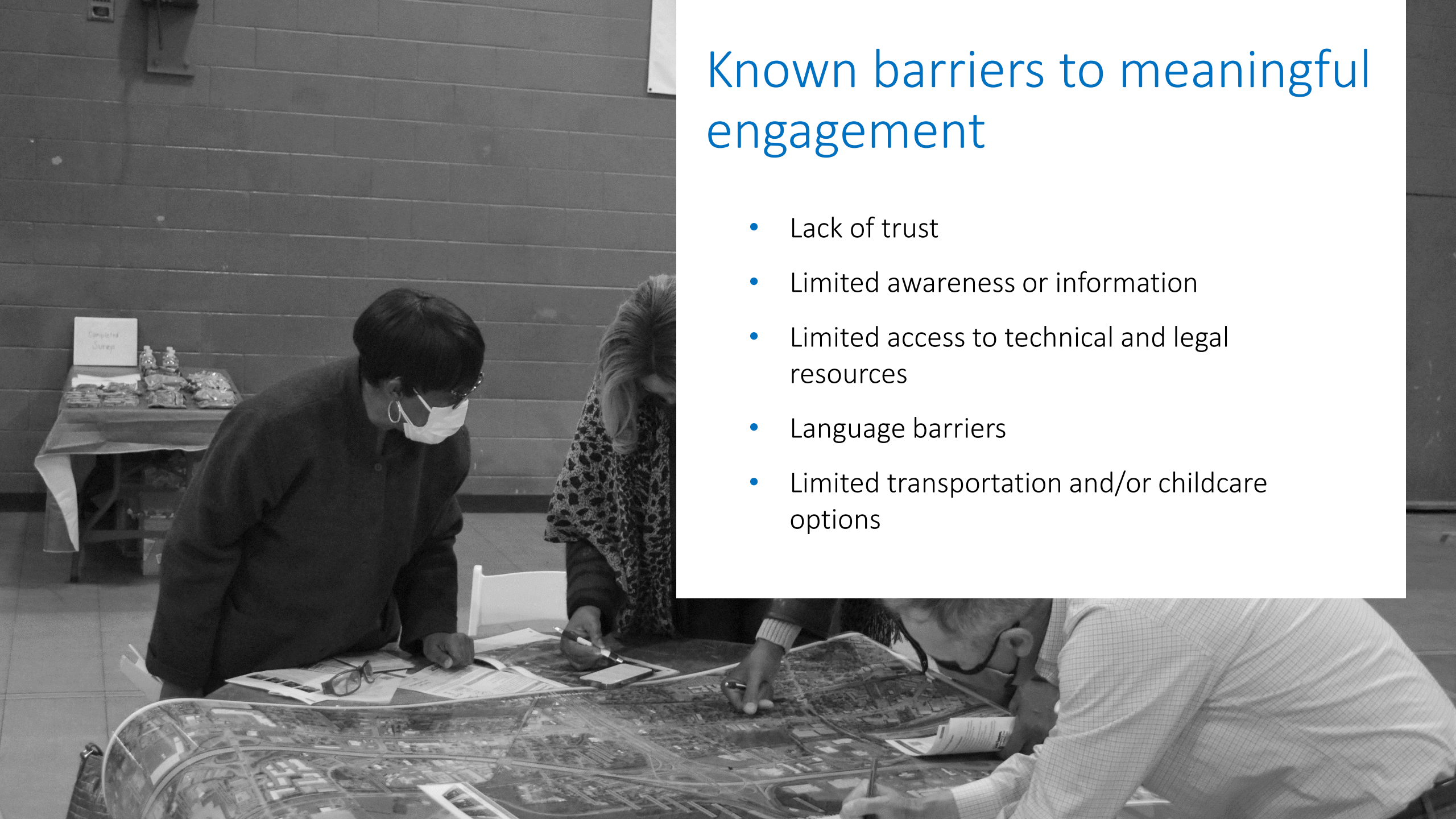


Cumulative/recurring EJ Impacts



Known barriers to meaningful engagement

- Lack of trust
- Limited awareness or information
- Limited access to technical and legal resources
- Language barriers
- Limited transportation and/or childcare options





Charleston, aquí estamos

October 21 · 🌐

Información en español sobre el plan de mitigación de la I-526
<https://www.526lowcountrycorridor.com/.../community.../>

See Translation



526LOWCOUNTRYCORRIDOR.COM

Community Commitments | I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST

WEST 526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

Community Mitigation Plan Highlights

Background
Every effort was made to avoid and minimize impacts to your community during the development of the project alternatives. However, because of the close proximity of many communities to the existing interstate, significant community impacts were unavoidable in all reasonable alternatives and would require community mitigation.

Community Mitigation Plan *Developed by identifying & considering the social needs & priorities of neighborhood residents*

Community Office
In November 2019, a Community Office was opened within walking distance of potentially impacted communities. Located in Gas Light Square at 5627 Rivers Avenue (CARTA Route 10), the Community Office is where you can meet one-on-one with the project team and connect with resource specialists such as right-of-way relocation experts.

Community Advisory Council (CAC)
A Community Advisory Council (CAC) was formed as a resident-lead group to facilitate meaningful engagement.

Survey
The CAC and residents of the potentially impacted neighborhoods completed a Social Needs Assessment (SNA) survey to provide a insight into the daily operations, needs, and desires of the community.

Now is the time to have your voice heard!
Complete our survey & leave a comment by January 15, 2021:
www.526LowcountryCorridor.com

Make an appointment at our Community Office (5627 Rivers Avenue, Gas Light Square) for assistance

info@526LowcountryCorridor.com 843.258.1135 @526Corridor
SCDOT Project Manager Joy Riley, PE, DBIA, PMP, CPM (Call or Text)

EJ Outreach

Fall 2019 – Spring 2021

- Community Advisory Council
- Community Office
- Pop Up informational Meetings
- Church Services (Spanish & English)
- Project information boxes
- Doorhangers
- Postcards
- Newsletters
- Website / Social Media
- Door-to-Door Canvassing
- Surveys

In 2020, approximately 70 flyers picked up weekly!



YOU'RE INVITED TO A COMMUNITY DROP-IN

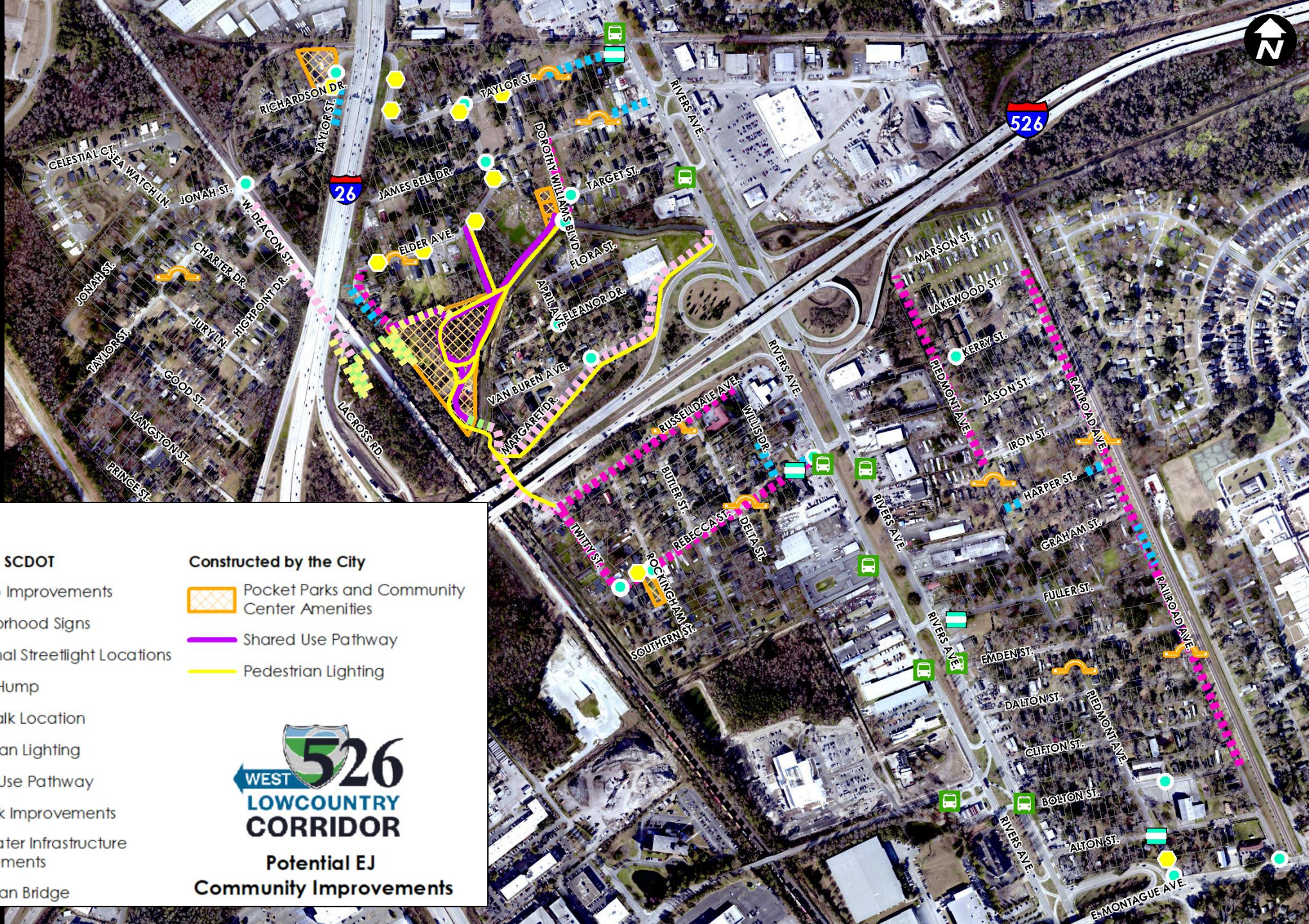
WEST 526 LOWCOUNTRY CORRIDOR

OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT NORTH CHARLESTON AND WEST ASHLEY

Come provide input on the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor WEST!











Informal Drop-ins
More Details on Back

SCDOT



Legend

Constructed by SCDOT

-  Bus Stop Improvements
-  Neighborhood Signs
-  Additional Streetlight Locations
-  Speed Hump
-  Crosswalk Location
-  Pedestrian Lighting
-  Shared Use Pathway
-  Sidewalk Improvements
-  Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements
-  Pedestrian Bridge

Constructed by the City

-  Pocket Parks and Community Center Amenities
-  Shared Use Pathway
-  Pedestrian Lighting



Potential EJ
Community Improvements



Take Aways from Large Scale Transportation EJ Efforts

- Meaningful community outreach includes:
 - Strong understanding of local community
 - How information can be best received
 - Access through variety of methods
- Mitigation may require investment in infrastructure unrelated to work
- Take opportunity to improve poor mitigation from past projects



Building Industry Diversity

Building Industry Diversity

- Infrastructure funding requires various contributions by disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs)
- Many owners and utilities are requiring more meaningful participation
- Better was to leverage DBE participation

Proposal Development

- A successful program involves your partners in all phases of an opportunity from proposal development through project award and closeout
- This is more than just checking a box. The collaborative nature of this approach helps ensure all consultants understand the depth of their scope, have the required resources, and have priced their scope appropriately
- When consultants are engaged at the onset of a project, they are better prepared and equipped for the project award, contract negotiations, and mobilization

**Building strong relationships
begins with an inclusive
approach within the
community around the
project**



Mentor Protégé Programs

- Maintain a real commitment to the ongoing development of small businesses and emerging firms
- Provide support through a structured program that provides benchmarks and consistent feedback such as a mentor-protégé program
- Provides excellent opportunities for larger consultants to mentor small and emerging businesses, creating a legacy of firms that will make a notable footprint on the local economy long after the conclusion of a project
- Provides multiple layers of benefits to:
 - Prime consultant
 - Subconsultant
 - Owner,
 - Community

Compliance Monitoring and Reporting

- Demonstrating success while meeting or exceeding the project's participation goals is critical to understanding how well a program is working
- Create the necessary infrastructure to monitor, track, and create detailed documentation and systematic reporting to make certain project compliance is met. These practices flow down to all tiers of the project
- Go beyond the mere tracking of invoices/dollars, track work accomplished, concepts learned

Support Services

- Small businesses face many common barriers. Consequently, it's important to provide technical assistance, financial guidance, and supportive services to subconsultants through the duration of the project
- This can take the form of capacity and resource building, utilizing consultants within the project footprint (as covered above), and simply offering consultants flexibility, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Closing

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides an unprecedented opportunity to improve DEI throughout our communities

Some requirements are mandated but with good project planning we can go beyond the minimum requirements to make a real difference





Questions?

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