



The Town of Hilton Head Island
U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee

May 30, 2019, 4:00 p.m.

Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

AGENDA

*As a courtesy to others please turn off / silence ALL mobile devices during the meeting.
Thank You.*

1. Call to Order

2. FOIA Compliance - Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

3. Committee Roll Call

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Committee Meeting from May 8, 2019

5. Unfinished Business - NONE

6. New Business

- a. Summary of Visit with SCDOT and Federal Highway Administration Officials – David Johnson
- b. Overview of Craig Winn's Recent Memo on Alternatives
- c. Scoring - Methodology to Evaluate SCDOT's Corridor Alternatives
- d. Report from Data Analysis Working Group
- e. Appointment of Aesthetics Working Group
- f. Appointment of Pathway Working Group
- g. Upcoming Meetings
 - i. Stoney Neighborhood Meeting, June 13, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
 - ii. Next Committee Meeting, June 20, 2019, 4:00 p.m.

7. Public Comments

8. Adjournment

Please note a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more Town Council members attend this meeting.



Town of Hilton Head Island
U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Committee

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 3:00 pm
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

MEETING MINUTES

Present From the Committee: David Johnson, *Chairman*; Frank Babel, Alex Brown, Tom Crews, Craig Forrest, Hannah Horne, David Lunka, Brenden Reilly, John Taylor, Sarah Stewart, *Members* Palmer Simmons, *First Alternate*; Dan Wood, *Bluffton Liaison*; Larry McElynn, *County Liaison*

Absent from Committee: Jerry Cutrer, Tom Peeples, Kyle Theodore, *Members*; Marc Grant, *Hilton Head Island Liaison*

Present from Town Staff: Charles Cousins, *Assistant to the Town Manager*, Anne Cyran, *Senior Planner*; Rocky Browder, *Environmental Planner*; Krista Wiedmeyer, *Executive Assistant/Town Clerk*

1. Call to Order

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. FOIA Compliance

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Committee Roll Call

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Committee Meeting from April 24, 2019

Mr. Crews moved to approve the Committee meeting minutes from April 24, 2019. Ms. Stewart seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 10-0.

5. Unfinished Business - None

6. New Business

a. Update on SCDOT Commends & Schedule

Chairman Johnson stated that with the help of Town staff, the information and the alternatives presented by the workgroups during the April 10th meeting were successfully submitted. He reported that at least one of the alternatives submitted may have been selected by the SCDOT as an alternative of consideration. Chairman Johnson further reported that the SCDOT would be speaking to the stakeholders more about the methodology instead of making the announcement of the different alternatives they have chosen. He said that this would be the same discussion they would also have with the Committee too. Chairman Johnson also reported that he and Mr. Cousins would be heading to Columbia on May 22nd to meet with the SCDOT. He stated that after this meeting, there would be a better understanding of how to introduce and pull other members of the Committee into meetings such as these in Columbia.

b. Potential Environmental Impacts of Corridor Improvements

- i. Rocky Browder – Environmental Planner, Town of Hilton Head Island**
- ii. Rikki Parker – South Carolina Coastal Conservation League**

Rocky Browder, the Town’s Environmental Planner, and Ms. Rikki Parker, with the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League discussed the impact the 278 Project would be on the environment within the study area. They discussed what the potential positive and negative consequences to the wetlands could be. Ms. Parker discussed the mitigation bank and the generation of mitigation credits. She explained that a mitigation bank generates credits for the amount and quality of habitat that is improved. The credits are units of exchange defined as the ecological value associated with converting a naturally occurring wetland or other specific habitat type, for economic purposes, such as the 278 Project. Both Mr. Browder and Ms. Parker provided a good overview the different ecological impacts.

c. Discussion of Committee’s Next Tasks

- i. Scoring – Methodology to Evaluate SCDOT’s Corridor Alternatives**

Chairman Johnson reported that Mr. Forrest and Mr. Taylor had volunteered to review and explore the traffic data that has or will become available as a result of traffic studies completed in the project area. Mr. Taylor stated that he would like to better understand what the modeling is for the traffic study. Another question raised was about not just looking at the one individual traffic study, but any traffic study. Mr. Brown asked about funding for the Committee to provide a work-up or proper analysis of the data once it is captured. He referred to other Town committees that had a small budget for such projects. Mr. Brown noted that once the data is received, how does the Committee simplify the information to properly present the information back out to the community. During this discussion, other questions were raised about the Town or County utilizing their resources or consultant to assist with proper dissemination of information once received. Chairman Johnson stated that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Forrest would be meeting with Town staff to begin the research and from there begin to report back.

Mr. Babel reviewed a scoring model/methodology developed by his workgroup. After review of the scoring model and discussion from the Committee as a whole, many questions were raised. It was pointed out that the Committee does not have a financial budget to develop a scoring model of this nature, and as such, why change a process that the SCDOT already has in place. Upon further discussion, it was decided that something like the model presented might be helpful as a companion to what the SCDOT already has, but not as a replacement.

- ii. Communications Strategy**

During the Committee’s discussion about the methodology to evaluate the SCDOT’s Corridor Alternatives, a lot of discussion was had about how to communicate with the general public. Specifically utilizing different tools already provided by the Town of Hilton Head Island through staff and maybe also utilizing the consultant that has been contracted by the County and the Town. The final consensus among the Committee was that communicating to the public is essential. The question was raised about holding different public meetings with specific public groups. Chairman Johnson noted that they certainly could have meetings that were specific to community groups such as Windmill Harbour and the Stoney community.

- iii. Aesthetics Considerations and Treatments**

This item was not discussed.

6. New Business (cont.)

iv. Meeting Schedule

Chairman Johnson polled the Committee about when they would like to meet again. It was unanimously decided that the next two meetings would take place on May 30, 2019 and June 20, 2019 both at 4:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Submitted by: Krista M. Wiedmeyer, Executive Assistant/Town Clerk

Approved: May 30, 2019

DRAFT



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Community Development Department

TO: Gateway Corridor Committee
FROM: David Johnson, Committee Chairman
CC: Charles Cousins, *AICP, Assistant to the Town Manager*
DATE: May 24, 2019
SUBJECT: Response from Craig Winn Related to Committee's Ideas and Suggestions on Corridor Alternatives

As I reported to you at our May 8th meeting, the ideas and suggestions on corridor alternatives that came from our working groups were forwarded to Craig Winn, SCDOT's project manager for their US 278 Corridor project. We had heard from Craig that the input from our working groups was considered as Craig and his team was developing their list of feasible alternatives. This consideration resulted in some of our ideas being incorporated in their alternatives. Attached is a document from Craig that provides detail comments on our suggestions and ideas. I want to thank all of you for the efforts you gave in developing our suggestions and ideas and, as you will see in the attachment from Craig, SCDOT and their consultants gave them serious consideration. I plan to discuss Craig's attachment at our May 30, 2019 meeting.

While I intend to provide the committee with details that Charles and I learned from our May 22 meeting with SCDOT and a representative from the Federal Highway Administration, I want to make you aware of two items that were brought to our attention during the meeting. First, we were shown the updated SCDOT web page for the corridor project. The web page now contains several videos that will help us and the public understand the NEPA process. I hope you will take time to review the web page.

I look forward to seeing on the 30th!

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

One Town Center Court, Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29928

(843) 341-4600 Fax (843) 842-7728

www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov

John J. McCann
Mayor

April 12, 2019

William D. Harkins
Mayor ProTem

Council Members

David Ames
Tamara Becker
Marc A. Grant
Thomas W. Lennox
Glenn Stanford

Stephen G. Riley
Town Manager

Mr. Craig Winn, PE
SCDOT Program Manager
c/o South Carolina Department of Transportation
Lowcountry Regional Production Group
955 Park Street, Room 401
Columbia, SC 29202-0191
winncl@scdot.org

Dear Mr. Winn:

On April 10, 2019, the US 278 Gateway Corridor Committee's work groups submitted suggested improvements to the project area, enclosed. All of the groups recommend reducing, if not eliminating, left turn movements within the project area, particularly by using grade separated intersections. Every group also stressed the importance of safe pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Group A recommends two options.

One: Existing bridge route with the roadway dividing on Jenkins Island. A new west-bound lanes and pedestrian pathway through the powerline easement, and the east-bound lanes stay on the existing roadway.

Two: The scenic route option separates the bridge at Pinckney Island with a new, six-lane bridge across the north marshes providing a new entrance to the Island. The existing roadway would become a local road for Jenkins and would end at Pinckney Island.

Group B recommended a number of alternatives. Two stood out:

One: Widening the current bridges to six lanes and adding a pedestrian pathway, then separating the roadway into two east-bound lanes in the powerline easement through Jenkins Island. These east-bound lanes would connect directly to the Cross Island Parkway. The current road on Jenkins Island would be used as a west-bound route.

Two: Keep the current location of the roadway with five lanes through the Stoney neighborhood, with one lane being reversible depending on the time of day.

Note there is no attachment from Group B.

Group C recommends creating a new six lane bridge just south of the existing bridge. The new bridge will cross and be elevated over the existing bridge at Hog

Island, run along the powerline easement, and come down at grade in the middle of Jenkins Island.

Group D offered two options. Option one is to build a six lane single span bridge just south of the existing bridge. Option two is a combination new east bound bridge and combination west bound. Please note their use of innovative methods such as a dog bone intersection and reducing the speed limit to reduce congestion and increase capacity instead of widening the bridges and US 278.

The working groups also had a number of suggestions about many of the issues along the corridor which are included in the attachments.

Thanks so much for reviewing our suggestions. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David C. Johnson, Jr., Chairman
US 278 Gateway Corridor Committee



US 278 Team Responses

for the Hilton Head Island Stakeholder Committee

Prepared for:



Prepared by:

The US 278 Corridor Improvements Team

May 2019

The following is a summary of responses to the suggestions and ideas developed by the Town of Hilton Head's Stakeholder Committee as outlined in their April 12, 2019 letter:

1. Group A Submission –

- a. **One:** Existing bridge route with the roadway dividing on Jenkins Island. New westbound lanes and pedestrian pathway through the power line easement, and the eastbound lanes stay on the existing roadway.

i. US 278 Team Comments:

1. The proposed new 2-lane "local road" utilizing the power line corridor for westbound traffic (off the island direction) and making no changes to the existing 4-lane corridor other than making it all eastbound traffic will create the following:
 - a. Will not increase capacity of the overall US 278 system
 - b. Will require reconfiguration of the westbound Skull Creek Bridge to connect the new 2-lane roadway which may not allow for the required continuous 4-lanes of traffic throughout construction
 - c. Creates a new bridge between Jenkins Island and Hilton Head Island parallel the existing US 278 causeway
 - d. Creates a new dissection of land described as the Big Stoney Gullah Community along Squire Pope Road and Wild Horse Road
 - e. Creates a new dissection of land described as the Squire Pope Gullah Community along Gum Tree and US 278
 - f. Because the proposed 2-lane road is intended to be for westbound traffic only, Spanish Wells Road would require improvements to properly connect
 - g. A significant increase in the power line utility impacts (requiring the complete relocation of these transmission lines)
 - h. The Jenkins Island Cemetery is located in close proximity to this proposed new 2-lane corridor
2. This option does not address the required replacement of the Eastbound Mackay Creek Bridge
3. This option does not introduce any safety improvements on Pinckney Island
4. The proposed intersection of Windmill Harbour and US 278 will not meet signal warrants
5. A US 278 underpass at Windmill Harbor cannot be constructed under this scenario
6. Once this option is constructed, there will be 6-lanes for eastbound traffic through Jenkins Island and 2-lanes for westbound through the power easement on Jenkins Island

Note: Parts of these suggestions are being considered for incorporation into other alternatives for this corridor

- b. **Two:** The scenic route option separates the bridge at Pinckney Island with a new, six-lane bridge across the north marshes providing a realigned entrance to the Island. The existing US 278 roadway would become a local road for Jenkins and would end at Pinckney Island.
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 1. This option does not address the required replacement of the Eastbound Mackay Creek Bridge
 2. The new 6-lane bridge runs up the Intracoastal Waterway and crosses at a skewed angle that will make it difficult to provide the required navigable waterway horizontal clearances
 3. Significant increase in bridge costs due to bridge length along the Intracoastal Waterway, skewed angle crossing the Intracoastal waterway, and bridging wetlands near the existing causeway
 4. There will be additional impacts to Pinckney Island (north) which US Fish and Wildlife have expressed concerns about
 5. Proposed eastbound tie-in for new 6-lane to access the existing US 278 occurs at the Causeway
 6. The intersection of the existing US 278 and the proposed 6-lane new roadway occurs at the Crazy Crab Restaurant driveway and will require an additional merging lane to integrate with the 6-lane facility
 7. Without the addition of a substantial flyover bridge, there is no way for the old section of US 278 (which is serving as a local road for Jenkins Island) to go westbound on the new 6-lane facility
 8. Leaves the 6-lane Superstreet on Jenkins Island as a local road for access to Pinckney Island, Hog Island, Windmill Harbor and RV Development

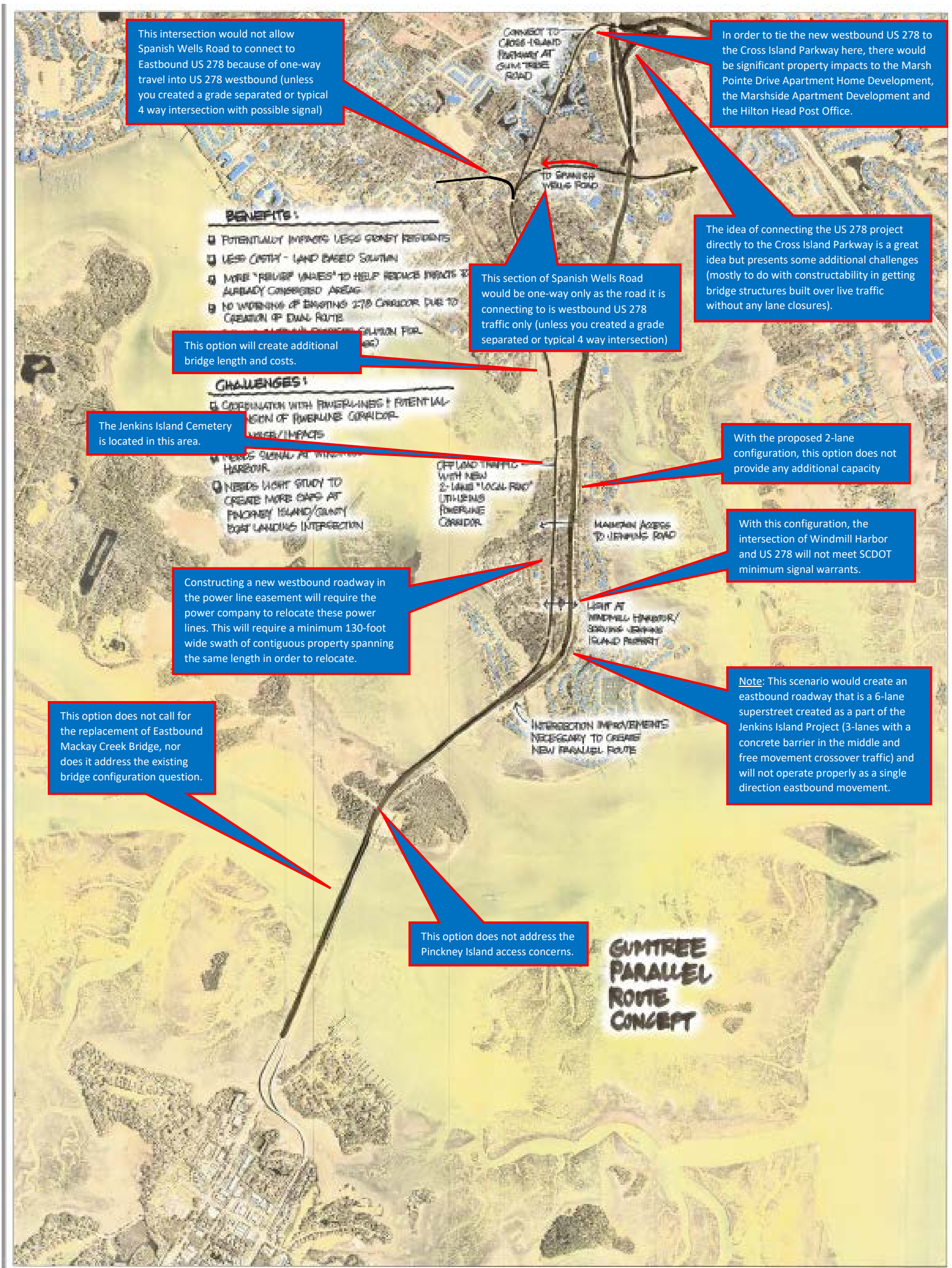
2. Group B Submission –

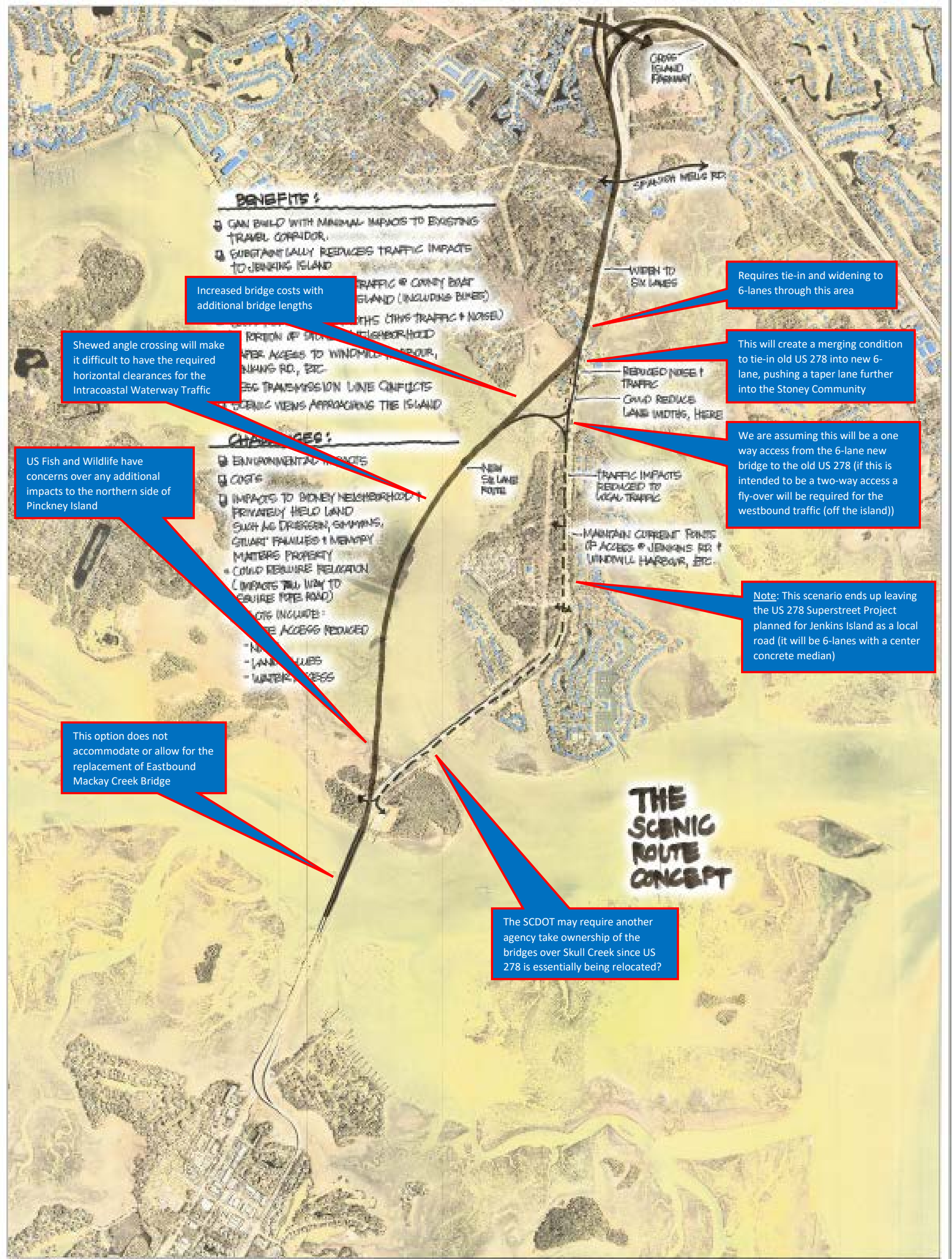
- a. Widening the current bridges to six lanes and adding a pedestrian pathway, then separating the roadway into two east-bound lanes in the power line easement through Jenkins Island. These east-bound lanes would connect directly to the Cross Island Parkway. The current road on Jenkins Island would be used as a west-bound route.
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 1. This option does not address the required replacement of the Eastbound Mackay Creek Bridge
 2. Some of the existing bridges over Mackay Creek and Skull Creek cannot be widened
 3. Bike and Pedestrian facilities are being considered for this project
 4. Using the power line easement as a corridor for a single direction US 278 and then connecting that new corridor directly to the Cross Island Parkway will generate the following concerns:
 - a. A significant increase in the power line utility impacts (requiring the complete relocations of these transmission lines)
 - b. Possible impacts to the Jenkins Island Cemetery
 - c. Will require reconfiguration of the westbound Skull Creek Bridge to connect the new 2-lane roadway which may not allow

for the required continuous 4-lanes of traffic throughout construction

- d. Creates a new bridge between Jenkins Island and Hilton Head Island parallel the existing US 278 causeway
 - e. Creates a new dissection of land described as the Big Stoney Gullah Community along Squire Pope Road and Wild Horse Road
 - f. Creates a new dissection of land described as the Squire Pope Gullah Community along Gum Tree and US 278
 - g. Because the proposed 2-lane road is intended to be for westbound traffic only, Spanish Wells Road would require improvements to properly connect
 - h. Leaves the 6-lane Superstreet planned for Jenkins Island carrying eastbound traffic only
 - i. This option creates a large amount of environmental impacts
- b. Keep the current location of the roadway with five lanes through the Stoney neighborhood, with one lane being reversible depending on the time of day
- i. US 278 Team Comments:
 - 1. The current configuration of US 278 through the Stoney Community is a 5-lane facility comprised of two 12-foot travel lanes for eastbound traffic (onto the island), two 12-foot travel lanes for westbound traffic (leaving the island) and a 15-foot center turn lane for left turn movements throughout this section. In order to create a reversible lane within that roadway configuration, it would require eliminating the 15-foot center turn lane and allow that to serve as the reversible lane. This option would create additional congestion since the new reversible lane would consistently be used for left turn movements (in the direction that is being accommodated) while one of the two travel lanes in the opposite direction would then have to absorb the left turn movements for that direction of travel. This will also create an abnormal traffic configuration that changes depending on the time of day, creating serious safety concerns.
3. Group C Submission –
- a. Creating a new six lane bridge just south of the existing bridge. The new bridge will cross and be elevated over the existing bridge at Hog Island, run along the power line easement, and come down at grade in the middle of Jenkins Island.
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 - 1. The concept of leaving some of the existing structures for alternative uses (such as Bike/Ped, Fishing or other form of transportation) is being considered, however, in these scenarios someone will have to take over ownership and maintenance responsibilities in the event SCDOT can no longer maintain them
 - 2. Even with this proposed layout, there would need to be some changes to the Pinckney Island access

3. We are in agreement, under this scenario the power lines south of the existing Skull Creek Bridge will have to be relocated, however, the SCDOT will likely not allow them to be attached to the new bridge
 4. The suggestion of keeping the Skull Creek Bridge elevated further into Jenkins Island does provide some opportunities for tying the new bridge back into the mainline US 278
 5. The tie-in point shown for the new 6-lane bridge and the existing US 278 on Jenkins Island introduces some challenges including:
 - a. It would require the widening of the existing causeway connecting Jenkins Island with Hilton Head Island
 - b. The new 6-lane US 278 would not utilize any of the planned Jenkins Island Project, leaving a 6-lane roadway parallel to the new US 278 for local traffic only
 - c. However, this option does provide the possibility of creating an underpass for Windmill Harbour that could be used to provide safer access for that community
 6. The development of park and ride facilities along the US 278 corridor are being considered in this process
4. Group D Submission –
- a. Build a six lane bridge just south of the existing bridge
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 1. A six-lane continuous bridge configuration is being considered
 - b. Combination new east bound bridge and combination west bound
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 1. This configuration is being considered
 - c. Please note their use of innovative methods such as a dog bone intersection and reducing the speed limit to reduce congestion and increase capacity instead of widening the bridges and US 278
 - i. US 278 Team Comments:
 1. The team is looking at new and innovative ways to accommodate US 278 Traffic including innovative intersection design, signal timing, lane configurations, design speeds, etc.





US 278 Hilton Head Island Stakeholder Committee : Group C Suggestion Map 1

