

Proposed Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Multi-Use Greenway/Blueway Trail Brunswick County, North Carolina *“A pathway to Freedom”*

Presentation
to the
Cape Fear RPO Rural Transportation
Advisory Committee
September 11, 2020



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Multi-Use Greenway/Blueway Trail Project and
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Between 1525 and 1866, 12.5 million Africans were shipped to the New World.

10.7 million survived the dreaded Middle Passage, disembarking in North America, the Caribbean and South America.

Only about 388,000 were transported directly to North America

Many to be enslaved on the plantations of the south

Including the rice plantations along the lower Cape Fear River area.

The Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor was designated by the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act, passed by Congress on October 12, 2006 (Public Law 109- 338).

The Corridor was created to:

- Recognize, sustain, and celebrate the important contributions made to American culture and history by African Americans, known as the Gullah Geechee, who settled in the coastal counties of South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida.
- Assist state and local governments and public and private entities in South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida in interpreting the story of the Gullah Geechee and preserving Gullah Geechee folklore, arts, crafts, and music.
- Assist in identifying and preserving sites, historical data, artifacts, and objects associated with Gullah Geechee people and culture for the benefit and education of the public.



Proposed Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Multi-Use Greenway/Blueway Trail

This is a grassroots effort to:
Develop a concept plan that captures, celebrates and begins the process of developing local, regional and national support for the establishment of a 30-50 mile Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor in Brunswick County in the form of a Greenway/Blueway Trail.



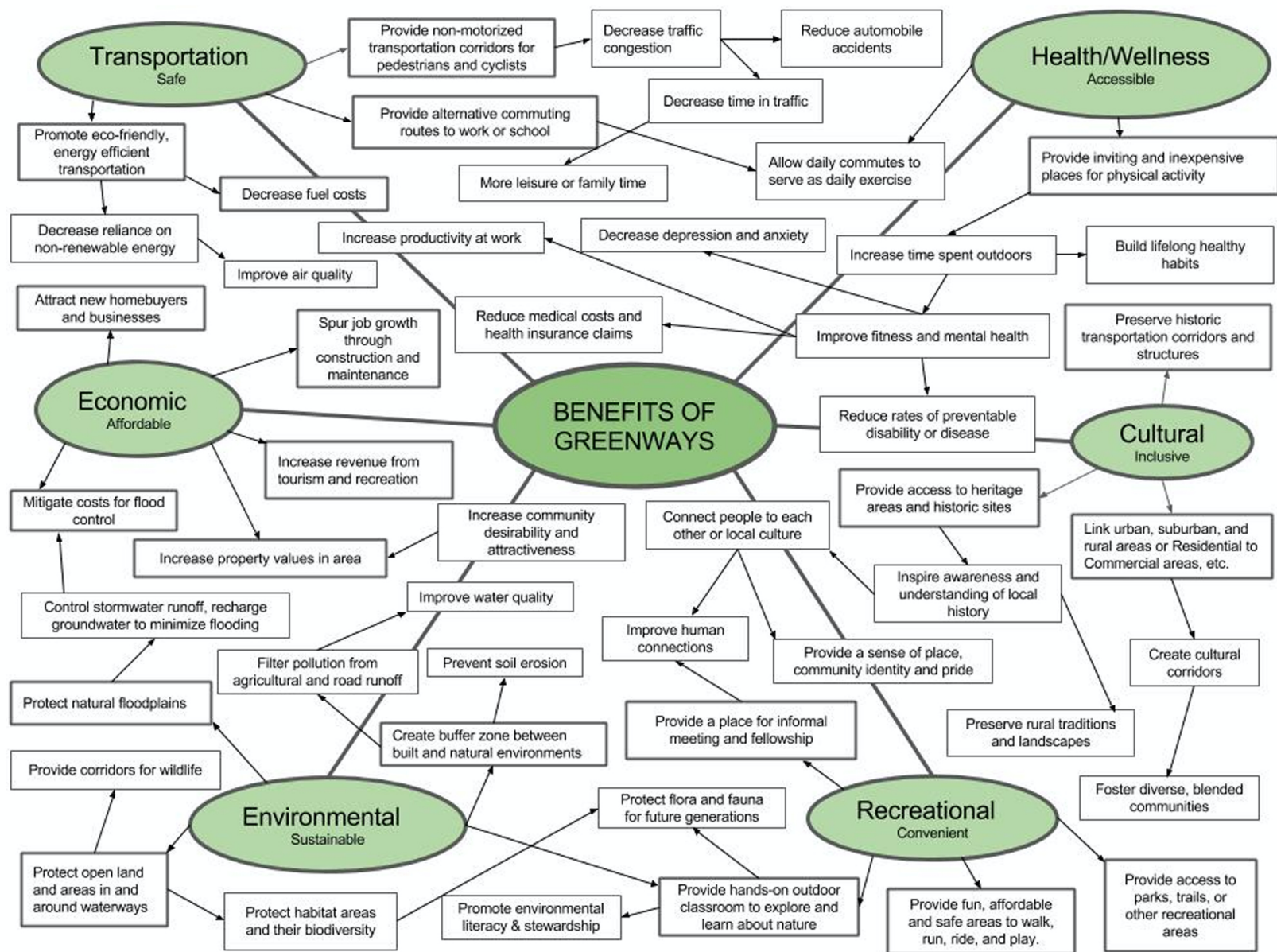


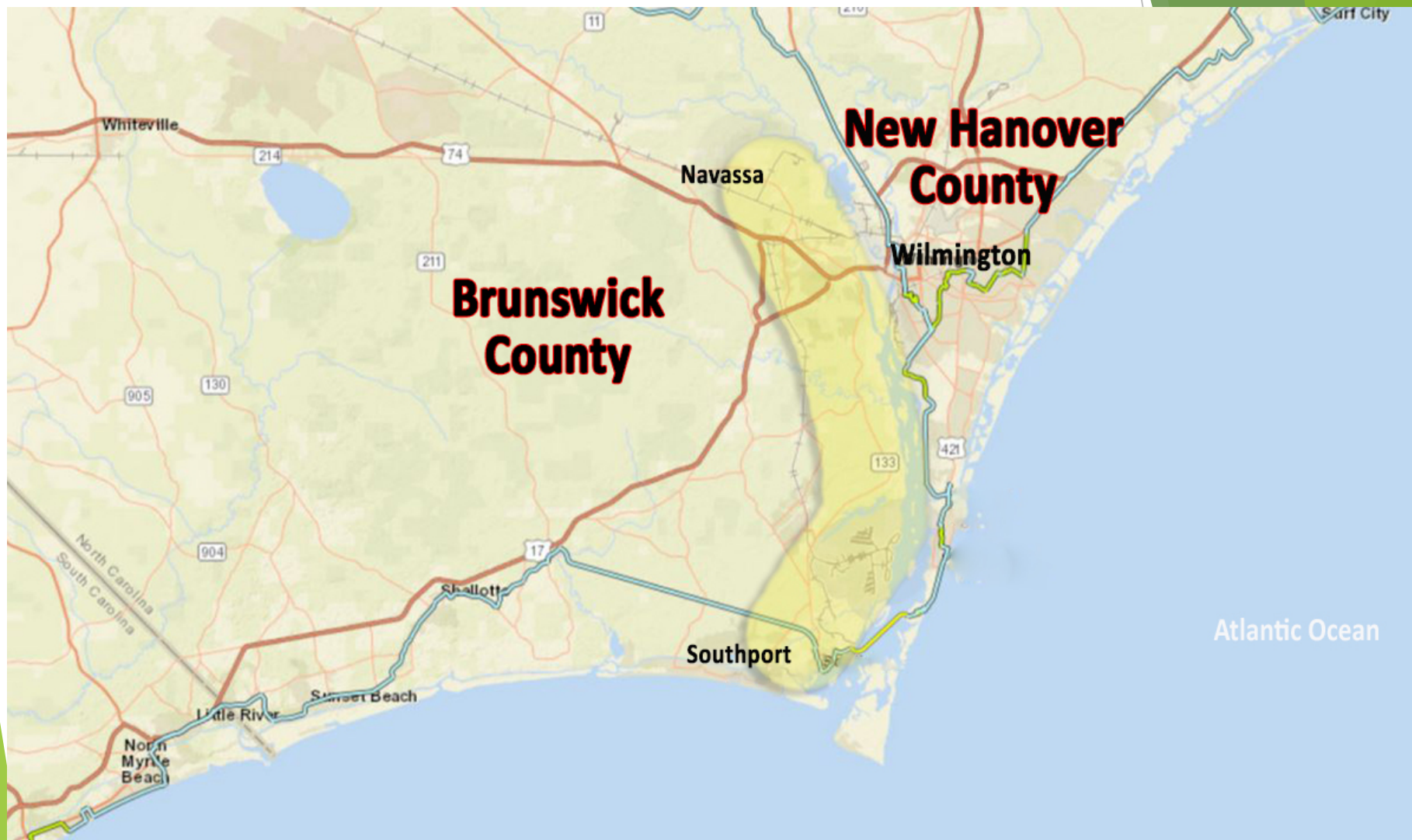
Regional and Community-wide Benefits

- **Educational Outreach:** Increasing understanding and awareness of Gullah Geechee people, culture and history.
- **Economic Development:** Supporting tourism and businesses while promoting the preservation of the land and natural resources that are important to a healthy way of life and a sense of place.
- **Documentation and Preservation:** Trails, Greenways and Blueways have the power to connect and bond us to the fabric of our collective society by preserving and celebrating historic places and providing access to them.
- **Promoting Healthy Living:** Creating new recreational opportunities that provide safe, inexpensive avenues for regular exercise for people living in rural, urban and suburban areas in Brunswick County.
- **Protecting the Environment:** Greenways and Blueways protect important habitat and provide corridors for people and wildlife.
- **And, potential to link to the 3,000 mile East Coast Greenway**



2/26/2020





The trail system planning and development is already underway in Navassa heading towards the Leland/Belville area



Historic Reaves Chapel A.M.E. Church in Navassa is one of the Cape Fear region's most culturally and historically significant African American structures. it is one of the oldest African American buildings in southeastern North Carolina.

Desperately needs an episode or two of “This Old House (Church)”



The Moze Gullah Geechee Heritage Site will protect a 40-acre habitat that is deemed “vulnerable to extinction.” A scenic recreation area including walking trails, a viewing dock, and a pier with a kayak launch also are planned.

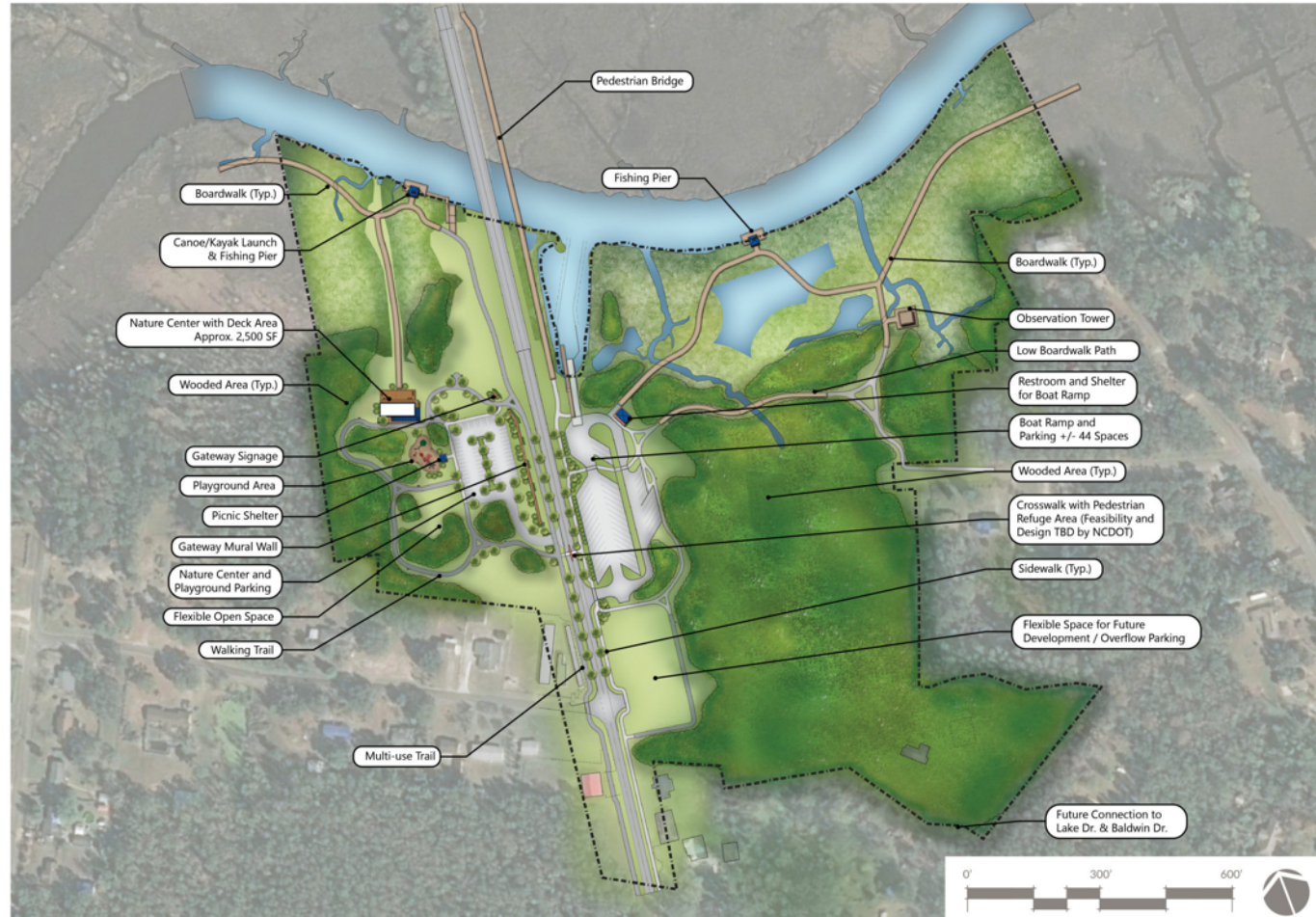


Navassa near future Moze Center



Leland Future Sturgeon Park

Sturgeon Creek Final Concept Plan



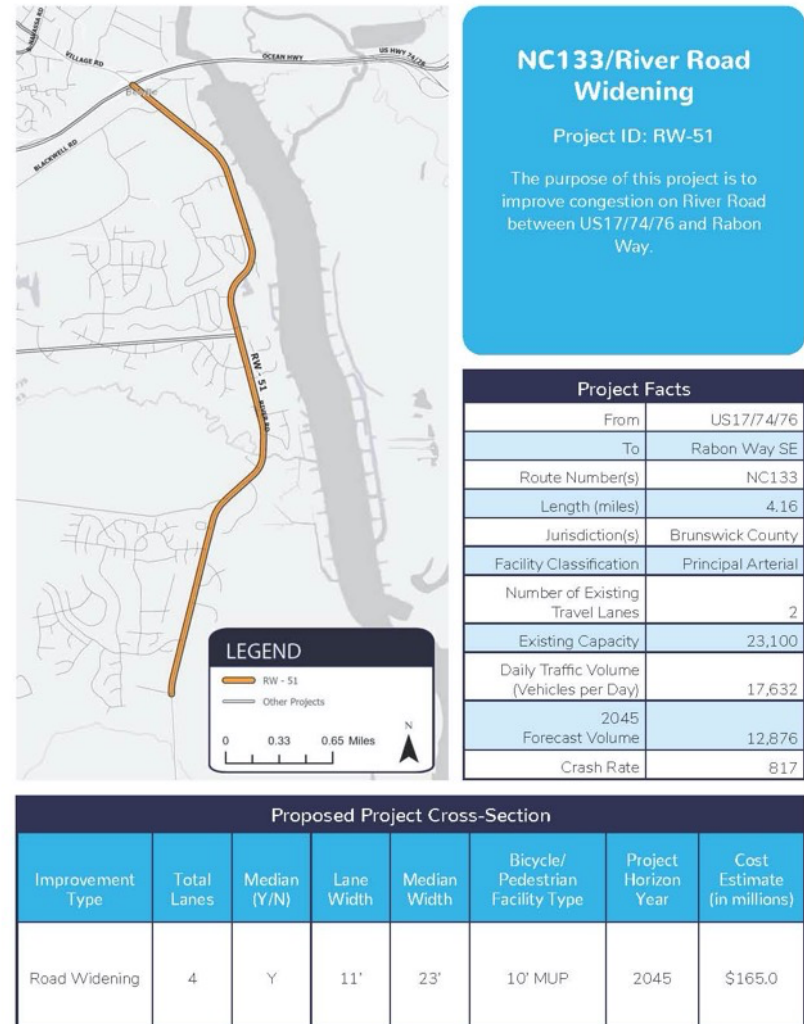


Belville Riverwalk Park



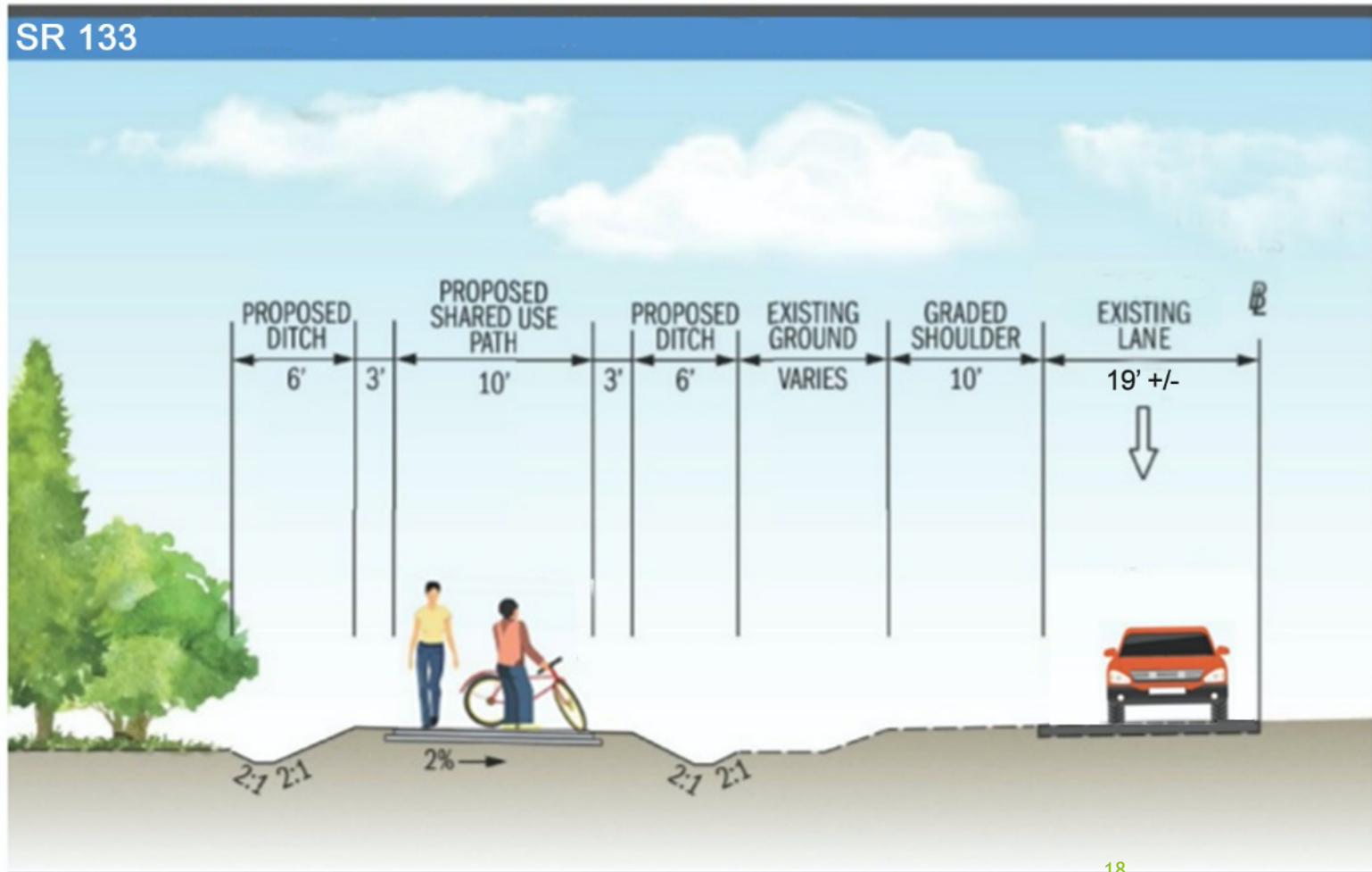
Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization 2045 Transportation Master Plan Update Project RW-51 NC 133/River Road Widening 4.16 miles

KEYWORDS: SAFETY; COASTAL
EVACUATION ALTERNATIVE; MULTI-
COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
CONSISTANCY; STRATEGIC REGIONAL
AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE; MULTI-
MODAL; CONGESTION MITIGATION;
CONNECTING NEIGHBORHOODS;
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Conceptual Design (Typical Cross-Section)

SR 133



In addition to the **Reaves Chapel** restoration and the work going on at the **Cedar Hill African-American Heritage Park**, **Navassa's Moze Center** and the **Rice Festival** activities in Leland Some of the more significant historic features that reside along and within reach of the Brunswick portion of the proposed Gullah Geechee Heritage Greenway/Blueway Corridor

- **The Brunswick Town Historic District**
- **The Cape Fear Civil War Shipwreck District**
- **The Orton Plantation**
- **Southport Historic District**
- **New Hope Presbyterian Church**

CURRENT OUTREACH

- National Park Service, River and Trails Program
- Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor Foundation
- East Coast Greenway Organization
- Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- New Hanover County Branch - NAACP
- COG - Rural Planning Organization
- Brunswick County Planning
- NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
- NC Division of State Historic Sites
- NC Parks and Recreation - Trails Program
- NC African American Heritage Commission
- Moore Foundation
- Town of Navassa
- Town of Leland
- Town of Belville
- Leland Economic Development
- Leland Parks and Recreation
- City of Southport
- City of Boiling Spring Lakes
- Cedar Hill African - American Heritage Park
- African - American Heritage Museum of Southeastern NC



Where we are and next steps

Brunswick County is the fastest growing county in NC and the fourth fastest growing in the United States. Preserving, protecting and celebrating our area's historic and cultural features must be at the heart of sustainable growth and development here in Brunswick County.

Current resolutions of support: Brunswick County, WMPO, Navassa, Belville and a letter of support from the Southern Environmental Law Center

Next Steps:

- Continuing collaboration with our friends at the East Coast Greenways Organization, Brunswick County, Town of Navassa and other surrounding towns and cities as well as Cape Fear Cyclists.
- Preparation of our application for support from the National Park Service's River and Trails Group. Due no later than March 2021 with the possibility of early submission.
- Continued outreach to our community members

Just imagine, with solid planning, community teamwork and support this could be us in the future.



Gullah Geechee Comm
@GullGeechComm

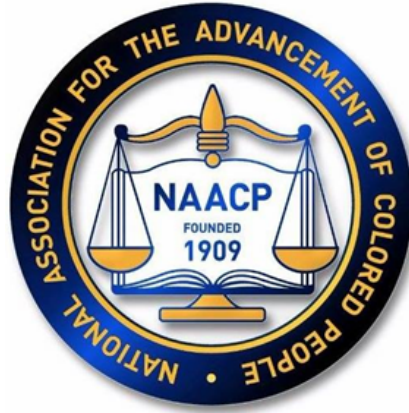
Georgia Gullah Geechee Youth Bike team pauses en route to Riceboro, GA [@ECGreenway](#)



11:06 AM · Jun 15, 2017 · [Twitter Web Client](#)

Our bikes are ready and waiting





We, the members of the NAACP, constantly strive to improve and empower the lives of the people we serve.

And for those we serve and our members we thank you for the privilege of your time, consideration and support.

"The tree of our family was parted - branches here, roots there - parted for their lumber." — Ta-Nehisi Coates, The Water Dancer