

Overview

Boundary Street Redevelopment District

Located in the City of Beaufort, SC, the **Boundary Street Redevelopment District** is defined as:

- The area bound by Ribaut Road to the east and Robert Smalls Parkway (SC 170) to the west
- Land bordered on the north by the marshes of Albergotti Creek and on the south by Battery Creek
- For landmarks, Beaufort City Hall and the County Government Center anchor the east end of the District while the Beaufort Plaza shopping center frames the west end.

Boundary Street is the primary entrance to the City of Beaufort and the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District.

The Boundary Street Redevelopment District serves as an essential element in the regional road network. The previous Boundary Street Corridor failed to grow in appropriate ways to accommodate increased traffic, retail/commercial growth and the increased use of bicycles and pedestrian pathways.

Besides that, the road and its roadsides provided a poor welcome to Beaufort's 300-plus years of history, character and charm. ***Together, we can do better.***

Since 2006, the City of Beaufort and Beaufort County have developed a comprehensive strategy for the future of this important corridor to address its physical form, redevelopment potential, and its ability to accommodate all modes of transportation.

The City of Beaufort and Beaufort County seek to transform Boundary Street from a crowded, inefficient and unattractive strip commercial corridor into a complete, compact and connected mixed-use district that supports a more walkable, livable and attractive community.

To make this change happen, about half the \$30 million project cost is funded through a federal DOT grant, with the balance coming from the City's share of a countywide one-cent transportation sales tax and other local dollars.

When the project is complete, estimated in 2018, improvements will include:

- Complete streets that benefit vehicles and pedestrians
- More attractive landscaping and designs that welcome travelers to Beaufort
- And enhanced connections for people, businesses and the places they visit.

Goals

1. **Retrofitting the strip mall design:** A major premise of the Boundary Street Redevelopment District is the retrofit of a conventional suburban development into a pattern that is more sustainable and economically thriving.
2. **Complete streets:** Realign the intersection of Boundary Street with Robert Smalls Parkway to create a safer, pedestrian-friendly intersection that connects into a parallel network.

Great streets form the backbone of healthy neighborhoods. They perform dual roles as vehicular and pedestrian corridors, as well serve as the community's primary public spaces as destinations in and of themselves. The impact of our streets' design cannot be underestimated.

For communities to be walkable, streets must be designed with pedestrian comfort and safety as critical goals along with the safe and efficient flow of traffic. Other considerations also come into play, such as easy and efficient use by emergency vehicles, accessible parking, placement of utilities, and stormwater runoff issues.

The new and improved Boundary Street will continue to provide two lanes of traffic in each direction. Those lanes will be separated by a landscaped median, which research shows is a safer design for both motorists and pedestrians.

In the event of an evacuation for storms or other disasters, law enforcement will be able to change the traffic flow so that three or even all four lanes are outbound.

3. **Improved mobility options:** Connecting housing to employment and shopping centers along Boundary Street and creating a direct connection to the Spanish Moss Trail are important components of this project. The Spanish Moss Trail, a multi-use path and trailhead, includes access for people with disabilities. It also provides an option for non-motorists who would rather travel in an environment separated from vehicular traffic.

Background

The Boundary Street Redevelopment District has a unique level of broad regional support from the public and private sectors. Since 2008, the City of Beaufort and Beaufort County have undertaken an extensive planning, design, engineering, and public financing effort that led to a completion of the Boundary Street Master Plan, Boundary Street Form-Based Code, Boundary Street Redevelopment Plan, Beaufort County One Percent Transportation Sales and Use Tax, and related Boundary Street Redevelopment District design and engineering documents.

The total estimated cost to develop and build this important safety project is \$30 million.

The Boundary Street Redevelopment Corridor project budget is funded through three sources:

- a) A Federal Highway Administration grant of \$12.635 million
- b) The Beaufort County one cent sales tax of \$7.819 million
- c) And the City of Beaufort's TIF II estimated contribution of about \$6.443 million.

Approximately \$3 million was spent prior to Right of Way acquisition and construction on design, infrastructure planning and other pre-construction elements of the project.

The Boundary Street Redevelopment Corridor plans caught eyes at the federal level in 2011 as Beaufort earned the 16th largest federal Highway Administration grant that year and the largest in South Carolina history.

Of the 848 applications for the TIGER III grant in 2011, only 48 were awarded funding -- about 6 percent of the total applications received. The TIGER grant is DOT-talk for *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery*.

In Summer 2014, local utilities worked out agreements with the City of Beaufort to relocate overhead utility lines beneath ground once an underground conduit is built and installed. Construction started in January 2016 and is expected to be completed in early 2018.