



Beaufort County conducted an in-person Public Meeting on Tuesday, October 29, 2024, in conjunction with a Virtual Public Meeting from October 15, 2024, through November 14, 2024, for the proposed Salem Drive Sidewalk project. This was the second public meeting held for the project.

The project is a proposed 8-ft sidewalk on S-234/S-457 (Salem Road) from Old Salem Road to SC 170 (Robert Smalls Parkway) with a 10-ft boardwalk over the creek and an 8-ft sidewalk along Robert Smalls Parkway to the Spanish Moss Trail. The sidewalk is approximately 1 mile long and will connect citizens to existing resources along Robert Smalls Parkway and the Spanish Moss Trail.

Salem Road is a SCDOT-owned and maintained roadway with a present 33-ft right of way. It is anticipated the sidewalk will remain within the present right of way where possible, but new right of way is needed for drainage improvements or to save trees. Also, near Old Salem Road, a portion of the existing road will be used for the 8-ft facility and will be separated from the travel lanes by a concrete median while maintaining a two-lane road and existing driveway access.

Meeting Summary:

Time Period:

- Public Meeting: October 29, 2024, from 5-7 pm at County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Rd, Beaufort, SC 29902 – An informal, drop-in format meeting hosted by Beaufort County Engineering along with representatives from J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. and Infrastructure Consulting and Engineering, PLLC. Citizens were provided an opportunity to review the exhibits and have a one-on-one question/answer session with project representatives. There were 35 attendees.
- Virtual Public Meeting: October 15, 2024, through November 14, 2024, - 30-day virtual meeting hosted on www.BeaufortCountyPenny.com

Advertisements:

- E-mail Newsletters were sent to 694 recipients on October 15, 2024; 728 recipients on October 28, 2024
- Press Release for public meeting published on October 23, 2024
- 6 “Yard” Signs were placed on October 15, 2024

Public Comments:

36 total comments were received by submitting the comment form during the public meeting or by an online comment form, mail, and e-mail. Comments with a valid mailing address will receive a mailed response. The following is a summary of comments received:

- 18 comments were submitted at the Public Meeting.
- 15 online comments were submitted.
- 2 comments were emailed
- 1 comment was mailed





On the Comment Form, they were asked if they were "In Favor Of" the project by answering "Yes" or "No", if they lived near the proposed project "Yes" or "No", and if they would utilize the proposed 8-ft sidewalk "Yes or "No." This is a summary of those who responded to the questions:

Salem Road Sidewalk		
Questions	Yes	No
Do you live near the proposed project?	34	2
Would you utilize the proposed project?	35	1
Are you in favor of the proposed 10' pathway?	34	2

Recommendation:

Based on the comments received from the meeting and previous meeting, it is recommended that the County proceed with an 8-ft sidewalk on Salem Road from Old Salem Road to SC 170 (Robert Smalls Parkway) with a 10-ft boardwalk over the creek.

Comment Summary:

Note: Comments are copied as is with no edits.

Salem Road is in desperate need of this sidewalk. It was approved in 2018 and made a priority by Councilman Flewelling immediately thereafter. We are glad to see that it is moving forward. However, for the reasons set forth below (and others that may subsequently come to mind), the sidewalk should be located on the western side of Salem Road rather than on the eastern side as proposed.

First, a great number of the pedestrians who will use the sidewalk live on the western side of the road. They should not be made to cross Salem Road (an increasingly heavily trafficked road) to gain access to the sidewalk. In support of this argument I would point out that there is a new, very large (288 units), 1-2-3 bedroom apartment complex on the western side of the road ("Garden Oak Apartments"). Many of these apartments will be occupied by young families that will use the sidewalk to get to Robert Smalls Parkway ("RSP"). In addition, there are two more family oriented, residential complexes on the same side of Salem Road ("Residences at Battery Creek" and an unnamed development that is located at "1700 Salem Road"). And there are at least two apartment complexes (currently, with more on the way) on the northern side of Old Salem Road. These complexes are a second "Residences at Battery Creek" and "123 Club". Old Salem Road intersects with Salem Road. Residents of these complexes (at least one of which appears to be an affordable housing complex) currently walk in an easterly direction on Old Salem Road to Salem Road. They then walk up Salem Road to RSP. If the sidewalk is located on the western side of Salem Road, as I suggest, those residents will not need to cross Salem Road to gain access to the sidewalk.

Second, the property that is located on the western side of Salem Road is entirely commercial property other than the five residential parcels at and near the intersection of Salem Road and Old Salem Road. Property on the eastern side of the road is entirely residential property all the way from Old Salem Road toward RSP to BE Wheatly Road (where the U-Haul Rental Center is located). Placement of the sidewalk on the western side of Salem Road is completely consistent with the current use of the properties that are located on that side of the road.

Third, the eastern side of Salem Road enjoys tree canopy coverage. There is no such coverage on the western side of the road. Thus, there is no requirement to remove any trees or to reduce the existing canopy coverage in any way whatsoever.

Finally, if the existing right-of way along Salem Road is, in fact, 33' on each side of the centerline as represented by the County (I have asked for the legal documents that confirm this claim, but I have not yet received them), then the County should not need to obtain by condemnation any property in order to construct the sidewalk on the western side of the road. (The County acknowledges that it will need to condemn property in order to construct the sidewalk on the eastern side of the road). Constructing the sidewalk on the western side of the road is a win-win: the County saves money by avoiding condemnation and taxpayers will not be forced, by legal means, into selling property they wish not to sell.

Yes - please build the sidewalk!!

This would provide our families a safe route when walking the road. Cars go fast around the bend and can't see families well.

Can you add a crosswalk to connect to Battery Point? Will the sidewalk be lit?





Absolutely. I gleefully await the arrival of the sidewalk. It will provide for safer access to city and shops/restaurants. I plan to use it for cycling, running, and walking my dog.

The project to get in a sidewalk of some kind is absolutely necessary. If this is too much even a 4 ft sidewalk would be better than nothing. Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.

I want to thank you for holding an open house meeting to let the public review the Salem Road Sidewalk proposed design. It is great the County is considering a means to connect this part of Beaufort to the Spanish Moss Trail (SMT). After reviewing the project drawings on October 29, 2024, I feel potential changes can be made to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

First off, the project title should NOT include the word "Sidewalk". A sidewalk by definition is for pedestrian traffic and couple that with the fact bicycles will be allowed on this pathway, this is considered a multiuse pathway (MUP), and the width should be redesigned in accordance with AASHTO Standards to 10 foot not 8 foot as proposed in drawings. Furthermore, the proposed project should include a MUP on the opposite side of Salem Road. How else will pedestrians cross Salem Road? Have you considered this in the design? Each intersection should include safety provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross all roads. This means more than placing a crosswalk. For safety and security reasons stop signs should be erected for pedestrians at unsignalized crosswalks; for signalized intersections (or future signalized intersections), the crosswalk signals should be programmed to countdown on a green light; at high-visibility crosswalks, the crosswalks should be painted with green markings; stop signs along with a high-visibility crosswalk with raised pedestrian crossing, rectangular rapid flashing beacon, and/or yield/stop here to pedestrian signs are needed to enhance pedestrian crossing of Salem Road; and the design should have considered street lighting along the MUP. The County should consider future projected crosswalk demand in their design. Frequent crossings reinforce useability and have the potential to fuel greater demand. Finally, signage is needed to ensure motorized vehicles know not to use this MUP and signage is needed on stop signs or traffic lights to warn motorists who are turning right at intersections that pedestrians and bicycles maybe present.

The County should also follow the requirements in the SCDOT's February 4, 2021, Complete Street Directive when planning, designing, and maintaining this project.

Hurry up, please! :)

I would like to be kept in the look as to the progress of the project; sidewalks are definitely needed in this area!!

As a nearly daily user of the roadway of interest here, both as a pedestrian/dog-walker and as a motorist, I strongly agree the sidewalk is urgently needed.

Excited about this project! My family will greatly appreciate this!

this would be a wonderful addition to the community to allows us to safely get to the spanish moss trail and publix! thank you!!

This project should have already been completed. Someone is going to be seriously injured or killed walking, biking, or in there wheel chair on this road.

As a resident of Battery Point my family and I are very much in favor of this and eagerly await construction and completion. In the last 4+ years we have seen this area grow and grow to a point that more and more traffic hazards exists. With several family oriented neighborhoods along this round and the connection to the Publix shopping center and the SMT we see this as something we will use regularly.

Overdue, glad to see

Has there been a survey sent to residences that border the proposed sidewalk to see if they will actually take advantage of it, and if so what is that number.

I would prefer plan with grass not curb between walk and through way

I would love to see this project completed sooner that 2027. Lots of traffic on foot bike, wheelchairs, etc are on Salem. With the increase of development, an unnecessary accident in the future is a high risk.

If we're going to continue to over develop the county and in this case specifically Salem/Old Salem road, then it is the duty of the county/city to provide infrastructure changes to safely manage the influx of new pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic.

I drive a mobility scooter to work. I am concerned about the traffic on the way to work. The sidewalk will help me to put my mind at ease and will help keep me safe.

Salem Road is narrow and winds so motorists can't see people walking or riding a bike. The path needs to be pedestrian friendly as well as bike friendly.

Yes!! Please, ASAP!





<p>It is much needed & is a dangerous area to ride a bike. This needs to be a priority because of safety concerns. I love the plan. Do more :)</p>
<p>Thrilled to know this to become a reality. Will promote safety for walkers, bikers, car traffic to share the space. Access to the SMT is a real benefit/convenience. Will add an overall/practical as well as aesthetic value to the neighborhood. Loved to hear about the extension down old Salem to Burton Hill Road and back to R. Smalls/SMT!!!</p>
<p>As a resident of Salem Bay, I would love a safe way to access the Spanish Moss Trail and other shopping at the Plaza with my family!</p>
<p>This is the most poorly managed, led, and communicated project in the 2019 county referendum everyone responsible should be ashamed and is one of the reasons why the current referendum will fail overwhelmingly.</p>
<p>This is a much needed project to protect the kiddos growing up in Salem bay, battery point and the new apartment complexes going up in the area. I would much rather us build this than pay for a lawsuit against the county or city. Thank you for your hard work.</p>
<p>Our family has six little kids and would definitely like to have that sidewalk since it's been very dangerous to be biking along the busy road.</p>
<p>I moved here in Sept 2023. This is a much needed project. I am a former City Councilman from Tega Cay, SC. Am surprised that developers are not required to add amenities like this and infrastructure as part of the development codes.</p>
<p>Much needed improvement, especially with the large amount of new construction in the area increasing traffic volumes along Salem Road. Would appreciate some temporary solutions to slow traffic / highlight shared usage of road with pedestrians and cyclists (bike markings on road, digital speed indicator signs, etc).</p>
<p>My son has Asbergers and rides a mobility scooter to and from Publix everyday to work - often early in the morning or late at night. The sidewalk will provide him a safe way to do this. The traffic on this road has greatly increased due to all the development. I bike this road daily. Many walk dogs, babies, and cycle on it. It will be a bike safety improvement for all. It will tie into Spanish Moss Trail as well. The sooner the better. Will there be lighting?</p>

