

# Contract awarded for final phase of Berlin G. Myers Parkway

## *Long-awaited traffic congestion relief is coming to Summerville*

After more than 18 years of planning, permitting and engineering work, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) has received bids and awarded a construction contract to proceed with the \$137 million project to build the final 3.9 miles of the Berlin G. Myers Parkway.

The final phase of the project will deliver a new four-lane roadway and a shared use multipurpose pathway along the Sawmill Branch Trail for bicycle and pedestrian users. The Parkway will serve both Summerville, by reducing traffic on Main Street, and the county as a whole as it provides connectivity with other well-travelled roads including U.S. 17A and Bacons Bridge Road.

The project required extensive permitting and interagency coordination to develop a project that met all of the regulatory requirements and fit well into the region. A number of partnerships were formed during that time to bring this final phase to construction.

Secretary of Transportation **Christy A. Hall** said the cooperation was a significant factor. “SCDOT is very thankful for the many partners that worked tirelessly over the years to make this project a reality. The level of cooperation and coordination on this project are unprecedented and we look forward to building this regionally significant and much needed project,” said Hall. She continued, “In particular, I would like to thank the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their commitment to ensuring that we deliver a great project and to Senator Lindsey Graham for his steadfast efforts to get the project to construction.”

Hall also recognized the years of hard work and leadership provided by Program Manager **Joy Riley** and Director of Environmental Services **Chad Long**, both of whom spent more than five years involved in the final phase. Riley noted that this project required two permits (408 and 404) which was a very rare occurrence. “Adding a consultant with expertise in flood plain risk management was a key in moving the project forward,” she said. Long added that weekly and even daily contact with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 408 Permit Manager was a positive. Long said, “The real time feedback from the Corps for all of our submittals and the team effort by all partners got this project across the finish line, allowing it to go to construction.”

Chairman of the Dorchester County Transportation Authority (DCTA) **Stephen Grant** noted the local importance of the Parkway. “The Berlin G. Myers Parkway will serve as a bypass that will take the pressure off our local roads. Main Street is at its limits and cannot be extended. In addition, congestion will be relieved around Summerville High School. There are many partners to thank for persevering for many years to get this project to construction. Especially the people of Summerville and Dorchester County who placed their trust in us to enhance the quality of life for our citizens,” Grant said.

Chairman of the Charleston Area Transportation Study Committee (CHATS) and Dorchester County Council member **George Bailey** said: “This is a great moment for the residents of Dorchester County and the result of years of hard work at every level of



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**Dignitaries announced Phase III of the Berlin G. Myers Parkway on Nov. 15, 2021. Speakers at the event included, from left, S.C. Secretary of Transportation Christy A. Hall, Commissioner Robbie Robbins, Senator Lindsey Graham, Summerville Mayor Ricky Waring and Christopher Mims with the Army Corp of Engineers.**

government. Our enduring gratitude goes to our regional partners, SCDOT, SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank and Senator Graham for his efforts regarding this vital piece of transportation.”

South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank Board Chairman **John B. White, Jr.** added, “This is an excellent example of how a focused and collaborative effort on a complicated and complex project can break through years of obstacles to provide much needed traffic relief for the citizens of our

state. The State Infrastructure Bank appreciates the opportunity to assist the Dorchester County Transportation Authority, Charleston Area Transportation Study and SCDOT to fund and deliver a successful project for the Summerville area.”

The total project budget is approximately \$137 million and is supported by \$35 million DCTA funds, \$30 million State Infrastructure Bank funds and \$72 million in Charleston Area Transportation Study/SCDOT funds.

### 10-Year Plan from page 1

Drainage issues have become a rising concern in many parts of the state.

Hall said the agency was asked for ideas on large projects if more dollars become available on the state level. In that respect, DOT responded with accelerated plans for the I-26 widening between Columbia and Charleston; I-95 widening in Jasper County; and the Governor’s recommendation of using \$300 million to build phase I of I-73 in the Pee Dee.

Already, interstate highway improvements have heated up with projects underway all across the state. In contrast, there were only four interstate projects underway when Hall took over as Secretary.

“I want to thank the Commission for your support,” Hall said, closing her annual presentation.



### RAWLINSON ROAD REOPENED

ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**A ribbon cutting was held on April 1, 2022, reopening Rawlinson Road over Lake Trotwood. Speakers at the event were Representative Jermaine Johnson, SCDOT Deputy Secretary for Engineering Leland Colvin and Richland County Council Member Chakisse Newton.**