

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PORT DISTRICT (ED-P)



TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT,  
SOUTH CAROLINA

OCTOBER 02, 2017

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## Introduction

**PURPOSE** | The purpose of this report is to address the character and use of a key area primed for economic development in the town of Mount Pleasant with the goal of shaping its growth, redevelopment, and evolution. This should occur in a way that is intentional, successful, and sustainable and ultimately increases the quality of life for all who live, work, or visit the area.

This vision should also have a positive impact on the entire town of Mount Pleasant through increased and focused economic development opportunities. The Port District Economic Development Study provides an assessment of the assets in the port area, as well as an action plan outlining improvements and policies needed to better leverage those assets, and thus, enhance the opportunities.

The general approach to this project is to develop the appropriate criteria that will guide growth and redevelopment, including both land use and infrastructure, in a way that benefits the town. Input was received from representatives within study-area neighborhoods, the South Carolina State Ports Authority and members of the Town's Economic Development Committee of Council.

**STUDY AREA** | This area is located generally along Long Point Road bounded by I-526 (the Mark Clark Expressway) and the South Carolina State Ports Authority Wando Welch Terminal. This includes those properties fronting Long Point Road and Wando Park Boulevard and other adjacent and connecting streets within the study area boundaries. **Exhibit 1** illustrates the limits of the study area.

There are approximately 274 acres within the district, not including the port, single family neighborhoods and other predominately residential uses. Of this acreage, approximately 60 acres (22%) of the area is prime for redevelopment. Most of this land is along Long Point Road.



**GOAL** | The main purpose of this report is to explore options as to how this area may change over time. The goal is to protect and enhance Mount Pleasant’s quality of life by fostering an economic environment that is vibrant, favorable to job creation, and that promotes the general prosperity of the community. The Town must maintain a sensitivity to the existing surrounding uses while capitalizing on the unprecedented economic opportunity of having the state’s largest economic driver, the South Carolina State Ports Authority, locate its headquarters within the Town’s boundaries. A primary goal of this report is to outline clear and actionable items to promote economic activity that advances the Port Area while protecting existing residential areas.

## Recommendations

The findings of this report suggest the Town should create a new zoning classification: “Economic Development: Port District” (ED-P) zoning that applies to all parcels within the area. **Exhibit 2** shows the parcels to be included in the ED-P. This district should address land use, building heights, densities, setbacks, parking, and other land development regulations.

It is important to note that this study area also includes many of the Light Industrial (LI) parcels within the town. Consideration needs to be given as to whether ED-P is a more appropriate use than LI, whether some or all parcels need to remain LI instead of ED-P, or whether more LI uses need to be included within the ED-P designation than is currently being recommended. Any planning and zoning changes also need to respect and protect the quality of life for existing neighborhoods. This decision needs to be made within the framework of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. A complete review and comparison of permitted land uses in ED and LI would provide insight and possible direction towards establishing an ED-P District. Studies of infrastructure improvements are recommended. These studies should include a review of transportation issues with roadway and intersection operations, traffic flow and connectivity, and parcel access. Utilities, generally, are adequate to serve most development types within the area. However, extension of utilities to newly annexed properties should be a priority.

Recommendations of this report should be provided for consideration of inclusion into the goals and strategies of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan which is currently being reviewed.





WANDO PARK BOULEVARD



WANDO PLACE DRIVE



SHIPPING LANE



EXISTING CONDITIONS





EXISTING CONDITIONS



WANDO PARK BOULEVARD



LONGPOINT ROAD



LONGPOINT ROAD



## Annexation

Many parcels in the study area are not in the Town of Mount Pleasant but are, instead, part of unincorporated Charleston County. **Exhibit 3** shows which parcels are in the Town and which are in the County. The main impact of this situation is that the regulations and ordinances that guide development are not consistent. It is a recommendation of this study that the Town encourage annexation of strategic parcels to ensure consistency in land uses and land development consistent with the goals of both the Town of Mount Pleasant and Charleston County. If parcels are not annexed, the Town should work with the County to ensure parcels that remain in the County are in keeping with the Town's goals for the area.

**Exhibit 4** shows the existing zoning pattern for the study area.

To encourage annexation, the Town should continue to enforce its policy regarding sewer service with Mount Pleasant Waterworks requiring annexation for sewer service in an effort to ensure new development would occur pursuant to Town goals.

## Land Use + Economic Development Target Clusters

This area has the potential to be an economic ecosystem with a wide range of complementary land uses. Land uses may include offices, port-related businesses, restaurants/breweries, and non-residential mixed-use products. It is important to recognize the disparate uses that are currently present in this area which include a broad range from Light Industrial to Single-Family Residential. As this area continues to evolve, these existing uses as well as any newly developed land uses will need to be compatible and respectful. This will require land development standards that allow for the promotion and protection of these varying land uses.

The studies, "High Impact Clusters" report, dated April 4, 2016 and its companion study "Competitive Assessment" dated February 15, 2016, were utilized widely during the analysis of this Port District Economic Development report. These in-depth studies explore the concept of creating clusters and specifically outline the industry clusters that could offer the greatest potential to "positively affect regional dynamics and generate opportunities for all residents to improve their standards of living." Clusters promote diverse employment opportunities and are defined as "groupings of similar companies that share markets and or/technologies and depend on common suppliers and workforces."



Based on the assets available in the study area such as the Port of Charleston and quality of place, Advanced Logistics, Information Technology and Corporate Headquarters/ Back and Middle Office would be the most appropriate target clusters for the study area. Target companies could include Logistics Corporate Headquarters, Logistics IT, Specialized Business Services, Software Development, Health IT, Blue Tech, Creative Design etc. These reports, in their entirety, are included in the Appendix.

Corporate and regional headquarters of businesses that work closely with the Port should be encouraged to relocate to the district. Many of those businesses are currently on the Charleston peninsula, near the existing Port Headquarters and may choose to relocate closer to the new headquarters location.

There are opportunities for ancillary uses including restaurants, health and welfare businesses, and professional service businesses that support the major employers within the cluster, particularly the Port. By providing services within the district, users will be better able to remain within the district and shorten their respective trip lengths, affecting traffic flow and patterns.

The Town of Mount Pleasant should further review its Economic Development Incentive Grant Ordinance to ensure the companies outlined in these target clusters would qualify for this grant.

**LAND USE CHART** | The following chart includes a list of proposed land uses within a new zoning district, ED-P (Economic Development - Port), some may be permitted, others conditional.



## ED-P (Economic Development - Port)

### Economic Development

Local Food Production, Agriculture, and Horticultural Uses

Brewery, Distillery, Winery

Commercial Uses

Office General

Special Industry Uses

Manufacturing And Production

### Ancillary Support Services

Commercial Uses

Artisan Workshop Or Studio, With  
Retail Sales

Artisan Workshop Or Studio,  
Without Retail Sales

Mobile Food Vending

Restaurant, Without Outdoor Dining

Restaurant, With Outdoor Dining

Gas Station

Outdoor Storage And Display

Flex Space

Special Industry Uses

Fuel Storage And Dispensing Facility  
Warehousing Facility

Transportation Uses

Parking Lot Or Structure

Government Facilities

Lay Down Yard, Maintenance Facility  
Administrative Office  
Police, Fire, Or Ems Facility

Recreation and Entertainment

Open Space, Natural  
Pedestrian Trails

### Port-Related

Transportation Uses

Distribution Terminal

Transportation Terminal

Port

### Light Industrial/Existing Uses

Local Food Production, Agriculture, and Horticultural Uses

Agricultural Storage

Commercial Uses

Animal Boarding Facility, Day Care, Or  
Shelter

Veterinary Clinic, Without Boarding

Marine Salvage Operation

Marine Warehousing

Marina/ Dry Stack Storage

Watercraft Of Marine Equipment

Service Or Repair

Watercraft Rental Or Sales, Without  
Outdoor Storage

Recreation and Entertainment

High Impact Entertainment

High Impact Recreation

Shooting Range, Indoor





## Design Guidelines

**GENERAL PROVISIONS** | In general, all applicable off-street parking, loading, sign, bufferyards, and supplemental regulations shall apply to uses within this district; provided, however that variations may be made to such provisions during the Design Review Process as may be necessary to accomplish unique operational requirements or characteristics inherent with individual businesses. As provided in the Town's existing Economic Development Zoning District, an example may be the allowance of additional paved parking for an office use with a significant number of cubicles, sometimes referred to as a "cube farm," that has higher parking demand on a daily basis, as opposed to a shopping center's desire for additional paved parking to accommodate sales on one or two days a year.

**DESIGN REVIEW** | All parcels within the ED-P will be subject to approval by the Town of Mount Pleasant Design Review Board (DRB) in accordance with the Town's existing regulations for DRB. However, it is recommended that the Economic Development Incentive Grant Ordinance be updated to allow for certain Economic Development companies to be able to apply for an advanced timeline as part of their incentives package. Companies qualifying as the "Economic Development Targets" in the Town's Economic Development strategy could qualify to apply for an advanced timeline as part of the Town's Economic Development Incentive Ordinance to further incentivize economic development in this area.

**BUILDING HEIGHT** | 4 floors and 65' maximum; No minimum height. Height shall be measured in accordance with the Town's existing regulations. Within 100' of a single-family-detached land use, building heights should step down to 45'.

**SETBACKS** | Buildings should generally address the street with parking predominantly on the side and to the rear of parcels, or in parking structures. Front setback (or side setbacks if on a corner) should be 20' to 30' build-to lines. There is no minimum lot size or building size.

**PARKING** | Structured parking is encouraged. Connectivity between adjacent parking fields is strongly encouraged. Shared parking may cross parcel boundaries if a shared parking agreement is executed between the various entities and parking fields are connected. On-street parking, if utilized on new or existing internal streets, may be counted within 500' of a building entrance. On-street parking is subject to approval by the Town of Mount Pleasant and SCDOT.





**BUFFERS** | No peripheral buffers would be required in the ED-P except that outdoor storage, loading docks, refuse dumpsters, compactors, and utility substations or pump stations shall be adequately screened with any combination of fences, walls, and/or landscaping. Buffers along Long Point Road should be consistent as currently required by the Town. All buffers against existing residential development will be required in accordance with Town ordinance.

## Traffic + Transportation

**I-526** | The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) is currently studying improvements to I-526 from Rivers Avenue to Highway 17 in Mount Pleasant because of the high levels of congestion along this corridor. This report recommends that the Town of Mount Pleasant play a very active role in this process. As part of this process, there should be consideration of the impact of the large number of trucks coming in and out of the Port, the ramp system in the study area, and access to Wando Park Boulevard.

**LONG POINT ROAD** | Several possibilities for modifications on Long Point Road have been discussed. Some may warrant further study, others have been determined infeasible for various reasons.

The following transportation improvement concepts warrant further study:

1. Modification to the intersection of Wando Park Boulevard/Hobcaw Bluff Drive at Long Point Road to improve signal operations and peak-hour congestion. Recommend addressing as a top priority based on estimated cost to perform, time to complete and estimated benefit. (See Exhibit 5)
2. Exploration of the feasibility of a roundabout at Long Point Road and Shipping Lane. (See Exhibit 6)
3. Modifications to the I-526 exit at Long Point Road with the main goal being to alleviate conflicts between trucks and other vehicles as trucks exit from East Bound I-526 onto Long Point Road. Recommend working with the State as part of their current study.
4. Beautification of Long Point Road including signage, sidewalks, street trees, and lighting to improve the general appearance and functionality of the corridor to complement the sidewalks budgeted for Wando Park Boulevard. Recommend



including this district as part of the town-wide wayfinding program. (See Exhibit 7)

5. Exploration of a barge at the Wando Welch Terminal to transport shipping containers to rail lines within the region to alleviate traffic. Recommend working with SC Ports Authority on this solution.

6. Conduct a full corridor traffic analysis taking into consideration the current traffic patterns and those that may arise with economic development investments in the area to establish an infrastructure plan. Recommend doing this in conjunction with improvements recommended in the I-526 study.

Ideas that were explored but determined infeasible:

1. Realigning Long Point Road from I-526 to the Port as a modified or hybrid boulevard with the main goal of separating local traffic from truck traffic. This would be very difficult given the short length of the road, the variable Right Of Way width, the number of curb cuts, and difficulty of creating a safe merge point.

2. Create an overpass either directly from I-526 to the Port to divert truck traffic. There are several reasons this is infeasible from an engineering standpoint including the height needed for the overpass to clear Wando Park Boulevard and the distance needed between interchanges.

**WANDO PARK BOULEVARD** | There is a need to provide connectivity from Wando Park Boulevard to Shipping Lane and improve Shipping Lane operations. This could be accomplished in many ways. This report recommends that options be considered and that the Town monitors the availability of land and the ability of the Town of Mount Pleasant to acquire land. This study does not recommend any one approach to achieve this connection over another for this goal, but any option must consider the strict access requirements for the Port on Shipping Lane. A few of the possible options are shown in Exhibit 8. None of these are intended to represent any land acquisition strategies by the Town. All new or modified streets should be “complete streets” with sidewalks and street trees.



## First Phase Recommendation

**TRANSPORTATION** | The Town of Mount Pleasant currently has funds available for a project of limited scope in this area. This report recommends that those funds be used to improve the functionality of the intersection of Wando Park Boulevard at Hobcaw Bluff Drive and Long Point Road.

Currently, the lane configuration presents an overlap in the path of vehicles turning left from Wando Park Boulevard and from Hobcaw Bluff Drive. This conflict requires split-time phasing of the signalization, making the intersection far less efficient and contributing to congestion issues on Wando Park Boulevard, particularly during the PM peak hour.

Modifications to this intersection should help alleviate this congestion. A diagram outlining the area of conflict is shown in **Exhibit 5**. A design solution for this intersection is not included in this report as there are many options, some of which would require acquisition of land or reconfiguration of existing features.

**ZONING** | It is recommended that the findings of this report be considered for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. This includes a recommendation for implementing the re-zoning of the properties in the study area to the Economic Development - Port (ED-P) designation and exploration of branding the area.

**ANNEXATION** | The Town should develop an annexation strategy for strategic properties and include Mount Pleasant Waterworks in these discussions utilizing the possibility of sewer connection as an incentive.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** | The Town should review its current economic development incentive grant ordinance and adopt additional policies in order to drive the redevelopment as outlined in this plan especially to include those of an advanced timeline for the Design Review Board. Additionally, the Town should consider a branding effort for this area. Many redevelopment projects have been successful where they have unified a community under one district “brand.” Streetscaping and wayfinding that reinforce the “brand” should be included as funds permit.



## TOP TEN ACTION ITEMS

1. Rebuild the Wando Park / Long Point Road intersection to eliminate turning movement conflicts and improve signal timing. (see Exhibit 5)
2. Add gateway signage identifying the district and helping to establish the “brand.”
3. Work with MPWW to install sewer mains which would accommodate redevelopment and encourage annexation.
4. Explore the practicality of a roundabout at Shipping Lane / Long Point Road. (see Exhibit 6)
5. Develop streetscape treatment for section between Wando Park Boulevard and Shipping Lane with mast arms, landscaped medians, street trees, better lighting, and improved sidewalks. (see Exhibit 7)
6. Connect Shipping Lane to Wando Park Boulevard through one of several possible scenarios, while also improving the physical appearance of Shipping Lane. (see Exhibit 8)
7. Explore the options of other traffic calming measures that would benefit the residential communities along the corridor.
8. Develop a specific policy on annexation and rezoning in the area.
9. Codify the ED-P Zoning Ordinance and work towards rezoning key parcels in conjunction with the review and update of the Comprehensive Plan.
10. Explore and develop options for nearby services and dining to reduce daily traffic trips.



# EXHIBITS



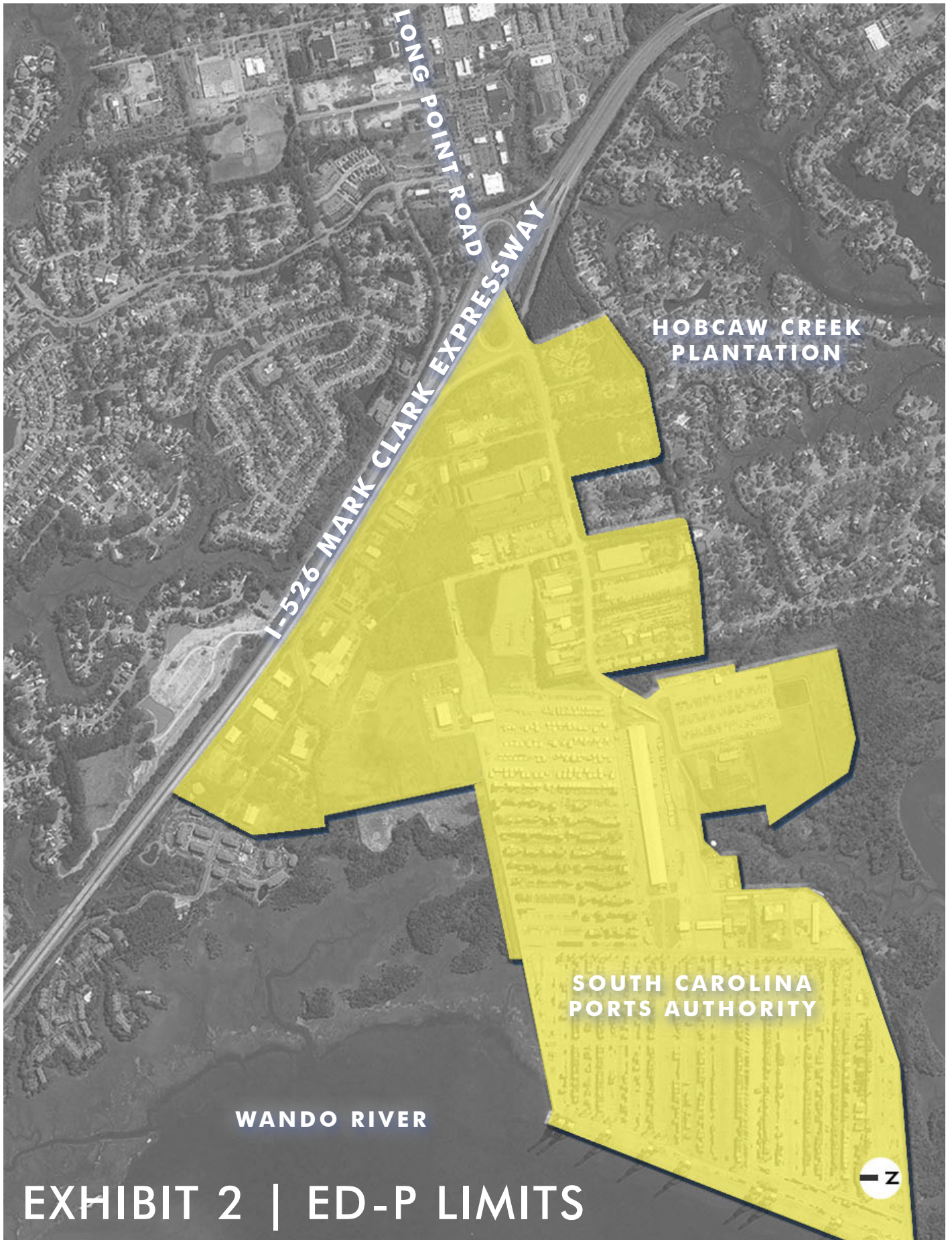




# EXHIBIT 1 | STUDY AREA



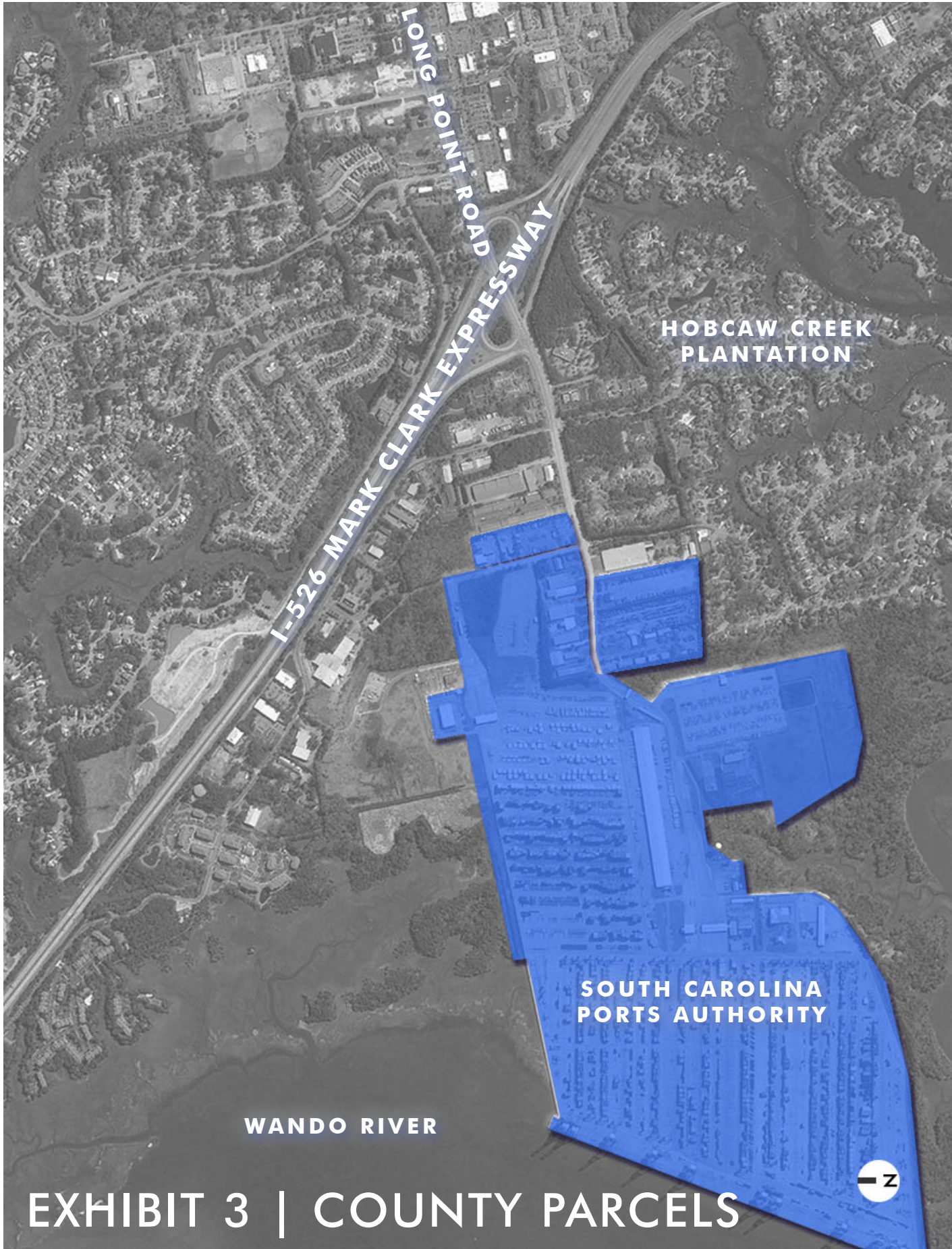




## EXHIBIT 2 | ED-P LIMITS











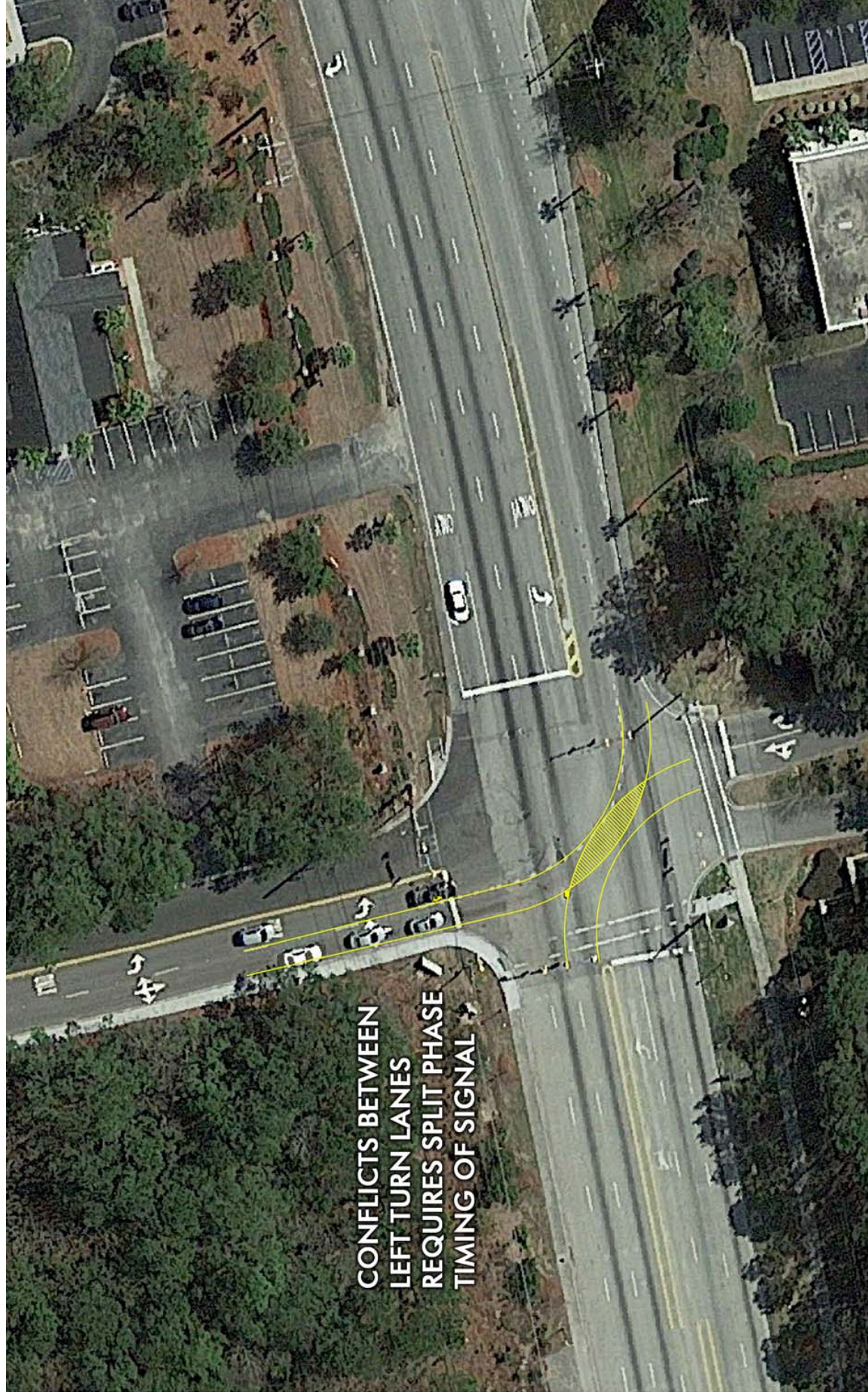
# EXHIBIT 4 | EXISTING ZONING

## LEGEND:

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
|  | CHARLESTON COUNTY ZONING           |
|  | CHARLESTON COUNTY                  |
|  | CHARLESTON COUNTY OVERLAY DISTRICT |
|  | MOUNT PLEASANT ZONING              |
|  | LIGHT INDUSTRIAL                   |
|  | AREA-WIDE BUSINESS                 |
|   | R1 RESIDENTIAL                     |
|    | R2 RESIDENTIAL                     |
|    | PLANNED DEVELOPMENT                |







CONFLICTS BETWEEN  
LEFT TURN LANES  
REQUIRES SPLIT PHASE  
TIMING OF SIGNAL

## EXHIBIT 5 | INTERSECTION CONFLICT







**EXHIBIT 6 | LONG POINT MODIFICATIONS**



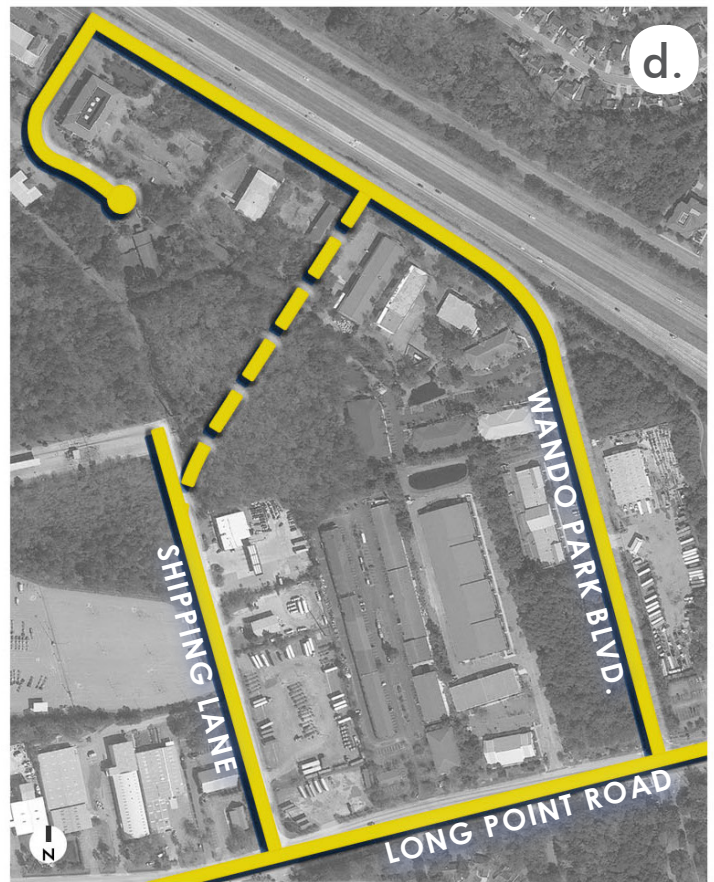
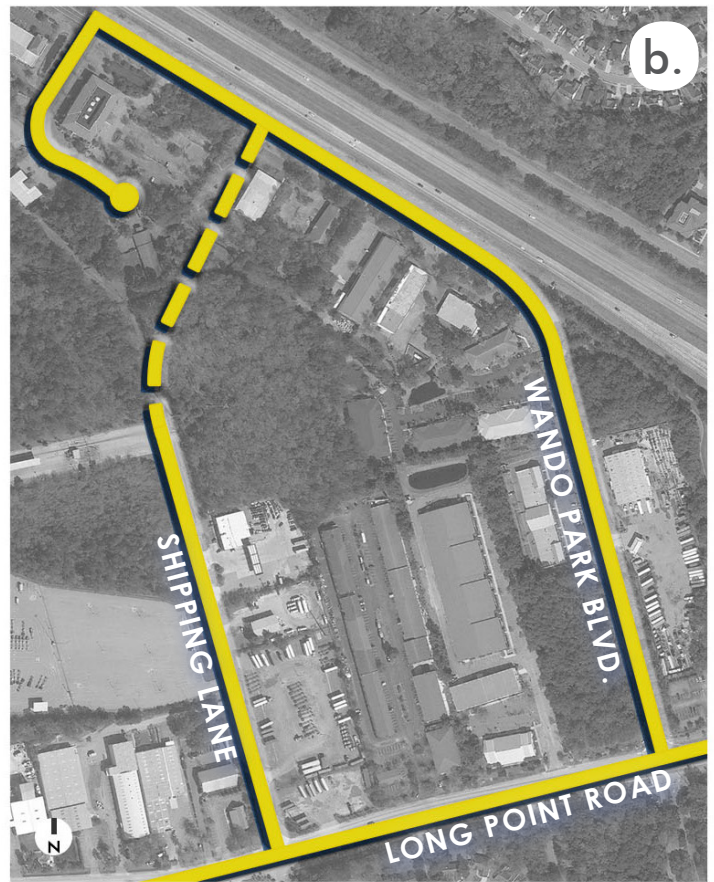




EXHIBIT 7 | LONG POINT ROAD VIGNETTE







## EXHIBIT 8 | CONNECTIVITY



# APPENDIX





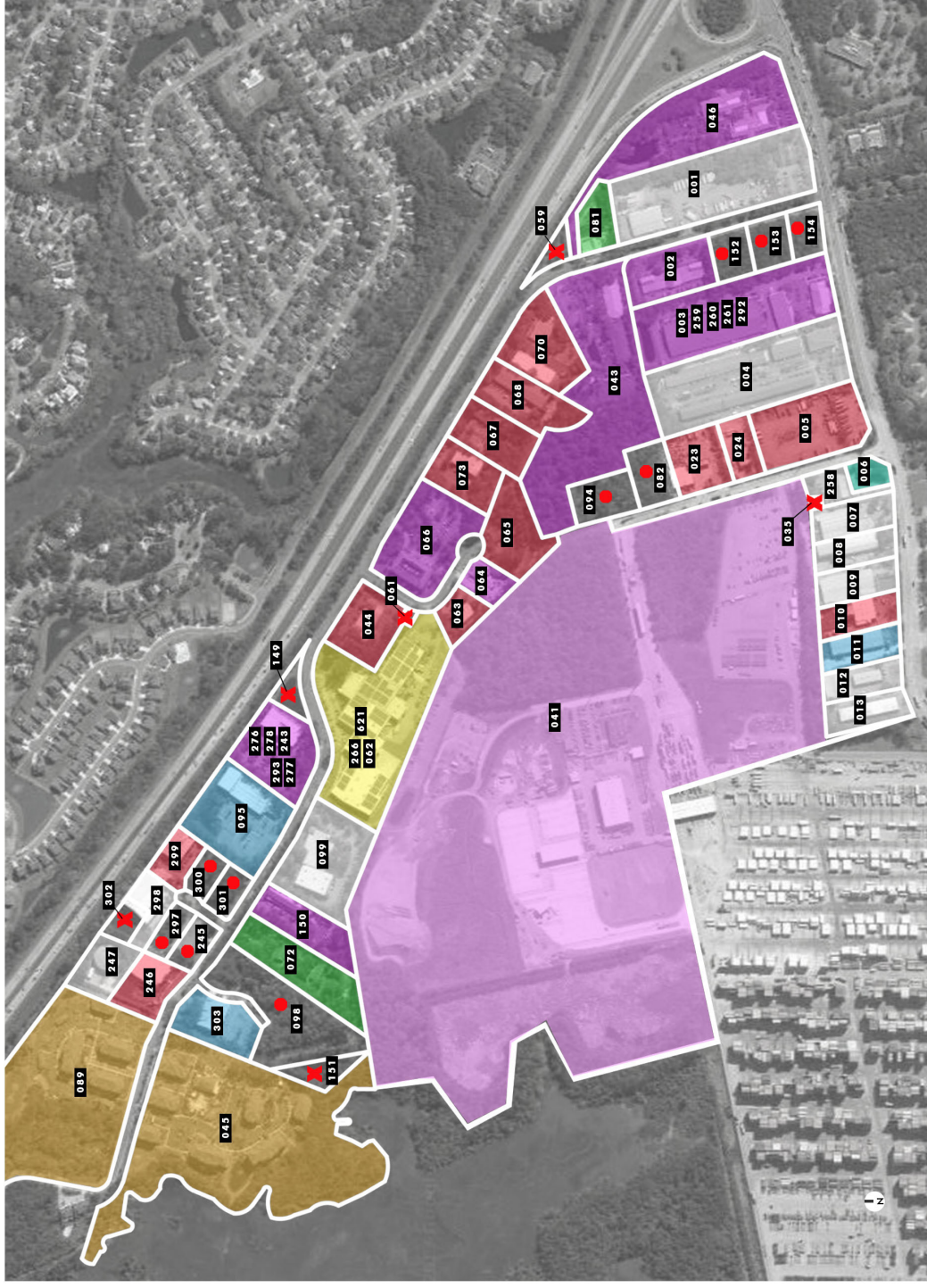


PARCEL #	EXISTING USE	PRIMARY CLASS	SECONDARY CLASS	CLASS CODES
5370000001	BW Mitchum Trucking Company	Warehouse		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000002	office/commercial center	Office	Commercial	500 GEN COMM
5370000004	River Side Center	Warehouse	Commercial	630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000005	Intermodal Services	Commercial		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000006	Long Point Grill	Food & Beverage		580 SPCLTY RST
5370000007	Pro Performance Athletics / Buckannon Brothers Tile / Sherman Williams	Warehouse	Indoor Recreation	630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000008	Habitat For Humanity	Warehouse	Commercial	630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000009	Fastenal	Warehouse		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000010	The Pooch Palace	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000011	Tapio Dance	Indoor Recreation		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000012	Pleasant Places Landscape	Warehouse		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000013	Wax Werx	Warehouse	Commercial	630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000023	Port Side Automotive & Jaguar Service Inc.	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000024	Blue Flame Gas	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000035		Undevelopable		
5370000041	Port of Charleston	Port		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000044	Lloyd's Soccer / Infu Science	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000045	Windward Apartments Long Point	residential		200 SPCLTY APT
5370000046	Long Point Center	Office		650 SPCLTY OFC
5370000059		Undevelopable		990 UNDEVELOPABLE
5370000061		Undevelopable		990 UNDEVELOPABLE
5370000063	Emery Allen / Q4 Launch / Scoular	Commercial		500 GEN COMM

5370000064	under construction (future office building)	Office		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000065	Paw Plaza Hotel	Commercial		650 SPCLTY OFC
5370000066	Wando Park Center	Office		650 SPCLTY OFC
5370000067	E Group	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000068	Interior Specialist Inc.	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000070	Summit Worx / Charleston Dance Institute / Jack Russell Software	Commercial		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000072	Hospice of Charleston-IMPatient Unit	Health Care		121 GROUP LIV
5370000073	Powell Global Service / Tandem Logistics	Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000081	Dr. Randy Dentist	Health Care		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000082		Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000089	Windward Apartments Long Point	residential		200 SPCLTY APT
5370000094		Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000095	Sky Zone	Indoor Recreation		750 SPCLTY REC
5370000098		Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000099	Arcadia Publishing	Warehouse		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000149		Undevelopable		990 UNDEVELOPABLE
5370000150	S&ME	Office		500 GEN COMM
5370000151		Undevelopable		990 UNDEVELOPABLE
5370000245		Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT

5370000246	Wando Park Self Storage		Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000247	Town of Mt. Pleasant Utilities		Utilities		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000258	Possum's		Warehouse		500 GEN COMM
5370000297			Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000298	Westbrooke Brewing		Warehouse		630 SPCLTY WHS
5370000299	Westbrooke Brewing		Commercial		500 GEN COMM
5370000300			Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000301			Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000302			Undevelopable		990 UNDEVELOPABLE
5370000303	GCA Gym Masters Academy / Rock Cheer Charleston		Indoor Recreation		500 GEN COMM
5370000003/259/260/261/292	Long Point Center		Office		250 SPCLTY COMM CONDO
5370000043/276/277/278/293	Wando Commons		Office		650 SPCLTY OFC
5370000152/153/154			Vacant		952 VAC COMM LOT
5370000293/277/276/278/243	Port Side Center		Office		167 CONDO COMMON COMM
5370000622/062/621	Hubner Manufacturing Corporation		Manufacturing		952 VAC COMM LOT
KEY:					
Commercial	13				
Warehouse	10				
Vacant	9				
Office	8				
Undevelopable	6				
Indoor Recreation	3				
Health Care	2				
Residential	2				
Food & Beverage	1				
Manufacturing	1				
Port	1				
Utilities	1				

- COMMERCIAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- OFFICES
- HEALTH CARE
- MANUFACTURING
- RECREATION
- WAREHOUSE/  
UTILITIES
- FOOD/BEVERAGE
- PORT
- VACANT
- UNDEVELOPABLE



MARITIME DISTRICT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY  
TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 1"=200'







# EXISTING SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

Wastewater Force Main

Wastewater Gravity Line

