



City Council Worksession

Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1st Floor

June 23, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

Members of Council in attendance - Philip Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Michael McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate.

II. EMPLOYEE NEW HIRE RECOGNITION

A. Fire Department.

Ross Vezin, Deputy Fire Chief, introduced Matthew Arguijo and Zachary Nykiel.

B. Public Works Department.

Nate Farrow, Public Works Director, introduced Markell Mulligan.

III. PRESENTATIONS

A. Boards, Commissions and Committees applicant interviews.

Council held a question and answer session with Jeremiah Smith for the Downtown Advisory Board.

B. Federal Interest Determination (FID) - Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) Feasibility Study (US Army Corps of Engineers Presentation).

Eric Claussen, Assistant City Manager, introduced Jeff Livasy, Walker Messer and Bethney Ward with the Army Corps of Engineers. He stated the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has requested the City of Beaufort's formal consent to initiate the Federal Interest Determination (FID) for a Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) feasibility study. The FID is an initial scoping process used by USACE to determine whether sufficient federal interest exists to proceed with a full feasibility study focused on reducing coastal storm and flood risks.

Mr. Claussen mentioned that The City of Beaufort faces ongoing coastal storm and flooding challenges, particularly within downtown Beaufort and The Point neighborhood. The 2022 Point and Downtown Drainage Study was provided to USACE. The first letter of intent sent to the USACE was in 2021.

The Beaufort CSRM study was included in the Fiscal Year 2027 President's Budget with \$600,000.00 in Year 1 funding under a 50/50 cost-share arrangement. Subsequent discussions outlined a preliminary three-year local funding approach of approximately \$400,000.00 in Fiscal Year 2026, \$600,000.00 in Fiscal Year 2027, and \$500,000.00 in Fiscal Year 2028 to support the estimated \$3 million feasibility study.

Mr. Livasy and his team went over how the process would work. A copy of their presentation is attached to these minutes.

There was a discussion to see if the work that needs to take place on the Waterfront Relieving Platform could be included in this study.

Council is supportive of proceeding with the process.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

A. City of Beaufort Housing Repair Program Update.

Claude Hicks and Jennifer Tuckwiller provided an update from the Beaufort-Jasper Housing Trust regarding the City of Beaufort Housing Repair Program. 23 applications have been received, of which 20 were determined eligible within the city limits. Two homes have completed repairs totaling approximately \$69,738.00, while three additional projects remain underway. Current projects include roof replacement, HVAC installation, foundation stabilization, electrical upgrades, accessibility improvements, and repairs to historic structures. A waiting list of 12 applicants remains; all located in Zone 1. There are 5 zones. The program began with \$250,000.00 in funding, with approximately \$48,000.00 remaining for future projects. They showed some before and after pictures on a few of the projects. They mentioned a new Housing Directory that can be used to search for workforce and affordable housing options across Beaufort and Jasper Counties. This brings together rental opportunities in one place, supporting individuals and families seeking stable, attainable housing near where they work and live. The website is bjht.org. The following will take you to the City of Beaufort Home Repair Program - <https://bjht.org/city-of-beaufort-repair/>.

The following addressed Council with their comments and concerns on topics discussed:

Dan Blackmon
Joe Macdermant

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (1) of the SC Code of Laws - Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; to wit, Municipal Judges.
- B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a)(2) of the SC Code of Laws - Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim; to wit, Bond Court Services.
- C. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (1) of the SC Code of Laws - Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; to wit, Downtown Advisory Board.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to come out of Executive Session and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Actions Taken:

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to appoint Jeremiah Smith to the Downtown Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scallate.

All were in favor, motion carried.

VI. ADJOURN

8:35 PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Disclaimer: This document is a summary of discussions and captures any action taken. All City Council Worksessions and Regular Meetings are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Any questions, please contact the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda was posted on the City's bulletin board and website www.cityofbeaufort.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.

approved: July 7, 2026
Traci Guldner



USACE PRESENTATION FOR BEAUFORT CITY COUNCIL



Jeff Livasy, P.E.
Chief of Civil Works

Walker Messer
Chief of Planning

Bethney Ward
Project Manager

Charleston District
June 23, 2026



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US Army Corps
of Engineers®



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INTRODUCTIONS



Jeff Livasy, P.E.
Chief of Civil Works



Walker Messer
Chief of Planning



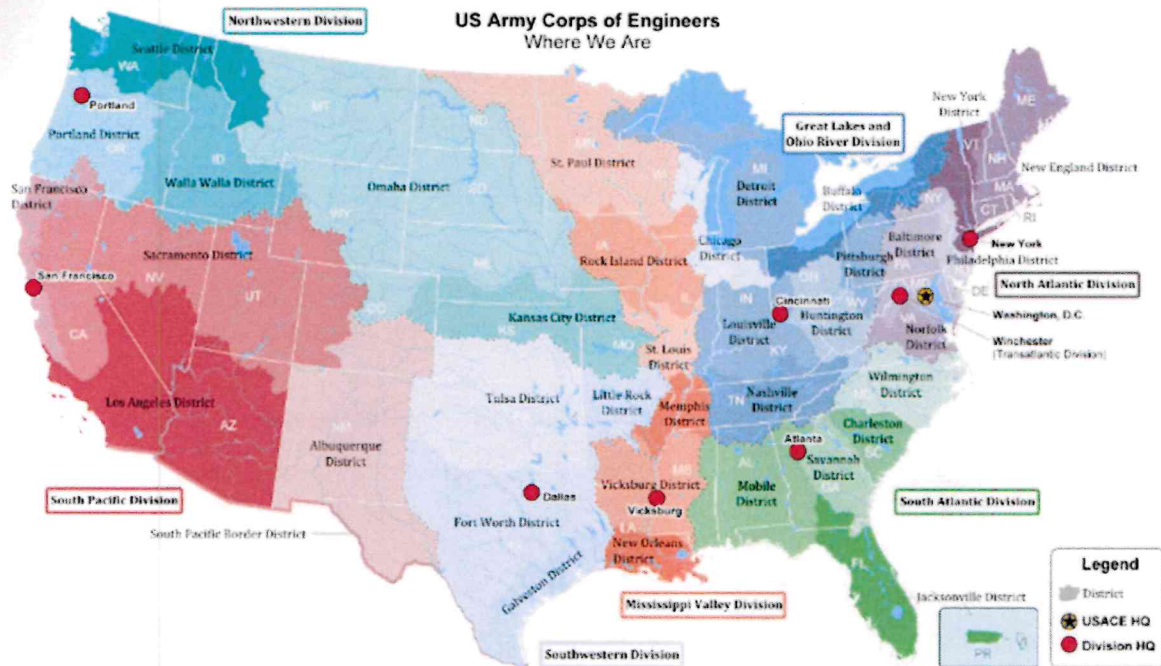
Bethney Ward
Project Manager



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MISSION, VISION, & ORGANIZATION

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Civil Works Districts shown in United States. Military Districts shown outside United States.

Other Organizations

249th Engineer Battalion
Army Geospatial Center
Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville
Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), 7 labs
Institute for Water Resources
Marine Design Center
USACE Finance Center
USACE Logistics Activity



USACE Mission

Deliver vital engineering solutions, in collaboration with our partners, to secure our Nation, energize our economy, and reduce risk from disaster.

USACE Vision

Engineering solutions for the Nation's toughest challenges.

Headquarters

- 9 Divisions**
- 38 Districts**
- 9 Centers and Labs**
- 1 Active-Duty Unit**
249th Prime Power Battalion
- 2 U.S. Army Reserve Theater Engineer Commands**
412th and 416th

34,000 DA Civilians | 800 Military | \$62 Billion Budget

USACE PRIMARY CIVIL WORKS MISSIONS



Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM)

Reduce risk of flooding impacts from **storm surge** specifically.

SAC Examples:

- Charleston Peninsula Project
- Beach Projects – sand placement and dune construction designed to prevent surge inundation. Periodic renourishment of sand is included as part of the authorized project.



Flood Risk Management (FRM)

Reduce risk of impacts from riverine flooding

Flood waters *inside* homes or businesses, disrupting critical infrastructure evacuation or emergency routes

SAC Example:

- Waccamaw River Study



Harbor and Waterway Deepening and Maintenance Dredging

Creating and maintaining a means for **waterborne commerce** at the nation's deep ports. Dredged material may be used for beneficial purposes.

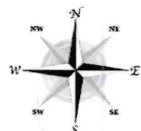
SAC Examples:

- Charleston Harbor
- AIWW
- Folly River, Murrells Inlet, Town Creek

CIVIL WORKS PROJECTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Charleston District



Hartwell Lake
(Savannah District)

Richard B. Russell Lake
(Savannah District)

J. Strom Thurmond Lake
(Savannah District)

SC Congressional Delegation

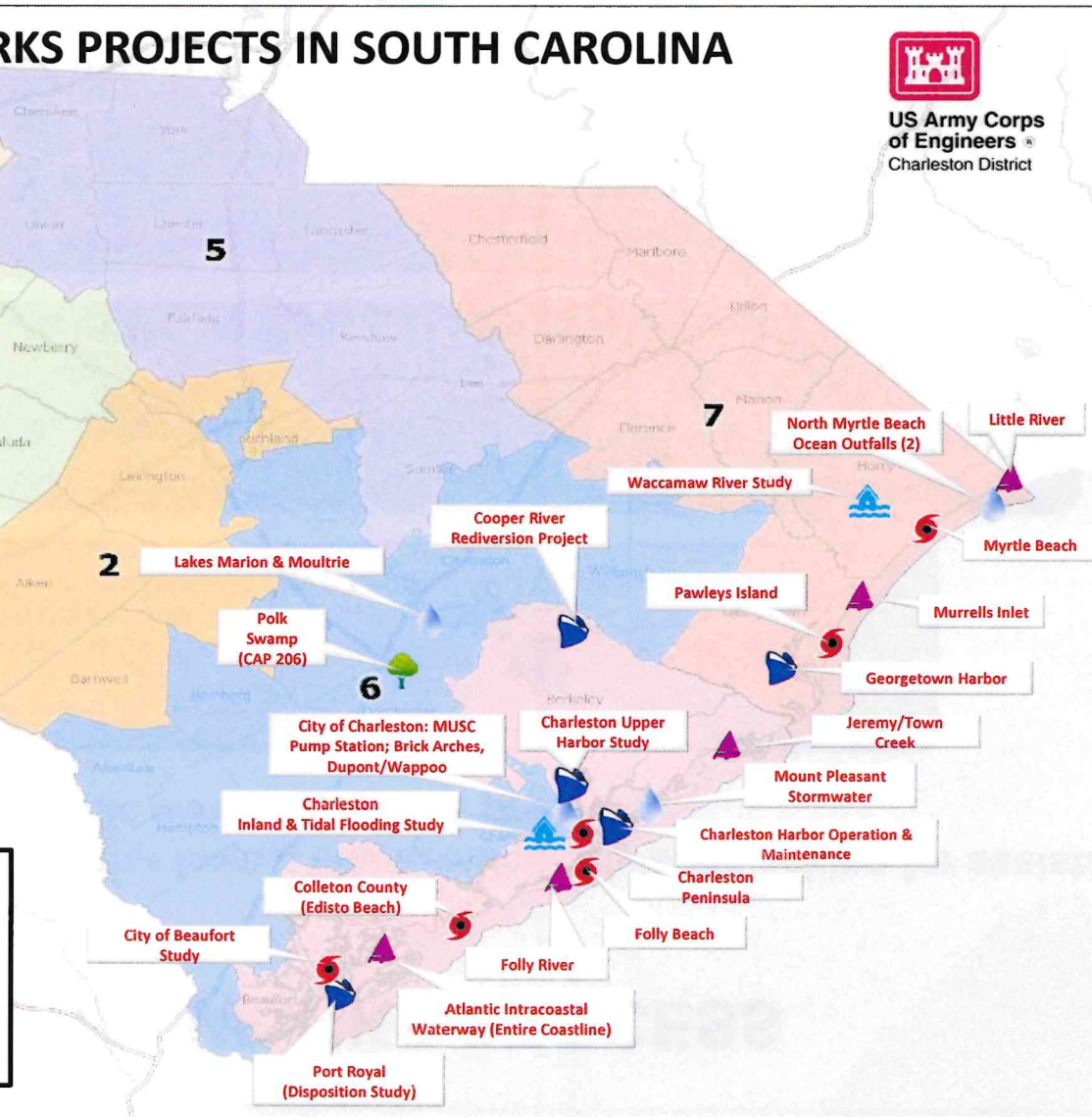
Senator Lindsey Graham (R)
Senator Tim Scott (R)

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Nancy Mace (R) |
| 2 | Joe Wilson (R) |
| 3 | Sheri Biggs (R) |
| 4 | William Timmons (R) |
| 5 | Ralph Norman (R) |
| 6 | James Clyburn (D) |
| 7 | Russell Fry (R) |

Legend

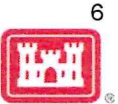
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|--|-------------------------------|--|--|
| | Deep Draft Navigation | | Hydropower |
| | Shallow Draft Navigation | | Planning Assistance to States |
| | Flood Risk Management | | Section 219 Environmental Infrastructure |
| | Coastal Storm Risk Management | | Continuing Authorities - Ecosystem Restoration |

DATE: May 2026





USACE CIVIL WORKS PROCESS



All Civil Works projects begin with a letter from a city/town/county/state asking for assistance with a specific water resources problem.

Phase 1: Feasibility Study

- Once USACE receives Authorization and Appropriation, the feasibility phase can start.
- Phase begins with a ***Federal Interest Determination*** (100% Federal Cost).
- 3-year, \$3 million study leading to a Chief's Report, which recommends a project to Congress for Authorization

Phase 2: Project Construction

- Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) Phase begins once project authorization and appropriations are received (considered the start of the *Construction Phase*).
- Construction begins with the award of the first contract.

Phase 3: Operation & Maintenance

- Phase begins when an operable segment of the project is complete.
- Includes on-going Inspection of Completed Works.



STUDY AUTHORIZATION & APPROPRIATION



Authorization

Resolution adopted on April 22, 1988 by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate:

Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, that the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Section 110 of the River and Harbor Act of 1962, is hereby authorized to study, in cooperation with the State of South Carolina, its political subdivisions and agencies and instrumentalities thereof, the entire Coast of South Carolina in the interests of beach erosion control, hurricane protection and related purposes. Included in this study will be the development of a comprehensive body of knowledge, information, and data on coastal area changes and processes for such entire coast.

Appropriation

Timeline	City Cost (50% Cost Share)
Federal Interest Determination (~July 2026)	\$0k (100% Federal)
Fall 2026	\$400,000
2027	\$600,000
2028	\$500,00
TOTAL	\$1,500,000



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FEDERAL INTEREST DETERMINATION



Feasibility Studies require a Federal Interest Determination (FID) to begin.

- Federal Interest Determination will answer:
 - Does the problem and potential solution align with a core USACE mission (e.g., Flood Risk Management)?
 - Is there a potential solution that can address the identified problems?
 - Is there a reasonable likelihood that a solution's benefits will exceed its costs and are environmental impacts manageable?
- USACE has 45 days and \$100k (100% Federally funded) to make a recommendation
- FID submitted to Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works for concurrence to start the Feasibility Study.

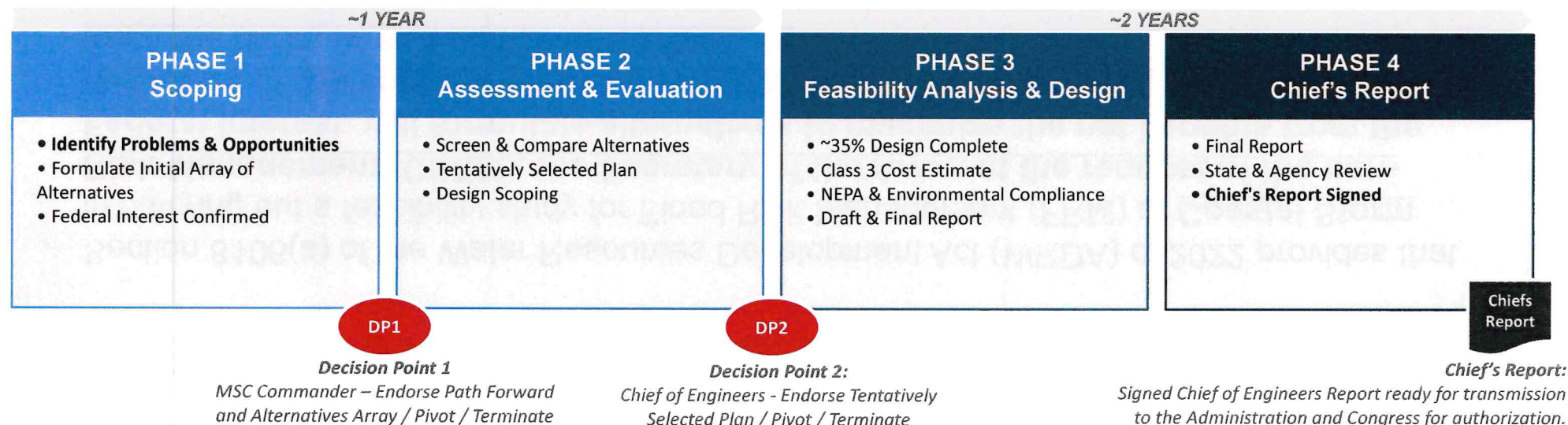


FEASIBILITY STUDY PROCESS

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- Starts with identifying the problem, ends with a recommendation in a Chief's Report.
- Up to 3-year, \$3 million study.
- Commitment from Non-Federal Sponsors:
 - **Cost Share:** 50%/50% for Feasibility Phase
 - **Time and Resources:** Significant data needs and staff time working with USACE project team
 - **Decision-Ready:** clear vision from City on problems and preferred outcomes.





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SECTION 8106(a) Scope of Feasibility Studies

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- Section 8106(a) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022 provides that in carrying out a feasibility study for Flood Risk Management (FRM) or **Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM)**, **the Secretary of the Army, at the request of the non-Federal interest, will formulate alternatives to maximize the net benefits from the reduction of the comprehensive flood risk within the geographic scope of the study from the isolated and compound effects of.....**
- **The non-Federal sponsor for a feasibility study may provide a written request** to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) to formulate additional alternatives in any authorized FRM or CSRM feasibility study
- If the non-Federal sponsor prefers to recommend a plan that includes one or more measures that are outside of Army Civil Works policy, then that plan will be identified as a Locally Preferred Plan (LPP). The ASA(CW) may grant an exception to allow recommendation of the LPP if **the non-Federal sponsor agrees to pay 100 percent of the difference in construction cost** between the NED and the LPP.



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BOTTOM LINE

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- Receiving authorization and appropriation for a feasibility study is rare. Beaufort and Charleston Harbor received the only new start studies in FY26 in the South Atlantic Division.
- Next steps:
 - **Federal Interest Determination:** USACE needs written consent (email) from the City to initiate the FID (early July)
 - **Feasibility Study Cost Share Agreement (FCSA):** soon after FID initiation, negotiate the FCSA, which commits USACE and the City to funding the feasibility study to completion.
 - **8106(a) Consensus & Request:** which drivers of comprehensive flood risk/compound effects.
 - **Feasibility Study:** study starts with concurrence on the Federal Interest Determination from ASA(CW).



CHARLESTON DISTRICT



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