The Community Workshop, held at Alston-Bailey Elementary School, had about 30 resident stakeholders in attendance to share their input regarding pressing issues within the Town, specific projects they would like to see undertaken, and the primary strengths of the community. The following sections summarize the received feedback. Please note that the following are summaries of feedback provided by attendees and in no way represent ideas or recommendations from the consultant.

Issues & Concerns

Land Use & Development
A prominent issue raised participants was the current lack of density downtown including the amount of office, event, restaurant, and retail options available. Additionally, the desire for improved stormwater and regional flood management was voiced. As the town continues to grow, a key issue for most residents was the need for a defined strategy for sustainable growth and development.

Housing & Economic Development
The most-discussed issue related to economic development was that the Town is not attracting enough new businesses and jobs. Property taxes were another prominent concern, particularly the increasing residential and decreasing industrial tax bases. Housing concerns with the participants included the shortage of affordable housing and increase in sprawl due to the lack of residential density downtown.

Parks and Open Space
The lack of parks and trails was a prominent issue for residents. Further, the issue concerning temporary closing of the Sawmill Branch Trail due to the Berlin G. Myers Parkway construction was voiced.

Community Character & Services
The key issue participants raised was the lack of coordination between community, county, and state bodies and the lack of consistent governance in result. Additionally, residents voiced the need for improved emergency response services.

Transportation & Mobility
The most-discussed issue among participants was traffic congestion and the Berlin G. Myers Parkway construction. Additional key issues were the town’s limited public transit and the desire for improved pedestrian and bike networks that are safe and better connected.

Priority Actions
When asked what specific actions should be taken to improve the Town, participants suggested ideas about development, parks and recreation, arts, culture, and more. Ideas included:

Land Use & Development
- Expand food and retail downtown (2)
• Expand office and event space downtown
• Trident Technical College campus

Parks and Open Space
• Expand parks and trails
• Mitigate Berlin G. Myers Parkway construction impacts on Sawmill Branch Trail

Housing & Economic Development
• Establish more affordable housing (2)
• Create funding mechanism for new business/industry development

Community Character & Services
• Preservation of historical character and original homes
• Disaster preparedness

Transportation & Mobility
• Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity downtown (5)
• Have Berlin G. Myers Parkway bypass Main St. (2)
• Infrastructure to direct commuter traffic away from downtown (2)

Strengths & Assets
When asked what is best about Summerville, participants focused on the character, the people, and opportunity. Participants mentioned:

Land Use & Development
• Low density

Parks and Open Space
• Ashley River
• Beauty (2)

Housing & Economic Development
• Growth (3)
• Local business (2)
• Affordability
• Downtown potential

Community Character & Services
• Small town charm (15)
• Historical areas and homes (6)
• People (5)
• Schools (4)
• Parks and greenway (4)
• Downtown events (3)
• Location (3)
• Weather (2)