



Although the alternatives do not affect the community boundary, as defined by the survey, and are not anticipated to affect community cohesion, Alternatives 4 and 7 pass within 0.8 miles of Spring Branch. An overpass is proposed for Road S-263 (Sellers Road) east of the community and an interchange would be located at U.S. Route 501, approximately one mile to the southeast.

Road S-223 and Road S-23 (Temperance Hill Road) are the primary routes between Spring Branch, Marion, and Latta, where Spring Branch respondents reported shopping, banking and conducting business (refer to Figure 3-21). Development may be expected to occur in the area of the proposed U.S. Route 501 interchange; however, based on community input, development could have a positive impact on the Spring Branch community. Specific elderly, handicapped, non-driving, or transit-dependant populations have not been identified in this portion of Spring Branch and would not be impacted by the alternatives.

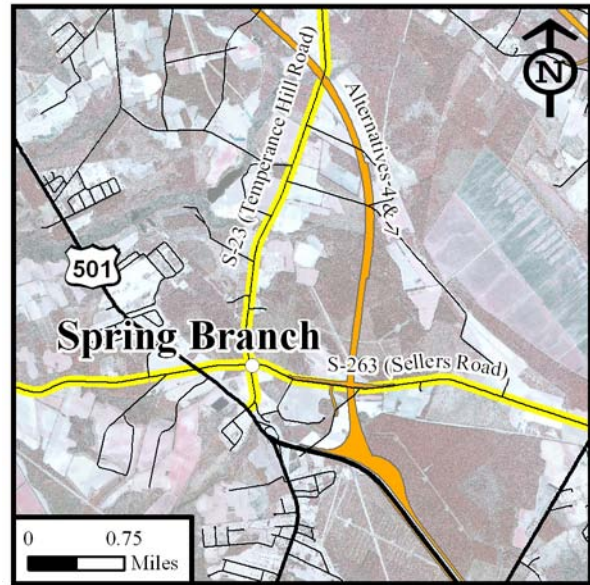


Figure 3-21: Spring Branch

There are no commercial or residential relocations associated with the Spring Branch community for any of the proposed alternatives, and no emergency services would be affected. Although growth would be anticipated due to normal increases in population, the land use model predicted no development due to the No-build Alternative in the community (refer to Section 3.1, Land Use). However, all of the alternatives were projected to bring 21 acres of new development to Spring Branch (Table 3.11, page 3-46).

Summary of impacts

Alternatives 1, 2, 5, and 8 would have one residential relocation, no noise impacts, and no changes in accessibility. Alternatives 3, 4, 6, and 7 would have no relocations, no noise impacts, and no changes in accessibility.

Zion

Zion is a small residential area approximately four miles north of Mullins at the intersection of S.C. Route 41 and Zion Road. There are several residential areas, a community store, and two churches, the Mt. Zion AME and Everbee Baptist.

Comments from the surveys were received from Zion show that respondents feel very safe in



Zion Grocery



their community and the majority felt that it is a close-knit community in which they interact regularly with their neighbors and have other family members living in Zion. Average length of residency for survey respondents is 33 years (individual surveys ranged from nine years to 77 years). The main concerns of respondents were jobs during construction and long-term jobs, new stores and businesses in the area, family or friends moving away, and changes to their rural way of life. Other important issues varied among respondents; however, several mentioned the importance of preserving the character of their community.

Zion would be affected by Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8, which pass through the Zion community, as defined by the survey. An interchange at S.C. Route 41 would be located just to the west of the community's center. Alternatives 4 and 7 would not impact Zion, as it would be over three miles farther to the west.

The construction of the interstate would separate residences west of Zion from the community center, including the store, local churches, and the main residential areas. However, access would be maintained and connectivity of the existing roads in this area would remain intact. As a result, travel patterns would not be affected and would not prevent residents from interacting and pedestrian access would not be impacted. Road S-22 (Methodist Church Road) is the primary access from Zion to businesses and services in the City of Mullins (refer to Figure 3-22). Although the road configuration would change, this connection would be maintained via a frontage road. Due to the re-configuration of local roads, travel patterns may be affected temporarily during construction.



Figure 3-22: Zion

Currently, the Zion area is primarily rural and residential. Over time, development resulting from the project could cause changes to the character of the area. The proposed project could change the visual landscape of the area and create noise impacts. Emergency services from Temperance Hill or Mullins would not be affected. The alternatives would require relocation of eight residences in Zion, including seven houses and one mobile home. Census data shows a high percentage of persons with disability in this block group; it is unknown at this time if any of the relocations in Zion would affect disabled. The evaluation of the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS would address potential impacts.

Based on land use modeling, no new development due to the No-build Alternative would be predicted to occur in Zion, although growth would be anticipated due to normal increases in population (refer to Section 3.1, Land Use). Alternatives 1, 2, 5, and 8 are projected to bring 10 additional acres of



development to the community, while Alternatives 3, 4, 6, and 7 are predicted to result in no new additional growth to Zion (Table 3.11, page 3-46).

Summary of impacts

Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 would have eight residential relocations, six impacted noise receivers, and no permanent changes in accessibility. Alternatives 4 and 7 would have no relocations, no noise impacts, and no changes in accessibility.

3.3.10 What are the characteristics of Horry County and how would it be impacted?

Horry County covers 1,160 square miles⁵⁷ of beaches, rivers, streams, and swamps making it the largest county in South Carolina. The largest city within the county is Myrtle Beach and the county seat is Conway. The demographic and economic characteristics of the communities in Horry County are shown in Tables 3.8 and 3.9, pages 3-35 and 3-36, respectively.

The South Carolina State Library Reference Room states that “Horry was named after Brigadier General Peter Horry, a Revolutionary War Hero. The county was originally a part of Georgetown District but became a separate county in 1801. This area of the state was isolated for many years by numerous rivers and swamps, and the inhabitants sometimes referred to themselves as the “Independent Republic of Horry.”⁵⁸ During the 18th and early 19th centuries, Horry County’s primary industries were lumber, turpentine, naval stores, and tobacco farming. Today, tourism has come to dominate the coastal areas of the county with major growth in and around the City of Myrtle Beach.

The majority of western Horry County is unincorporated and is primarily undeveloped and rural in nature, with a mixture of land uses including forest/agriculture, conservation preservation, residential, industrial, commercial, parks, recreation, and municipalities.⁵⁹ The Town of Aynor is the largest community within the CIA study area in Horry County. Conway is the closest city to the CIA study area and is considered the gateway to the Myrtle Beach and the Grand Strand area.

All of the alternatives would link to S.C. Route 22, the Conway Bypass, in the northeastern part of Horry County. Of the surveys received from Horry County, the majority of respondents did not support the project being built in the area and thought the project could have a negative impact on their community.

As detailed in Chapter 1, Horry County has experienced substantial growth in its population and economy over the past 20 years. Respondents who live in the urbanized portions of Horry County showed stronger support for the project than those living in rural areas of the county. In general, the

⁵⁷ Horry County Comprehensive Plan, March 16, 1999

⁵⁸ South Carolina Association of Counties website, Horry County page. http://www.sccounties.org/counties/Profiles/horry-profile_files/horry-profile.htm Last accessed March 13, 2006.

⁵⁹ South Carolina. “Horry County Comprehensive Plan.” [Horry County Government](http://www.horrycounty.org). 17 Jan. 2006 <http://www.horrycounty.org>



majority of respondents living in smaller communities within Horry County like Cool Spring, Ketchuptown, Poplar Hill, Dog Bluff, and Methodist Rehobeth, did not support the project being built in the area. Respondents from rural areas were much more concerned about potential impacts the project could have on their communities, viewing the project as a negative impact to their community.

On March 10, 2005, a public information meeting was held at Myrtle Beach High School in Horry County. A total of 235 people attended and 49 left comments at the meeting. Approximately 40 percent of the respondents supported the project, while 16 percent were against it, and the rest provided no comment. The use of U.S. Route 501 was favored by 16 percent of the respondents and opposed by 35 percent. Respondents were concerned with loss of residences, historic sites, wetlands, and family farms. Most wanted the interstate to avoid small communities and towns such as Aynor, Cool Spring, Ketchuptown, and Galivants Ferry.

A second public information meeting was held on March 22, 2005, at the Aynor High School and 620 citizens attended. Of the 194 people that provided comments, less than 20 percent supported the project. Opinions of the project were generally consistent throughout the portion of Horry County in the project study area. The rural/urban dichotomy seen in Marion and Dillon Counties was not as evident in Horry County from the surveys, comments, and letters received. Most respondents in the project study area portion of Horry County did not support the project. Many of the comments received at the public meeting suggested putting the roadway closer the state's border with North Carolina and using existing S.C. Route 9. Respondents did not think that the construction of an interstate was needed and were, in large part, apprehensive of the project's impact to their community and their way of life. In general, the potential for economic development was not as important to the respondents as it was for the respondents surveyed in other counties of the project study area.

Land use modeling projected that approximately 1,525 acres of new development would occur in Horry County with the No-build Alternative, regardless of this project (refer to Section 3.1, Land Use). The eight Build Alternatives are predicted to result in additional development, ranging from 285 acres to 470 acres, depending on alternative (Table 3.12, page 3-62). New development could bring in economic development such as new businesses which would create new jobs. However, it could also bring in increased traffic and noise throughout communities in the County.

3.3.11 What are the characteristics of Cities and Towns located within Horry County and how would they be impacted?

Aynor

The Town of Aynor is located in the northwestern part of Horry County along U.S. Route 501. Aynor started out as a railroad depot. It was originally laid out in 1906 by the timber and turpentine



Table 3.12
Horry County and Communities Projected 2030 Development by Acreage
Interstate 73 EIS: I-95 to the Myrtle Beach Region

County/Community/Neighborhood	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 6	Alt. 7	Alt. 8
Horry County								
Induced Development	331	470	285	312	420	334	334	376
Cumulative Development	1,856	1,995	1,810	1,837	1,945	1,859	1,859	1,901
Horry County Communities								
Aynor								
Induced Development	271	258	183	252	224	193	193	283
Cumulative Development	1,658	1,645	1,570	1,639	1,611	1,580	1,580	1,670
Galivants Ferry								
Induced Development	312	210	171	312	200	181	181	312
Cumulative Development	1,072	970	931	1,072	960	941	941	1,072
Cool Spring								
Induced Development	10	28	0	10	28	0	10	10
Cumulative Development	472	490	0	472	490	0	472	472
Joiner								
Induced Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Methodist Rehobeth								
Induced Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Cumulative Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ketchuptown								
Induced Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dog Bluff								
Induced Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative Development	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
Poplar Hill								
Induced Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative Development	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Bakers Chapel								
Induced Development	0	107	1	0	67	1	1	1
Cumulative Development	80	187	81	80	147	81	81	81

company, Burroughs and Collins, and was incorporated in 1913. Aynor was a tobacco and cotton market for Horry County. Its nickname is “Little Golden Town”.⁶⁰

Aynor’s community facilities include the Aynor Branch of the Horry County Memorial Library and Aynor Recreation Center. The citizens of Aynor are serviced by a fire and rescue station within the Town and the Aynor Police Department.

⁶⁰ Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce. <http://www.myrtlebeachinfo.com/chamber/aboutarea/communities.html>
 Last accessed March 13, 2006.



The Aynor community boundary, as defined by the survey responses, is much larger than the incorporated town limits, and includes many of the rural Horry County communities within the CIA study area. Due to this fact, the survey data for the town and the community of Aynor were assessed collectively. Comments received from surveys showed that a high majority of respondents feel they have a high quality of life, live in a safe environment, it is a close-knit community, interact with their neighbors, and have other family members living in the Aynor community. Respondent concerns included the loss of farms, the potential changes to their rural way of life, living too close to an interstate, and creating dangerous routes for school traffic. Issues such as faster routes and bringing in new businesses were of low importance to respondents.

Though respondents did not support the project as a whole, they submitted a petition of 888 signatures that indicated which alternatives would be best for their community. The letter to SCDOT, dated January 16, 2006, supported alternatives that would closely follow the existing attendance zones for the Aynor school area. “Following school attendance zones would preserve this long standing, close knit community.”⁶¹ The alternatives that would most closely follow this recommendation are Alternatives 3 and 6.

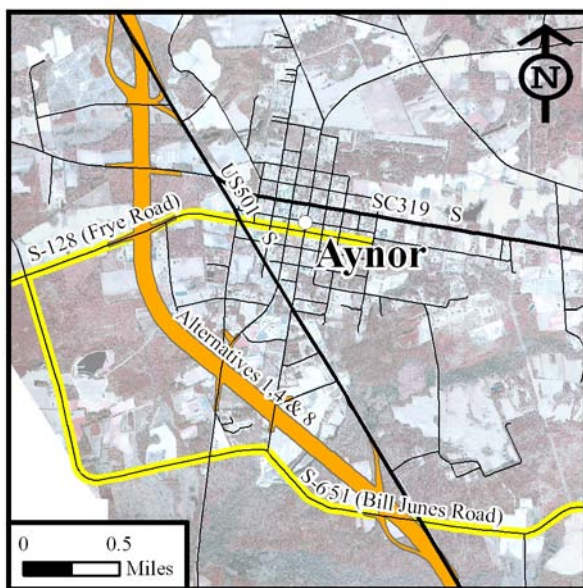


Figure 3-23: Aynor

The Town of Aynor would be impacted by Alternatives 1, 4, and 8, which pass the downtown area to the west. Proposed interchanges would be constructed northwest and southeast of Aynor where the alternatives depart from and reconnect to existing U.S. Route 501. The downtown and main residential areas of Aynor would remain intact and cohesion in this area would not be affected. The alternatives would separate more rural residential areas from downtown. Although access would be maintained, the interstate could be perceived as a barrier between these areas. Alternatives 1, 4, and 8 would separate Aynor High School from Aynor Middle School, Aynor Elementary School and the downtown area. Connectivity between the schools would be maintained with an overpass at Road S-128 (Frye Road), (refer to Figure 3-23).

Regional travel patterns, between Conway and Marion along U.S. Route 501 would be altered. Access between the project and U.S. Route 501 would be limited to two interchanges and one-way frontage roads built adjacent to the project. These one-way frontage roads would be used for local access where the project would replace existing U.S. Route 501. Road S-651 (Bill Jones Road) to the east of Aynor would be converted to a cul-de-sac at the interstate; however, S-651 would still have direct access to U.S. Route 501 Business into downtown Aynor. Through the Town of Aynor, existing U.S. Route 501 would become a business route and travel patterns in the downtown area

⁶¹ Horry County petition



would remain unchanged, and accessibility for pedestrian traffic and other modes of travel would also remain intact. Emergency service routes may be altered but access to all areas of the community would be maintained. Specific elderly, handicapped, non-driving, or transit-dependant populations have not been identified in this portion of Aynor and would not be impacted by the alternatives.

Displacements and relocations that would result from Alternatives 1, 4, and 8 would include the following:

- 19 homes, including 15 houses and four mobile homes;
- Three businesses, including Woody's Auction, Van Lott, Inc., and Lamar's Meat Market; and
- One public facility, Horry County Recycling.

Based on the land use model, approximately 1,387 acres of development is anticipated with the No-build Alternative by the Year 2030 (refer to Section 3.1, Land Use). The eight Build Alternatives were predicted to result in an additional amount of development, ranging between 183 and 283 acres, depending on alternative (Table 3.12, page 3-62).

The volume of tourist traffic increases during the summer months in the Town of Aynor. Many tourists briefly stop for convenience services such as gas stations and restaurants. Alternatives 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 would be located away from Aynor, and tourist-friendly businesses could be adversely impacted due to loss of revenues.

Summary of impacts

Alternatives 1, 4, and 8 would have 19 residential, 3 business, and 1 community facility relocations, no noise impacts, and accessibility affected by one-way frontage roads. Alternatives 2, 5, and 7 would have no relocations, one impacted noise receiver, and no changes in accessibility. Alternatives 3 and 6 would have no relocations, no noise impacts, and no changes in accessibility.

3.3.12 What neighborhoods and rural communities are located within Horry County and how would they be impacted?

Cool Spring

Cool Spring is a residential area located approximately four miles southeast of Aynor, along S.C. Route 319. The name originates from a small spring that was referred to by local respondents many years ago as the cool spring. Area churches include Cool Spring Methodist Church, St. Peter's AME Church and St. Matthew's Baptist.



S.C. Route 319 in Cool Spring