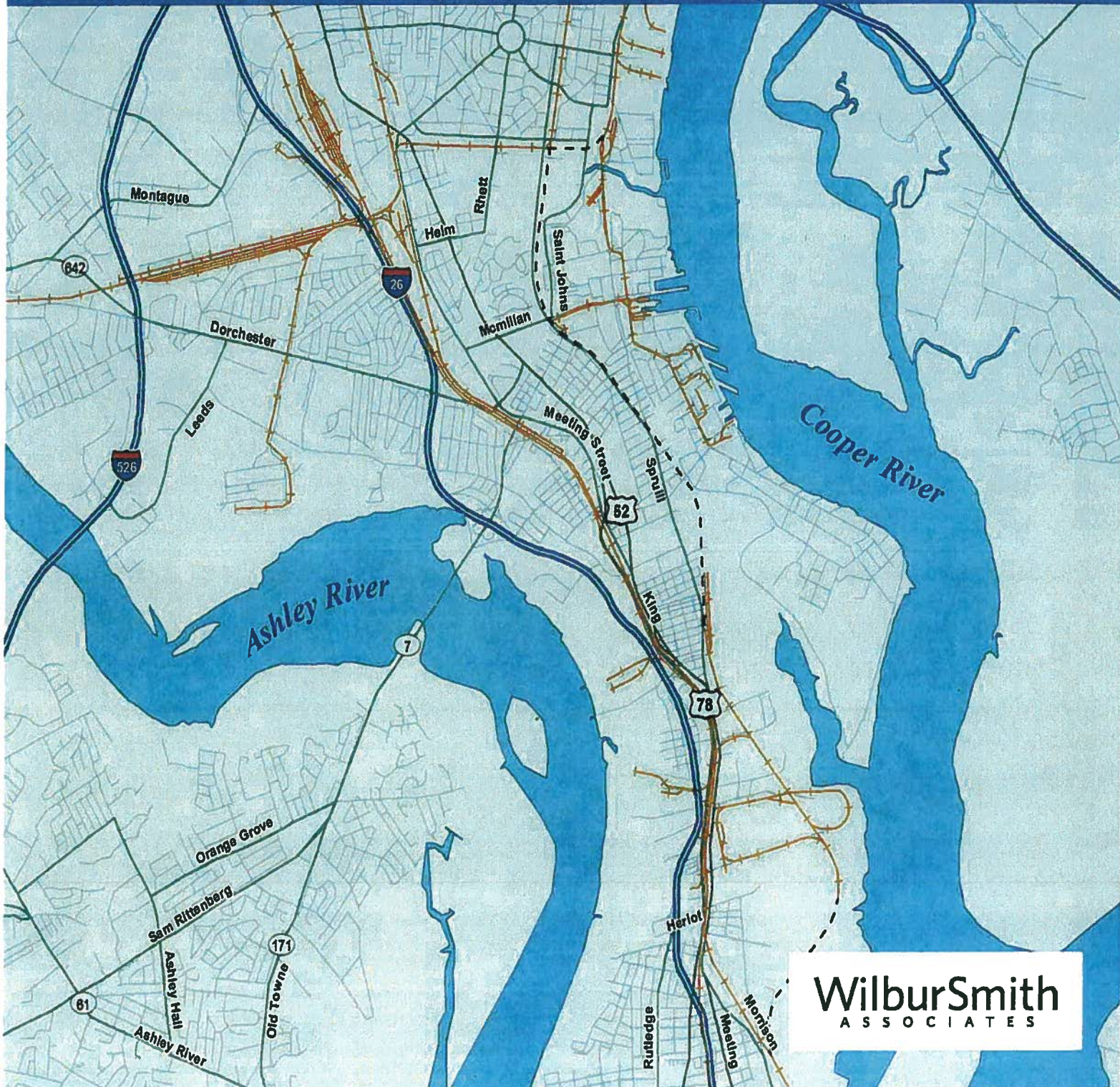


# CHARLESTON NECK RAIL STUDY

Presented to: Cities of Charleston and North Charleston  
Submitted by: Wilbur Smith Associates



**Table of Contents**

Charleston Area Rail System..... 1  
Study Area Rail System..... 4  
Future Rail Service Needs..... 5  
Concept Plan..... 8  
Conclusions..... 12

**Illustrations**

BCDCOG Rail Map..... 2  
Major Neck Developments ..... 6  
Concept Plan..... 10

## CHARLESTON NECK RAIL STUDY

The purpose of this study is to develop a future rail plan for “the Neck”, that narrow part of the peninsula along the boundary between the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston running generally between Cosgrove Avenue and Mt. Pleasant Streets. The work effort is designed to obtain insights into the requirements for a rail system within the study area that will meet anticipated rail traffic demands from both existing and future rail users. New and expanding industries and terminals along the eastern side of the Neck along with potential rail commuter service, for example, are expected to place significant additional demand on the rail system. At the same time land uses in the area are being converted from industrial to less rail-compatible commercial and residential that are expected to generate significant vehicular traffic. Needed rail system improvements and modifications are identified while at the same time means to minimize impacts on future land use and roadway vehicular traffic are explored.

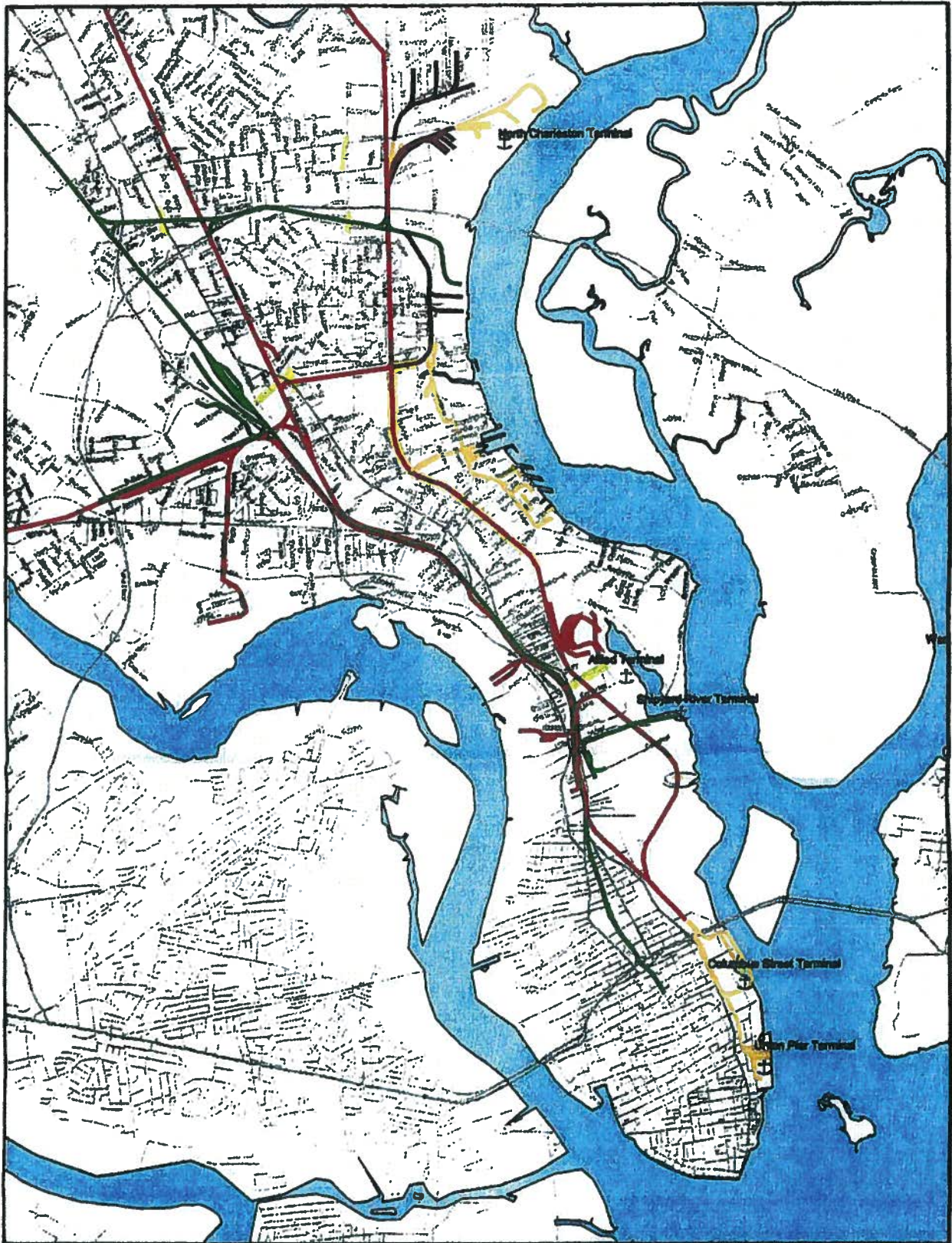
### Charleston Area Rail System

The rail system serving the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston is depicted on the illustration on the following page compiled by the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG). Three railroads are involved in operation of the rail lines shown on the exhibit - CSX Transportation (CSXT), Norfolk Southern Railway (NS), and the South Carolina Public Railways (SCPR).

**Principal Rail Lines** - Three rail lines enter the area in the northwest corner of the figure. The green line is the Columbia - Charleston main track of the Norfolk Southern Railway. It continues through the study area and terminates in downtown Charleston. The westernmost red line is the CSXT’s “A Line,” its main track from the Northeast to Florida<sup>1</sup>. It passes through North Charleston turning west, crossing the NS main track, and exiting the area mapped along the western border of the figure at the Ashley River. The location where the two main tracks cross is known as SY Junction. The easternmost red line is CSXT’s “S Line” which runs from Hamlet, North Carolina through Dillon and Andrews and passes the Charleston Naval Complex (CNC) on the west in North Charleston before joining the CSXT port line and terminating just north of Columbus Street Terminal in Charleston. It is a secondary freight line. The other rail lines on the exhibit serve local industries, marine terminals of the South Carolina State Ports Authority and private operators, and government installations.

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<sup>1</sup> CSXT has submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation to include its “A Line” as an I-95 rail corridor in the DOT’s Corridors of the Future program. The CSXT corridor is one of 14 selected as a finalist in competition for five designations. The program is an element of the DOT’s strategy to reduce congestion on America’s transportation network. CSXT has identified the need for additional main tracks to handle the present and future demand for passenger, intercity and commuter, and freight service. Based on the application, the Corridor handles an average of 24 trains per day, including AMTRAK service, between Florence and Charleston.



# Charleston Area Railroads



- LEGEND**
- Port Terminals
  - Rail Lines
  - CSX
  - East Cooper & Berkeley RR
  - Norfolk Southern
  - North Charleston Terminal Co. - *JOINT CSX/NS*
  - SC Public Railways
  - US Government
  - Outfalls, etc.
  - Interstate Highways
  - Other Roads
  - Proposed Port Terminal Site
  - Water



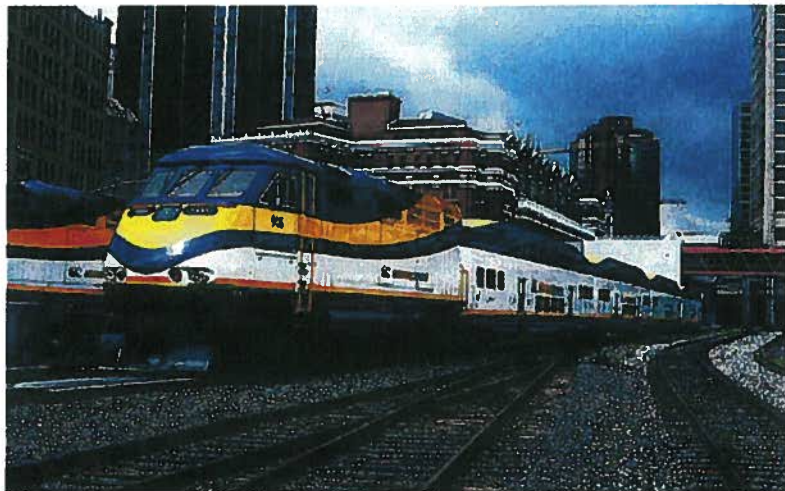
Disclaimer: This map is a graphic representation of the detailed information contained in the data. It is not intended to be used as a legal document. The user assumes all responsibility for the use of this map.

## CHARLESTON NECK RAIL STUDY

**Terminal Facilities** – With the exception of CSXT’s Cooper Yard located on the “S Line” in the area designated as Allied Terminals on the BCDCOG map (currently used for car storage and bulk transfers) and Cosgrove Yard (used by both CSXT and NS) at the North Charleston Terminal, the other railroad facilities are located at SY Junction - CSXT’s Bennett Yard just to the west on the “A Line,” its intermodal facility just to the south, and both the NS Seven Mile Yard and its intermodal facility just to the north on the NS main.

**Passenger Service** – Charleston is served by AMTRAK, which operates three interstate passenger trains per day each way through the area. Station stops for the Silver Meteor and the Palmetto occur in North Charleston on CSXT’s “A Line” just north of SY. The Auto Train also runs on the same route but does not stop.

There is also local interest in commuter rail as exhibited by a 2006 assessment by the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) of such service on the NS main track from Summerville to downtown Charleston terminating at the Visitor’s Center<sup>2</sup>. Although the analyses in the study are very preliminary, a reasonable amount of evidence was developed that a commuter rail service in the corridor could be viable in the future. It was also found that the geography of the Charleston peninsula that funnels travel along a well-defined corridor - nowhere more evident than in the Neck- is a major contributor to the potential viability as are the area’s major residential and employment developments proposed and underway.



An evaluation of the potential for commuter service from Moncks Corner to Charleston over CSXT’s “A Line” has been initiated by the BCDCOG. This latest study effort will also develop additional details of the potential feasibility of commuter service over the NS main line to Summerville. Both routes would make use of the I-26 - King Street - Meeting Street corridor to reach downtown Charleston.

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<sup>2</sup> Charleston Metropolitan Area Commuter Rail Feasibility Study prepared for the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority by Wilbur Smith Associates in association with URS Corporation, May 2006.

### Study Area Rail System

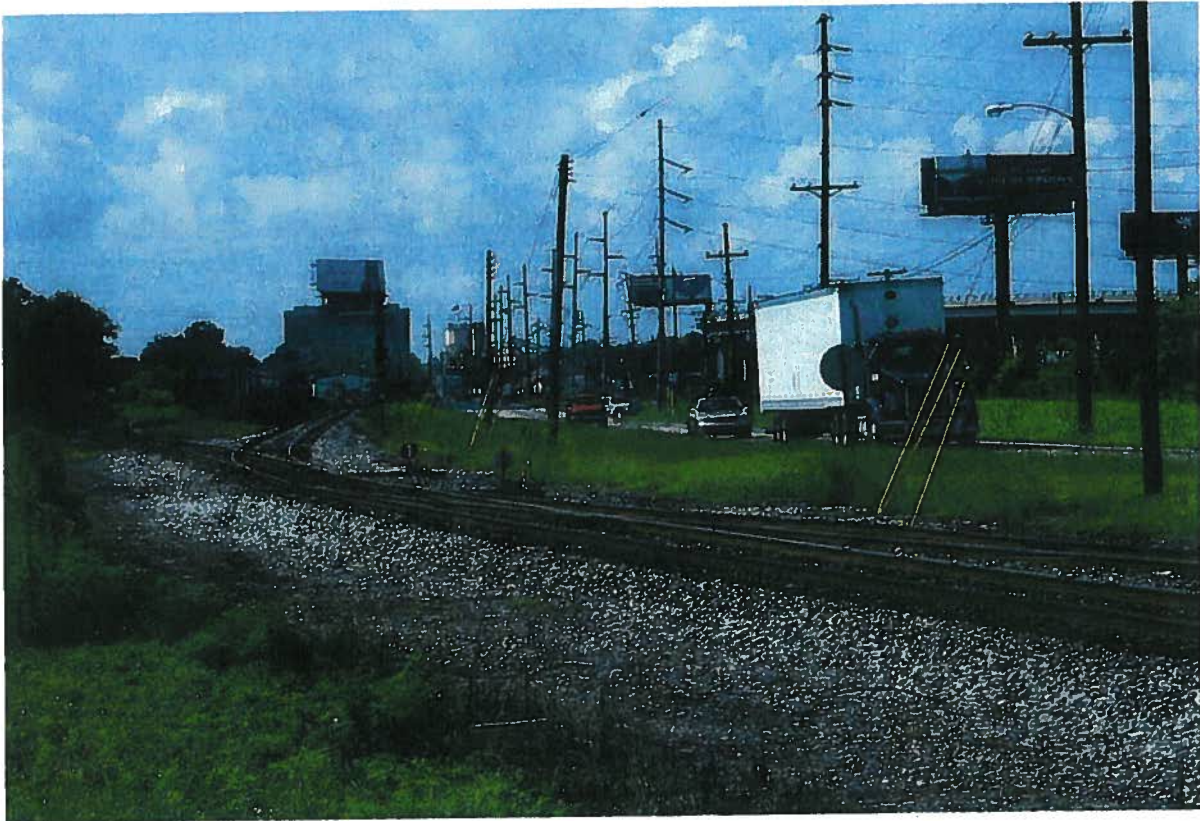
There are four rail lines that basically run north-south in or through the Neck. The existing rail lines are a result of several consolidations over time that have resulted in the removal of a lot of redundant trackage. With the exception of one line running along the east side of the Neck, the other three lines lie in the I-26-King-Meeting Streets corridor.

Three of the four lines spring from or cross CSXT's "A line" at or in very close proximity to SY Junction (the crossing of the Norfolk Southern's main track between Columbia and Charleston and the "A Line"). The westernmost is CSXT's Downtown Lead which originates at the eastern end of the railroad's Bennett Yard and runs parallel and adjacent to I-26 initially and eventually ends up parallel and adjacent to King Street on the west serves a number of industries, the largest of which is Rhodia, Inc. The line terminates in the vicinity of Ford Ready Mix at Monrovia Street. Both railroads provide weekday service over the spur.



Lying between I-26 and Meeting Street initially are two rail lines, one belonging to CSXT (closest to Meeting) and the other to NS. The CSXT line is a remnant of predecessor Atlantic Coast Line's track to downtown Charleston and the docks of the South Carolina State Ports Authority. The line has been truncated in the vicinity of Hackerman Street before reappearing at Cherry Hill Avenue and continuing to a junction with the South Carolina Public Railways at the northern boundary of Columbus Street Terminal. The northern end of the line is the location of CSX Intermodal's Charleston terminal. The NS line is the original route of the South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company constructed in the early 1830s. The NS line ends up in between King and Meeting Streets in the Neck and continues on between the two roadways until it terminates at Spring Street in downtown Charleston. Columbus Street Terminal and Union Pier Terminal bound NS trains cross over to the CSXT line described above near Covington Street for interchange of traffic with SCPR at Columbus Street Terminal. The NS main from that point to its downtown terminus is out of service. The joint port line is used by the NS BMW unit train 6 days per week and other port-bound trains of both railroads less frequently.

## CHARLESTON NECK RAIL STUDY



The CSXT line lying along the eastern side of the Neck enters the study area running parallel and adjacent to Spruill Avenue and then Meeting Street until it diverges on a route closer to the Cooper River and finally joins the joint CSXT and NS line enroute to Columbus Street Terminal. This rail line was owned by CSXT's predecessor Seaboard Air Line and thus is designated the "S Line." It is out of service except for the segment from the north end of Cooper Yard to Kinder Morgan.

### **Future Rail Service Needs**

As stated previously, land use in the Neck is changing. The dominant heavy industrial use in the past along both rivers is rapidly disappearing at least on the Ashley River side. The mixed-use Magnolia project on the Ashley River and the Promenade development on the Cooper River are examples of major non-industrial/terminal projects while SCSPA's new container terminal and the Macalloy Industrial Park are examples of projects with more traditional Neck land uses (major project areas are the subject of the illustration contained in the pocket following this page). In addition, there are a number of historic neighborhoods that are to be protected.