

# A Navy base being reborn

The former Charleston Naval Base and Shipyard is home to many new businesses, government agencies, schools and nonprofits.

Together, they have more than 4,000 jobs, more than all but five of Charleston County's largest employers.

And many more are in the works. Below is a summary of the major redevelopment spots.

## 1. WATER MISSION:

This nonprofit helps provide potable water across the globe. It moved its headquarters here, where it employs about 70. A church leases its multi-purpose space for Sunday services.

## 2. SPAWAR:

The Navy didn't entirely leave. Its Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command is using buildings here. The city of North Charleston's long-term plans call for a dense urban infill here.

## 3. FISHER RECYCLING:

This company began in 2006, and three businesses with about 20 employees share the 20,000-square-foot buildings. These structures likely will be razed to expand the city's Riverfront Park.

## 4. OFFICERS QUARTERS:

This scenic, hilly landscape contains the grand buildings that once housed the base's top brass. Several have been renovated, and a \$4.5 million makeover of the Admiral's House is underway and should be done by year's end. North Charleston envisions using the area as a park and event venue.

## 5. RIVERFRONT PARK:

This park along the Cooper River was developed over what once was a golf course used by the Navy. It's North Charleston's central park and most valued public access to the water. The city hopes to more than double its size by building a pedestrian bridge over Noiset Creek.

## 6. WEST YARD LOFTS:

This workforce apartment complex has 60 units and currently is the main residential redevelopment.

## 7. LOWCOUNTRY INNOVATION CENTER:

The center opened in February 2009 and is now the professional home of more than 20 companies and about 150 employees.

## 8. STOREHOUSE ROW:

These office and warehouse spaces have seen some activity and redevelopment, but more is expected, particularly after a growing parking crunch is addressed.

## 9. HOSPITAL DISTRICT:

While it's on the National Register of Historic Places, most of its 32 buildings are vacant, decaying and at risk because of Palmetto Railways' plans for a new rail line.

## 10. CMMC:

The first tenant at the former base was the Charleston Maritime Consortium, which later bought its current site in 2005. It includes almost two dozen buildings, three drydocks and six piers and is home to 25 businesses. About 1,500-2,000 regular and contract workers are employed here on an average day.

## 11. INTERMODAL FACILITY:

Palmetto Railways plans a \$291 million project, scheduled to open around 2022, that will transfer cargo from the terminal to Norfolk Southern and CSX Corp. trains. The 118-acre site will include about 174,410 feet of new track, railroad bridges, a container stacking area, electric gantry cranes and more.

## 12. NEAL BROTHERS:

This shipping company moved its operations to the base about 20 years ago and currently employs about 55 on the base, about half its total.

## 13. CURI:

The Clemson University Research Institute was established in 2004, and one of its first tasks was to conserve the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley, which is still on display in a small museum inside the Warren Lasch Conservation Center. Clemson's presence covers 24 acres, employs about 64, and has grown to include the \$98 million SCE&G Energy Innovation Center and the Zucker Family Graduate Education Center.

## 14. CHARLESTON WATER SYSTEM:

The utility took advantage of empty Navy buildings to house its water distribution, wastewater collection, meter services and operation, dispatch, fleet maintenance, and inventory departments. It employs 184 employees, more than a third of the utility's employees.

## 15. VETERANS TERMINAL:

The Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority soon is expected to transfer these 110 acres to the State Ports Authority. While its future use is unclear, it has four piers and roughly 97,000 square feet of warehouse space.

## 16. FEDERAL ENCLAVE:

While the Navy left, other federal government agencies moved in. Anchored by a Federal Law Enforcement Training Center that opened in 2004, the property also is home to the Department of State, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard Base Charleston, and the U.S. Maritime Administration. These agencies together employ more than 2,100, more than any other reuse so far.

## 17. NEW TERMINAL:

The State Ports Authority's \$492 million Leatherman Terminal is under construction, and its first berth is scheduled to open in late 2021. The site covers some 286 acres, almost 20 percent of the former base, and will eventually include three berths. It could reach capacity around 2035.

## 18. MARINA:

The Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission took over the marina with about 120 slips that the Navy had built just a few years before the base closed. The property is expected to remain a county park, but the marina's future is being restudied in light of the new container terminal being built next door.

