

SCDOT Right of Way Process Transcript

(South Carolina Department of Transportation logo appears on screen.)

Brittany: Hi, I'm Brittany and I'm here to explain the South Carolina Department of Transportation's Right-Of-Way process.

While it may seem overwhelming at first, our dedicated right-of-way team is committed to assisting you through every step of the way.

(Video of a busy highway.)

South Carolina is growing and with that growth comes the need for new or improved highways to reduce traffic congestion and make roads safer.

Our vision at SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION is to connect communities and drive the economy.

(Video of construction work.)

We work hard to provide the road improvements our communities need while balancing the potential effects on the surrounding environment and communities.

Before construction of any road project, SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION follows an extensive and oftentimes lengthy process that includes expert planners and public outreach to find the best option that minimizes impacts.

Sometimes it's necessary for SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION to purchase land, homes and businesses in order to complete a road project. This is called a right-of-way acquisition.

During the design phase of the project the amount and specific property that may be needed is better defined.

Each project is unique, so the amount of land or property that may be required is dependent on the type of roadway that will be built or improved. This process can take some time, several months or even years.

However, should your property be impacted, you will be notified.

Here's what to expect.

We follow the Uniform Act of 1970 which is a federally required process to ensure your rights as a property owner are protected.

First a dedicated right-of-way agent is assigned to the project

(Video of Right-of-Way agent, Kristen, on the phone.)

Kristen: Hello, this is Kristen with right-of-way how may I help you.

Brittany: The agent will verify ownership of any property impacted by the road plan.

(Video of Kristen knocking on property owner's door.)

Second, the right-of-way agent will reach out to you the property owner in person or through certified mail to explain why the roadway project is needed and how it may affect you.

(Video of Kristen talking with property owners.)

Next, SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION will use third-party licensed appraisers to estimate the fair market value of the property through an appraisal.

(Appraiser talking with property owners.)

Fair market value is the current day value and is determined using recent sales of similar properties. Prior to the appraisal, the appraiser will provide you with an opportunity to meet and discuss the property.

This is a great opportunity to provide the appraiser with any information that may contribute to the property's value. The appraiser knows what to look for but without your help and cooperation he may overlook something of value.

(Property owners indicating specific features of the property to the appraiser. Appraiser takes notes, measurements, and photographs of the features.)

After the initial appraisal, an independent review is conducted to verify the appraised value. Based on the completed appraisal, the right-of-way agent makes a fair market value offer.

(Kristen presents offer to the property owners. They continue in discussion followed by another walk around the property.)

You can either accept the offer or negotiate further to reach an agreement. If you and SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION are unable to reach an agreement, eminent domain proceedings may be initiated. Eminent domain is the government's right to acquire property for public benefit. Should this happen, your rights to full compensation are still protected. As part of this process, the government will pay you, the owner, what is considered to be a fair price for the property.

However, most property is acquired successfully their negotiations. If property owners have to move as a direct result of a right-of-way acquisition, they may be able to take advantage of several relocation assistance programs, services and financial support.

(Kristen presents paperwork to property owners and they continue discussion.)

The right of way agent will talk with you one-on-one to explain which benefits may be available based on your unique situation and how to use them. This is a critical step. To avoid risking or jeopardizing your benefits, you should not move prior to confirming your eligibility with your agent.

Your agent will work to ensure this process is as smooth as possible. We understand that your property is a testament to your time and hard work and we do not take this process lightly. While we are unable to compensate for sentimental value alone, our experienced right-of-way team is dedicated to helping you understand and navigate this process. We will work with you as a partner giving your case personal attention every step of the way.



Our goal is to ensure you are treated fairly, understand the process and ultimately provided just compensation. We look forward to providing you additional information on the right-of-way process in person, on the phone or online.

(Contact information appears on screen.) 955 Park Street, Columbia, SC 29201. Contact us at www.scdot.org or 855-467-2368.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION right-of-way process.

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