

Carolina Crossroads Corridor Improvement Project

C/O South Carolina Department of Transportation
Mega Projects Division, Room 122
PO Box 191
Columbia, SC 29202-0191



Carolina Crossroads Newsletter

Summer 2018

Your shorter commute coming soon 😊

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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Si necesita ayuda para traducir al idioma español al participar en este proyecto, por favor envíenos un correo electrónico a info@CarolinaCrossroadsSCDOT.com

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Attend the Public Hearing

A public hearing will be held in the summer to present the DEIS and the Recommended Preferred Alternative that will be proposed for construction. The DEIS is a document required by NEPA to promote informed decision-making by federal, state and local agencies, and is the process used to review the proposed Reasonable Alternatives. After reviewing each proposed alternative design and evaluating impacts, a Recommended Preferred Alternative will be identified and presented at the public hearing.

During the public hearing, attendees will have the opportunity to review the DEIS, speak with members of the project team and make formal, verbal or written comments regarding the project. Members of the public will be notified via the project website, mail, email and newspaper ad once a date for the public hearing is selected.



RECEIVE UPDATES

Sign up to receive updates by visiting www.SCDOTCarolinaCrossroads.com/#get-involved and clicking the "Join the mailing list" button.

CONVERSATION RECAP

DID YOU MISS THE SEPTEMBER 2017 CAROLINA CROSSROADS REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES PUBLIC MEETING?

Review the details below for an update.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation held a public meeting on September 19, 2017, at the Columbia Conference Center. The purpose of the meeting was to present and solicit comments from the public on the Reasonable Alternatives that were proposed to move forward in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Additional information was provided to explain the process used to evaluate and eliminate other Representative Alternatives that were developed after the October 2016 public meeting. Representative Alternatives 1 and 5 were recommended to be carried forward in the DEIS for further evaluation. More information regarding these alternatives and the process used to evaluate other alternatives can be found at www.scdotcarolinacrossroads.com/onlineeting/.

For this meeting, SCDOT introduced a new public meeting format that provided more convenient times and engaging technology. The meeting was held from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. with a rolling video presentation starting every ten minutes. Digital 65-inch smartscreens were used to display project preliminary design information and meeting attendees were able to touch the screen to compare alternatives and zoom in on their property to view potential impacts. Project team members were available at Geographic Information System (GIS) stations to print a personalized map for property owners. Environmental planners and scientists were on hand to answer questions about community impacts, noise, wetlands and other issues. There were 340 people in attendance and 174 comments received during the comment period.

To share your suggestions on the format of our next public meeting email us at info@CarolinaCrossroadsSCDOT.com

FIVE HIGHLIGHTS ABOUT THE REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

We are approaching the final phase of the National Environmental Policy Act process. Reasonable Alternatives are frequently mentioned, they were presented at a public meeting, featured in a video, and even have a special online tool. Our project team evaluated several alternatives and based on impact results, two Reasonable Alternatives moved forward to be further evaluated in the DEIS. The project team further evaluated the two Reasonable Alternatives by considering public comments and conducting a detailed traffic and environmental analysis. During this evaluation, refinements were considered for the Reasonable Alternatives. While refinements do not seek to completely change an alternative, they could modify the design at select interchanges to help improve the overall operations. If a modified design is found to provide a better solution, it may be carried forward in the DEIS as a Reasonable Alternative and further evaluated for environmental impacts.

What are the improvements of the Reasonable Alternatives?

Read below to find out five things you need to know about these alternative designs.

1

More lanes on I-26.

To improve mobility and reduce traffic congestion, I-26 would be widened to include one additional lane in each direction.

2

No more weaving on mainline.

Both Reasonable Alternatives eliminate the current cloverleaf design of the I-20 at I-26 interchange to create seamless movement for traffic between the interstates.

3

Introducing collector-distributor lanes.

Both Reasonable Alternatives feature collector-distributor (CD) lanes. These new longer separated ramps allow traffic to move seamlessly throughout the system by removing exiting vehicles to their destinations early and preventing on/off conflicts.

4

Relocation of Bush River Road at I-26 interchange.

Both Reasonable Alternatives would relocate the Bush River Road at I-26 interchange to a new full access interchange at Colonial Life Boulevard and I-126. Removing the direct connection between Bush River Road and I-26 would eliminate weaving maneuvers between Bush River Road and the I-20 at I-26 interchange. The interchange at Colonial Life Boulevard and I-126 will be improved to allow for movements in all directions, improve traffic flow on I-26, and reduce traffic congestion.

5

Environmental considerations.

Both alternatives have fewer impacts on wetlands, streams, and properties compared to the other Representative Alternatives that were evaluated during the screening process. The alternatives also have improved travel time and speed along the corridor compared to current conditions.

Both alternatives for the I-20/26/126 Corridor have similar features and will feature improvements to several interchanges along the 14 mile stretch of highway. However, there is a key difference in design at the I-20 and I-26 system interchange; take a closer look below at the turbine interchange in Reasonable Alternative 1 and the directional interchange in Reasonable Alternative 5.

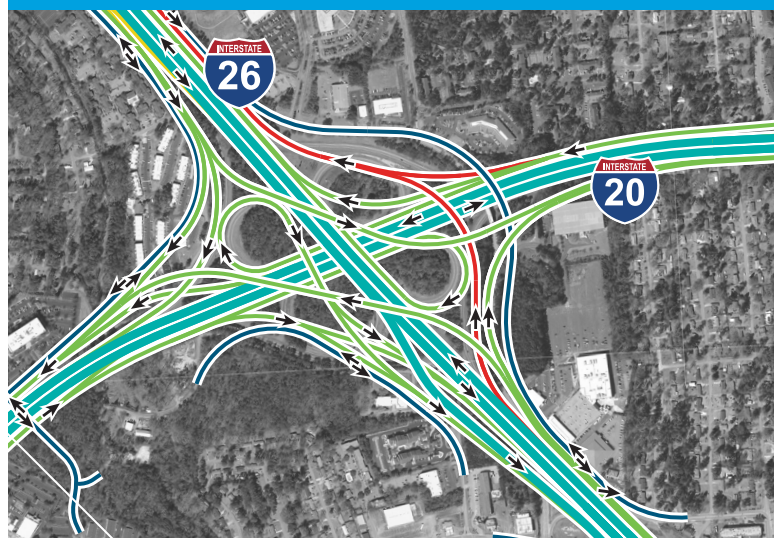
Reasonable Alternative 1



Turbine Interchange

Features a proposed turbine interchange at the I-20 and I-26 junction, which replaces all loop ramps with higher speed directional ramps.

Reasonable Alternative 5



Directional Interchange

Features a proposed directional interchange with two upgraded opposing loop ramps in the NW and SE quadrants. It also provides directional flyover ramps connecting I-26 and I-20 to replace the existing NE and SW loop ramps.

HOT TOPIC: BUSH RIVER ROAD AT I-26 INTERCHANGE

The I-20/26/126 corridor is a complex interstate system made up of 19 bridges, 12 interchanges, and 14 miles of interstate. More than 130,000 vehicles travel this system every day. Reasonable alternatives that meet today's transportation needs of the corridor are being evaluated on a variety of criteria, including cost, social and economic impacts, and environmental considerations. The key factors to consider are how each potential alternative improves local mobility, enhances traffic operations, accommodates future traffic needs and improves traffic congestion in the entire system.

Since presenting Reasonable Alternatives 1 and 5 at the September 2017 public meeting, the project team has received comments in support of and against the relocation of the Bush River Road at I-26 interchange. The relocation of this interchange advanced in both alternatives because it eliminates traffic conflict points and weaving maneuvers on I-26 between Bush River Road and the I-20/I-26 interchange, thereby reducing traffic congestion/disruption and improving traffic flow on I-26. In

addition, people will have alternative access to destinations along Bush River Road through the improved full-access Colonial Life Boulevard interchange with I-126 and at the upgraded interchange of Bush River Road and I-20.

The process to review alternatives is an Environmental Impact Statement which is a document required by NEPA to promote informed decision-making by federal, state and local agencies by making "detailed information concerning significant environmental impacts" available to both agency leaders and the public. Through the EIS process, NEPA encourages communication and cooperation between those who are involved in project-related decision making, including government officials, private businesses, and the public. All comments, in support of or against this design, will be reviewed and evaluated during the formal comment period after the Notice of Availability of the DEIS and the Public Hearing.

WHAT IS A FIELD STUDY?



Sometimes field studies include geotechnical boring to collect soil samples. These soil samples help our team understand how to design stable foundations for structures that minimize impacts to the environment around them.

Have you ever noticed an SCDOT vehicle in your community and wondered what are they doing? Before we bring in pavement trucks, cones and flashing signs, our employees at SCDOT and consultant partners take time to examine a project area. Field studies are undertaken to assess the environmental impacts of alternatives and to collect more data to assist in the design phase of a project. To learn more about the SCDOT field study process, view our new video online at www.SCDOTCarolinaCrossroads.com/#project-resources and click SCDOT-Field Studies under the Videos heading. The video explains why SCDOT might be in your community, what types of activities are expected as part of the field studies and how the information collected will be used.

GOODBYE POTHOLES. HELLO ROADWAY RESURFACING!



It may not come as a surprise to you that some of South Carolina's roadways are in need of new pavement.

The Carolina Crossroads corridor is no exception and resurfacing of the existing pavement is an immediate need outside of the overall capacity and operational improvement project. Resurfacing operations have already begun and will continue through the summer.