



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

South Carolina

April 14, 2026

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In Reply Refer To:
HDA-SC

Mr. Chad Long
Director Environmental Services Office
South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)
955 Park Street, P.O. Box 191
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Mr. Long:

The FHWA has received your request for approval of reevaluation seven for the I-26/126/20 (Carolina Crossroads) Environmental Impact Statement (Federal Project ID P027662). Project modifications analyzed within the reevaluation include,

1. Programmatic design changes to be incorporated into the project (I-20 /I-26 interchange configuration, Phases 4 and 5 design progression and Harbison Boulevard interchange redesign, Fernandina Road realignment and bridge, Berryhill Road at Woodland Hill Road realignment and bridges)
2. Right of way updates, (Tract 9 driveway realignment).
3. Implementation of environmental commitment for a park and ride
4. Phase 3C design build updates (design modifications to Noise Barrier O along I-20, modification to wetland fill areas)

Based on the information provided within the reevaluation, FHWA finds that the proposed modifications to the project will not introduce any new significant impacts, therefore, a Supplemental EIS is not required.

We have also received the request from SCDOT related to the update to the Interchange Modification report (IMR) for the I-26/126/20 (Carolina Crossroads) project, dated March 19, 2026. Based on safety, operations, and engineering considerations, it has been determined that the proposed modifications are acceptable. Since the conditions outlined in this IMR consistent with the FEIS reevaluation, this IMR update is approved. This approval is subject to reevaluation if significant changes occur in final design or if the construction is delayed (as specified in 23 CFR 771.129).

Please ensure that the project commitments made during the NEPA process remain included in the project construction contract and ultimately carried out. Please address any questions to Mr. Aaron Dawson at aaron.dawson@dot.gov/803-253-3885 or Mr. Blake Gerken at blake.gerken@dot.gov/803-253-3881.

Sincerely,

Jermaine R. Hannon
Division Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Will McGoldrick, SCDOT Design Build NEPA Coordinator
Brad Reynolds, SCDOT Program Manager



Carolina Crossroads

NEPA RE-EVALUATION 7

Supporting Documentation

September 29, 2025



Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Project phasing for construction.....	2
3. Programmatic Design changes to be incorporated into the project	3
A. I-20 / I-26 System to System Interchange.....	3
B. Phase 4 and 5 Design Progression (Harbison Blvd. (Exit 103) interchange update)	5
C. I-20 Lane extension to US 378.....	5
D. Fernandina Road Realignment and bridge	8
E. Berryhill Road / Woodland Hills Road Intersection Realignment.....	9
F. Tract 9 driveway realignment	10
G. I-26 Park and Ride	11
4. Phase 3C Design Build Updates	13
5. Summary.....	14

Appendix A: I-20 / I-26 Schematic Design Noise Analysis Update Memo

Appendix B: FHWA SO&E Approvals for I-20 / I-26 Interchange

Appendix C: I-26 / I-20 Interchanges Traffic Operations Comparison from IMR and Interchange Graphics

Appendix D: I-20 Lane Extension Noise Analysis Update Memo

Appendix E: Cultural Resources Short-form Report

Appendix F: Natural Resources Technical Memo Addendum

Appendix G: Park and Ride Evaluation Memo

Appendix H: Phase 3C Noise Analysis Update Memo for Noise Barrier O

1. Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) propose to implement various strategies that will improve mobility and enhance traffic operations within the I-20/26/126 corridors in Richland and Lexington Counties, South Carolina. The proposed project, Carolina Crossroads (CCR), will ultimately increase roadway capacity throughout the corridor and improve operations by reconstructing or improving the following interchanges: the I-20 and I-26 system to system interchange, I-26 at Broad River Road (Exit 101), I-26 at Lake Murray Boulevard (Exit 102), I-26 at Harbison Boulevard (Exit 103), I-26 at Piney Grove Road (Exit 104), I-26 at St. Andrews Road (Exit 106), I-26 at Bush River Road, I-26 at I-126, I-126 at Colonial Life Boulevard, I-20 at Broad River Road (Exit 65) and I-20 at Bush River Road (Exit 63).

FHWA approved a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decisions (ROD) for the Carolina Crossroads Project on May 2, 2019. Since that time, the construction of Phases 1 and 2 has reached substantial completion. Phase 3C (widening of I-20 between US 378 and Bush River Road) is currently in design under a design-build contract. Six re-evaluations have been approved since the FEIS/ROD and have included design changes and revisions based on the design-build process (Phases 1 and 2), and changes to right of way and parcel acquisitions based on right of way negotiations.

SCDOT is continuing to administer the project through multiple phases. The phases of construction are proposed to overlap or be performed consecutively with little or no time between phases.

This re-evaluation will address four types of project updates for the CCR project:

1. Programmatic design changes to be incorporated into the project;
2. Minor right of way updates (driveway relocation);
3. Implementation of the environmental commitment for a park and ride;
4. Phase 3C design-build updates;

None of the proposed changes/updates to project execution/construction and/or design would affect the ability of the CCR project to meet the purpose and need as documented in the FEIS/ROD.

2. Project phasing for construction

SCDOT, in coordination with FHWA, previously developed phases of work to continue the development and construction of the CCR project. The updated phasing plan was developed to reduce project risk related primarily to complex utility relocations and geotechnical conditions discovered during the construction of Phases 1 and 2. The original Phase 3, which included the I-20 / I-26 system to system interchange has been divided into additional phases so that risks are minimized.

Phasing details and schedule are reflected in Figure 1, which includes:

- Phase 3A – Utility and Frontage Road Relocation
- Phase 3B – Clearing and Grubbing (under construction through bid-build contract)
- Phase 3C – I-20 Widening (awarded through design-build)
- Phase 3D – I-26/ I-126 Improvements
- Phase 3E – I-20/I-26 System to System Interchange

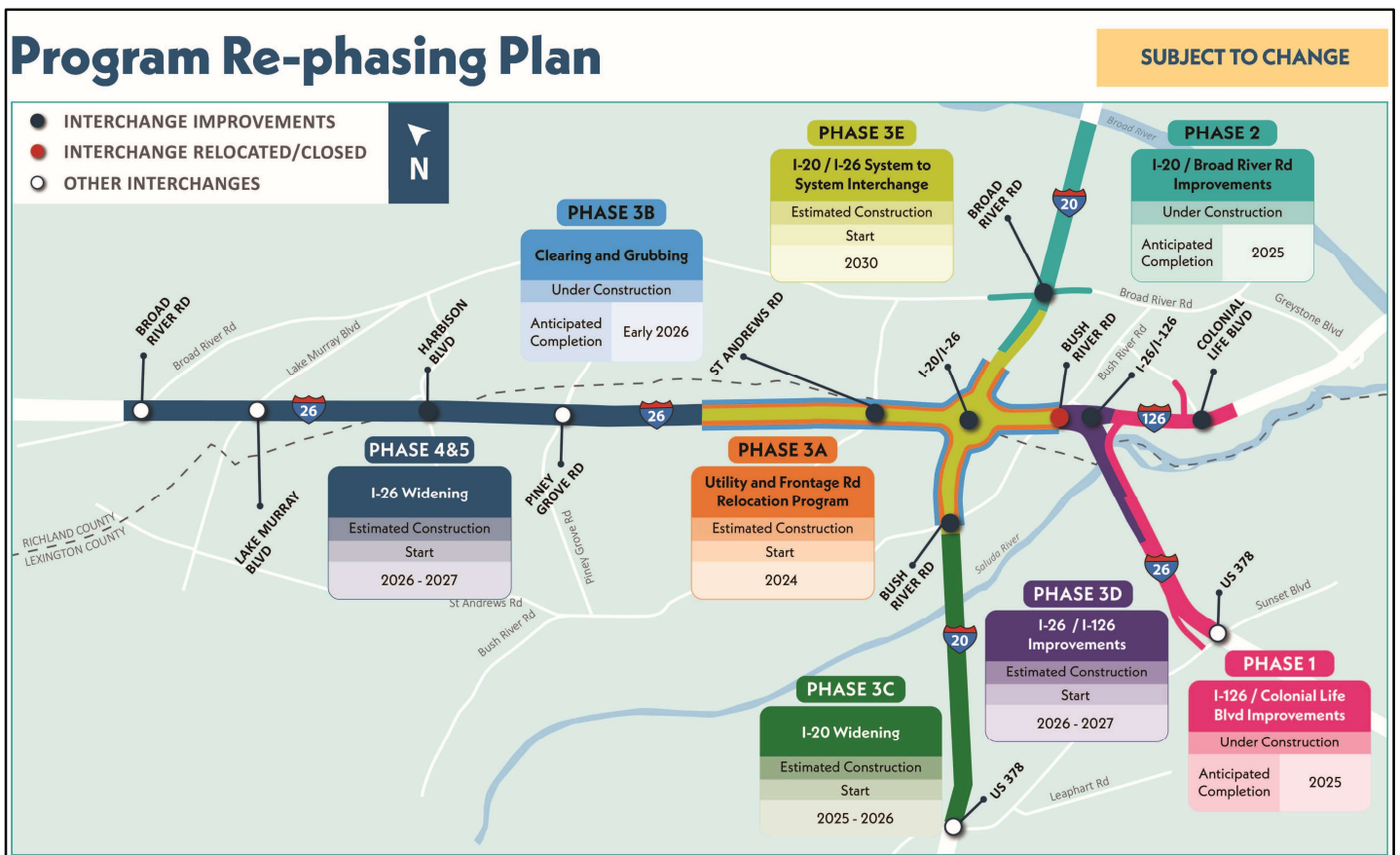


Figure 1. CCR Updated Project Phasing

3. Programmatic Design changes to be incorporated into the project

During detailed design and constructability reviews, the development of right of way plans, and review of alternative concepts for the Carolina Crossroads Project, several design changes have been proposed to the Refined Recommended Preferred Alternative (RRPA) described in the FEIS/ROD. The changes prompted SCDOT to re-evaluate the social, environmental and economic impacts documented in the FEIS/ROD. These changes are described below.

A. I-20 / I-26 System to System Interchange

The RRPA originally proposed a turbine interchange design at the I-20 / I-26 system to system interchange. In efforts to improve constructability, reduce costs, and improve operations, the design was revised. The revised design proposes to reconstruct and improve two loop ramps, add collector-distributor (C-D) roads in both directions of I-26, and make improvements to ramps, and make improvements at the interchange at St Andrews Road, thereby improving traffic operations and safety (Figure 2). The C-D road implementation relocates merges, diverges, and weaves off the mainline interstate to improve operations and safety of the mainline. These design changes have been documented in an Interchange Modification Report (IMR) update that is currently under review at FHWA Headquarters.

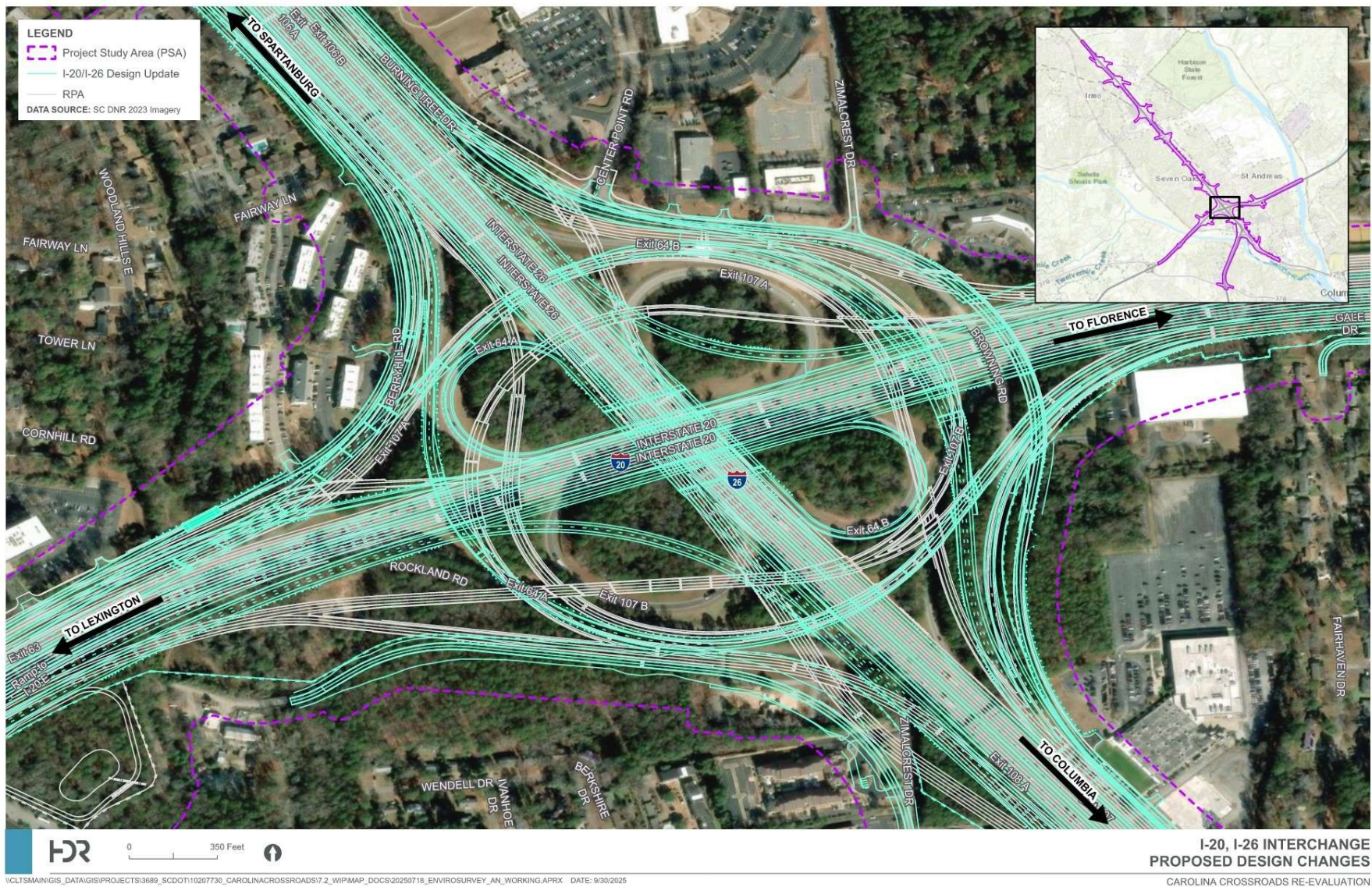
The St. Andrews Road interchange in the RRPA was a single point urban interchange and has been revised to a partial cloverleaf interchange similar to the existing interchange but with tie-ins to the proposed I-26 C-D roads. This revision improves operations on St. Andrews Road and supports the design of the proposed I-20/I-26 interchange.

The revised design is within the previous project study area (PSA) and right-of-way at adjacent properties have already been acquired. In the northwest quadrant of the interchange, Berryhill Road and multiple system interchange ramps were shifted closer to the adjacent noise receivers, and the elevation of an interstate ramp was raised. As a result of these design changes, the traffic noise analysis was updated to assess any changes in noise impacts or noise abatement in Noise Sensitive Area (NSA) K. While impacted noise receivers did increase slightly in NSA K (+7 receivers), a reassessment of Noise Barrier K still found that these barriers were not reasonable/feasible. See attached noise memo in Appendix A.

No other studies documented in the FEIS/ROD required updating as a result of this design change.

Traffic analyses for these design changes were conducted and the study was reviewed by FHWA for Safety, Operations and Engineering (SO&E) approval. Approval was issued by FHWA's Executive Director. Please see Appendix B for SO&E approvals.

The interchange level of service (LOS) for operational movements remains the same or improves from the originally proposed RRPA concept. FHWA is currently reviewing an IMR update. See LOS comparison tables from the updated IMR and side-by-side comparison graphics of the interchanges in Appendix C.



B. Phase 4 and 5 Design Progression (Harbison Blvd. (Exit 103) interchange update)

The design for Phases 4 and 5 has been progressed by SCDOT concurrently with other CCR construction phases. The majority of the I-26 widening from US 176 to St. Andrews Road remains the same as previously proposed in the FEIS/ROD. However, the interchange at Harbison Boulevard has been revised to minimize right of way impacts.

In the RRPA, this interchange was proposed to be replaced with a tight urban diamond interchange. Due to design constraints, a Partial Cloverleaf Interchange (ParClo) similar to the existing interchange configuration, is proposed. Under this design, the ramps are shifted slightly to the east on Harbison Boulevard from their current termini. The tighter westbound loop off-ramp is realigned and modified to provide two lanes exiting westbound I-26 but provides essentially the same geometry at its terminus (separate left turn, through and a free-flow channelized right turn lane). Under the ParClo concept, the channelized right turn lane becomes a third westbound lane crossing the interchange area. A single lane westbound on-ramp is provided exiting the intersection. The westbound approach of Harbison Boulevard approaching the intersection of the westbound loop off-ramp/Woodcross Drive is modified from its existing separate left turn, single through and right turn lanes to provide a separate left turn lane, two through lanes, and a separate right turn lane. The eastbound Harbison Boulevard approach remains essentially the same as existing but lengthens the separate left turn lane storage and taper from approximately 300 feet in length to approximately 725 feet.

All areas of the extension of this interchange design fall within the PSA, which has been previously surveyed. Due to the minimized footprint of the interchange, three (3) previously documented business relocations (Applebee's, Hooters, Best Buy) would be avoided. No other studies documented in the FEIS/ROD required updating as a result of this design change. No other changes to impacts are associated with this design change.

For this interchange, the level of service (LOS) for operational movements remains the same or improves from the original RRPA concept. See LOS comparison at the I-26 / Harbison Boulevard interchange summarized in the table below:

Table 1				
LOS Comparison for I-26 / Harbison Blvd Interchange				
	RRPA Design		Updated Parclo design	
	AM Peak LOS	PM Peak LOS	AM Peak LOS	PM Peak LOS
I-26 EB/Exit 103 Merge LOS	E	C	E	C
I-26 WB /Exit 103 Merge LOS	C	E	C	E
I-26 EB/Exit 103 Diverge LOS	D	C	D	C
I-26 WB/Exit 103 Diverge LOS	C	D	B	C

C. I-20 Lane extension to US 378

In the RRPA, I-20 Westbound was widened to four travel lanes from the I-26 interchange to 2,000 feet beyond the Saluda River bridge, where the four lanes merged into three lanes. To improve operations of the interstate, the fourth lane has been extended approximately 4,000 feet to the US 378 interchange and drops as an exit-only lane. See Figure 3.

All areas of the extension of this lane fall within the PSA, which has been previously surveyed, and impacts were assessed in the ROD. However, due to the extension of the additional travel lane, a reassessment of the traffic noise analysis was conducted for NSA N. Noise levels increased by approximately 1 dBA at two out of three noise receivers; however, all receivers were already approaching or above the NAC in the previous analysis and were considered as impacted. There were no newly impacted receivers identified. A reassessment of Noise Barrier N found that this noise barrier still was not reasonable. See attached noise memo in Appendix D.

No other studies documented in the FEIS/ROD required updating as a result of this design change. No other changes to impacts are associated with this design change.



Figure 3. I-20 Lane Extension

D. Fernandina Road Realignment and bridge

In the RRPA, Fernandina Road would remain in its current location and the culvert over Stoop Creek would be replaced with a new culvert. Based on additional hydraulic studies, the updated design proposes to replace the existing culvert with a bridge. To accomplish this, Fernandina Road would be realigned slightly to the north. See Figure 4.

The new bridge will allow for a “no rise” condition on Stoop Creek per FEMA requirements. This is a risk mitigation strategy for the overall project that will allow improvements in future construction phases to improve additional culverts on Stoop Creek (under I-26 and I-20) at separate times without impacting flooding conditions in the area, reducing design and regulatory risk. The bridge allows Fernandina Road to be offset further from the I-26/St. Andrews Road interchange, which further reduces the risk of design inter-phase and improves constructability of future phases.

All areas of the realigned Fernandina Road and bridge over Stoop Creek fall within the PSA, which has been previously surveyed, and impacts have been assessed in the FEIS/ROD. Therefore, no studies documented in the FEIS/ROD required updating and no change of impacts presented in the FEIS/ROD are anticipated with this design change.

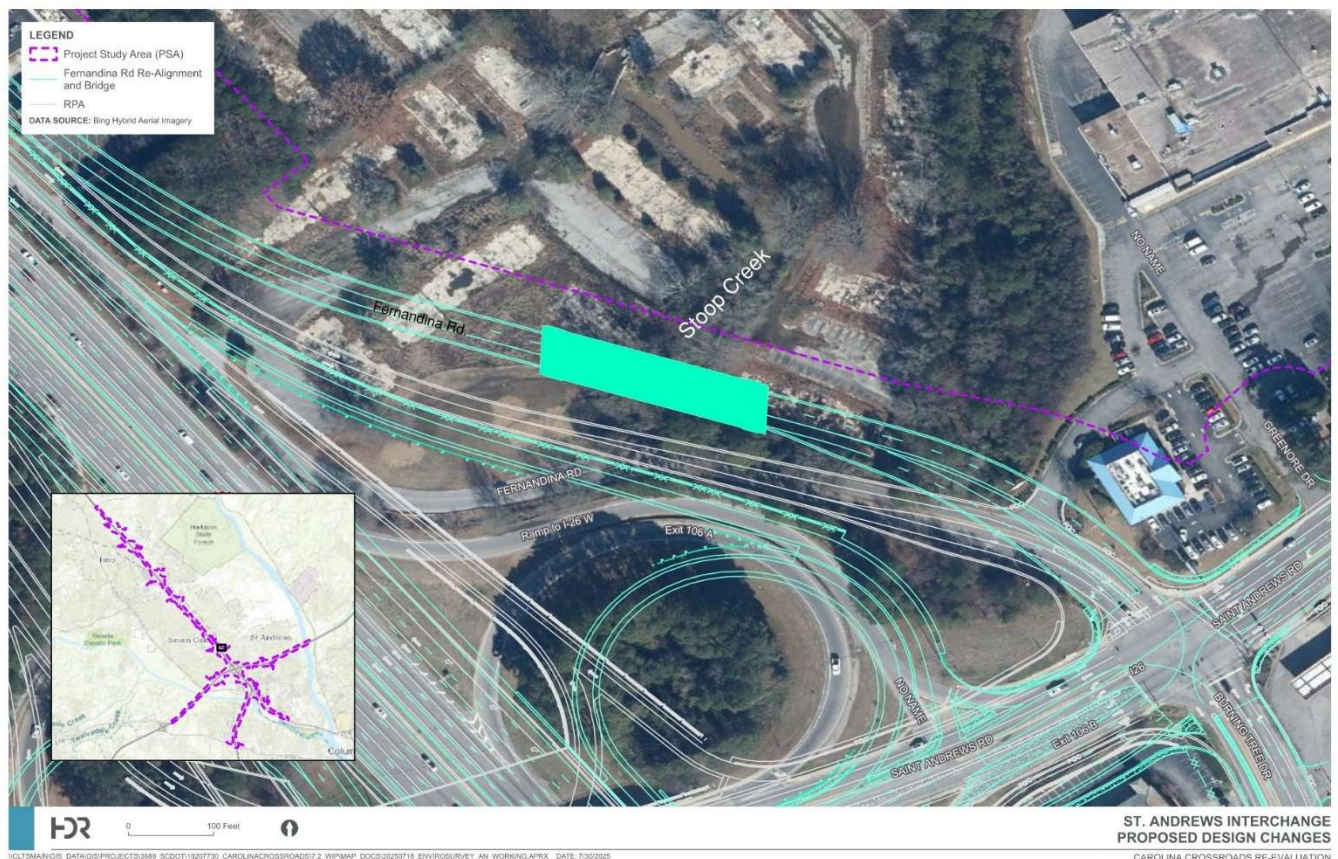


Figure 4. Fernandina Road realignment and bridge over Stoop Creek

E. Berryhill Road / Woodland Hills Road Intersection Realignment

The RRPA did not make any adjustments to the alignment of Berryhill Road or its intersection with St. Andrews Road. A proposed design was developed which realigned Berryhill Road to intersect directly with St. Andrews Road. Woodland Hills Road would be realigned to tie into Berryhill Road approximately 350 feet prior to the intersection with St. Andrews Road to better meet design standards. The realignment would move the Woodlands Hill Road intersection approximately 350 feet further away from the St. Andrews Road intersection, thereby increasing the intersection spacing and simplifying turning movements at the two intersections improving safety. In addition, the relocated alignment will accommodate a bridge crossing of Stoop Creek and provide more room for utility relocations, while improving operations of the Berryhill Rd/Woodland Hills Road and St. Andrews Road intersections (Figure 5).

All areas of the realignment of Berryhill Rd/ Woodland Hill Road fall within the previously surveyed PSA, which has been surveyed, and impacts have been assessed in the ROD and/or previous re-evaluations. This design change would cause one additional business relocation, the Tokyo Buffet restaurant (Tract 632). Taken together with the above decrease at Harbison, there is a net decrease in relocations of two (2). Total business relocations for the overall project were 44 and are now 42.

No other changes to impacts are associated with this design change.

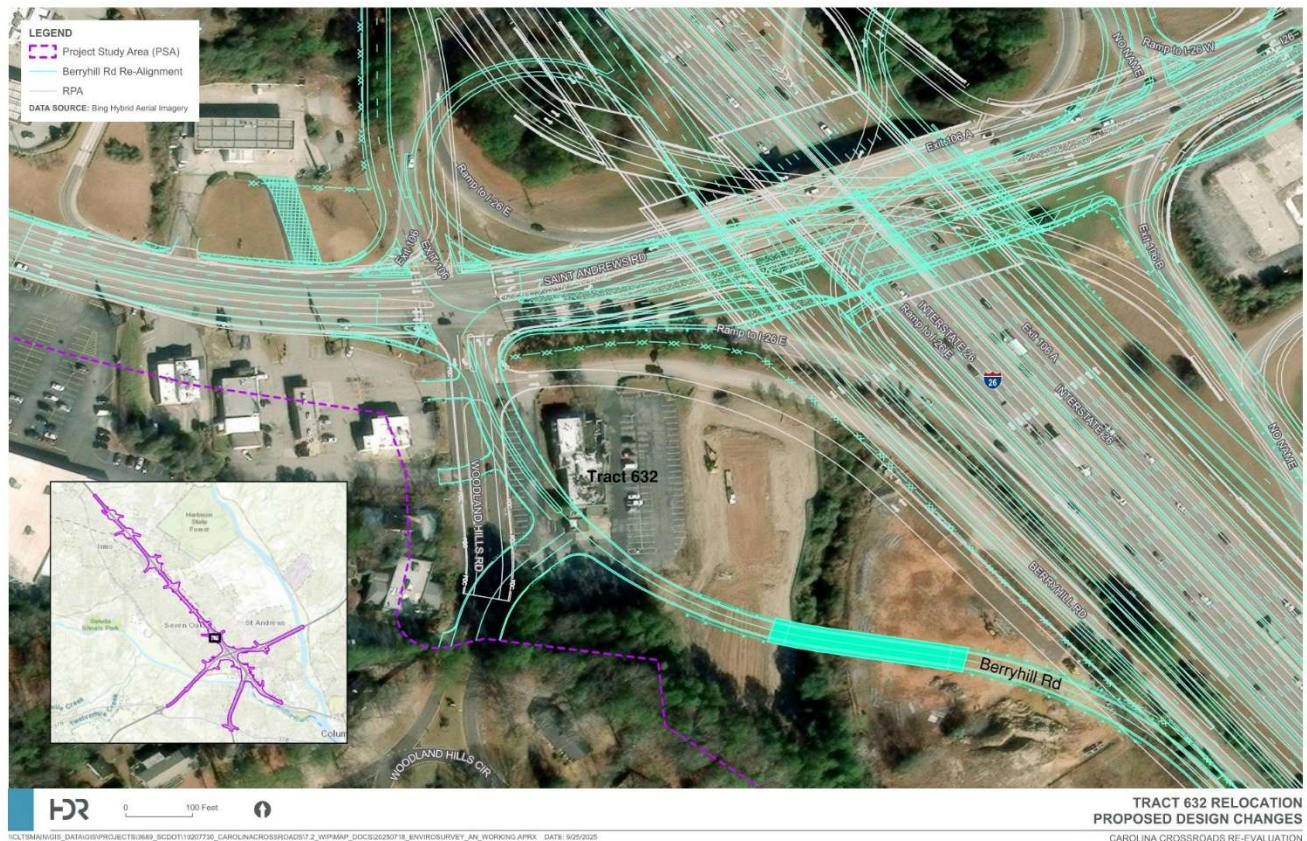


Figure 5. Berryhill Road/Woodland Hills Road Intersection Realignment

F. Tract 9 driveway realignment

The RRPA proposed a strip take from Tract 9 for ramp improvements at the I-26 / Broad River Road interchange; the acquisition planned to maintain the existing driveway to the parcel. During right of way negotiations, the driveway was proposed to be moved to a new location to improve the circulation of vehicles on the parcel.

The newly proposed driveway is located on a new location alignment that extended outside of the FEIS/ROD PSA. SCDOT re-evaluated the social, environmental, and economic impacts documented in the FEIS/ROD. Areas outside of the PSA were surveyed for cultural resources, jurisdictional features (streams and wetlands) and T&E habitat.

Field surveys found no wetlands or streams on the parcel. No T&E habitat was identified. No archaeological artifacts or sites were identified. See Cultural Resources shortform report in Appendix E and Natural Resources Technical Memo addendum in Appendix F. No other social or economic impacts associated with the driveway realignment were identified.



Figure 6. Tract 9 driveway realignment

G. I-26 Park and Ride

During the development of the EIS and ROD, stakeholders expressed concerns about the increase in travel times due to extended construction periods for the Carolina Crossroads project. As a result of this, SCDOT committed to exploring opportunities to provide two park and ride locations during construction.

SCDOT will work with the Central Midlands Rural Transit Authority / COMET (CMRTA/COMET) and the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) to develop two park-and-ride lots to improve mobility during construction and mitigate congestion resulting from the project. SCDOT would construct the two sites and maintain them during construction of the project. Engineering feasibility, timing and continued maintenance of the sites would be determined in coordination with CMRTA and the CMCOG prior to the start of construction. In the event a permanent site cannot be developed, SCDOT would work with CMRTA and CMCOG to identify and provide funding for existing parking lots that could be leased for park-and-ride use during construction.

To meet this environmental commitment, SCDOT established evaluation criteria for siting the park and ride locations and explored multiple new construction locations. After consideration of 5 sites along I-26 and 6 sites along I-20, all new construction parcels were found to not meet the evaluation criteria for implementation. SCDOT then expanded its search to include existing parking lots where leasing options may exist along both I-26 and I-20.

After multiple meetings with property owners at potential locations along I-20, no viable leasing options were found along I-20.

One park and ride site located at Exit 97 along I-26 was found to be feasible and agreements to lease a portion of the SC DMV parcel have been finalized. To meet the environmental commitment, SCDOT will make improvements to the site by extending the parking lot to add 95 parking spots and relocating the existing motorcycle track. SCDOT documented the park and ride analysis and selection process in a memo to FHWA in January 2025 – see Appendix G. For proposed site layout of the park and ride, see Figure 7.

This area of proposed improvement extends outside of the FEIS/ROD PSA and SCDOT has re-evaluated the social, environmental, and economic impacts documented in the FEIS/ROD. Areas outside of the PSA were surveyed for cultural resources, jurisdictional features (streams and wetlands) and T&E habitat.

Field surveys found no wetlands or streams on the parcel. No T&E habitat was identified. No archaeological artifacts or sites were identified. No other social or economic impacts associated with the proposed park and ride were identified.

Upon completion of the improvements to the site, SCDOT considers this environmental commitment fulfilled.

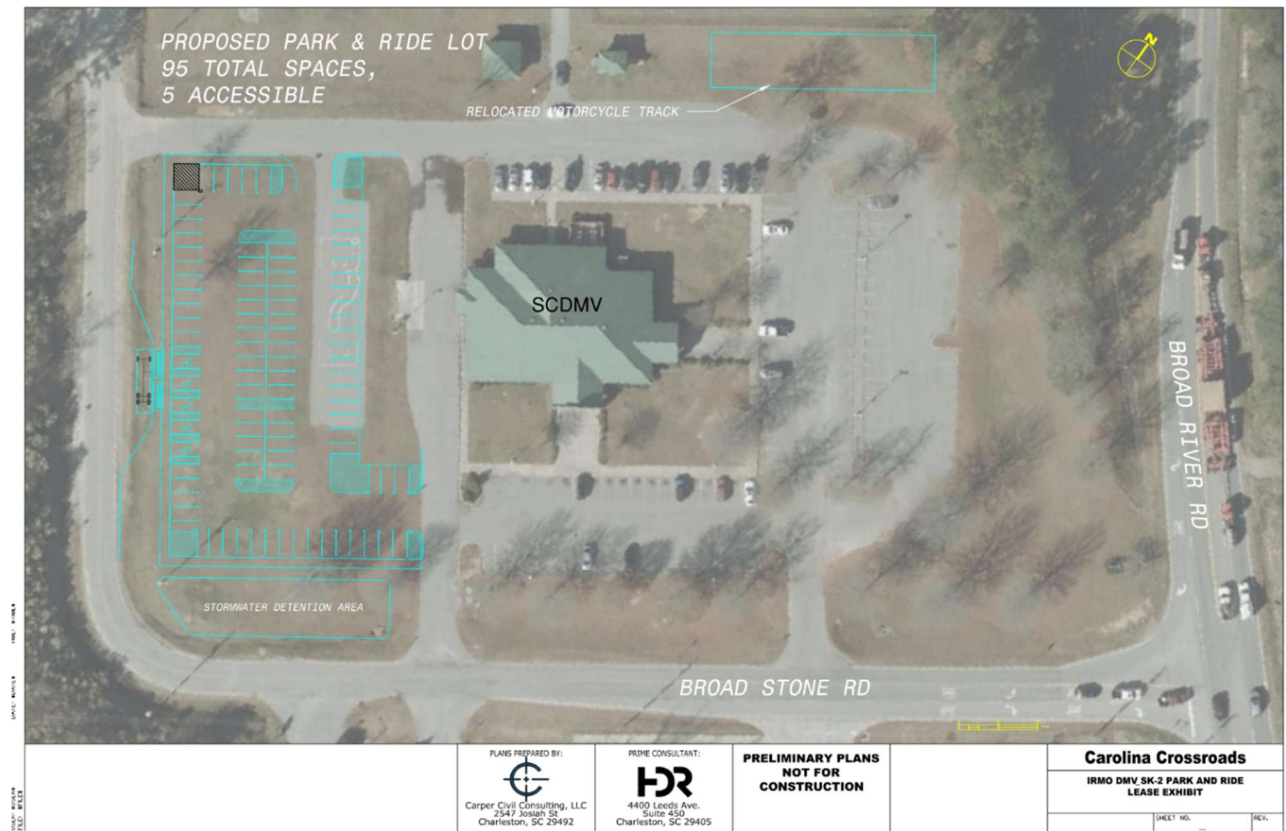


Figure 7. Proposed park and ride location

4. Phase 3C Design Build Updates

As the CCR Phase 3C design-build team progressed the design for the phase, minor changes to the RRPA were proposed to improve constructability; in addition, further details for drainage and best management practices (BMPs) were developed. The proposed noise barrier in Phase 3C was also reassessed to avoid conflicts with a major power line easement within the corridor. While these design updates are within the previous PSA, minor changes in impacts were identified.

Phase 3C includes the construction of Barrier O along I-20 East from the power line easement at Davega Drive to just short of the Saluda River. To avoid conflicts with the Dominion power line easement, accommodate drainage, and avoid topographic issues at the Saluda River, modifications to Barrier O are proposed. The need to incorporate absorptive material on Barrier O has also been reevaluated. A rerun of FHWA's noise model (TNM 3.2) was completed to ensure that Barrier O will provide comparable benefits to receptors (homes/businesses) within noise sensitive area (NSA) O. Based on the results of the analysis, all twenty-seven (27) impacted receptors were found to remain benefitted and eighteen (18) non-impacted sites are benefitted. These results are comparable to the existing Barrier O benefits. While the length of Barrier O has been shortened by 177 feet, the height of the barrier is being increased to ensure existing noise reductions and benefits are maintained. Detailed results of the TNM model can be found in the Phase 3C Noise Analysis Addendum in Appendix H.

Slight design modifications within the footprint of Phase 3C would result in changes to waters of the U.S. (WoUS) as proposed in the EIS/ROD and the USACE Section 404 that has been approved for the project. These include:

1. Alignment shifts at the bridges to improve constructability and provide a reduction in embankment fill. This modification would allow for construction of erosion and sediment control devices. This would affect Wetland 9 by increasing clearing impacts and Wetland 12 by converting clearing impacts to fill impacts.
2. Additional drainage and best management practices (BMPs) were added to the project that would affect Wetland 11. Additional wetland clearing would be required.

Changes in impacts are approximately 0.30 acres; these will be documented and coordinated with the USACE through a permit modification request.

5. Summary

The purpose of the re-evaluation is to document the reconsideration of environmental impacts based on the passage of time between the approval of the FEIS/ROD, and the present to determine whether a supplement to the FEIS/ROD is needed. This re-evaluation was accomplished by a thorough document review and analysis based on proposed design modifications made to the project.

Based on surveys conducted for the right of way updates, no additional jurisdictional features were identified outside of the previous PSA; for Phase 3C, minor amounts of additional wetland impacts will be addressed in a Section 404 Permit Modification request. See impact matrix below.

Based on the analyses and surveys conducted for the proposed design changes, described in Sections 3 and 4, no changes in environmental impacts were found to be significant nor were there any impacts that would change the validity of the FEIS/ROD.

Table 3 Project Changes – Summary of Impact Changes from Previous NEPA decisions						
	Wetlands/ streams (acres)	Cultural Resources (sites/findings)	Relocations	Socioeconomics/ Communities	T&E Habitat (presence)	Noise (Impacted receivers)
I-20 / I-26 System to System Interchange	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	+ 7 receivers
Phase 4 and 5 Design Progression / Harbison Blvd interchange	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	-3 relocations	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
I-20 Lane Extension	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
Fernandina Rd realignment & bridge	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
Berryhill Rd / Woodland Hills Rd intersection	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	+1 relocation	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
Tract 9 driveway realignment	No change in impacts	None found	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
I-26 Park & Ride	No change in impacts	None found	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts
Phase 3C design	+0.04 acres of fill and +0.21 acres clearing in wetlands	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No change in impacts	No	No change in impacts