

APPENDIX G

Relocation Study



I-26 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT MM172- 187 RELOCATION STUDY

DORCHESTER AND BERKELEY COUNTIES, SOUTH
CAROLINA

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1. INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure Consulting and Engineering and RND Consultants, Inc. have investigated the potential relocation impacts associated with the corridor improvements to the Interstate (I)-26 widening from MM 172 to 187 just west of the existing interchange of I-26 and US 15 (approximate Sta 3330+00 1961 centerline alignment) to just west of the I-26 and SC 27 interchange (approximate Sta 4152+00 1961 centerline alignment). This relocation report is intended to inform the project about the development of relocation assistance strategies prior to the initiation of any right-of-way acquisition activities. This report outlines anticipated challenges related to the displacement of individuals, families, businesses, farms, and other entities. By identifying potential impacts to residential and non-residential properties early in the planning process, the project team can proactively develop equitable, effective, and compliant relocation plans in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (URA) and applicable state regulations. This approach helps ensure displaced individuals, families, and businesses receive appropriate support and potential disruptions are minimized through thoughtful planning and early coordination.

Generally, relocation studies include two categories of data: direct (primary) and indirect (secondary) sources to assess potential impacts. Primary data refers to firsthand information obtained from individuals who may be affected by the project, typically collected through outreach efforts such as surveys and public forums. In contrast, secondary data consists of information compiled from existing records and institutions, including local governments like Dorchester and Berkeley Counties, housing agencies, school systems, faith-based organizations, census databases, real estate listings, GIS mapping platforms, and web-based resources.

Since this is an early-stage, conceptual review of potential relocation impacts, engagement with potentially affected households was minimal. Accordingly, the analysis is largely grounded in secondary data sources. Demographic and housing statistics were derived from public records, including census data. The availability of comparable replacement housing was analyzed using real estate tools such as the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). In addition, on-site assessments were conducted through multiple field visits to observe conditions within the study area. Over a span of several months, detailed research and repeated site observations informed the development of this report, which identifies available housing options and estimates the number of potential relocations under each of the three alternatives under consideration.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The I-26 Corridor Improvement Project proposes to widen I-26 from just west of the I-26/US 15 interchange (approximately Sta. 3330+00, 1961 centerline alignment) to just west of the I-26/SC 27 interchange (approximately Sta. 4152+00, 1961 centerline alignment) in Dorchester and Berkeley Counties, South Carolina. The project corridor is divided into two (2) segments:

- **Segment 1:** Near MM 172 (approximately Sta. 3330+00) to MM 179 (approximately Sta. 3765+00)
- **Segment 2:** MM 179 (approximately Sta. 3765+00) to near MM 187 (approximately Sta. 4152+00)

The purpose of the project is to improve traffic operations and address existing geometric deficiencies along I-26 between MM 172 and MM 187. The project is needed due to existing and projected traffic volumes and operating conditions that indicate this segment of I-26 is currently operating and will continue to operate beyond its available capacity. Without improvements, the corridor is expected to experience increasing congestion, reduced mobility, and operational deficiencies that would negatively affect both passenger and freight movement.

The proposed improvements include increasing travel lanes from two to three lanes in each direction of I-26, grading of median and outside shoulders, and the installation of barrier walls and/or cable guardrail. The project also includes the replacement of eleven (11) bridges—seven (7) overpass structures and four (4) mainline bridges—as well as upgrades to six (6) hydrological box culverts and two (2) access box culverts. Additional improvements consist of modifications to the Exit 172 and Exit 177 interchanges and associated ramps, along with drainage enhancements throughout the corridor.

Figure 2-1 Project Limits



3. NEIGHBORHOODS

Table 3-1, which presents the demographic profile for the study area alongside comparative data for Dorchester and Berkeley County and the State of South Carolina, serves as a critical foundation for the relocation study. This table includes key socioeconomic and demographic indicators—such as total population, household size, racial and ethnic composition, income levels, housing tenure (owner- vs. renter-occupied), educational attainment, and poverty rates—which are essential to understanding the community context in which the proposed project will occur.

Understanding these demographic patterns is important for several reasons:

1. **Identifying Vulnerable Populations:** Disaggregated demographic data helps identify populations that may be more vulnerable to displacement impacts—such as low-income households, renters, elderly individuals, minority communities, or those with limited English proficiency—who may face additional barriers in the relocation process.
2. **Tailoring Relocation Assistance:** A clear demographic profile supports the development of equitable and responsive relocation assistance strategies. For example, if the study area has a high percentage of renters or low-income households, assistance plans may prioritize access to affordable replacement housing, financial counseling, or language-accessible services.
3. **Ensuring Compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (URA) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.** The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that owners of real property to be acquired for Federal and federally-assisted projects are treated fairly and consistently, to encourage and expedite acquisition by agreements with such owner, to minimize litigation and relieve congestion in the courts, and to promote public confidence in Federal and federally-assisted land acquisition programs. Table 3-1 provides an overview of the community demographics within the project study area.
4. **Supporting Public Engagement:** Knowing the composition of the affected community allows project planners to design inclusive and effective public outreach, for example, by offering materials in multiple languages or holding meetings in accessible locations and formats tailored to community needs.
5. **Comparative Analysis for Context:** Comparing the study area with broader county and state metrics helps place the local community in context, highlighting disparities or unique trends that may require special attention. For instance, if the study area has a significantly higher poverty rate than the county average, this may influence how relocation assistance is prioritized and funded.

Table 3-1 Demographics for Dorchester and Berkeley Counties and the Study Area

Demographics	Study Area (Harleyville)	Dorchester County	Berkeley County	South Carolina
Percent of Population that is White	63.5%	62.7%	61.5%	63.3%
Percent of Population that is Minority	36.5%	37.3%	38.5%	36.7%
Median Age	45.6	38.8	37.7	40.7
Percent of Population Age 65 and Over	20.1%	16%	15.4%	19.8%
Median Household Income	\$60,231	\$83,907	\$86,658	\$72,350
Per Capita Income	\$46,267	\$37,279	\$39,727	\$37,993
Percent of Families Below Poverty Level	25.3%	8.8%	8.2%	13.3%

Unemployment	43.9%	36.9%	37.8%	42.4%
Limited English Proficiency Population	7%	N/A	11.1%	9%
Percent Owner-Occupied	65.3%	74.9%	73.9%	72.3%
Percent Vacant	13.37%	5.6%	6.2%	12.18%
Median House Value	\$192,700	\$359,300	\$356,000	\$299,500
Percent of Persons with a Disability	17.7%	12.4%	13.5%	14.8%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2024

*Data not available at block group level; data was collected at census tract level.

4. PROPOSED DESIGN

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the proposed design alternative was based off the Environmental Assessment for the I-26 Widening Project MM172-187. The proposed design would widen the existing corridor by expanding the roadway equally on both sides of the median from two lanes in each direction to three continuous lanes in each direction. The approximate 15 miles of widening on I-26 will utilize the existing right-of-way within the interstate median.

The proposed design will be evaluated for its potential impacts on surrounding properties, utilities, and environmental resources, as well as its ability to meet the project's purpose and need.

5. PROPERTY IMPACTS

5.1. Proposed Design Impacts

Based on the proposed design, which utilizes a symmetrical widening approach to expand the existing I-26 corridor equally on both sides of the current centerline, the project team has identified a total of eleven (11) potential property impacts associated with this alignment. These impacts were identified through a preliminary evaluation of the properties and structures situated within the expanded right-of-way limits on both the north and south sides of the roadway. This results in the relocation of six (6) commercial, one (1) residential home, four (4) personal property moves, and nine (9) billboards. Therefore, a total of twenty (20) relocations have been identified for the proposed design (shown in Table 5-1 Proposed Design Potential Displacements).

Figure 5-1 Proposed Design Displacements

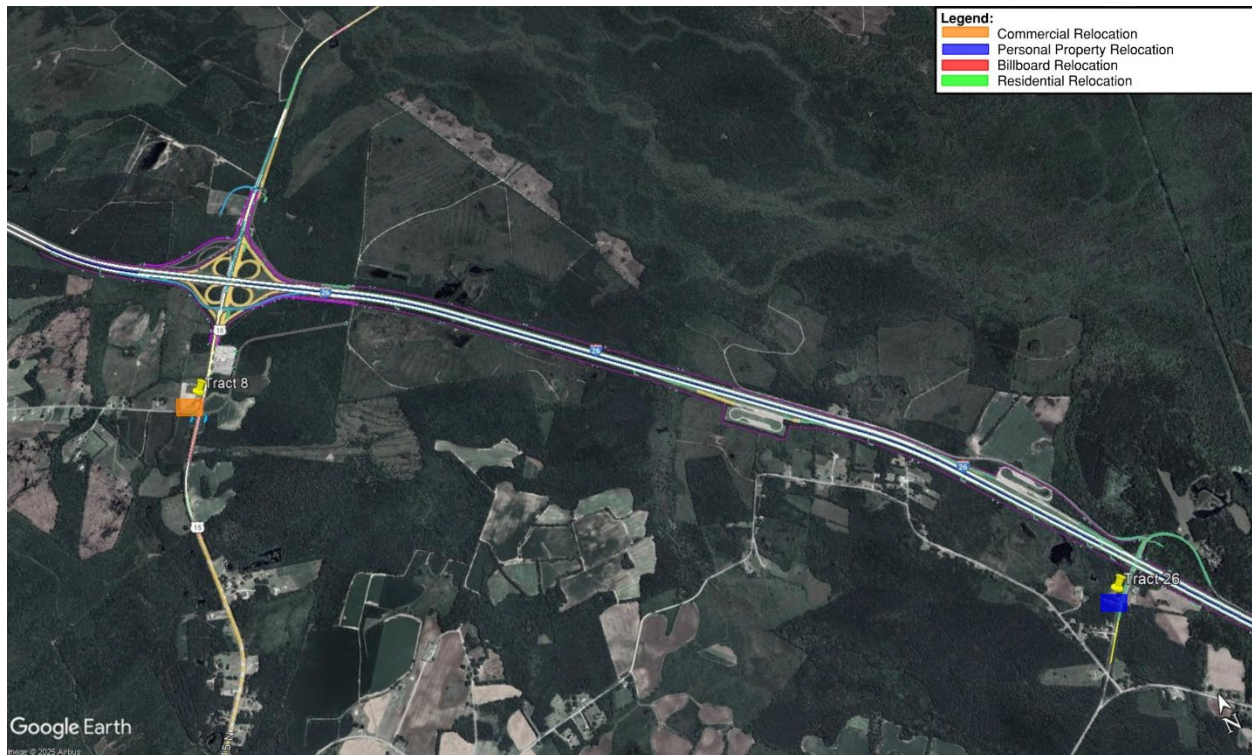


Figure 5-2 Proposed Design Displacements

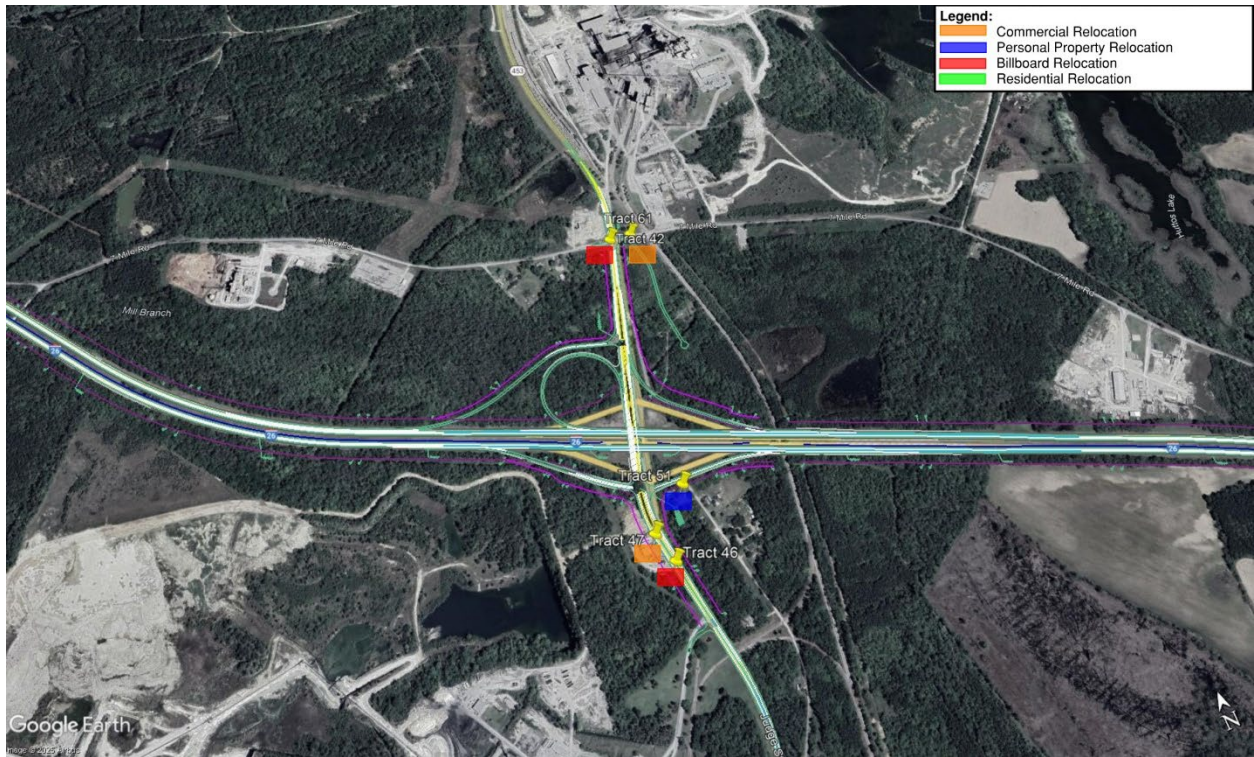


Figure 5-3 Proposed Design Displacements

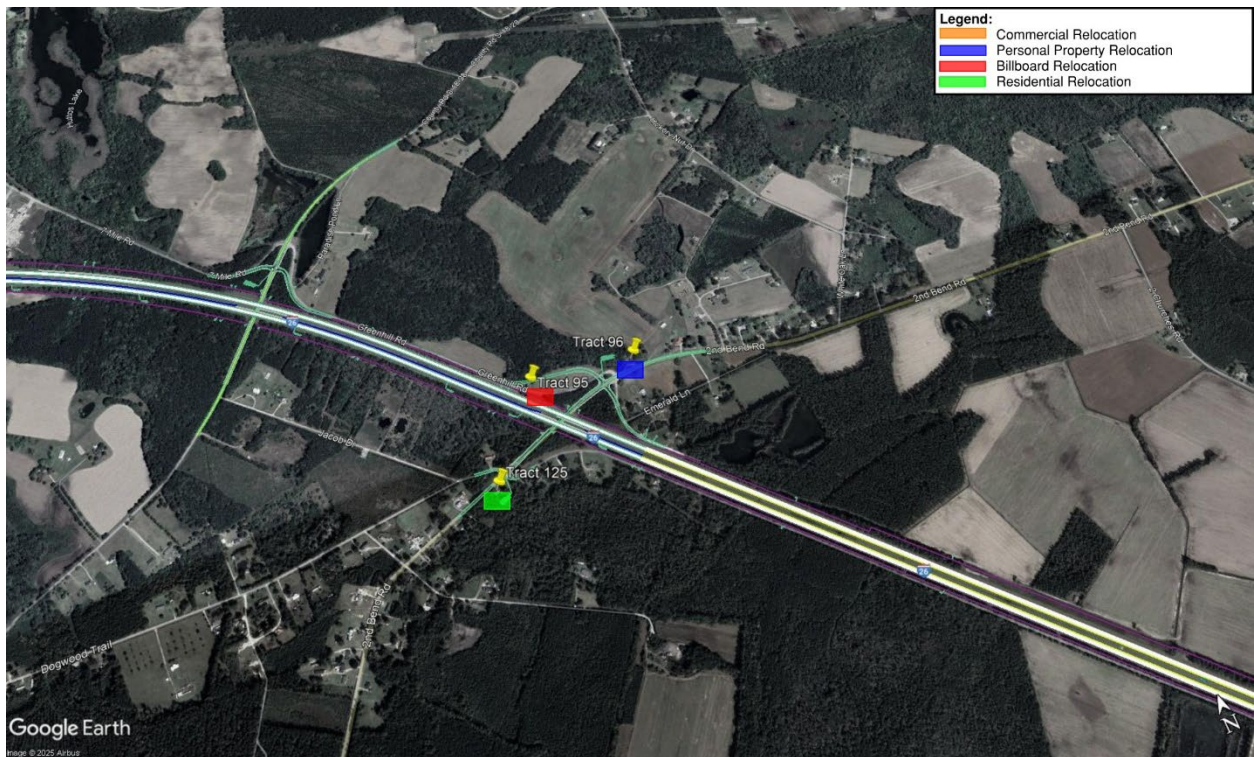


Figure 5-4 Proposed Design Displacements

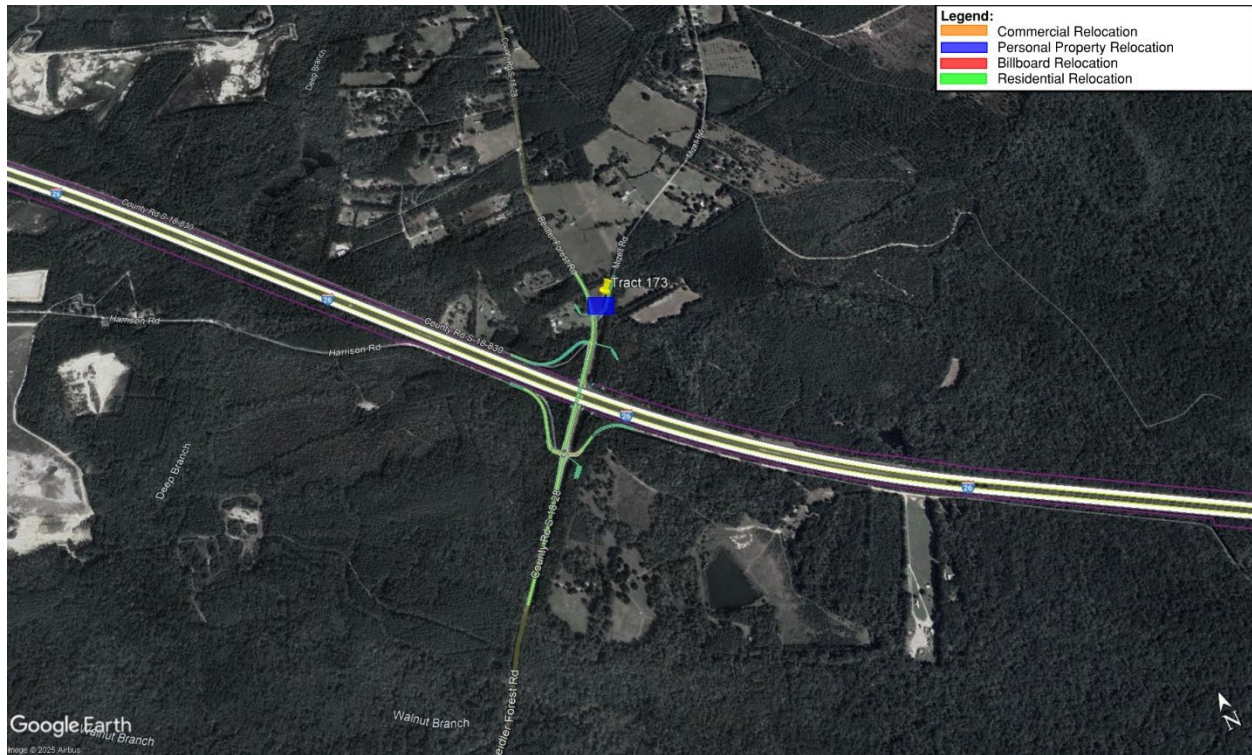


Table 5-1 Proposed Design Potential Displacements

Tract #	TMS #	Address	Buildings	Total Units	Occupied Units	Type of Impact	Tenure	Relocations
8	008-00-00-048.000	Highway 15 N, Harleyville, SC 29448	1	1	1	Commercial	Owner: BLYTHE Development CO • Tenant: Archer Western Construction	2: 1 tenant, 1 landlord
26	015-00-00-108.000	1154 7 Mile Road, Harleyville, SC 29448	1	1	1	Commercial Storage Building (personal property move)	Owner: Georgia Adams Et Al	1
42	025-00-00-038.000	654 Judge Street, Harleyville, SC 29448	0	1	0	Commercial: Billboard	Owner: Giant Cement Company • Tenant: Westbury's Ace Hardware	2: 1 owner, 1 tenant

46	025-00-00-031.000	495 Judge Street, Harleyville, SC 29448	0	3 sign structures 4 sign faces	0	Commercial: Billboards	Owner: Argos USA LLC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant: TRC Inc. • Tenant: Westbury Ace Hardware • Tenant: Shell • Tenant: Harleyville Mini Storage, LLC 	5: 1 owner, 4 tenants
47	025-00-00-007.000	495 Judge Street, Harleyville, SC 29448	1	2	2	Commercial: Gas Station	Owner: Yogesh of Summerville LLC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant: Shell Gas Station • Tenant: Harleyville Liquor Store 	3: 2 tenants, 1 owner
51	025-00-00-001.000	229 Shields Drive, Harleyville, SC 29448	3	1	0	Personal Property (Outbuildings)	Owner: Christopher Allan Moore	1
61	025-00-00-014.000	504 Seven Mile Road, Harleyville, SC 29448	1	1	1	Small building (Commercial)	Owner: For a Greater Cause	1
95	037-00-00-066.000	200 Greenhill Road Harleyville, SC 29448	0	1	0	Commercial Billboard	Owner: Jefferson L and Nelda A Westbury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant: Adams Outdoor Advertising 	2: 1 owner, 1 tenant
96	037-00-00-067.000	493 Second Bend Road, Summerville SC 29485	1	1	1	Personal Property (Outbuilding)	Owner: Andrea Faehrmann	1
125	037-00-00-065.000	402 Second Bend Road, Summerville SC 29448	1	1	1	Residential Home	Owner: Weldon Morris	1
173	064-00-00-018.000	421 Beidler Forest Road Dorchester, SC	0	1	0	Personal Property (Outbuilding)	Owner: Melissa Mizell	1

Table 5-2. summarizes the type of commercial properties impacted and the estimated employees associated with the business displacees (relocations) associated with the proposed design.

Table 5 2 Employment per Business Relocation

Business	Industry	Estimate of Employees*
Archer Wester Construction	Construction	5-15
Shell Gas Station	Convenience Store	3-8
Harleyville Liquor Store	Liquor Store	2-8

**Based on average employee estimates by industry from www.ibisworld.com, August 2022

**Estimate of employees impacted is based on the average number of employees by industry. However, based on the size and number of units in each building being relocated, these average number of employee estimates are very high and are not representative of our study area.

The preliminary relocation estimates are subject to refinement as the design advances and right-of-way limits are finalized. All relocations will be conducted in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and all relocation resources will be made available to displacees without discrimination.

6. AVAILABLE REPLACEMENT PROPERTY

Table 6-1. and Table 6-2. identify the availability of commercial and residential properties by type within Dorchester and Berkeley Counties area, according to the National Realtors' Association Multiple listing service (MLS) at www.loopnet.com and www.zillow.com as of July 2025. The likelihood of the businesses relocating within the study area varies based on the business and its needs.

Table 6-1 Available Commercial Real Estate for Sale/Lease on Multiple Listing Service

Property Type	Town of Harleyville- Sale	Town of Harleyville- Lease	Dorchester County- Sale	Dorchester County- Lease	Berkeley County- Sale	Berkeley County- Lease
Industrial (2,000- 15,256 SF) ¹	0	0	4	18	5	38
Retail (950- 15,256 SF)	0	0	8	20	13	20
Hospitality	0	0	0	0	1	0
Office (1,145- 9,000 SF)	0	0	5	10	6	29
Restaurant (950-15,669 SF)	0	0	4	2	1	2
Land (.74 -34 acres)	1	0	19	0	39	12

Source: www.loopnet.com, July 2025

Note: 1 SF = square feet

Table 6-2 Available Residential Replacement Properties for Sale

Property Type	Town of Harleyville- Sale	Town of Harleyville- Lease	Dorchester County- Sale	Dorchester County- Lease	Berkeley County- Sale	Berkeley County- Lease
1 Bed/ 1 Bath	0	0	1	130	12	597
2 Bed/ 2 Bath	0	0	54	209	198	668
3 Bed/ 2 Bath	1	1	561	186	942	460
4 Bed/ 3 Bath	1	0	410	90	598	130

Source: www.zillow.com, July 2025

Note: This includes homes and town homes only.

The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and all relocation resources will be made available to displacees without discrimination.

7. CONCLUSION

The I-26 Corridor Improvement Project involves adding capacity and completing associated bridge, interchange, and drainage improvements along the corridor from just west of the I-26/US 15 interchange to just west of the I-26/SC 27 interchange.

A detailed evaluation of the proposed design alternative indicates that a symmetrical widening on both sides of the centerline will be the least impactful option. Based on preliminary right-of-way assessments, this alignment balances the need for infrastructure improvements with minimized impacts, resulting in a total of twenty (20) displacees on eleven (11) of the impacted properties. Potential relocations include six (6) commercial properties, one (1) residential home, four (4) personal property moves, and nine (9) billboards. The proposed design presents the least number of relocations and provides a more balanced footprint, making it the most practical and context-sensitive option to advance further design and environmental review.

The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (P.L. 91-646, as amended by 100-17; 49 CFR 24.205 A-F) as the project progresses. Relocation resources are available to all residential and business displacees without discrimination.