



APPENDIX K

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MATERIALS

- K-1: Public Involvement Plan
- K-2: Public Comment Period Summary
- K-3: Public Comment Period Comments & Responses



K-1: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN



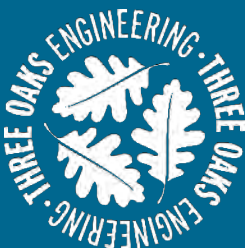
Public Involvement Plan

Interstate 26 (I-26) Corridor Improvements Project MM 145-172

Orangeburg and Dorchester
Counties, South Carolina

PROJECT ID: P041967 & P042454

AUGUST
2025
(v5.0)



QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Role	Name	Contact
South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)		
Program Manager	Alex Bennett	bennettja@scdot.org
Assistant Program Manager	Jordan Jolly	JollyJG@scdot.org
Public Involvement Director	Ginny Jones	JonesMV@scdot.org
Director of ESO	Chad Long	longcc@scdot.org
RPG 3 NEPA Coordinator	Ed Frierson	FriersonEW@scdot.org
Website Coordinator	Jeff Craver	CraverJA@scdot.org
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)		
FHWA Environmental	Shane Belcher	jeffrey.belcher@dot.gov
FHWA Environmental	Sandra Saint-Surin	sandra.saintsurin@dot.gov
Michael Baker International (MBI) - Prime		
Project Manager	Renee Tison	RTison@mbakerintl.com
Deputy Project Manager	Stephen Ross	SRoss@mbakerintl.com
Assistant Project Manager	Kenneth Johnson	Kenneth.johnson@mbakerintl.com
Design Manager	Jason Stillwell	Jason.Stillwell@mbakerintl.co
Environmental Manager	Lee Williams	Lee.Williams@mbakerintl.com
Three Oaks Engineering (3Oaks) – NEPA Lead/Natural Systems Lead/Public Involvement Lead		
NEPA Lead	Christy Shumate	Christy.Shumate@threeoaksengineering.com
Public Involvement	Shelby Ellenburg	Shelby.Ellenburg@threeoaksengineering.com
Natural Systems	Wade Biltoft	Wade.Biltoft@threeoaksengineering.com

SCHEDULE

Milestone	Delivery
2025	
ACE Meeting	January 9, 2025
Distributed LOI	March 21, 2025
Public Information Meeting	July 25, 2025
Preliminary Plans	September 2025
NEPA Approved EA	November 2025
Public Hearing	January 2026
2026	
NEPA Decision Document	February 2026
Right-of-Way Plans	May 2026
2027	
Final Plans	October 2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose of the Agency and Public Involvement Plan	1
2	Overview	2
2.1	Project Description	2
2.2	Purpose and Need	3
3	Development of the PIP	3
3.1	Goals	3
3.2	Strategies	3
4	Agency Coordination	4
4.1	Lead Agencies	4
4.2	Partnering and Commenting Agencies	4
4.3	Agency Scoping	5
4.3.1	NEPA Class of Action	5
4.3.2	Letter of Intent (LOI)	5
4.4	Agency Coordination Meetings	6
4.5	Document Review	6
5	Public Involvement	7
5.1	Establishment of the Public Outreach Area	7
5.2	Community Demographics	8
5.2.1	Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	9
5.3	Stakeholders	9
5.4	Public Outreach Tools & Advertisements	9
5.4.1	Branding	9
5.4.2	Project Website	9
5.4.3	Roadway Signs & Banners	10
5.4.4	Postcards	10
5.4.5	Property Owner Letters	11
5.4.6	Stakeholder Press Release(s)	11
5.4.7	Local Newspapers	11
5.5	Meetings & Events	12
5.5.1	Public Information Meetings	12

5.5.2 Public Hearing 13

5.5.3 Project Database 14

6 Revisions 15

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Agency Roles & Contacts..... 4

Table 2: Agency Coordination 6

Table 3: Demographic Data..... 8

Table 4: Meetings & Events 12

Table 5: Version Log..... 15

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: NEPA Process Graphic..... 1

Figure 2: I-26 Widening Project MM 145-172 2

Figure 3: US Census Block Groups..... 7

LIST OF ACRONYMS

A

ACE Agency Coordination Effort

C

CIN Catawba Indian Nation (CIN)

CEQ Council on Environmental Quality

E

EA Environmental Assessment

F

FHWA Federal Highway Administration

L

LEP Limited English Proficiency

N

NEPA National Environmental Policy Act

P

PIM Public Information Meeting

PIP Public Involvement Plan

PSA Project Study Area

S

SCDAH South Carolina Department of Archives and History

SCDES South Carolina Department of Environmental Services

SCDNR South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

SCDOT South Carolina Department of Transportation

SHPO State Historic Preservation Office

U

USACE US Army Corps of Engineers

USEPA US Environmental Protection Agency

USFWS US Fish and Wildlife Service

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Agency and Public Involvement Plan

The I-26 Improvements Project MM 145-172 Public Involvement Plan (PIP) details strategies and tools to ensure that members of the public receive key information about the project and have opportunities to provide meaningful input on decisions that will affect their community. This PIP was developed to be consistent with public involvement requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in support of the Environmental Assessment (EA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and other federal regulations. The PIP outlines methods to engage all segments of the public, with intensive outreach focused on residents, small neighborhood businesses, special populations, and other stakeholders in and around the proposed project area, as well as regulatory agencies. Engaging the public in the process ensures their insights help better align the project with the community's needs. In addition, involving agencies early and often in project development will contribute to efficient regulatory reviews and approvals.

The PIP is a living document that will be continuously updated to incorporate new information and document outreach activities. **Figure 1** shows the NEPA process, including agency and public coordination points.

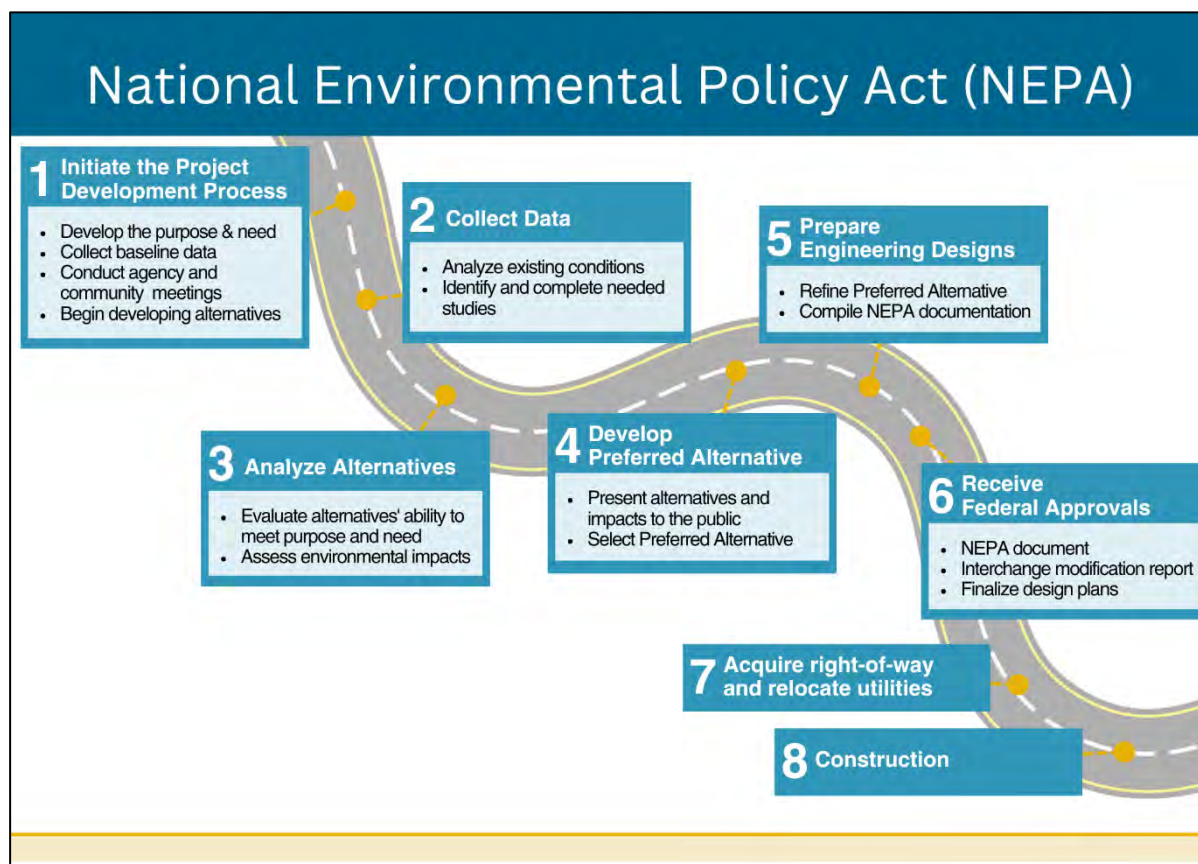


Figure 1: NEPA Process Graphic

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 Project Description

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposes to improve Interstate 26 (I-26) from mile marker (MM) 145 to MM 172 in Orangeburg and Dorchester Counties to improve capacity, mobility, and operations. The I-26 project study area (PSA) is approximately 27 miles long, beginning at Exit 145 to Exit 172 (**Figure 2**).

The project includes the following elements: adding a travel lane in each direction of I-26 toward the existing median where possible, replacing overpass bridges (except S-50/ Four Holes Road over I-26), addressing culverts and drainage, median clearing, barrier walls and cable guardrail installation, and improving the interchanges and ramps at Exits 149, 154, 159, and 165. The interchange between I-26 and I-95 is excluded from this project and is being improved via a separate project.

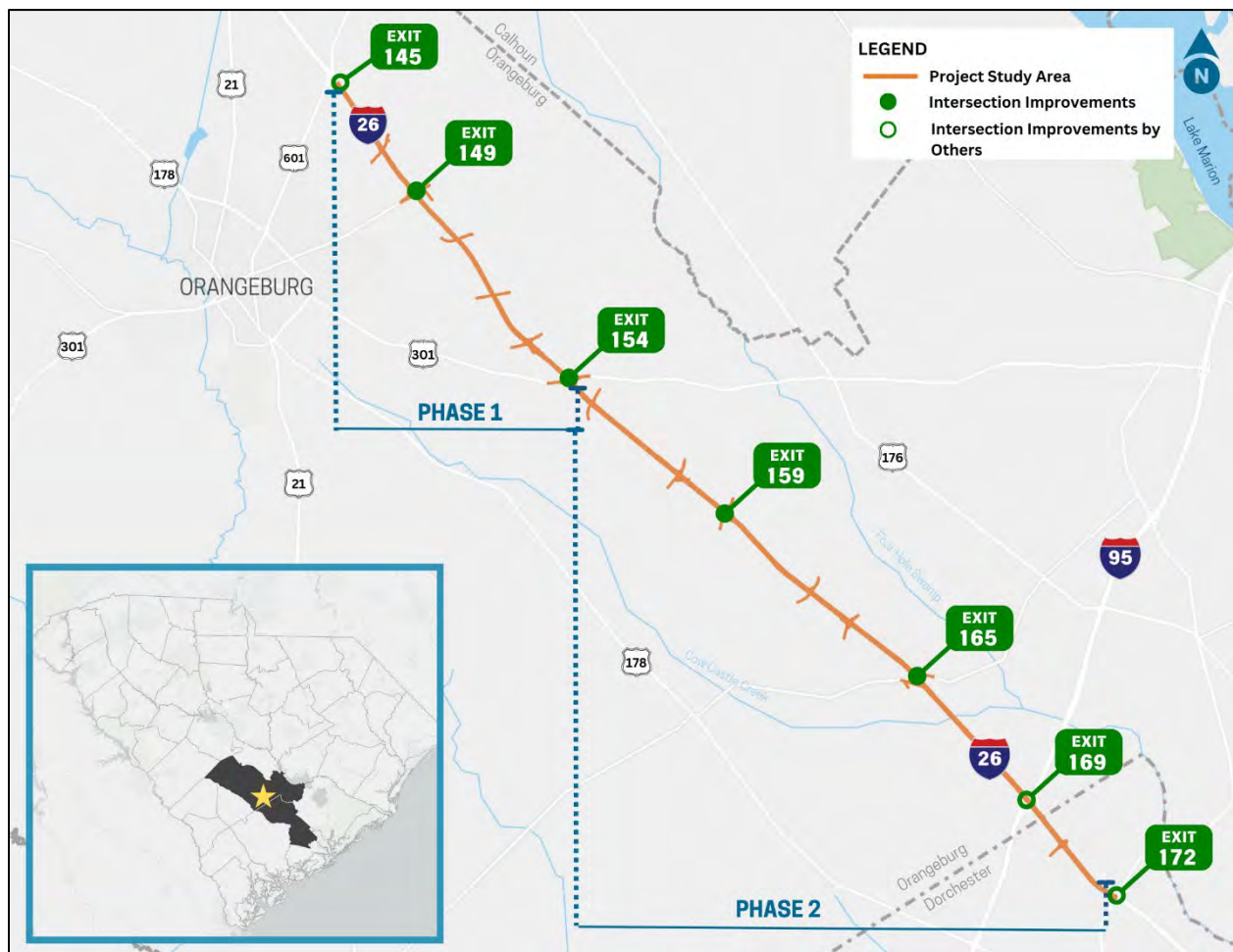


Figure 2: I-26 Widening Project MM 145-172

The project will be implemented in two phases:

- Phase 1 (SCDOT Project ID P041967) includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 601 (Exit 145) through the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154).
- Phase 2 (SCDOT Project ID P042454) includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154) to the western limits of the interchange with US 15 (Exit 172).

2.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to increase capacity within the project study limits to alleviate existing and future congestion, address geometric deficiencies along I-26 and at the interchanges by bringing them up to current interstate design standards, and improve corridor safety by addressing deficiencies that contribute to the corridor's crash rate.

Improvements are needed to address:

- existing and future congestion due to insufficient capacity on I-26
- operational issues and safety concerns caused by geometric deficiencies that do not meet current standards at interchanges

3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIP

This PIP includes the goals and strategies of the agency and community outreach approach. Because agency and public involvement is a critical component of the transportation planning process, engaging agencies and the public at the very early stages will help ensure decisions are made in consideration of, and to benefit, public needs and preferences, while adhering to regulatory requirements and addressing agency concerns.

This public involvement effort is intended to establish and maintain communication between the community and SCDOT regarding issues and concerns surrounding the I-26 Improvements Project MM 145-172. The overarching public involvement goals and strategies are identified below.

3.1 Goals

The following goals have been identified for public and stakeholder involvement on this project:

- Educate the public and stakeholders on the project development process and project status
- Identify concerns, issues, and potential impacts of the project
- Accomplish agency and public participation
- Incorporate community input into project designs and decision-making

3.2 Strategies

To achieve the goals of the PIP, this project will use a combination of general public involvement activities, as well as more tailored stakeholder outreach.

4 AGENCY COORDINATION

The process described herein will guide SCDOT and FHWA in their communications with each other and the regulatory and resource agencies involved in the project.

4.1 Lead Agencies

FHWA will be the Lead Federal Agency; therefore, environmental review and documentation will follow policy and procedures set forth in 23 CFR 771 and FHWA's Technical Advisory T6640.8A *Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents*. SCDOT, as the project sponsor, will be responsible for preparing environmental documentation and complying with applicable federal and state requirements. SCDOT's Environmental Services Office will provide support and expertise to the SCDOT Program Manager to ensure FHWA's requirements with respect to environmental review and agency, stakeholder, and public involvement are met.

4.2 Partnering and Commenting Agencies

SCDOT identifies partnering and commenting agencies that should be coordinated with during the NEPA and permitting processes. Partnering agencies are project partners with a decision-making role at one or more points in the transportation planning process, such as a regulatory approval. Commenting agencies are consulted for input and feedback on particular aspects of the project based on their expertise. Agencies will generally provide the following:

- Respond to the Letter of Intent (LOI) and request for input on the project, including identifying any issues regarding the project's potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts
- Participate in Agency Coordination Effort (ACE) meetings and other meetings, as needed, to discuss the project, impacts, and methodologies and provide input in their areas of expertise
- Review and comment on NEPA and permitting documents

Agency roles and contacts are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Agency Roles & Contacts

Agency	Role	Contact
Federal Agencies		
US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	<i>Partnering:</i> Jurisdictional Area Determination & Section 404 Clean Water Act (CWA) and Section 10-Rivers and Harbors Act permitting	USACE Charleston Regulatory Office sac.rd.charleston@usace.army.mil
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	<i>Commenting:</i> Protected species & Section 7 of Endangered Species Act (ESA)	Melanie Olds Regulatory Team Lead Charleston_regulatory@fws.gov
US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)	<i>Commenting:</i> Air quality & water resources	Tami Thomas-Burton US Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV Thomas-burton.tami@epa.gov
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration	<i>Commenting:</i>	NOAA Service Account

Table 1: Agency Roles & Contacts

Agency	Role	Contact
National Marine Fisheries Services (NOAA Fisheries)	Essential Fish Habitat; protected species & Section 7 ESA	nmfs.ser.esa.consultations@noaa.gov
State Agencies		
SC Department of Environmental Services (SCDES)	<i>Partnering:</i> Section 401 CWA permitting; NPDES permitting	Chuck Hightower SCDES HIGHTOCW@dhec.sc.gov
SC Department of Natural Resources	<i>Commenting:</i> State protected species	speciesreview@dnr.sc.gov
SC Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	<i>Commenting:</i> Historic and archaeological resource under Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act	Mary Sherrer MSherrer@scdah.sc.gov
Tribes		
Catawba Indian Nation (CIN)	<i>Commenting:</i> Cultural resources	Wenonah G. Haire, THPO wenonah.haire@catawba.com
Cherokee Nation	<i>Commenting:</i> Cultural resources	Elizabeth Toombs, THPO elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	<i>Commenting:</i> Cultural resources	Russell Townsend, THP Specialist syerka@nc-cherokee.com
Muscogee (Creek) Nation	<i>Commenting:</i> Cultural resources	Turner Hunt, THPO section106@muscogeenation.com

4.3 Agency Scoping

4.3.1 NEPA Class of Action

The Probable Class of NEPA Action form will be completed based on available project information and used to initiate coordination with FHWA. At this time, it is assumed that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be the appropriate NEPA class of action to document the project.

4.3.2 Letter of Intent (LOI)

SCDOT will formally notify FHWA and other agencies of its intent to initiate the environmental review process for the proposed project. The LOI is intended to initiate the coordination/scoping process and assist the SCDOT in identifying potential issues of concern and soliciting comments from the agencies. The LOI will also provide a project schedule and anticipated timeframes for agency involvement in the project. Responses will be requested from agencies within 30 days. All comments will be incorporated into the environmental review for the project and addressed in the EA. The LOI will also serve as the start of the one-year schedule for completion of the EA, in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.10, as amended.

August 2025 Update

SCDOT distributed the LOI on March 21, 2025, to inform agencies and stakeholders that an EA was being prepared.

4.4 Agency Coordination Meetings

SCDOT holds regular meetings, known as Agency Coordination Effort (ACE) meetings, to share project information and receive input from partnering and commenting agency staff. It is anticipated that these meetings will be used to communicate with agency representatives with respect to this project. Two ACE meetings and two additional touchpoints are anticipated during the NEPA phase of project development, as outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Agency Coordination		
Method	Topic	Date
ACE Meeting	Letter of Intent & Early Scoping	January 9, 2025
Written Notification	Notice of Availability of the EA	Fall 2025
ACE Meeting	EA Document	Early 2026
Written Notification	Notice of Availability of the NEPA Decision Document	Early 2026

Additional meetings or calls may be scheduled with one or more agencies to discuss specific topics, as needed. All agency coordination will be summarized in the EA.

4.5 Document Review

The project team will prepare a draft EA for SCDOT review and comment. Once all SCDOT comments have been satisfied, a revised draft EA will be provided for SCDOT to coordinate reviews with FHWA – South Carolina. Upon FHWA approval, SCDOT will publish a Notice of Availability for the EA. The notice will be published in local news media, on the project website, and distributed to agencies and stakeholders. Copies of the EA will be made available via the project website and at locations near the project study area for review and comment.

Following the public availability and public hearing (see section 5.5.3), the EA will be revised as appropriate to reflect changes made resulting from comments received on the EA or at the public hearing. Responses to comments received on the EA will be drafted and included in the final EA, along with a copy of the public hearing transcript.

The final EA will be reviewed and approved by SCDOT, FHWA SC, and FHWA Headquarters prior to issuing the final decision document.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Establishment of the Public Outreach Area

The public outreach area for the I-26 Improvements Project MM 145-172 was developed in consideration of the proposed project's physical footprint and was set to encompass the communities anticipated to experience potential effects associated with the proposed project. Outreach will be focused in the 10 main block groups within the study areas shown in **Figure 3**. These BGs define the broader community study area, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the community that may be affected by the project. Data for the community study area represents the combined totals of all BGs.

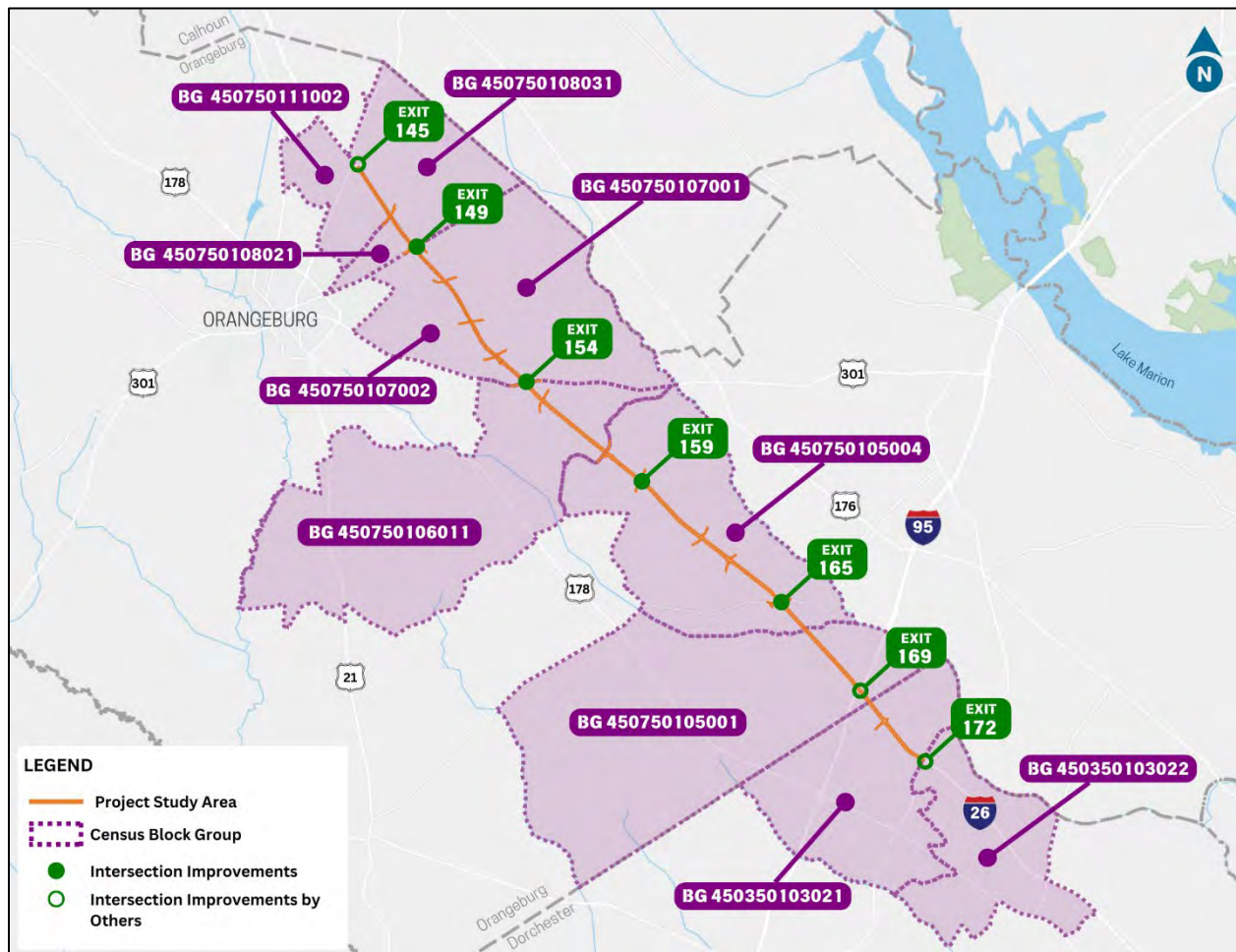


Figure 3: US Census Block Groups

5.2 Community Demographics

Demographic data for the State, County, and BG levels were examined using the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year data from the US Census Bureau, as summarized in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Demographic Data						
Geography		Total Population	Underserved Populations	Persons in Poverty	Population over 64 Years of Age	Limited English Proficiency
Orangeburg County BGs	BG 450750111002	1,655	90%	30%	34%	0%
	BG 450750108021	1,719	99%	24%	20%	2%
	BG 450750108031	1,278	78%	17%	12%	0%
	BG 450750107002	1,295	83%	28%	19%	0%
	BG 450750107001	708	25%	18%	24%	0%
	BG 450750106011	1,123	73%	8%	17%	1%
	BG 450750105004	636	41%	16%	18%	0%
	BG 450750105001	1,214	24%	6%	18%	3%
Dorchester County BGs	BG 450350103021	1,503	44%	2%	33%	0%
	BG 450350103022	862	57%	5%	18%	2%
Community Study Area		11,993	66%	16%	22%	1%
ORANGEBURG COUNTY		83,531	67%	23%	21%	2%
DORCHESTER COUNTY		164,322	38%	11%	15%	3%
SOUTH CAROLINA		5,373,555	38%	11%	19%	3%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2019-2023

The population of Orangeburg County declined from 91,836 in 2013 to 83,531 in 2023, a 9 percent decrease over the last decade. This downward trend is expected to continue, with projections showing a further 14 percent decline by 2035.¹ In contrast, Dorchester County experienced notable growth, increasing from 139,802 residents in 2013 to 164,322 in 2023, a growth rate of about 17 percent. Growth in Dorchester County is projected to continue, with the population expected to increase by an additional 30 percent by 2035.¹

The community study area has a total population of 11,993 residents. Seven of the ten BGs have a higher percentage of underserved populations compared to their respective counties, with some BGs reporting

¹ South Carolina population estimates from 2000-2018 and population projections from 2019-2035: County totals: <https://rfa.sc.gov/data-research/population-demographics/census-state-data-center/population-estimates-projections>

above 90 percent. The population age 65 and older ranges from 12 to 34 percent across BGs, with the community study area average (22 percent) slightly higher than the statewide average (19 percent).

Poverty levels vary across the study area. Three BGs in Orangeburg County report poverty rates above the county average of 23 percent, with the highest reaching 30 percent. In contrast, BGs in Dorchester County show lower poverty levels, ranging from 2 to 5 percent, below the county average of 11 percent.

5.2.1 Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals are defined by the U.S. Department of Justice as those “who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English” (67 FR 41459). The Department of Justice’s “Safe Harbor” provision is met when either 1,000 persons or 5 percent of the community study area speak a particular non-English language and report speaking English “less than very well,” as documented by U.S. Census Bureau survey results. No LEP populations were identified within the community study area.

5.3 Stakeholders

The project stakeholders and interest groups identified in **Appendix A** will be invited to participate in the NEPA and project development process. This list will be updated throughout the project and serve as a distribution list and tracking list for all outreach activities. Targeted outreach to stakeholders will include project advertisement mailings and stakeholder meetings as alternatives are developed and analyzed; stakeholders and interest groups will be invited to the public meeting and hearing. The following groups of stakeholders have been identified:

- Property owners and residents in areas surrounding the project study area
- Community organizations and special interest groups (HOAs, bike/ped, etc)
- Community leaders, elected officials, and local staff
- Businesses in the project study area
- Commuters and travelers who use the interstate corridor and associated roadway network

5.4 Public Outreach Tools & Advertisements

5.4.1 Branding

Establishing a distinct project identifier/logo will help set this project apart from others in the area and increase its visibility. The project logo will be featured on all public-facing materials, enabling stakeholders to easily recognize resources associated with the project. For more details, refer to the Project Identity Guide in **Appendix B**.

5.4.2 Project Website

SCDOT encourages public participation in project development through a Public Involvement Portal where information about the project can be accessed. SCDOT will create a project website in SCDOT’s Public Involvement Portal. In addition, a project-specific website address/url will be procured that can be included on all project materials. The project-specific website will forward all traffic to the SCDOT’s Public Involvement Portal.

Regular project updates will be provided by the project team to SCDOT for posting on the Public Involvement Portal site. It is anticipated that updates will be provided quarterly and/or as project milestones are reached.

August 2025 Update:

SCDOT launched the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172) on June 5, 2025.

The project website provides:

- Project study area and mapping
- Project description and purpose and need
- Project status and anticipated schedule
- Public meeting details & materials

Website Performance Metrics (June 5, 2025 – August 26, 2025):

- Total Visits: 657 (479 unique visitors)
- Traffic Sources: 52% direct (typed URL), 38% referral (external links & search engines)
- Total Downloads: 303 (PIM materials)

5.4.3 Roadway Signs & Banners

It is recommended that roadway signs be installed throughout the project corridor to advertise public information meetings and the public hearing. The Roadway Sign Request Form will be submitted by SCDOT's Public Involvement Director to the SCDOT Sign Shop at least 45 days prior to the desired installation date.

In addition, project banners will be developed for posting at community facilities within the study area. Banners will advertise the meeting date, project website, and public comment period deadline. Banners will be displayed throughout the project corridor and at interchanges prior to each public meeting or hearing.

August 2025 Update:

A total of 16 roadway signs and 16 project banners were installed along the I-26 corridor and within nearby communities by July 2, 2025.

5.4.4 Postcards

Postcards will be produced to notify surrounding neighborhoods, schools, and businesses of public meetings. The postcards will note the meeting date and location, project website, SCDOT Program Manager contact information, and the public comment period deadline. Postcards will be distributed to commercial, residential, and post office box patrons within the outreach area. The public outreach area has been defined by USPS Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) routes that overlap the project study area. Based on their proximity, 15 EDDM routes are recommended (see **Appendix C**). It should be noted that EDDM routes are set by the postal service and cannot be individually modified. SCDOT's Program Manager and Public Involvement Team must review and approve the postcard prior to printing. The Consultant will be

responsible for printing and mailing of the postcards using EDDM or another direct mail service, such as Mail Solutions.

August 2025 Update:

Postcards announcing the PIM and public comment period were mailed to approximately 5,750 addresses in and around the project study area, arriving by the start of the comment period on July 2, 2025. Recipients included commercial and residential addresses, as well as post office box patrons within the outreach area.

5.4.5 Property Owner Letters

A list of property owners was identified and included in **Appendix A** for all properties with right-of-way impacts within the project study area. The Consultant will prepare and mail letters to the list of property owners.

August 2025 Update:

Landowner letters were mailed on June 30, 2025, to 199 property owners within the project study area. The list included all owners of parcels that may be subject to right-of-way impacts within the project limits.

5.4.6 Stakeholder Press Release(s)

The SCDOT Program Manager or Public Involvement Director will be responsible for the development and distribution of any press releases to the list of stakeholders. Press releases may be appropriate to announce the start of the project, community and/or public information meetings, the public hearing, and availability of the NEPA document for review and comment.

August 2025 Update:

On July 2, 2025, SCDOT's Communications Office issued a press release announcing the start of the public comment period and inviting the public to attend the in-person PIM and review project materials online.

5.4.7 Local Newspapers

A Public Notice will be published in local newspapers to advertise the Public Meeting & Hearing. The public involvement team has developed a list of newspapers that is relevant for the outreach area.

August 2025 Update:

A legal advertisement was published in The Times and Democrat – Orangeburg (circulation: 12,500) on June 28, 2025, to notify the public about the PIM. The notice appeared just prior to the start of the public comment period.

Additional media coverage:

- NEWS 19 WLTX: <https://www.wltx.com/article/traffic/i26-widening-orangeburg-dorchester-sc-traffic-upgrades/101-5f351fea-a68d-4f94-a597-2208dab8073f>
- The Times and Democrat (Online edition): https://thetandd.com/news/local/government-politics/article_e4cbb043-29e0-42f0-9524-d2a9412c57d7.html

5.5 Meetings & Events

One public information meeting and a public hearing is anticipated for the project. Meeting-specific plans will be developed to provide additional detail as each meeting is scheduled, including goals and objectives, logistics (location, times, attendees), proposed meeting materials, and expected outcomes. **Table 4** summarizes the general types of meetings and advertisements and materials used for each.

Table 4: Meetings & Events		
Advertisements & Materials	Public Information Meetings	Public Hearing
Meeting-specific Plan	●	●
Stakeholder Press Release	●	●
Sign-in Sheets	●	●
Visualizations	●	●
Handout	●	●
Comment Forms	●	●
Roadway Signs & Yard Signs	●	●
Website Updates	●	●
Social Media	●	●
Postcard Mailers	●	●
Spanish-language Materials	●	●
Spanish Translator	●	●
Display Boards	●	●
Security	●	●
Public Hearing Presentation		●
Transcript/Court Reporter		●
Newspaper Ad (Public Notice)		●

5.5.1 Public Information Meetings

A Public Information Meeting (PIM) will be held during the project development to present the project and alternatives. Due to the length of the project corridor, two meetings will be held (one at each end of the project); the same information will be presented at both meetings. A PIM Plan will be developed prior to the meeting to outline goals, messaging, logistics, and schedule.

Advertisements & Materials

- Meeting-specific Plan
- Stakeholder Press Release
- Roadway Signs & Yard Signs

- Website Updates
- Social Media
- Postcard Mailers
- Spanish-language Materials
- Spanish Translator
- Sign-in Sheets
- Handouts
- Visualizations
- Display Boards
- Comment Forms
- Security

August 2025 Update:

The PIM was held on July 17, 2025, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at the New Vision Centre Event Venue (3699 Magnolia Street, Orangeburg, SC 29118). A total of 69 people attended, and eight in-person comments were submitted.

During the public comment period, the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172) received 869 views, 496 visits, and 377 unique visitors. A total of 65 contributions were submitted through the website, consisting of 37 comment forms and 28 quick poll responses.

A detailed review of the PIM and all comments received are provided in the **Public Comment Period Summary**.

5.5.2 Public Hearing

One public hearing will be held after completion of the EA to present the SCDOT Preferred Alternative. The public hearing will be consistent with guidance established in SCDOT's Public Involvement Policy for NEPA Compliance (2015, supplement 2020).

FHWA will submit a Notice of Availability for publication in the Federal Register 30 days prior to the public hearing date.

Advertisements & Materials

- Meeting-specific Plan
- Stakeholder Press Release
- Newspaper Ad (Public Notice)
- Roadway Signs & Banners
- Website Updates
- Social Media
- Postcard Mailers
- Transcript/Court Reporter
- Spanish-language Materials
- Sign-in Sheets
- Handouts
- Visualizations

- Display Boards
- Comment Forms
- Public Hearing Presentation
- Security

A public hearing certification package will be prepared and attached to the final EA. The package will include:

- Summary of the public hearing attendance and comments
- A transcript of the formal portion of the public hearing
- Sign-in sheets
- Comments received
- Handout
- Responses to comments

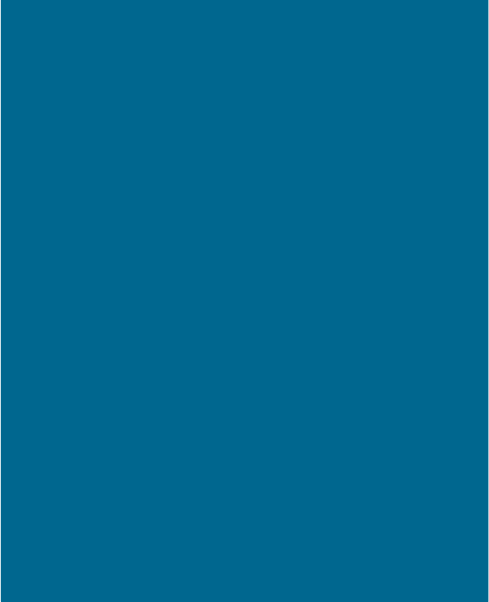
5.5.3 Project Database

A project database with the names and contact information of interested parties and members of the public will be developed at the beginning of project development and maintained throughout the life of the project. Individuals who request updates on the project will receive notifications electronically.

6 REVISIONS

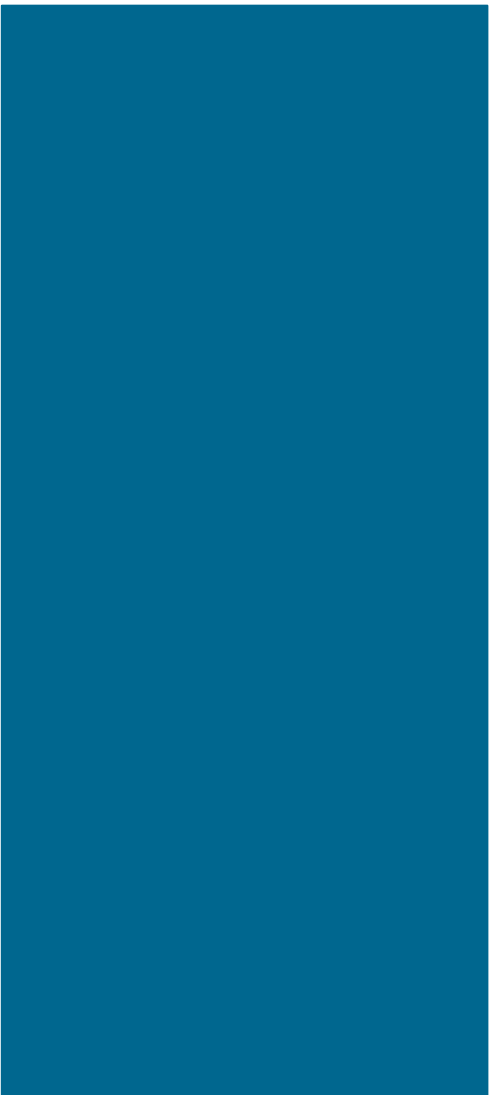
The PIP is a living document and will be updated throughout the project development process to document activities as they occur and/or modify anticipated activities as additional information becomes available. **Table 5** summarizes PIP versions and revisions made.

Table 5: Version Log	
Date	Summary of Revisions
8/25/2025	Revised to include PIM updates and details



APPENDIX A

List of Stakeholders



List of Stakeholders			
Organization	Name	Phone Number	Address & Email
Government Officials & Representatives			
SC House District 93	Russell L. Ott	(803) 212-6945	RussellOtt@schouse.gov
SC Senate District 40	Brad Hutto	(803) 212-6140	BradHutto@scsenate.gov
Mayor, City of Orangeburg	Michael C. Butler	(803) 533-6000	michael.butler@orangeburg.sc.us
Administrator, County of Orangeburg	Harold M. Young	(803) 533-6101	1437 Amelia Street Orangeburg, SC 29115
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 1	Johnnie Wright Sr.	(803) 492-7436	606 Vance Road Vance, SC 29163
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 2	Johnny Ravenell	(803) 854-4452	127 Kevin Drive Santee, SC 29142
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 3	Kenneth McCaster	(803) 290-1473	215 Kennerly Road Cordova, SC 29039
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 4	Joseph Garvin	(803) 606-6097	7040 Festival Trail Road Springfield, SC 29146
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 5	Janie Cooper-Smith	(803) 536-6447	2460 Hickory Drive NE Orangeburg, SC 29115
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 6	Deloris Frazier	(803) 534-8589	2689 Frazier Lane Orangeburg, SC 29115
Orangeburg County Council Dist. 7	Latisha Walker	(803) 308-7152	1491 Dogwood Drive Orangeburg, SC 29118
Planning Director, County of Orangeburg	Preston McClun	(803) 533-6160	1437 Amelia Street Orangeburg, SC 29115
Administrator, County of Dorchester	Jason L. Ward	(843) 563-0100	jward@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 1	Harriet Holman	(843) 563-0196	hholman@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 2	David Chinnis	(843) 801-2326	dchinnis@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 3	Rita May Ranck	(843) 955-9708	rmranck@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 4	Todd Friddle	(843) 805-2258	sfriddle@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 5	Eddie Crosby	(843) 832-0196	ecrosby@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 6	William (Bill) Hearn	(843) 442-5787	Bill.wrhearn@dorchestercountysc.gov
Dorchester County Council Dist. 7	Jay Byars	(843) 957-1759	jbyars2@dorchestercountysc.gov
Mayor, Town of St. George	Kevin Hart	(843) 563-3032	305 Ridge Street, Saint George, South Carolina 29477
Mayor, Town of Bowman	Rev. Patsy Rhett	(803) 829-2666	131 Poplar Street, PO Box 37, Bowman, SC 29018
City of Orangeburg SC Planning & Zoning	David Epting	(803) 533-6052	david.epting@orangeburg.sc.us
Dorchester County Director of Planning & Zoning	Kiera Reinertsen	(843) 832-0020	DCGPlanning@dorchestercountysc.gov
Town of Bowman SC Streets Commissioner	Linwood Isaac Carter	(803) 829-2666	bowmansc@oburg.net
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs – Hispanic/Latino Affairs Division	Alex Tovar	(803) 832-8298	Atovar@cma.sc.gov
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs – African American Affairs Program Coordinator	Ashley Owens	(803) 832-8169	Aowens@cma.sc.gov
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs – Public Information Coordinator	Lauren Cummings	(803) 898-3056	Lcummings@cma.sc.gov
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs – Small and Minority Business Program Coordinator	Jazmin Goodwin	(803) 832-8166	Jgoodwin@cma.sc.gov

List of Stakeholders			
Organization	Name	Phone Number	Address & Email
First Responders			
Orangeburg County Fire District	Teddy Wolfe	(803)-533-6218	twolfe@orangeburgcounty.org
Orangeburg County EMS Director	Stephanie Givens	(803) 553-6268	1558 Ellis Avenue Orangeburg, SC 29115
Orangeburg County Emergency Management	Bill Staley	(803) 533-6265	bstaley@OrangeburgCounty.org
Orangeburg County Sheriff	Leroy Ravenell	(803) 533-5805	1520 Ellis Avenue, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Dorchester County Fire District	Rickie Jenkins	(843) 832-0214	101 Ridge Street, Suite 6 St. George, SC 29477
Dorchester County EMS Director	Brian Watts	(843) 832-0025	821 W. 5th. North St Summerville, SC 29483
Dorchester County Sheriff	L.C. Knight	(843) 832-0300	212 Deming Way Summerville, SC 29483
Dorchester County Emergency Management	Thomas McNeal	(843) 832-0342	tmcneal@dorchestercountysc.gov
Transit			
SC Trucking Association	Rick Todd		ricktodd@sctrucking.org
Cross County Connection		(803) 531-1302	vgreen@orangeburgcounty.org
Tri County Link		(843) 899-4096	info@ridetricountylink.com
Schools			
Orangeburg County School District	Superintendent – Dr. Shawn Foster	(803) 533-7924	Shawn.Foster@ocsdsc.org
Orangeburg County School District	Communications – Erica Taylor	(803) 534-5454 ext. 80213	erica.taylor@ocsdsc.org
Dorchester School District 4	Board of Trustees Chairman – Phyllis Hughes	(843) 563-2298	500 Ridge Street, St. George, SC 29477
Orangeburg High School for Health Professions	Principal Derwin Farr	(803) 599-0467	hshp@hshpsc.org
The Orangeburg Career & Technology Center	Principal Steve Williams	(803) 536-4473 x 69900	Steve.Williams@ocsdsc.org
Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College	Dean of Planning, Development, Marketing - Faith McCurry	(803) 535-1230	mccurryf@octech.edu
Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School	Principal Rahim El-Amin	(803) 534-6180 x 28900	rahim.el-amin@ocsdsc.org
Marshall Elementary School	Principal Eric Brown	(803) 534-7865 ext. 34900	eric.brown@ocsdsc.org
Orangeburg Preparatory Schools, Inc.	Head of Schools - Libby Ray		lray@orangeburgprep.com
Sheridan Elementary School	Principal Aisha Williams	(803) 534-7504 ext. 39900	Aisha.Williams@ocsdsc.org
Wesley Christian School		(803) 536-6167	concarsonatfsmc@aol.com
Felton Laboratory Charter School	Director - Dr. Vanessa Lancaster	(803) 536-7034	300 College Ave, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Mellichamp Elementary School	Principal Dr. LaToya Glen	(803) 534-8044	LaToya.Glen@ocsdsc.org
Orangeburg Christian Academy	Principal Cynthia Poor	(803) 536-3959	oca0121@ntinet.com
Whittaker Elementary School	Principal Denise Simpson	(803) 534-6559 x 40900	Denise.Simpson@ocsdsc.org
Robert E. Howard Middle School	Principal Donyale Mosley	(803) 534-5470 x 27900	donyale.mosley@ocsdsc.org
Brookdale Elementary School	Principal Georgetta Kennedy	(803) 534-5982 ext. 36900	Georgetta.Kennedy@ocsdsc.org

Bethune-Bowman Elementary School	Principal Lakekia Lewis	(803) 533-6371 ext. 12900	Lakekia.Lewis@ocsdsc.org
Bethune-Bowman Middle/High School	Principal Lakekia Lewis	(803) 533-6371 ext. 12900	Lakekia.Lewis@ocsdsc.org
Places of Worship			
St. John United Methodist Church	Lead Pastor – Lawrence Cantey	(803) 534-8366	5337 Columbia Rd NE, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church	Reverend – Gary Haigler	(803) 535-6560	258 Hickson Dr, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Prospect Southern Methodist Church	Pastor – Danny McLellan	(803) 534-1520	585 Waterspring Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Bull Swamp Baptist Church	Senior Pastor – Rev. Dr. Ephraim D. Stephens	(803) 534-8951	112 Purity St, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Olive Grove Baptist Church	Reverend – James Cromartie	(803) 536-2602	305 Old Elloree Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29115
White House Global Methodist Church	NRHP Reference Number - 74001872	(803) 534-4442	3571 Five Chop Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Andre Chapel Baptist Church	Pastor – Dr. Donald E. Greene	(803) 531-0303	3670 Five Chop Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Mount Zion Baptist Church	Pastor – Arthur W. Goforth III	(803) 829-2957	707 Arista Rd, Bowman, SC 29018
Recreational/Community Facilities			
Assembly Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses		(803) 539-2600	184 Assembly Hall Way, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Shady Grove Family Life Center		(843) 563-6333	9140 Charleston Hwy, St George, SC 29477
West Middle Community Center			4610 Charleston Hwy, Rowesville, SC 29133
Nance Avenue Community Center		(803) 531-8703	980 Nance St, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Govindbhai Community Center			1175 Five Chop Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Orangeburg County YMCA		(803) 268-9622	2550 St Matthews Rd NE, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Bowman Fire Department Substation			2403 Homestead Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Orangeburg County Fire District		(803) 533-6218	131 Firefighter Ln, Orangeburg, SC 29115
MUSC Health – Orangeburg		(803) 395-2200	3000 St Matthews Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Jamison Fire Department		(803) 531-1070	3791 Belleville Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Orangeburg County Landfill		(803) 536-5045	310 Endicott Ct, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Army Reserve Center		(803) 515-9947	1132 Cook Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29118
Neighborhoods/Apartments (HOAs, etc)			
Elliot’s Residential Homes		(803) 829-3348	2432 Landsdowne Rd, Bowman, SC 29018
Heavenly Living Boarding House			167 Benthomp Rd, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Green Acres Mobil Home Park		(843) 358-0312	109 Fruit Port Ln, Orangeburg, SC 29118

List of Stakeholders			
Organization	Name	Phone Number	Address & Email
Local Businesses			
MACS Crane and Rigging		(843) 462-2970	146 Brown Town Rd Suite A Harleyville, SC 29448
Shell		(843) 462-7659	495 Judge St Harleyville, SC 29448
Giant Cement Company		(800) 845-1174	504 7 Mile Rd Harleyville, SC 29448
Dorchester Logistics		(843) 462-2600	261 7 Mile Rd Harleyville, SC 29448
Harleyville Recycling Center			455 7 Mile Rd Harleyville, SC 29448
Argis USA LLC, Cement Plant Harleyville		(800) 331-0022	463 Judge St Harleyville, SC 29448
Dorchester Biomass, LLC			609 7 Mile Rd Harleyville, SC 29448
Enmarket		(843) 563-2865	2722 US-15 Harleyville, SC 29448
American Tower Corporation			I-26, Bowman, SC 29018
Mizzells Appliance Repairs		(843) 563-1137	269 Duncan Chapel Rd Harleyville, SC 29448
Horsecreek Apiaries and Honey Farm LLC		(864) 237-1026	3300 Landsdowne Rd, Bowman, SC 29018
BP		(803) 829-2176	5463 Vance Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Exxon		(803) 829-1428	5323 Vance Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Smith Trucking		(803) 829-2552	5605 Vance Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Myers Farms			2721 Landsdowne Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Southern Farms and Equipment Repair LLC		(803) 596-6041	250 Winter Creek Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Lowcountry Creamery			2714 Landsdowne Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Leadership Education Awareness Nobility Corporation			843 Winter Creek Rd Bowman, SC 29018
McDonald's		(803) 829-4414	2064 Homestead Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Goodyear Commercial Tire and Service Center		(803) 829-2657	Exit 159, 2052 Homestead Rd I-26, Bowman, SC 29018
Western Union		(803) 829-1313	2267 Homestead Rd District 17 SE Region 1, Bowman, SC 29018
Lion's Den		(803) 829-1781	2269 Homestead Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Waggoneers Trucking		(803) 829-3111	2289 Homestead Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Pilot Travel Center		(803) 829-3541	2064 Homestead Rd Bowman, SC 29018
Home Stay RV Park and Campground		(803) 387-4871	332 Webber Farm Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Allied Air			250 Millenium Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
GKN Aerospace I			348 Millenium Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
HT Hackney Company		(803) 791-7000	368 Millenium Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
Monteferro USA Inc LLC		(803) 531-1352	258 Global Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
Quality Model South Carolina		(803) 531-8823	190 Global Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
Velocity Powersports Orangeburg		(803) 990-2479	170 All American Ln Orangeburg, SC 29115

Pioneer Farm Equipment Inc.		(803) 536-9411	847 Big Buck Blvd Orangeburg, SC 29115
711		(803) 707-0206	3467 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Wendy's		(803) 387-0685	3457 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Pet Supplies Plus Distribution			122 Palmetto Commerce Pkwy Orangeburg, SC 29115
CF Evans Construction		(803) 536-6443	125 Regional Pkwy #200 Orangeburg, SC 29118
Days Inn Wyndham Orangeburg South		(803) 387-0177	3402 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Hounen Solar American Inc.		(855) 468-6365	145 Millenium Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
QuikTrip		(803) 997-6995	111 Millenium Dr Orangeburg, SC 29115
Four Holes Sale Services		(803) 535-0371	3232 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Love's Travel Stop		(803) 534-1663	3205 Five Chop R, Orangeburg, SC 29115
Jimmy Jones Polaris – Big Tex Trailer – Bintelli Golf Carts of Orangeburg		(803) 997-6130	3159 Five Chop Rd Hwy 301 Orangeburg, SC 29115
Connie Maxwell Children's Home		(800) 868-2624	3105 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Super Sod of South Carolina		(803) 531-443	3086 Five Chop Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Chassilors Inc		(803) 535-0371	316 Boone Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
JL Gramling and Sons		(803) 534-4913	362 State Rd S-38-155 Orangeburg, SC 29115
Concrete Supply Co. LLC		(704) 372-2930	291 Monticello Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Helena Agri-Enterprises LLC		(803) 534-3125	2471 Gramling Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Intimidators Bodyshop		(839) 465-3753	3987 Cameron Rd Orangeburg, SC 29115
Palmetto Peach Catering		(803) 849-2317	336 Farmstead Ln Orangeburg, SC 29115
TEC Equipment Rental		(803) 792-0150	163 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Esthetically You		(803) 290-57834	114 Melvin Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Central Carolina Endodontics		(803) 516-0777	888 Cook Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
John Fitzgerald Ansley		(803) 536-5511	832 Cook Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Fairfield Inn		(803) 533-0014	663 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Springhill Suites Orangeburg		(803) 809-0111	675 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store		(803) 536-4773	699 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Subway		(803) 536-4424	700 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Ruby Tuesday		(803) 531-0022	724 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Comfort Inn and Suites		(803) 515-9700	746 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Tru by Hilton Orangeburg		(803) 813-8000	739 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Hampton Inn and Suites Orangeburg		(803) 937-5800	749 Citadel Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Holiday Inn Express and Suites		(803) 539-2900	118 Sleep Inn Dr Orangeburg, SC 29118
Waffle House		(803) 536-5481	3695 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Palmetto Express Convenience Store			3687 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118

Days Inn by Wyndham Orangeburg		(803) 387-0194	3691 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
McDonalds		(803) 536-1234	3675 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
The Max Family Entertainment		(803) 937-5959	1015 Red Bank Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Seedway LLC Orangeburg		(803) 585-7501	170 Regional Pkwy Orangeburg, SC 29118
NetSource			198 Regional Pkwy Orangeburg, SC 29118
Community Long Term Care		(803) 536-0122	191 Regional Pkwy # A Orangeburg, SC 29118
Qualfon-Orangeburg		(888) 791-8477	179 Regional Pkwy Orangeburg, SC 29118
Spinx		(803) 928-5355	3615 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Travelodge by Wyndham Orangeburg		(803) 536-0528	3620 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Southern Lodge		(803) 531-7333	3616 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Super 8 by Wyndham Orangeburg		(803) 570-2023	Exit, 3608 St Matthews Rd 145A US-601 I-26 Orangeburg, SC 29118
Shell		(803) 536-2987	3599 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Burger King		(803) 937-6154	3599 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
PayRilla		(888) 412-2233	3840 Marie St Orangeburg, SC 29118
Zaxbys		(803) 531-1611	3591 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Baymont by Wyndham Orangeburg		(803) 387-0180	3583 St Matthews Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Zeus Industrial Products Inc.		(803) 926-8194	3740 Industrial Blvd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Pratrivero USA, Inc.		(864) 234-0322	3777 Industrial Blvd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Davis Septic Tank Services		(803) 534-8130	121 Wunningham Rd Orangeburg, SC 29118
Pilot Travel Center		(803) 874-4340	1300 Burke Rd St Matthews, SC 29135
Mobil		(803) 874-1201	17 Tecklenburg Ln St Matthews, SC 29135
Shaw Tire and Truck Repair		(803) 874-2307	1180 Burke Rd St Matthews, SC 29135
Seek a Leak		(803) 521-7488	270 Goldfinch Trail St Matthews, SC 29135
Dollar General		(803) 456-2099	6025 Columbia Rd St Matthews, SC 29135
Enmarket		(803) 874-2892	6009 Columbia Rd St Matthews, SC 29135
Ole South Landscaping		(803) 664-0084	6045 Columbia Rd St Matthews, SC 29135



APPENDIX B

Project Identity Guide



Project Identity Guide

LOGO



COLOR PALETTE

#00678f

#3196b8

#f5ebc9

#e6b308

#434345

Typography

Header

HELVETICA BOLD

16 pt.

Hex: #00678f

Subheadline 1

Helvetica Bold

12 pt.

Hex: #3196b8

Subheadline 2

Helvetica Bold

11 pt.

Hex: #434345

Body Copy

Calibri (Body)

11 pt.

Hex: #000000

1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE APIP

1.1 Goals and Strategies

1.1.1 Goals

1.1.2 Strategies

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

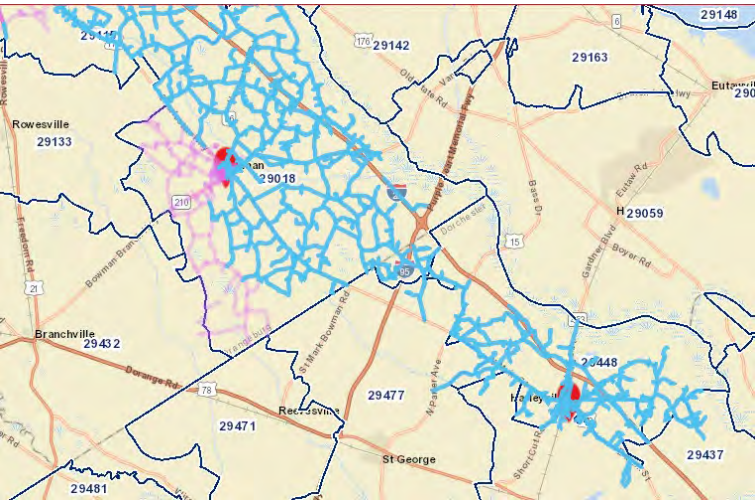
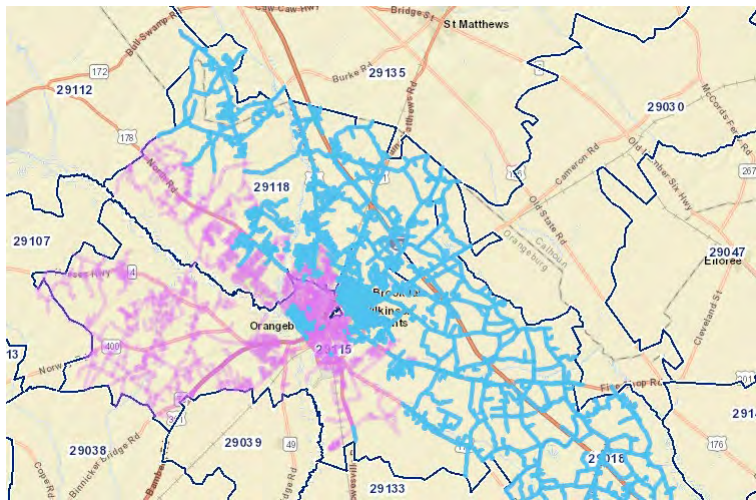


APPENDIX C

EDDM Routes



Proposed EDDM Routes for Postcard Mailers	
Route	Residences/Businesses
29118-R004	618
29118-R006	587
29118-R009	600
29118-R015	616
29118-R017	575
29115-C001	381
29115-C012	773
29115-C015	929
29115-R001	586
29115-R002	595
29115-R010	752
29018-R001	584
29018-R002	552
29448-R001	626
29448-R002	474
15 Total Routes	9,248 Total



K-2: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD SUMMARY



Public Comment Period Summary

**Interstate 26 (I-26) Corridor Improvements
Project MM 145-172**

Orangeburg and Dorchester
Counties, South Carolina
PROJECT ID: P041967 & P042454

**AUGUST
2025**

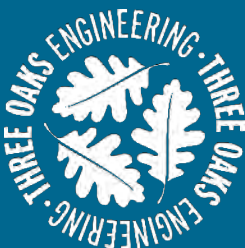


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Summary.....	1
2	Public EngaGement Materials	1
2.1	In-Person Meeting Content and Format	2
2.2	Project Website	4
3	PIM Advertisement.....	5
3.1	Legal Advertisement.....	5
3.2	Press Release & Media Coverage	5
3.3	Postcards	8
3.4	Landowners	8
3.5	Banner	8
4	Participation.....	9
4.1	In-Person PIM Attendance	9
4.2	Website Analytics	9
5	Comments.....	10

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: PIM Handout.....	2
Figure 2: PIM Display Boards	2
Figure 3: Legal Advertisement	5
Figure 4: Press Release & Media Coverage.....	5
Figure 5: Postcard Advertisement.....	8
Figure 6: Banner Advertisement	8

1 SUMMARY

This report summarizes the outreach, engagement activities, and public feedback gathered during the Public Information Meeting (PIM) and associated public comment period for the I-26 Improvements Project MM 145–172, from July 2 to August 1, 2025.

The PIM and outreach efforts were designed to inform the public, agencies, and other stakeholders about the proposed design concepts and gather input on potential impacts and community priorities. The following sections present feedback from local governments, agencies, and the public, highlighting key themes, concerns, and areas of support to help guide the project’s next steps.

During the comment period, project materials were available through multiple channels: on the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172), at the in-person PIM, and by mail upon request. The public could submit comments or ask questions via email, mail, or by attending the in-person PIM held on July 17, 2025, at the New Vision Centre Event Venue.

During the official public comment period, the project website received 496 visits and 377 unique visitors. A total of 69 people attended the in-person meeting. In total, 45 comments were received: 8 submitted at the in-person PIM and 37 through the project website.

**496**

Website Visits

**69**

In-Person Attendees

**45**

Comments Received

2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS

The in-person PIM for the I-26 Improvements MM 145-172 project was held on July 17, 2025, at the New Vision Centre Event Venue in Orangeburg, SC. The goals of the PIM were to:

- Educate the public and stakeholders on the project, including:
 - Study Area
 - Draft Purpose and Need
 - Anticipated Timeline and Project Development Process including the NEPA Process
 - I-26 Mainline Existing and Future Traffic Performance
 - Operational Deficiencies at Key Interchanges
 - Technical Studies
 - Right-of-Way Process and Next Steps
- Gather input from the public and stakeholders regarding:
 - Draft Purpose and Need
 - Concerns, issues, and potential impacts of the project on the human and natural environment
- Incorporate community input into project designs and decision-making

2.1 In-Person Meeting Content and Format

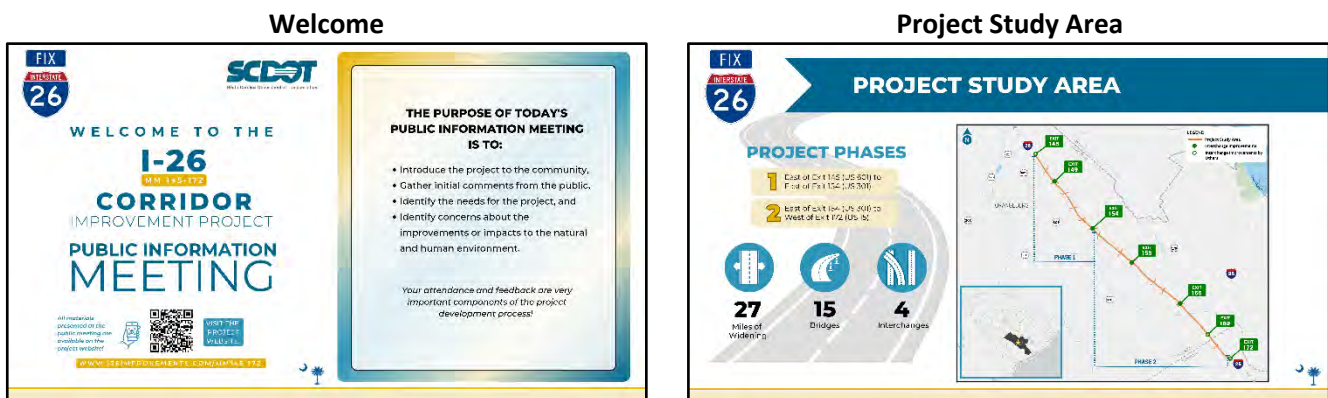
The PIM was staffed by SCDOT team members and project consultants knowledgeable about the proposed improvements. Attendees could drop in anytime between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. for the open-house style meeting, which encouraged staggered attendance and allowed staff to engage with participants individually. Upon arrival, attendees received a handout outlining the project purpose, proposed improvements, anticipated schedule, instructions for submitting comments, and a comment form.

Figure 1: PIM Handout



In-person materials included 12 static boards and three interactive smartboards showcasing the design concept and environmental constraints. The static boards were arranged in stations around the perimeter of the room.

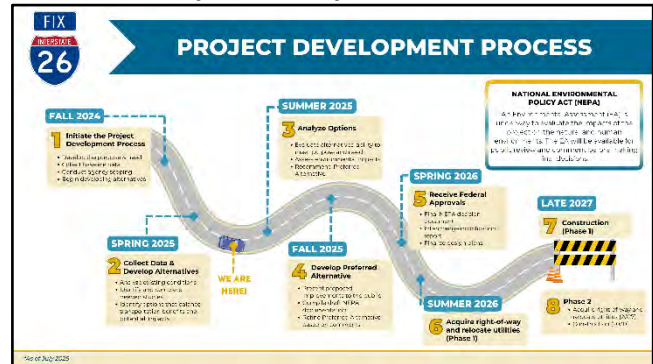
Figure 2: PIM Display Boards



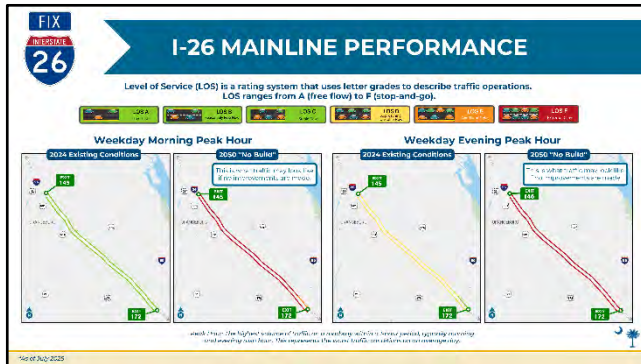
Draft Purpose & Need



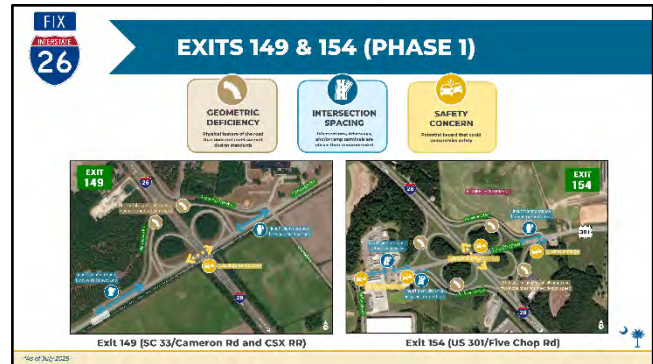
Project Development Process



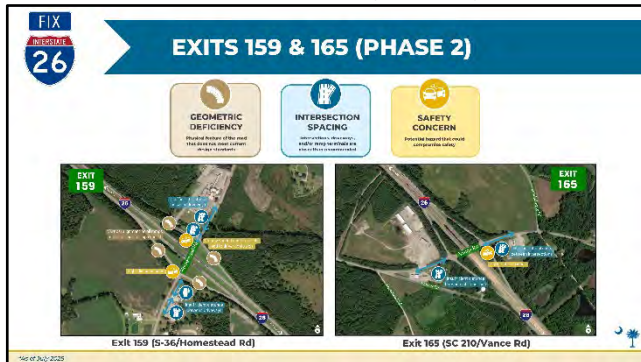
I-26 Mainline Performance



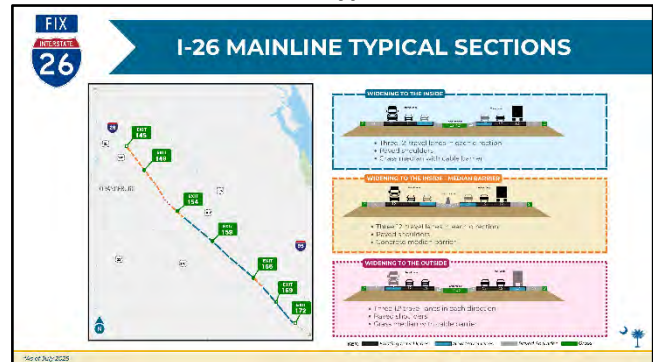
Exits 149 & 154 (Phase 1)



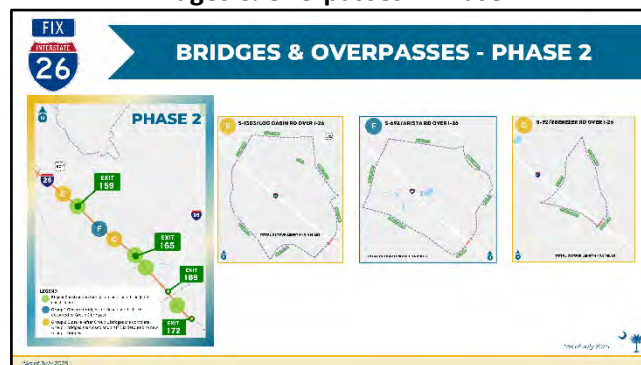
Exits 159 & 165 (Phase 2)



I-26 Mainline Typical Sections



Bridges & Overpasses – Phase 2



Typical Right-of-Way Process



2.2 Project Website

The online format allowed individuals to review materials and participate at their convenience, expanding access for those unable to attend the in-person meeting.

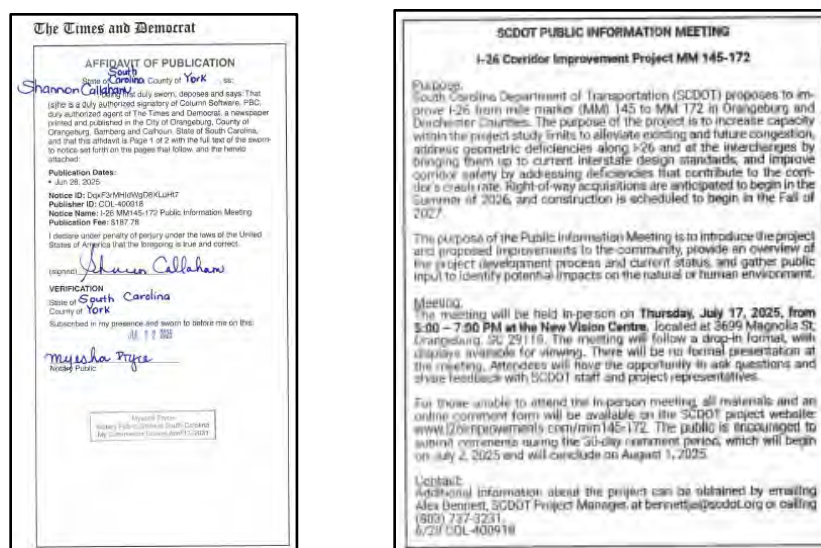
3 PIM ADVERTISEMENT

A variety of traditional and non-traditional advertising methods were used to publicize the PIM. These outreach efforts are outlined below.

3.1 Legal Advertisement

A legal advertisement was published in The Times and Democrat – Orangeburg (circulation: 12,500) on June 28, 2025, to notify the public about the PIM. The notice appeared just prior to the start of the public comment period.

Figure 3: Legal Advertisement



3.2 Press Release & Media Coverage

On July 2, 2025, SCDOT's Communications Office issued a press release announcing the start of the public comment period and inviting the public to attend the in-person PIM and review project materials online.

Figure 4: Press Release & Media Coverage



Media coverage prior to the PIM included:

- **NEWS 19 WLTX:** <https://www.wltx.com/article/traffic/i26-widening-orangeburg-dorchester-sc-traffic-upgrades/101-5f351fea-a68d-4f94-a597-2208dab8073f>

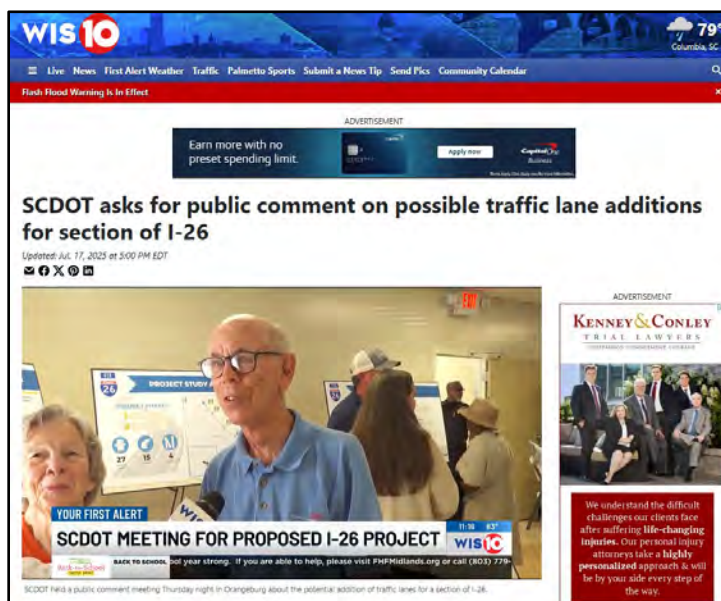


- **The Times and Democrat (Online edition):** https://thetandd.com/news/local/government-politics/article_e4cbb043-29e0-42f0-9524-d2a9412c57d7.html

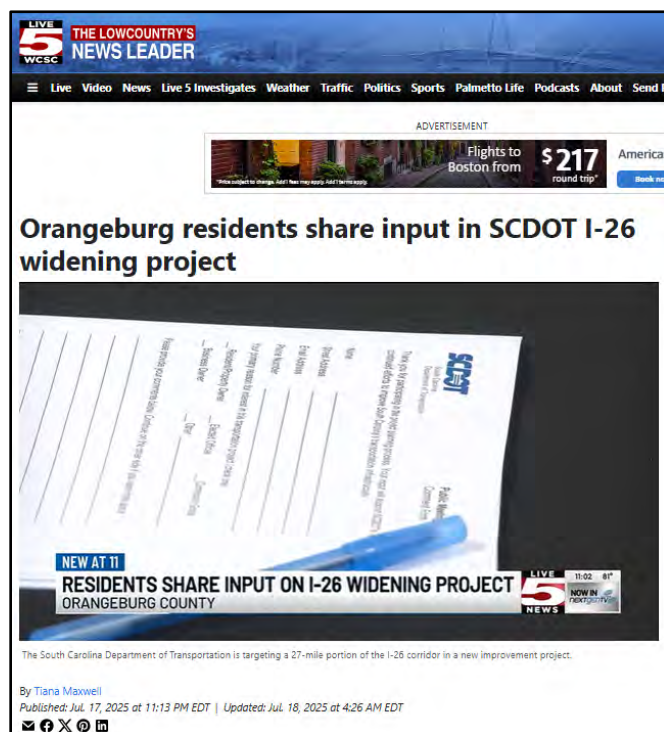


Media coverage following the PIM included:

- **WIS NEWS 10:** <https://www.wistv.com/video/2025/07/17/scdot-asks-public-comment-possible-traffic-lane-additions-section-i-26/>



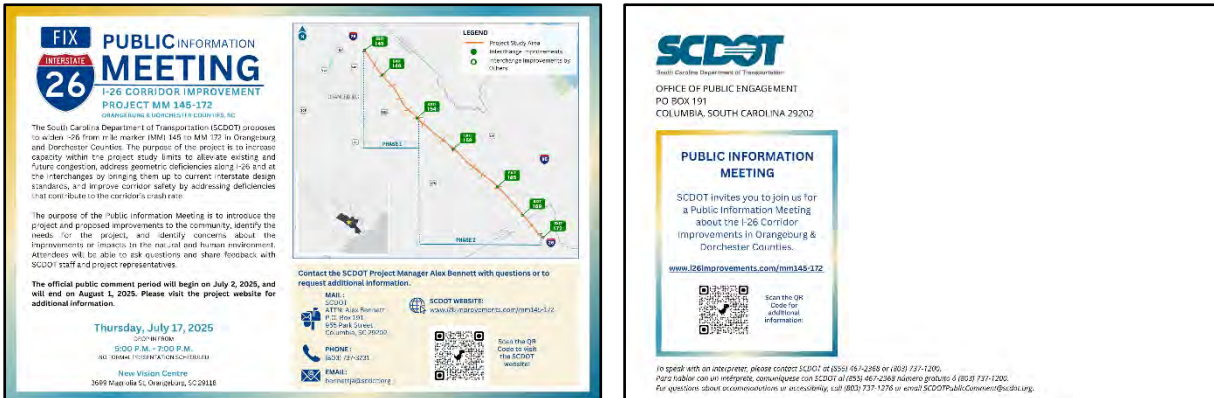
- **LIVE 5 WCSC:** <https://www.live5news.com/2025/07/18/orangeburg-residents-share-input-scdot-i-26-widening-project/>



3.3 Postcards

Postcards announcing the PIM and public comment period were mailed to approximately 5,750 addresses in and around the project study area, arriving by the start of the comment period on July 2, 2025. Recipients included commercial and residential addresses, as well as post office box patrons within the outreach area.

Figure 5: Postcard Advertisement



3.4 Landowners

Landowner letters were mailed on June 30, 2025, to 199 property owners within the project study area. The list included all owners of parcels that may be subject to right-of-way impacts within the project limits.

3.5 Banner

On July 1, 2025, 16 banners advertising the public meeting were installed throughout the project corridor and near key community facilities.

Figure 6: Banner Advertisement



4 PARTICIPATION

4.1 In-Person PIM Attendance

Date/Time: July 17, 2025, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Location: New Vision Centre Event Venue (3699 Magnolia Street, Orangeburg, SC 29118)

Attendees: 69

In-Person Demographics – Optional Survey

Attendees were invited to participate in an optional demographic survey. Seven surveys were completed, findings from the responses are included below:

- No special accommodations were requested, and no respondents reported having a disability.
- How attendees heard about the meeting:
 - Local News – 57%
 - Newspaper ad – 14%
 - Social Media – 14%
 - Postcard – 14%
 - Flyer/Handout – 14%
 - Letter – 14%
 - Online/Website – 14%
- Race / Ethnicity
 - White – 14%
 - Black/African – 86%
- Age
 - 30 to 44 – 14%
 - 45 to 54 – 14%
 - 65 or older – 72%

4.2 Website Analytics

During the public comment period, the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172) received 869 views,¹ 496 visits,² and 377 unique visitors³. A total of 65 contributions⁴ were submitted through the website, consisting of 37 comment forms and 28 quick poll responses.

The quick poll asked: *“How are you feeling about the Proposed Project(s) presented?”* The responses were as follows:

- Very Positive (60.7%)
- Positive (21.4%)
- Neither (10.7%)

¹ The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.

² The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.

³ The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day.

⁴ The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.

- Negative (3.6%)
- Very Negative (3.6%)

Overall, more than 80% of respondents indicated a positive or very positive view of the proposed project.

5 COMMENTS

During the public comment period (July 2–August 1, 2025), comments could be submitted in several ways: in person at the PIM, through the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172), by mail to Alex Bennett, SC Department of Transportation, Post Office Box 191, 955 Park Street, Columbia, SC 29202-0191, or by email to BennettJA@scdot.org. A total of 45 comments were received during the formal comment period, including 8 in-person comments from the PIM and 37 online comments submitted through the project website.

The top five themes for comments or concerns were:

- **Traffic Congestion** (40%)
- **Safety** (31%)
- **Property Impacts** (16%)
- **Noise** (11%)

Many comments supported widening I-26 and adding lanes to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. Commenters noted congestion caused by merging, slow-moving vehicles, and commercial truck traffic, with suggestions for prohibiting trucks from using the left lane.

Safety was another key concern, with commenters citing speeding, accidents, and dangerous merging conditions. Many suggestions for interchange upgrades were framed as safety improvements, including better ramp design, lighting, and signage. The corridor's importance as a hurricane evacuation route and recommended design measures to ensure efficient traffic movement during emergencies was also emphasized.

Property impacts were raised by multiple commenters, particularly property owners near Exit 149 due to concerns over property acquisition and potential impacts to property value. Questions were also raised about tree removal, with requests for clarification on whether trees would be replanted. Some property owners indicated a willingness to work with SCDOT if impacts could be minimized.

Noise concerns centered on the potential for increased noise from additional lanes and higher traffic volumes, with requests for noise barriers along affected sections of the corridor.

Overall, there was strong support for the proposed improvements, with several commenters urging SCDOT to expedite the project due to current congestion and safety issues. Many expressed appreciation for the public outreach process and the opportunity to provide input.

K-3: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Date	Method	Full Name	Phone Number	Street Address	City	Zipcode	Email	Want SCDOT Response?	Response Format	Comment	Response
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Kirit Patel	8037074372	3402 Five Chop Road	Orangeburg	29115	kpatel868@yahoo.com	Yes	Email, Mail, Phone	I own the hotel I-26 Exit 154B Days Inn. My main concern is noise which I already have a problem with. I can't hear guests from outside the door and guests are complaining about highway noises.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Eric L. Hubbard	8642471675	160 Sarah-Hannah Road	Orangeburg	29110	hubelh@yahoo.com	Yes	Email	I want to be assured that this project will include the installation of noise barriers along the project road widening program.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Cody Doudy	7062444593	413 Monticello Road	Orangeburg	29118	cody@happytownrv.com	Yes	Email, Phone	Would like to work with SCDOT on the 149 exit interchange to remove trees along interstate 26 at our property on the side headed to Charleston. We are acquiring property and would like to increase visibility at the end of Monticello Road along the length of our property line. I would be glad to discuss and assist with any idea to beautify and help with the tree removal. Reach out anytime.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Serena Zea	8434897848	208 Greenhouse Row	Summerville	29485	szea@me.com	Yes	Email, Phone	I have a digital billboard. My business is Orangeburg Outdoor. I am interested in finding out if the trees on the side of the fence along the highway will be removed and when if so. I would encourage the removal of those trees that surround and impeded with the ability to fully see the board. My digital billboard is on all American Lane off Exit 154 B, when going East towards Charleston. Thank you so much and I look forward to a response.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Maxwell H. Searson	8038374586	3474 Five Chop Road	Orangeburg	N/A	mjxwellsearson@gmail.com	Yes	Email	Drainage concerns. Each time they add a lane a turn lane I get my water in my yard.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Harold McMichael Jr.	8036821013	1377 Old Ellore Road	N/A	N/A	hai.mcmichael@yahoo.com	Yes	Email, Mail, Phone	When using the Old Ellore Road Bridge as a detour road be sure the gate is removed that is in place so you can access Till Road by the ballfield to get Four Holes Road.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Matthew Presley	7576032415	126 Roquemore Drive	Orangeburg	29115	pressleyeric111@gmail.com	N/A	N/A	I do not want to be affected by this as my resell value will drop. I would rather y'all just come in and buy my land. This will affect my front yard drainage and I have young kids. More lanes means more danger to enter my land.	N/A
17-Jul-25	In-Person	Albert Murdaugh	8329295835	1015 Red Bank Road	N/A	N/A	albert_murdaugh@themaxoburg.com	Yes	Email	The proposed changes will benefit the community.	Generic Response + FAQ
3-Jul-25	website	Ron Heatet	2406267020				ron_wool@msn.com	No	N/A	I would love to see the 4th lane on I-26.	N/A
3-Jul-25	website	John Hart	8034048805				jh36228@gmail.com	No	N/A	Thank you for updating I-26 to 3 lanes. Pray I will see the day when 3 lanes is all the way to Charleston from Columbia.	N/A
3-Jul-25	website	Kenetta Dash	8035562508				kp304@outlook.com	No	N/A	Definitely expand I-26 to three lanes, especially at the I-95 to I-26 exchange. Have you driven it? The ramp is maybe 3 cars long, no space to merge when traffic is heavy (always) and no where for the cars on 26 to move to let them in. And if it's a tractor trailer there when it's your time to merge, good luck. I've lived here 20 years and seen many accidents at that spot. I always say a prayer before getting on that I'll have an opening to merge. Too much traffic heading to Charleston and through Columbia not to have three lanes. Approve!	N/A
3-Jul-25	website	Jeffrey Angstadt	8034663585				jeffreyangstadt@gmail.com	Yes	email	It should have happened years ago. Eastbound to Charleston is extremely busy and should be six lanes at a minimum for the entire run. Westbound to Asheville doesn't seem as busy, but should not be far behind for expansion. Six lanes from Charleston to the North Carolina border. And when that is completed, or honestly at the same time, I-95 should have been expanded to six lanes through the state years ago. Unless it is our goal to discourage New Yorkers from traveling back and forth to Florida, there is no excuse for that road to have not been widened years ago.	Generic Response + FAQ
3-Jul-25	website	Kathy Blackmon	8033198540				kblw@bellsouth.net	yes	email	I can not understand why SC is so backwards about our interstates!! When traveling the East Coast coming from any state the traffic may get busy but not at a standstill, unless there is a wreck, until you hit SC! Traffic flows on 3 lanes in all directions except SC. Why? Is there a reason our interstates only have two lanes and all the other states have three. Traveling to Florida to visit family and I can't wait to hit Georgia and three lanes, and coming back I dread hitting the South Carolina border. Everything bottle necks and people are swaying in and out of lanes trying to get ahead, have they ever checked to see how many accidents happened around the areas with the lanes switched to two. Please SC fix our interstates, don't let our state be so backwards!	Generic Response + FAQ
3-Jul-25	website	David Rosenbaum	8642279477				dr_scarolina@yahoo.com	no	N/A	I'm in favor of continued improvements to I-26, including adding an additional lane.	N/A
3-Jul-25	website	Bob Workman	8033990126				bob_workman@gmail.com	no	N/A	This is great news. Long overdue. Thank you for this much needed expansion.	N/A
3-Jul-25	website	Chip Fallaw	8036030791				clyde.fallaw@outlook.com	Yes	email	Please consider providing as much lighting as possible as part of this project. This includes lighting along the highway and at the exits. Lighting improvements are critical parts of creating a safer driving environment, especially at night.	Generic Response + FAQ
3-Jul-25	website	Adryen Hall	8038627666				ajh945826@gmail.com	Yes	email	Me personally, I'm fine with it, but I believe yall should focus on the previous road projects first and make sure those are complete before you start on this(for example, Hardscrabble Road).	Generic Response + FAQ
4-Jul-25	website	Michelle Bizzell	2147275156				bizzellmichelle@gmail.com	yes	email	Adding more lanes won't help and never does. Don't do it.	Generic Response + FAQ
9-Jul-25	website	JOHN JOBE	18034785298				papagiblet@ftc-i.net	Yes	email	While we understand the need for this expansion, we feel the I95 bridge over Lake Marion needs immediate attention. We attended the meeting in Santee in 2023 and were told it would begin late spring of this year. There is not much on SCDOT about projected start date. Would love some updates. There was another crash on the bridge this morning SB shutting down both lanes for hours. Look forward to hearing from you. Debbie Jobe	Generic Response + FAQ
16-Jul-25	website	Elizabeth King	8037300221				epking803@gmail.com	Yes	email	Will this project be a design build project or a bid build project? What is the estimated cost of this project? Will stop lights be added to exit 165 as part of this project to replace the stop sign at the ramp?	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25										Will the rest areas in this area be improved as part of this project as well?	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	website	M. Austin	8037605809				wwb79@sc.rr.com	no	N/A	This project is long overdue. Anyone that travels this stretch of I-26 knows this. More often than not, when I travel this stretch of I-26, between Columbia and I-95, I hit a dangerous slow down or stoppage. This is also part of a major evacuation route for hurricanes. Furthermore, all of I-95 should also be widened for the same reasons.	N/A
17-Jul-25	website	Diana Rios	6168489833				rios14diana@yahoo.com	yes	email	Are the trees going to be removed? If so, will they be replanting trees. It would be nice to see more palm trees.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	website	Kevin Englehart	8033480335				kenglehart@sc.rr.com	no	N/A	I travel that road frequently on trips to MUSC as well as to visit family in Hanahan. The proposed addition of another travel lane is much needed and would be greatly appreciated!	N/A
17-Jul-25	website	Elaine McNeil	8435845600				elainemc09@yahoo.com	Yes	email	This is a comment as I strongly feel all interstates in SC should be a minimum of 3 lanes both ways. SC has I-95, I-26, I-77, and I-20 and when an accident occurs or traffic happens you can be stuck in traffic for miles which is ridiculous with the amount of traffic that travels through SC. The population is growing in SC and the number of daily commuters is increasing rapidly as well. I would definitely appreciate my tax dollars to go towards expanding and improving our interstates in SC.	Generic Response + FAQ
17-Jul-25	website	Chad Poteat	8036031189				cep@poteatlawfirm.com	no	N/A	I am highly in favor of both phases of this project moving forward, sooner rather than later.	N/A
17-Jul-25	website	Thomas Bennett	8037914788				bennettnt@gmail.com	Yes	email	I travel I-26 from exit 125 to exit 211 on a regular basis. The need for more lanes is vital on that stretch. Not only to move traffic better but for safety's sake, as well. One thing happens on that section of interstate, and it is a parking lot. So widening from exits 145 to 172 doesn't seem to smart when 26 is already being widened from exits 192 to 172 now. Why stop at 145. Why not go the extra 20 miles to exit125?	Generic Response + FAQ

17-Jul-25	website	José Acevedo	8434755256			jacevedo@dorchester2.k12.sc.us	Yes	email	I own a property at 209 Whitford Stage Rd, Orangeburg, SC. My house and lot is located right at the back of the I-26 rest area east bound between exits 149 and 154. How will my property be affected by the construction?	Thank you for your comments on the I-26 MM145-172 Corridor Improvements project. SCDOT is evaluating improvements to the rest area that would include new access roads, additional parking for cars and trucks, and new facilities. All designs at this time are conceptual and will be further developed and refined over the next 12 to 18 months. Once designs are finalized, if there are impacts to your property, you will be contacted by a right of way agent to discuss next steps. Please feel free to check in at any time on the project's status if you have questions.
17-Jul-25	website	Terry Mueller	8035299426			tmueller1970@gmail.com	Yes	email	More lighting at the interchanges. In large the rest stops with with more parking because you see so many tractor trailers parking on the off ramps. More overhead communication boards.	Generic Response + FAQ
18-Jul-25	website	Austin Pace	8033947828			austinspace@hotmail.com	Yes	email	With the growth being experienced in SC over the last 20 years it is well overdue to have I – 26 be 6 lanes from Columbia to Charleston. And the many times I travel to Charleston from Columbia there is frequent congestion, slowdowns, and other issues due to the small number of lanes in Orangeburg County. Further, poor traffic management practices from local responders and limited working room compounds the problem. In addition to widening, I would like to see SHEP coverage stretch into Calhoun and Orangeburg counties all the way down to the I– 95 interchange.	Generic Response + FAQ
18-Jul-25	website	Seth Riggsbee	2404837606			sariggs09@comcast.net	no	N/A	I travel through this corridor, 2-3 times a month traveling from Charleston to Columbia and back for work. Any widening to 26 would be appreciated.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	Wheatley Alford	8439866177			alfordwheatley@gmail.com	no	N/A	I-26 is a dangerously busy road. The users will be greatly benefited by adding additional lanes of highway. There are many times when 18 wheelers are so plentiful traffic cannot flow at the rated speed limit. Expanding this stretch of highway will save countless lives.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	Charles Harvey	8033159890			crhmgth@yahoo.com	no	N/A	I travel this section of I 26 often and traffic is horrible. It's a dangerous area where it goes from 3 to 2 lanes heading east. Lot's of accidents. Definitely needs to be 3 lanes all the way to Charleston.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	JWalker	8438133123			jorwalke@att.net	Yes	email	The biggest problem is the "Hills" of St. Matthews. These grade changes are on par with the mountains and the cause of most issues through this area with the increased truck traffic. Trucks get in the left lane and tie traffic up for miles. People then ride bumper to bumper to keep the trucks from coming over and this is what is contributing most of the accidents. I watch people run off the road all the time when traveling through this area to keep from slamming into the car in front of them when traffic comes to a dead stop on the interstate. Then when a truck does come over people have to slam on breaks as the chain reaction down the line starts. If truck restrictions are not put in place through this area there will still be a major safety issue. This is by far the worst section of interstate in SC outside of metropolitan areas.	Generic Response + FAQ
18-Jul-25	website	Mark Prohaska	8439908989			mzprohaska@aol.com	Yes	email	Why are you waiting 5 more years to begin this project?? It needs to have been done years ago! Please start it ASAP! S C is way behind the eight ball on road improvements and infrastructure needs! Thank you, Mark Prohaska	Generic Response + FAQ
18-Jul-25	website	John Lopez	8433439011			jmmcjohndlopez@gmail.com	no	N/A	Improvement of this portion of I-26 is needed. The widening should eventually go all the way to Columbia.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	Elaine Marlow	8036679888			laneymarlow@aol.com	no	N/A	ANYONE who has driven I-26 E or W knows that a 3 lane both ways is needed from Columbia to Charleston. That is a dangerously crowded highway with everyone speeding. And also, by the way, whoever decided to remove the trees from the median was an idiot who is responsible for any crossover deaths! Just saying...Oh the work done already on 26 is much appreciated. Thank you.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	Shelley Fentress	8037191595			shelleyfentress@gmail.com	no	N/A	Yes, to widening I-26 from Orangeburg to Dorchester. Please widen I-95 next.	N/A
18-Jul-25	website	B. Grooms	8437616381			groomsb53@gmail.com	Yes	email	Will these improvements affect any private properties?	Generic Response + FAQ
28-Jul-25	website	Harold McMichael	8036821013			hal.mcmichael@yahoo.com	yes	email	With the upcoming closing of the bridge on the Gramling Road and the Old Ellore Road it seems like a good idea to go on and completely repave the Bozard Road. Traffic will have to be routed there for detours thus greatly increasing traffic flow on an already heavily traveled road. Trucks from the lawnmower plant and SuperSod along with trucks hauling off dumpsters from the county collection site already put a lot of wear and tear on the Bozard Road. We travel this road daily in it is in great need of some repaving. Thanks for listening to a local resident!! On a separate note, is the personal gate that has been put up stopping traffic once you cross the bridge on Old Ellore Road going to be removed to allow traffic access to the Till Road by the old ball field to gain access to the Four Holes Road. That REALLY needs to be removed!!!! Again I say Thanks for listening to a very local resident!!!!!! Will a noise impact study be done due to the increased traffic flow created by the widening of the interstate. Our property line is the fence line running by the interstate at about MM 152. We are in very close proximity to the flow of traffic. It's tolerable now but with it increasing 33% we are just concerned about the increased noise level. Thanks for the open forum to express concerns!!	Thank you for your comments on the I-26 MM145-172 Corridor Improvements project and for sharing your concerns and observations as a local resident. We recognize that the temporary closure of Gramling Road and Old Ellore Road bridges will shift additional traffic onto surrounding roadways, including Bozard Road. Before the project starts construction, the project team will coordinate with SCDOT and the County to evaluate the condition of the roads on a detour route. If detours are deemed to have poor pavement condition, those roadways may be resurfaced, or the detour route may be altered to accommodate detour traffic. We are evaluating the gate blocking Old Ellore Rd and will determine the appropriate action, if any, in coordination with the County. In addition, a noise study will be performed as part of the NEPA process on this project. See also enclosed FAQ.
31-Jul-25	website	Jim McLean	8037071069			jmclean29118@gmail.com	Yes	email	I own property at I-26 and Hwy 33. I am opposed to altering the Glenzell Rd./ Hwy 33 / Assembly Hall Rd. intersection. My property is zoned commercial and is being marketed as such. I believe changing this intersection would have a negative effect on the usability and thus the market value. I also have ownership in property located at Monticello Rd and Hwy 33. We would be willing to discuss changes to the intersection that would not negatively impacted property value.	Thank you for your comments on the I-26 MM145-172 Corridor Improvements project. The project team is evaluating improvements to the interchange at Exit 149 to correct existing deficiencies and improve traffic operations and safety. The preferred interchange improvements will be presented in the Environmental Assessment being prepared for the project and available for public comment and at a public information meeting to be held in early 2026. See also enclosed FAQ.
31-Jul-25	website	Marie McLean-Choi	8036820913			mclean.choi@proton.me	yes	email	My family owns property on three corners of exit 149 (I26 & SC 33). We may be agreeable to changing the I-26 Eastbound exits onto SC 33 and / or leasing of a portion of our property to SCDOT for construction staging. However, we would not agree to any shift of the SC 33 / Glenzell / Assembly intersection which would eliminate the alignment of Glenzell with Assembly; such a shift would interfere with future development plans for our property.	Thank you for your comments on the I-26 MM145-172 Corridor Improvements project. The project team is evaluating improvements to the interchange at Exit 149 to correct existing deficiencies and improve traffic operations and safety. The preferred interchange improvements will be presented in the Environmental Assessment being prepared for the project and available for public comment and at a public information meeting to be held in early 2026. See also enclosed FAQ.
31-Jul-25	website	William McLean	8034676130			bmclean.cola@gmail.com	yes	email	As one of the Property Owner's of 3 of the 4 corners formed at the intersection of I-26 and Hwy 33(exit 149) I am opposed to any shift of Assembly Hall Way that would cause it to not align with Glenzell Rd. as this would have a significant impact on future development plans. Also, I am willing to discuss the following: 1)A lease of land to SCDOT for a staging area if needed while the project is ongoing. 2)Options for changing/shifting exits onto Hwy 33 from Eastbound I-26 traffic FYI - for awareness, there is a cattle crossing under I-26 east of the 149 interchange connecting our property	Thank you for your comments on the I-26 MM145-172 Corridor Improvements project. The project team is evaluating improvements to the interchange at Exit 149 to correct existing deficiencies and improve traffic operations and safety. The preferred interchange improvements will be presented in the Environmental Assessment being prepared for the project and available for public comment and at a public information meeting to be held in early 2026. See also enclosed FAQ.

COMMENT RESPONSE – GENERIC

Subject: SCDOT I-26 Corridor Improvements Project MM145-172– Comment Response

Email: [Insert Email]

[Insert Name],

Thank you for providing a comment during the official public comment period for the South Carolina I-26 Corridor Improvements Project MM 145–172, held from July 2 and August 1, 2025. Your feedback is an important part of our decision-making process and helps guide the project to address local needs while meeting state and federal transportation goals.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) recognizes the importance of I-26 as a critical corridor for the movement of people and goods through South Carolina and beyond. This project is one of several I-26 improvements currently funded, including:

- **I-26 Widening from MM 137–146** – Improvements beginning just east of the Caw Caw Road (Exit 136) interchange and ending just east of the US 601 (Exit 145) interchange. Right of way acquisition is underway, and construction may begin later this year. Construction will take approximately 2 ½ years.
- **I-26 & I-95 Interchange Improvements** – Enhancements to improve mobility and operations at the system interchange of I-26 and I-95. Construction began in 2024 and is anticipated to be completed in Summer of 2027.
- **I-26 Widening from MM172–187** – Improvements beginning just west of the US 15 (Exit 172) interchange and ending just west of the SC 27 (Exit 187) interchange. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2027 and will take approximately 4 years to complete.

For this project, SCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are developing an Environmental Assessment. The purpose of the project is to increase capacity within the project study limits to alleviate existing and future congestion, address geometric deficiencies along I-26 and at the interchanges by bringing them up to current interstate design standards, and improve corridor safety by addressing deficiencies that contribute to the corridor's crash rate.

At the public information meeting, held on July 17, 2025, at the New Vision Centre Event Venue (3699 Magnolia Street, Orangeburg, SC 29118), Orangeburg SC, SCDOT presented concept designs to widen this corridor from four to six lanes, with widening toward the inside median where possible. Bridges and overpasses within the project limits would be replaced to accommodate the additional lanes, and interchanges at Exits 149, 154, 159, and 165 would be reconfigured to improve safety and operational efficiency.

As the Environmental Assessment continues, SCDOT will work to refine the design and minimize impacts on the surrounding human and natural environment. The “Recommended Preferred Alternative” will be presented at a public hearing, tentatively planned for early 2026.

SCDOT values your participation and assures you that all comments, suggestions, and concerns received during the public comment period are reviewed and considered as part of the project development process. Your input has been included in the official project record.

To stay informed, please visit www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172. Enclosed is a summary of the public comments received, along with a flyer addressing frequently asked questions. For additional project questions, please contact **BennettAJ@scdot.org**. For maintenance requests unrelated to this project, visit <https://apps.scdot.org/mwro/> or call **855-GO-SCDOT**.

Respectfully,

Alex Bennett, SCDOT Program Manager
P.O. Box 191
955 Park Street
Columbia, SC 29202
803-737-3231
BennettJA@scdot.org

Public Comment Period Summary & FAQ



Interstate 26 (I-26) Corridor Improvements Project MM 145-172

Orangeburg and Dorchester
Counties, South Carolina

COMMENT SUMMARY

During the public comment period (July 2–August 1, 2025), comments could be submitted in several ways: in person at the PIM, through the project website (www.i26improvements.com/mm145-172), by mail to Alex Bennett, SC Department of Transportation, Post Office Box 191, 955 Park Street, Columbia, SC 29202-0191, or by email to BennettJA@scdot.org. **A total of 45 comments were received during the formal comment period, including 8 in-person comments from the PIM and 37 online comments submitted through the project website.**

The top five themes for comments or concerns were:

- **Traffic Congestion** (40%)
- **Safety** (31%)
- **Property Impacts** (16%)
- **Noise** (11%)

Many comments supported widening I-26 and adding lanes to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. Commenters noted congestion caused by merging, slow-moving vehicles, and commercial truck traffic, with suggestions for prohibiting trucks from using the left lane.

Safety was another key concern, with commenters citing speeding, accidents, and dangerous merging conditions. Many suggestions for interchange upgrades were framed as safety improvements, including better ramp design, lighting, and signage. The corridor's importance as a hurricane evacuation route and recommended design measures to ensure efficient traffic movement during emergencies was also emphasized.

Property impacts were raised by multiple commenters, particularly property owners near Exit 149 due to concerns over property acquisition and potential impacts to property value. Questions were also raised about tree removal, with requests for clarification on whether trees would be replanted. Some property owners indicated a willingness to work with SCDOT if impacts could be minimized.

Noise concerns centered on the potential for increased noise from additional lanes and higher traffic volumes, with requests for noise barriers along affected sections of the corridor.

Overall, there was strong support for the proposed improvements, with several commenters urging SCDOT to expedite the project due to current congestion and safety issues. Many expressed appreciation for the public outreach process and the opportunity to provide input.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

Will this project be a design build or a bid build project?

- At this time, SCDOT is planning to let the project in two phases using traditional design-bid-build procurement. Phase 1 includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 601 (Exit 145) through the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154). Phase 2 includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154) to the western limits of the interchange with US 15 (Exit 172).

What is the estimated cost of the overall project?

- The SCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) includes \$633,071,000 for Phase 1 and \$538,611,000 for Phase 2.

Will the Rest Areas be included in the project?

- Yes, improvements to the Rest Areas will be included in this project. Improvements include new visitor buildings and facilities, additional parking for cars and trucks, and revised access roads.

When will construction begin and how long will it take?

- Phase 1 includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 601 (Exit 145) through the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154). Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2027 and will take approximately 60 months to complete.
- Phase 2 includes I-26 from the eastern limits of the interchange with US 301 (Exit 154) to the western limits of the interchange with US 15 (Exit 172). Construction is anticipated to begin in 2030 and take approximately 48 months to complete.

Safety

How will safety improvements be implemented at the interchanges?

The project includes improvements to the interchanges at Exits 149, 154, 159, and 165. Safety upgrades will address:

- Geometric deficiencies – correcting on-ramps and off-ramps that do not meet current design standards, including lengthening on-ramps and off-ramps to allow safer merging.
- Intersection spacing – increasing the distance between intersections, driveways, and/or ramp termini to reduce conflict points.
- Sight distance issues – improving visibility for drivers.

Will lighting be included at interchanges and throughout the corridor?

- Lighting needs are being evaluated for the corridor.

Will commercial trucks be restricted from using the left lane?

- According to South Carolina code, the left lane is for vehicles overtaking and passing other vehicles. Commercial trucks must drive in the right-hand lane when driving slower than the normal traffic speed, except when passing or turning left.

Property Impacts

Will tree removal be included in this project? If so, will trees be replanted?

- Trees will be removed within the proposed right of way limits to allow for construction access and provide clear zones for safe travel.

Will any private property be taken for the project? Will there be compensation for property impacts or access issues? What is the Right-of-Way (ROW) process?

- In some areas, ROW acquisition will be necessary to accommodate the proposed improvements. SCDOT is committed to minimizing impacts to private property wherever possible.
- A preferred alternative has not yet been selected. Once selected, potential impacts to individual properties will be evaluated and calculated.
- If your property is affected, you will be contacted directly by a member of the ROW team to discuss the specifics.
- Property owners are entitled to just compensation in accordance with state and federal laws.

Noise

Will there be an increase in noise? Will noise walls be installed?

- A noise analysis is currently being conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state guidelines to determine whether the project will result in increased traffic noise for adjacent development.
- If the analysis shows that noise impacts exceed acceptable thresholds, noise abatement measures, such as noise walls, will be considered where feasible and reasonable.
- Additional information will be shared once the analysis is complete.

Utilities

What is being done to combat drainage impacts to property owners throughout the corridor?

- SCDOT aims to design improvements to avoid drainage impacts from the highway to adjacent properties. This project will incorporate new drainage facilities and/or the improvement of existing drainage systems. This may be in the form of earth or lined, channels, streams, culverts, and/or closed drainage systems.

Detours

When will detours be in place?

- Detours will be used during the replacement of some bridges and overpasses. Interchange bridges will generally remain open throughout construction by using staged construction and lane closures. Other overpasses may be closed during construction to allow the old bridge to be demolished and the new bridge to be constructed in the same location. Closures will be staggered so that adjacent bridges are not closed at the same time. Official detour routes will be signed, but local travelers may use any available route.