

# I-526 @ Long Point Road Interchange Improvements

## Public Information Meeting

Official comment period July 26 - September 1, 2022

### Meeting Purpose

- Explain how YOUR input in the I-526 Lowcountry Corridor (LCC) EAST study was used to accelerate this project
- Ask for your input on the draft purpose and need and the potential improvements
- Outline the next steps in the project development process
- Gather information on historic or cultural resources and other potential impacts

Tuesday, August 2, 2022, 5-7 PM  
 R. L. Jones Center  
 391 Egypt Road, Mount Pleasant, SC



Take our survey by September 1!  
[www.526LCCLongPoint.com](http://www.526LCCLongPoint.com)

### Project Overview

In 2022, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) completed a Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study for I-526 LCC EAST, from Virginia Avenue in North Charleston to US 17 in Mount Pleasant. The PEL study identified existing and projected transportation issues within the corridor through analysis and public and stakeholder engagement. The results of the study established a vision to guide future transportation decision-making in the corridor. After the needs were better understood, potential improvements were identified. One such improvement is the I-526 @ Long Point Road Interchange Improvements project. Carrying forward the analysis and public input, the I-526 @ Long Point Road Interchange project is now going through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, a federal review of the natural and human environment.

### Draft Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed project is to **improve the operations** of the I-526/Long Point Road interchange and I-526 mainline and **reduce operational conflicts between port-related and local traffic.**



### Draft Project Goals

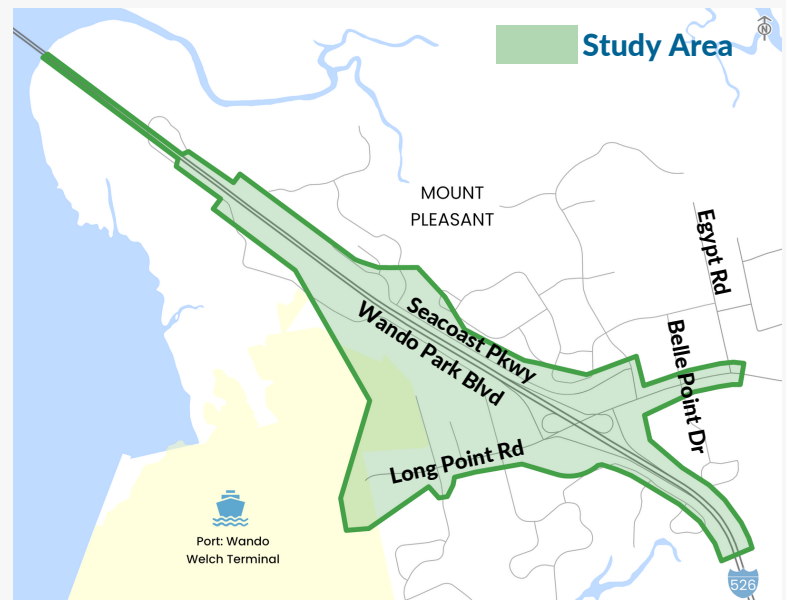
The following goals were identified in the I-526 LCC EAST PEL and have been refined based on your input and the purpose of the interchange improvements project.



**Compatibility:** Align with local land use plans and projects



**Multimodal:** Enhance movement through the corridor including other modes such as carpool, transit, walk, or bike

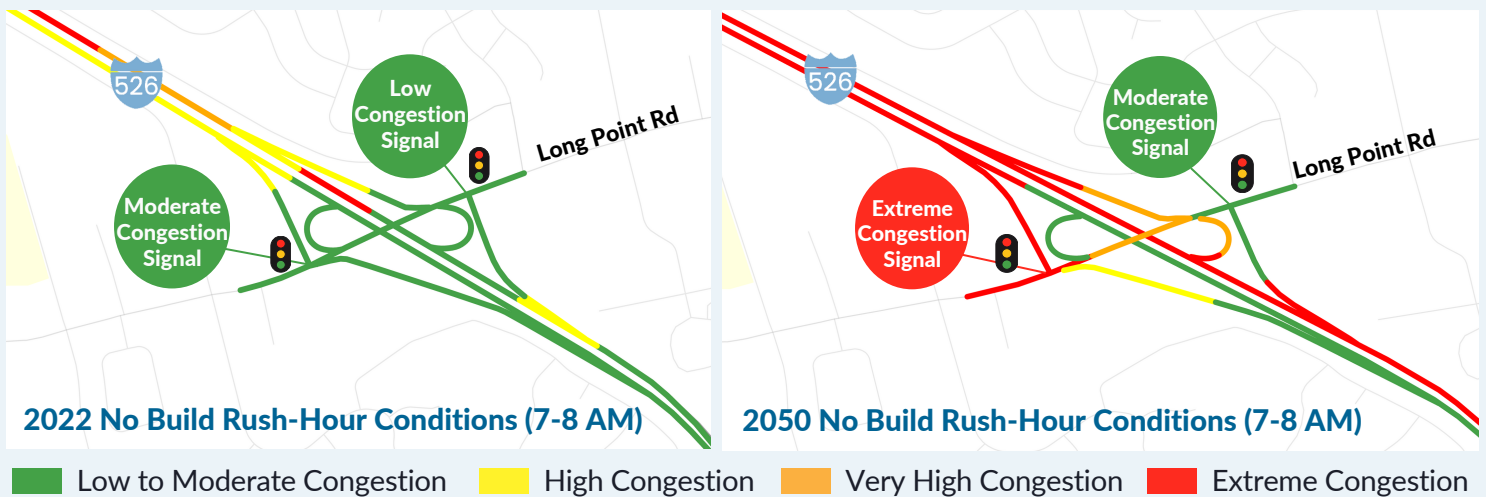


## Why is this project needed?

The I-526/Long Point Road interchange provides access to homes, businesses, schools, parks, restaurants, and commercial and industrial facilities along Long Point Road. The interchange provides access to SC Port's Wando Welch Terminal which serves as a hub for the distribution of freight from the Port throughout the southeast United States. The need for the project is demonstrated by the growing automobile and truck traffic on I-526 and Long Point Road, the existing interchange deficiencies, and the operational conflicts between cars and trucks on Long Point Road and I-526.

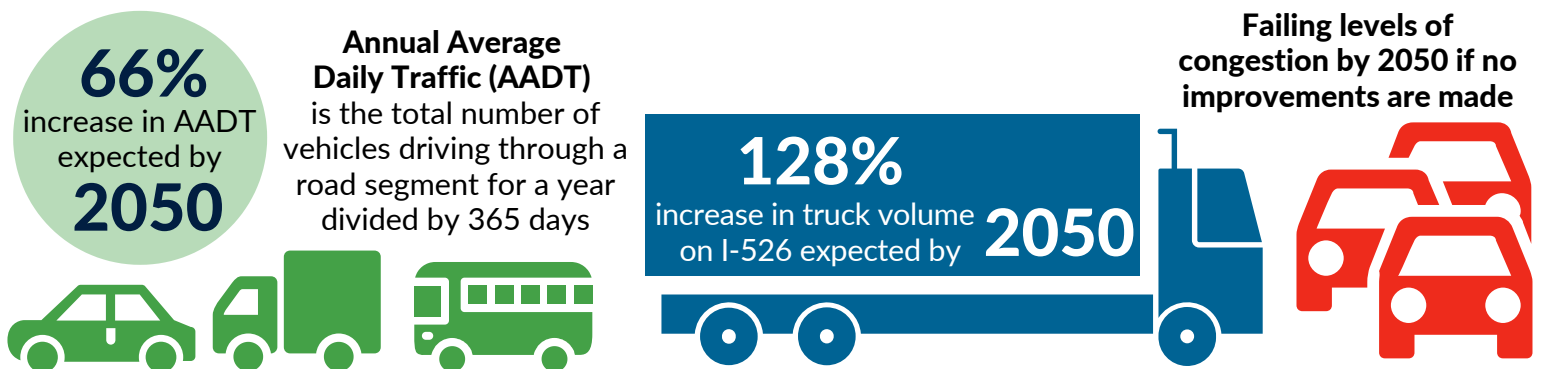
## What may traffic be like if no improvements are made?

Traffic is expected to increase and result in an extreme level of congestion (think bumper-to-bumper traffic) throughout much of the interchange by 2050, if no improvements are made.



## What does the data say about the need?

The data confirms concerns about growing congestion at the interchange. Why? The average daily number of vehicles driving through the interchange is expected to grow 66% by 2050. While all types of vehicles are expected to increase, the number of trucks on I-526 bound for the interchange will likely grow at a faster rate - increasing the percentage of vehicles using the corridor that are trucks. 13,000 more truck trips per day are anticipated on I-526 west of the Long Point Road interchange by 2050. The existing interchange is not designed to handle this volume of vehicles, especially with this mix of heavy-duty trucks.



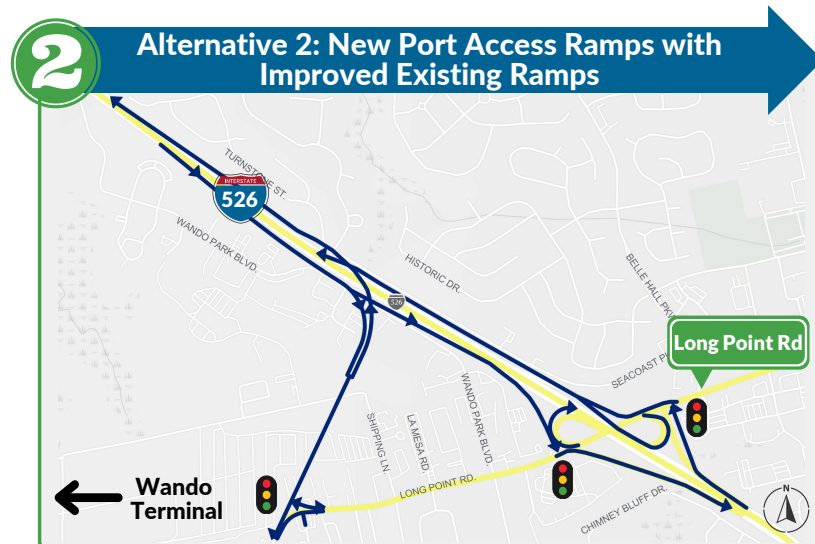
## What are the potential improvement options?

Alternatives are conceptual and may change



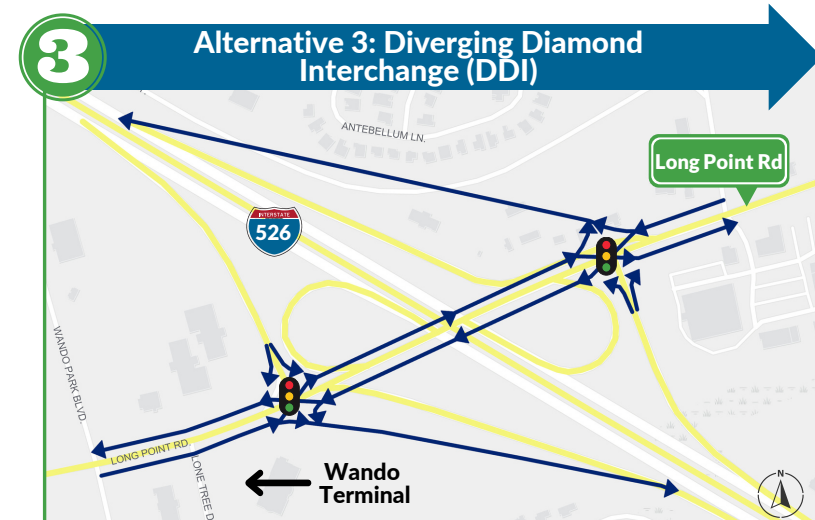
**Alternative 1** would improve the existing ramps. A larger version of the existing interchange, it would address concerns by constructing larger loop ramps to allow for increased speeds to improve merging onto I-526 for all vehicles and be compatible with the planned widening of I-526. Improvements to the eastbound off-ramp would also be made.

Based on initial traffic studies, the ability of **Alternative 1** to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic shows additional studies are required.



**Alternative 2** would provide new access to Long Point Road for port-related traffic along with improving the existing ramps. Collector-Distributor (CD) roads would be used to help separate port-related and local traffic. This alternative is compatible with the planned widening of I-526.

Based on initial traffic studies, the ability of **Alternative 2** to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic shows favorable results.



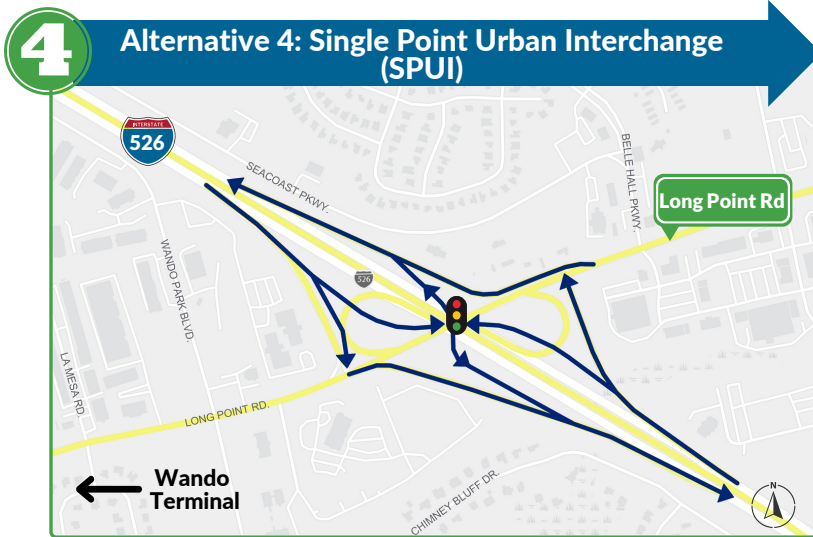
**Alternative 3** would replace the existing interchange with a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI). A DDI would remove left turns across oncoming lanes of traffic at each of the intersections within the interchange. This is done by shifting vehicles passing through to the left-hand side of the road. This alternative is compatible with the planned widening of I-526.

Based on initial traffic studies, the ability of **Alternative 3** to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic shows additional studies are required.



## What are the potential improvement options?

*Alternatives are conceptual and may change*



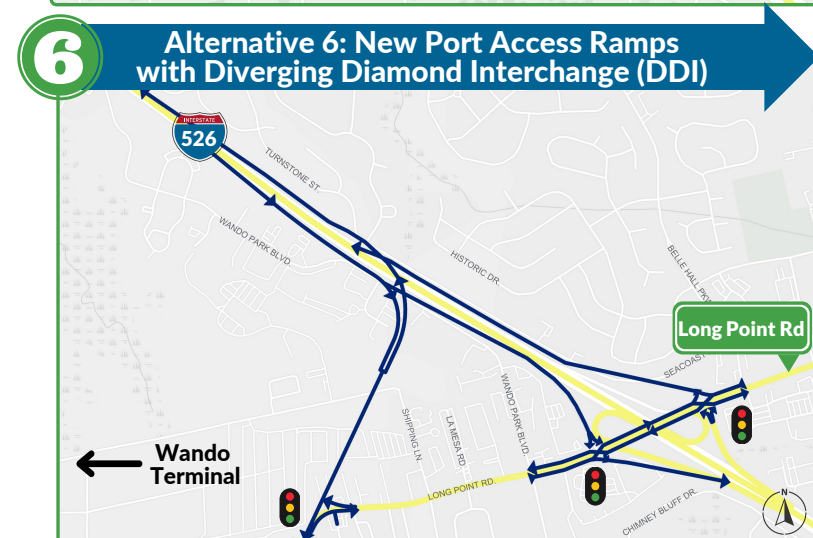
**Alternative 4** would replace the existing interchange with a Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI). The SPUI would create a single signalized intersection underneath I-526. This would allow the elimination of the two existing signals. This alternative is compatible with the planned widening of I-526.

**Based on initial traffic studies, Alternative 4 does not appear to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic.**



**Alternative 5** would replace the existing loop ramp to westbound I-526 with a flyover ramp. All other ramps would remain in their same location. The flyover ramp would require a realignment of a segment of Seacoast Parkway. This alternative would require additional work to be compatible with the planned widening of I-526.

**Based on initial traffic studies, Alternative 5 does not appear to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic.**



**Alternative 6** would provide new access to Long Point Road for port-related traffic along with a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI). Collector-Distributor roads would be used to help separate port-related and local traffic. This alternative is compatible with the planned widening of I-526.

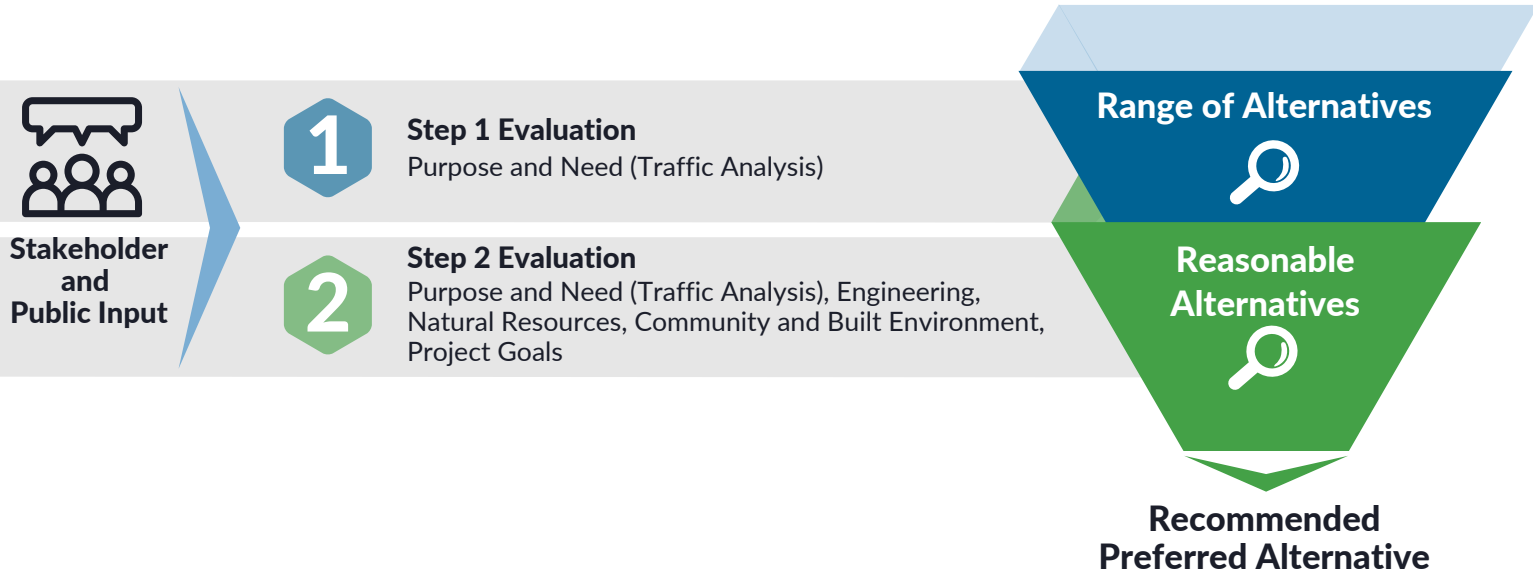
**Based on initial traffic studies, the ability of Alternative 6 to meet the purpose and need of improving operations and reducing conflicts between port-related and local traffic shows favorable results.**

## How do the potential improvement options compare?

Alternative	Potential to meet purpose and need
Alternative 1: Improved Existing Ramps	Probable
Alternative 2: New Port Access Ramps with Improved Existing Ramps	Yes
Alternative 3: Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI)	Probable
Alternative 4: Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI)	No
Alternative 5: Flyover	No
Alternative 6: New Port Access Ramps with Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI)	Yes

## How are the potential improvements evaluated?

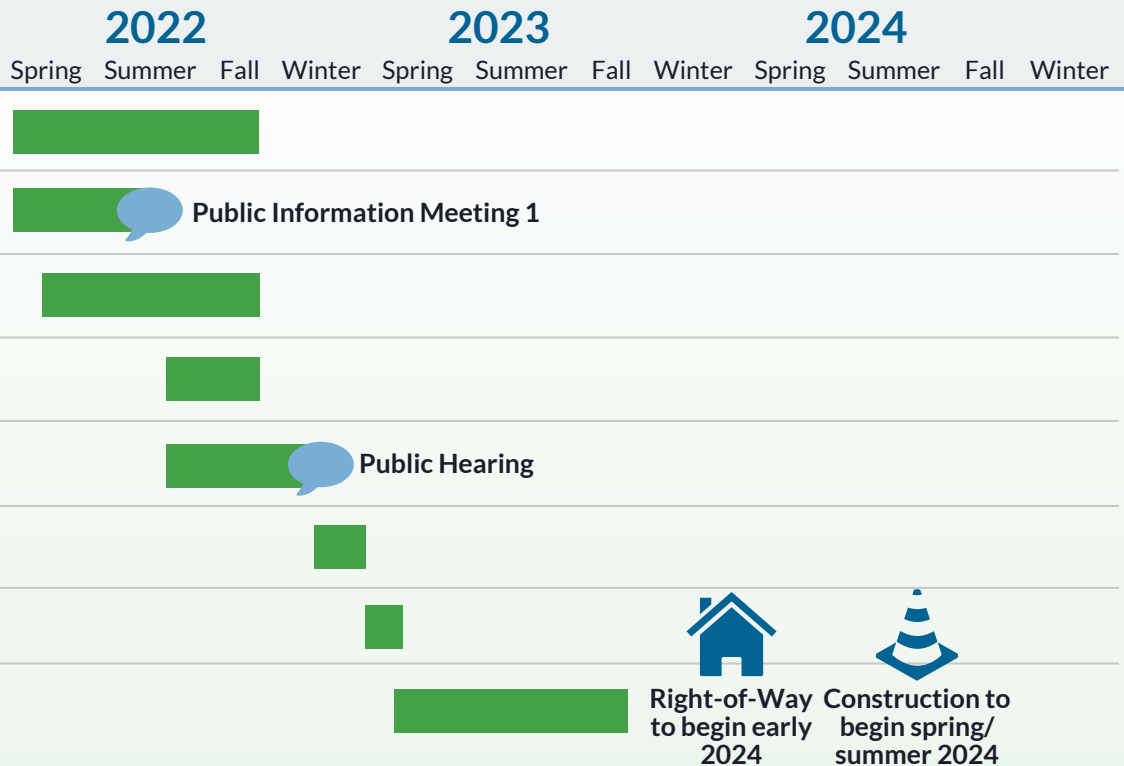
The team will evaluate the alternatives through a two-step process to identify the recommended preferred alternative. Greater detail in analysis will come with each level of evaluation. At the same time, the total number of alternatives will go down as those that are lowest performing are eliminated.



## What happens next?

Initial technical studies have begun on land use, natural resources, cultural and historical resources, hazardous materials, baseline noise measurements, and traffic modeling for existing conditions. After this public information meeting, the project team will evaluate all comments and refine these alternatives. The recommended preferred alternative will be presented at the public hearing in late 2022/early 2023.

Schedule as of July 2022  
and may change



## When will I hear about right-of-way and noise?



Right-of-Way

The official right-of-way (ROW) acquisition process does not typically start until the federal environmental review process (NEPA) is completed, and the Federal Highway Administration issues a decision. If a build alternative is selected, meaning something new would need to be constructed, SCDOT would develop final ROW plans and acquisition activities would begin.



Noise

Noise analysis is currently underway for the project, but the results will not be ready until the public hearing anticipated to be held in late 2022/early 2023. If noise mitigation, such as noise barriers, is determined to be reasonable and feasible, potential beneficiaries would receive additional information.

Learn More: [www.526LCCLongPoint.com/FAQS](http://www.526LCCLongPoint.com/FAQS)



## How to Participate

### Project Website

[www.526LCCLongPoint.com](http://www.526LCCLongPoint.com)

Live, July 26, 2022

The Public Information Meeting webpage contains all the materials you would see at the in-person meeting. Material disponible en ingles y español.

*A mailed copy of the public information meeting handout may be requested by calling 803.737.1346 or emailing [info@526LowcountryCorridor.com](mailto:info@526LowcountryCorridor.com).*

## How to Comment

Meaningful input is our number one priority. Below are the ways to make your voice heard in the official project records. Comment by September 1, 2022!

### Project Website & Survey

[www.526LCCLongPoint.com](http://www.526LCCLongPoint.com)

Fill out our survey and/or a comment form on the project website.

### In-person

#### At the Public Information Meeting

Paper comment forms will be available for you to use there or take with you to mail later.

### In-person Public Meetings

Tuesday, August 2, 2022 5-7 PM

R. L. Jones Center

391 Egypt Road, Mount Pleasant, SC

*Spanish translation services available.*

*Traductor estará disponible.*

**Official Comment Period**  
July 26 - September 1, 2022

### Project Email

[info@526LowcountryCorridor.com](mailto:info@526LowcountryCorridor.com)

### Mail

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Columbia, SC 29202-0191

*All formal comments received during the comment period will be evaluated and included in the project record. All information provided will be published and subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.*



## We want to hear from you!



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