

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where would the proposed noise walls be located, and how were those locations determined?

A total of four noise barrier locations were identified as feasible and reasonable for the Recommended Preferred Alternative. This includes proposed noise walls north of I-526 and west of Long Point Road between the Wando River bridge and Belle Hall Parkway, south of I-526 between the Wando River bridge and Ridge Road, south of I-526 and east of Long Point Road between Lone Tree Drive and the bridge at Hobcaw Creek, and north of I-526 and east of Long Point Road between Long Point Road and the bridge at Hobcaw Creek. A map of the proposed noise walls can be found online at www.526lclongpoint.com/publichearing/#noisewall.

To determine the proposed noise wall locations, a traffic noise analysis was conducted for the study area and completed in accordance with federal and state policies and requirements. Noise-sensitive sites such as residences, churches, schools, and recreational areas were analyzed.

The project team established a baseline of existing traffic noise using the Federal Highway Administration's traffic noise model. This analysis determined that current noise levels approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria for approximately one third of the receptors in the study area. The Recommended Preferred Alternative would result in noise impacts associated with modifying the existing I-526/Long Point Road interchange. However, those impacts would vary depending on the proximity to the project.

Per 23 CFR 772.13(c) and the SCDOT Traffic Noise Abatement Policy, noise abatement measures must be considered to reduce or eliminate noise levels to impacted receivers (66 dB(A)). All four noise barrier locations have been recommended as noise mitigation for the Recommended Preferred Alternative. A final decision on noise wall construction will be made upon completion of the project's final design and the public involvement process. More detailed information regarding the noise analysis can be found in [Appendix E of the Environmental Assessment \(www.526lclongpoint.com/environmentalassessment\)](http://www.526lclongpoint.com/environmentalassessment).

2. Will we have a say in the noise walls' construction and aesthetics?

Before final designs are created for the proposed noise walls, those who would directly benefit from the walls will have the opportunity to vote if they are in support of the noise walls' construction. At this time, we know the recommended noise walls have an average height of 24 feet. A public hearing exhibit on noise walls (www.526lclongpoint.com/publichearing/#noisewall) demonstrated just one idea as to what the walls could look like at varying viewpoints throughout the project. The design you see on the website is an artist rendering and does not necessarily reflect the actual aesthetic of the noise walls.

3. What is happening with the left turn at Belle Hall Parkway?

The Recommended Preferred Alternative retains the existing operations at Long Point Road and Belle Hall Parkway. SCDOT updated the original plans for this intersection based on input from the local community followed by further engineering analysis, with the goal of improving this interchange to best serve all users. SCDOT will continue to monitor the safety of this intersection.

4. I am concerned about truck traffic on Long Point Road. How will the Recommended Preferred Alternative improve traffic operations and address truck traffic?

The Recommended Preferred Alternative is designed to improve traffic operations and reduce conflicts between port-related and local traffic. The new ramps included in this alternative would provide trucks destined to, and coming from, the Wando Welch Terminal with a more direct connection to I-526 and the ability to avoid local traffic on Long Point Road. With the Recommended Preferred Alternative, the number of trucks on Long Point Road is estimated to decrease from 70% to 15%, while traffic on the new ramps is anticipated to be 90% trucks.

5. What are the 54 relocations that may be required for the construction of this project?

The Recommended Preferred Alternative presented at the public hearing would potentially result in 54 relocations, including 51 businesses in ten buildings, one church, and two outbuildings. The Recommended Preferred Alternative would not impact any private residences. A full list of the potential relocations can be found as part of the Environmental Assessment in Appendix D: Relocation Impact Study: www.526lclongpoint.com/environmentalassessment. It is important to note that the designs presented at the public hearing are subject to change as they are refined, and impacts could be reduced.

6. When will the right-of-way acquisition process begin? When will construction begin?

The right-of-way acquisition process is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2023, after the environmental approvals have been secured through the federal environmental review process. The official right-of-way acquisition process does not typically start until that process is completed and a decision has been issued by the Federal Highway Administration, who oversees the project. Once right-of-way design plans are finalized, acquisition activities would begin. Construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2025 and last approximately four years.

7. What happens if my business needs to be relocated?

SCDOT follows the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. Compensation and relocation assistance will be provided in accordance with federal requirements. For more information on the right-of-way process, visit the SCDOT website: www.scdot.org/business/pdf/rightofway/Relocation.pdf, view an informational video on the right-of-way process on our website (www.526lclongpoint.com/publichearing/#row), or email us (info@526lowcountrycorridor.com) to connect with a right-of-way agent.

8. What are the plans for incorporating bike, pedestrian, and transit accommodations into this project?

A shared-use path would be incorporated within the project limits of the design, where possible, and would provide connectivity with potential future bicycle and pedestrian facilities and I-526 widening. Where logical connections to existing facilities such as sidewalks or bike lanes exist, SCDOT will construct the planned improvements within the project area. If there are no existing connections or a logical location to safely end the bicycle, pedestrian, or transit facilities within the project area, then SCDOT will ensure drainage, shoulder, and roadway design could accommodate these additional features in the future. This strategy would allow future projects to easily make this connection within the existing roadway footprint without major modifications. Based on discussions with the Town of Mount Pleasant, the preliminary plans include a multi-use path along the east side of Long Point Road within the project limits, and existing sidewalk on Long Point Road would be replaced as part of the project within the project limits. Additionally, a multi-use path will replace the sidewalk along the south side of Wando Park Boulevard within the project limits.