



Overview of NCDOT road project planning process for Carolina Bays Parkway Extension

How was the study area determined?

- **It is not the whole GSATS area nor does it consider county development and growth.**

The Carolina Bays Parkway Extension study area boundary was established with consideration given to the ability to develop a full range of alternatives while also minimizing potential impacts to important environmental features. Therefore, the project study area does not comprise the entire GSATS Boundary. The western end of the project study area in South Carolina includes the existing terminus of the Carolina Bays Parkway at S.C. 9, and allows for options to extend that facility in South Carolina. The eastern end of the project study area is based on the desire to connect any new location options to a controlled-access portion of US 17 since the Carolina Bays Parkway Extension is proposed to be a fully controlled access facility. The width of the study area in between the two terminal points allows for a full range of alternatives using both existing and new locations. The study area provides for the ability to develop alternatives to avoid or minimize environmental impacts while meeting the traffic needs as defined by the project’s purpose and need.

Please explain the selection and decision process for choosing a route?

- **What is the overall process timeline?**
- **What steps are involved for both selection and decision?**
- **Where is this project in the process?**
- **When are next steps expected?**

Any state or federal agency proposing a project that uses public funds and may have a potential detrimental environmental effect must comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and/or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. Under SEPA/NEPA, agencies are required to evaluate the environmental impacts of their proposals. The evaluation generally follows a project development process that can be divided into the steps described below. This project is currently on **Step 6**.

Selection Process and Timeline		
Step 1:	Project Scoping (Initial Data Collection) Public Input on Purpose of and Need for Proposed Project	Completed
Step 2:	Establish Project Purpose and Need	Completed
Step 3:	Develop Corridor Concepts	Completed
Step 4:	Conduct Public Meetings	Completed
Step 5:	Select Alternatives for Detailed Study	Completed
Step 6:	Conduct Detailed Environmental Analysis	<i>We Are Here</i>
Step 7:	Public DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement	Fall 2021
Step 8:	Conduct Public Hearings	Winter 2021
Step 9:	Select Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)	Spring 2022
Step 10:	Identify Additional Avoidance and Minimization Measures	Spring 2022
Step 11:	Publish FINAL Environmental Impact Statement and Decision Document	Early 2023
Right-of-Way Acquisition to begin		South Carolina – 2023 North Carolina - TBD

Public Participation



- **Who is involved in selection and decision?**
- **Who is involved?**

The NCDOT, SCDOT, and Federal Highway Administration have agreed to review major decisions using an interagency merger team. To date, the merger team and the public have had an opportunity to review and comment on the project's purpose and need, study area, and a range of alternatives that will be evaluated in detail. After careful consideration and evaluation of the Detailed Study Alternatives (DSA) the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) in collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will determine a Preferred Alternative from among the 7 DSAs and the No Build option. NCDOT, SCDOT, and FHWA will coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies to reach consensus on the selection of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). This agency collaboration process helps to ensure project decisions are made with consideration of applicable laws and regulations, while taking into account public and local government input. For the Carolina Bays Extension project the following local, state, and federal agencies will be involved in reviewing the project and providing concurrence on major project decisions as part of an interagency merger team:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Fisheries
- N.C. Department of Environmental Quality - DWR
- S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control
- N.C. Department of Environmental Quality – DCM
- S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control – OCRM
- N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission
- N.C. Historic Preservation Office
- S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control – Bureau of Water
- S.C. Department of Natural Resources
- S.C. Historic Preservation Office
- Grand Strand Area Transportation Study MPO
- Horry County – Ride 3
- Cape Fear RPO

- **Who ultimately decides? State or Federal?**

Major project decisions are made by NCDOT, SCDOT, and FHWA. In some instances, those agencies will make recommendations to the Interagency Merger Team for review and concurrence. Decisions made through collaboration with the Interagency Merger Team includes:

- Project Purpose and Need
- Detailed Study Alternatives
- Hydraulic Structure Recommendations
- Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)
- Avoidance/Minimization Measures
- Permitting



- **How and why are routes dropped during the study?**

Alternative Corridors are dropped through concurrence with the Interagency Merger Team and can be dropped or added for different reasons such as environmental impacts, human impacts, permitting impacts, and input from the public and local agencies. Once Detailed Study Alternatives (DSAs) are identified they are normally not dropped until the detailed studies are complete. The most common time for DSA's to be dropped from further consideration is at the time of the selection of the LEDPA.

- **What and who determines the Least Environmentally Damaging Practical Alternative?**

The DEIS will contain a Preferred Alternative as recommended by NCDOT, SCDOT, and FHWA. NCDOT and SCDOT will recommend the Preferred Alternative be selected as LEDPA to the Interagency Merger Team after the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been circulated for public and agency review and comment, and after a Public Hearing. The LEDPA decision will be agreed upon by the Interagency Merger Team.

- **What are the next steps?**

Currently, NCDOT and SCDOT are conducting roadway design, environmental, and traffic studies. The results of those studies will be compiled in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be circulated for public and agency review. After the DEIS is published, a Public Hearing will be held at which time the public can review project recommendations and provide comments. The selection of the LEDPA will follow the Public Hearing comment period.

- **How will the public be informed?**

After the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, a Public Hearing will be held at which time the public can review project recommendations and provide comments on the proposed project. Additionally, the Public Input Site for the project is updated periodically with new information throughout the project development process, <https://ncdot.publicinput.com/10105/>

Eminent Domain Process and Property Value

- **How does NCDOT determine how much land to take for right of way and interchanges?**

Real property needed for projects is determined by the roadway design, drainage, and utility needs.

- **How does eminent domain work?**

Property owners receive written notice from NCDOT for acquisition of their property. NCDOT establishes fair compensation based on appraisals by a NC General Certified Appraiser. An offer is then presented to the property owner which includes the value of real property, structures, and damages. Following the offer, negotiations and settlements take place.



- **How are property values determined?**

NCDOT has an appraisal performed on the portion of land needed for the construction of the project. Appraisals are opinions of value, by a NC General Certified Appraiser. Property owners have the right to have property appraised independently and accompany the NCDOT appraiser on inspection.

- **How are property owners protected? What about intangibles?**

Property Owners rights are protected through the entire process, and they have the right to have property appraised and accompany the NCDOT appraiser on inspection. Property owners have the right to information about their claim at any time; and valuations and claim information is a private matter. NCDOT will only share information with parcel owner and/or representative of the owner. NCDOT follows a legislative procedure which protects all parties under North Carolina law.

- **What is the expected overall project cost, including property taken?**

The current NCDOT 2020-2029 STIP has the expected construction cost of the project as \$232,800,000 and a right of way estimate at \$133,900,000. These costs will be refined and updated as the project moves forward.

Impact includes destruction to homes, businesses, churches, cemeteries, emergency services, etc.

- **Is NCDOT aware of the impact?**

- **Is NCDOT aware that churches, fire departments and 5 schools will be impacted?**

The project team is in the process of evaluating potential impacts of each proposed alternative. During the current project phase, a series of technical reports will be prepared that provide comprehensive analysis of the potential impacts on all human and natural environmental resources. One of these reports is the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) report which will provide a comprehensive analysis of potential direct impacts to churches, fire departments, and schools as well as other community resources. Those impacts will be documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

- **Is NCDOT aware that realtors are already disclosing potential right of way impacts for local properties and that values are already taking a hit?**

NCDOT, SCDOT, and FHWA are evaluating 7 potential build alternatives in addition to the No Build Alternative. The project team is working as quickly as possible to complete the necessary roadway design and impact assessments to reach a decision on a Preferred Alternative, a LEDPA, and finally a selected alternative. Disclosure of potential right of way impacts is speculative at this time. The most current project information will continually be updated on the project website located at <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/carolina-bays-parkway>.