



US 278 Corridor Improvements

Public Information Meeting

March 3, 2022

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Provide a project update
- Demonstrate how your feedback has been used to modify the Recommended Preferred Alternative presented at the Public Hearing last year
- Ask for YOUR comments, feedback, and concerns!

We want to hear from you!
Official comment period runs
February 24 - March 26, 2022

Project Overview

Beaufort County, in coordination with SCDOT, is proposing improvements to the US 278 corridor between Moss Creek Drive in Bluffton and Spanish Wells Road on Hilton Head Island.

The project includes:



Widening US 278 between Moss Creek Drive and Squire Pope Road from 4 lanes to 6 lanes



Replacing the existing 4 bridges with 1 6-lane bridge



Improving traffic performance at the key intersections on Jenkins Island and Hilton Head Island

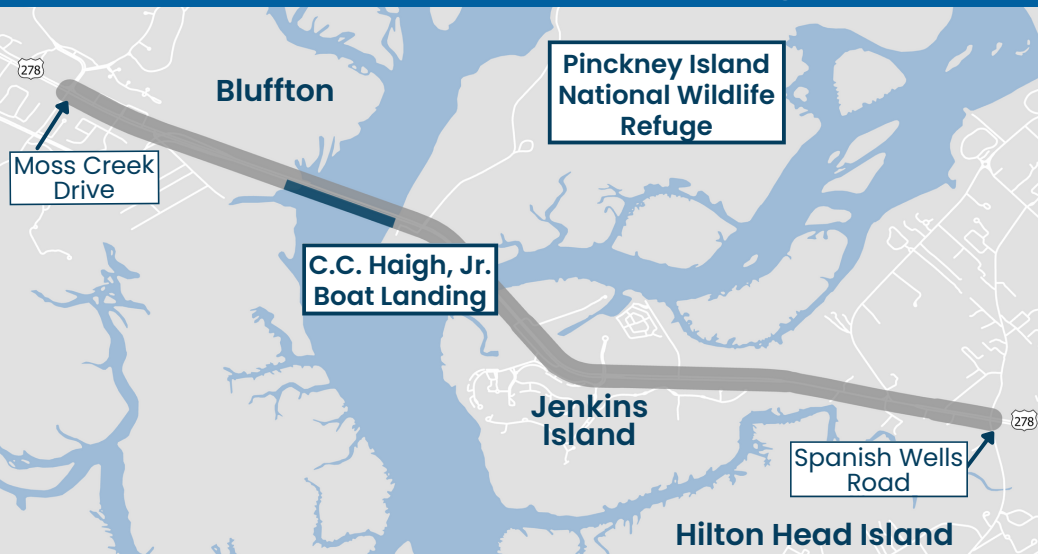


Improving access to Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge (PINWR)



Improving access to the C.C. Haigh Jr. boat landing

Project Study Area & Funding



Project Purpose

- Address structural deficiencies at the existing eastbound Mackey Creek Bridge
- Reduce congestion along US 278 from Moss Creek Drive to Spanish Wells Road

US 278 Corridor Improvements Project Funding Sources Legend

- Funded by Beaufort County
- Funded by SCDOT



What did we hear during the Public Hearing?

Thank you for participating in the July 2021 Public Hearing. The project team received 546 comments. The most frequent comments included concerns with eliminating the left turns from US 278 at Squire Pope and Wild Horse Roads and with widening in general, as well as a desire to preserve the Gullah heritage and natural environment.

Following the Public Hearing, the project team evaluated all feedback received from the public, local governments, and federal and state agencies. Today, we are presenting the modifications to the Recommended Preferred Alternative based on the results of YOUR feedback.

Public Hearing Summary

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENT PERIOD:
July 7, 2021 to August 22, 2021



In-person Public Hearing:
July 22, 2021 | 1:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Island Rec Center, Hilton Head Island

355

Total In-person Attendees

6,159

Web Visitors

Written Comment Forms & Surveys



59

Website Comments



375

Emailed Comments & Letters



80

Verbal Comments & Voicemails



32

Most Frequent Comments

546 individual responses were received during the comment period. Some included multiple messages summarized below.

209 Concerned with Left-Turn Eliminations



135 Against Widening



94 Concerned with Preserving Gullah Heritage



77 Against Signal at Windmill Harbour



70 In Favor of Signal at Windmill Harbour

72 Concerned with Preserving the Natural Environment



61 In Favor of Analyzing Grade-Separated Intersections












59 In Favor of Bike, Pedestrian, or Transit



Potential Impacts Comparison Matrix



Comparison of RPA 4A and the Modified Recommended Preferred Alternative

Evaluation Criteria		Recommended Preferred Alternative 4A (2021 Public Hearing)	Modified Alternative (NEW)
	Delay in Seconds (AM/PM)		
	at Squire Pope Road	25/16 seconds	24/35 seconds
	at Spanish Wells Road	10/29 seconds	21/43 seconds
	Wetlands	22.9 acres	22.5 acres
	Relocations	2 commercial	2 commercial
	Speed Limit	45 mph	45 mph
	Stoney Traditional Cultural Property Impacts	3.84 acres* *updated based on new right-of-way information along Wild Horse Road	3.47 acres
	Impacts to Adrianna Lane Park	Yes	No
	Construction Duration	3 years	3 years
	Intersection Improvements		
	Jenkins Road:	One way northbound	Removed and rerouted to C. Heinrichs Circle
	Squire Pope Road:	Eliminate left turn from US 278 & southbound free-flow right turn lane	Dual left turns from US 278 & dual southbound right turn lanes
	Old Wild Horse Road:	Traffic signal, u-turns, one way northbound	No change to existing
	Wild Horse Road/ Spanish Wells Road:	Eliminate all left turns from US 278	Left turns retained on US 278 & dual northbound left turns at Spanish Wells Road
	Additional Modifications		
	Lane Widths:	12'	two-11', one - 12'
	Meandering Roadway:	No	Yes
	Scenic Lookout Points:	No	Yes

How has YOUR input been used to modify the Recommended Preferred Alternative?

Intersection Improvements

The most frequent concern received during the Public Hearing comment period was related to the removal of the left-turn lanes on US 278 at Squire Pope and Wild Horse/Spanish Wells Roads and introduction of a u-turn movement. As a result, the project team re-evaluated the performance of other intersection configurations and consulted with agency partners about the difference in traffic performance of those alternative configurations to see if there was another option that would better balance the congestion needs with community input to eliminate the u-turn movement.

While the intersection improvements shown at the Public Hearing would perform better in 2045, modifications have been made to address local concerns.

Recommended Preferred Alternative 4A (2021 Public Hearing)

- 1 Jenkins Road:**
Convert to one way; right turn only from US 278; outbound traffic rerouted to C. Heinrichs Circle
- 2 Squire Pope Road:**
Eliminate left turns onto Squire Pope Road when travelling from Bluffton; single free-flow right turn onto US 278 with acceleration lane when headed toward Bluffton
- 3 Old Wild Horse Road:**
Install traffic light; convert Old Wild Horse Road to one way (northbound only)
- 4 Wild Horse Road/Spanish Wells Road:**
Eliminate all left turns from US 278

Modified Alternative (NEW)

- 1 Jenkins Road:**
Removed connection to US 278; all traffic will be rerouted to C. Heinrichs Circle
- 2 Squire Pope Road:**
2 left-turn lanes onto Squire Pope Road from US 278; 2 right-turn lanes onto US 278 from Squire Pope Road (no acceleration lane); combine southbound left and through lanes on Squire Pope Road
- 3 Old Wild Horse Road:**
Stays as it is currently
- 4 Wild Horse Road/Spanish Wells Road:**
Single left-turn lane onto both Wild Horse and Spanish Wells Roads; two left-turn lanes from Spanish Wells Road onto US 278




What does this mean for traffic congestion?

It is estimated that in 2045 it would take approximately 71 seconds to travel along US 278 eastbound from Squire Pope Road to Spanish Wells Road during the morning rush hour with the new modifications. This would be slightly longer than the 63 seconds it would take with the improvements presented at the Public Hearing. In the evening, that same trip would be 63 seconds vs. 58 seconds, respectively.

Additional Modifications

Based on comments received from the Town of Hilton Head Island, through an independent study, and public support for these ideas, the following have been incorporated into the Modified Recommended Preferred Alternative.

-  Reduce the width of the inside 4 lanes between the Crazy Crab and Spanish Wells Road along the Stoney Community

The below modifications would require additional local funding for implementation:



Meander the westbound lanes of US 278 on Jenkins Island to create a parkway effect



Include a scenic look-out point along the multi-use path over each creek



What happens next?

After this public information meeting, the project team will finalize the environmental document for review by the Federal Highway Administration. If approved by FHWA, right-of-way acquisition would begin, with the goal of starting construction in 2024.

Proposed Project Schedule				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prepare Environmental Assessment	█			
Public Hearing	█	Public Hearing July 2021		
Modify Preferred Alternative		█	★ Public Meeting March 2022	
FHWA Decision			█	
Right-Of-Way Acquisition			█	
Construction				█ Begins by 2024

This schedule is updated as of February 2022 and is subject to change. Right-of-way acquisition and construction start dates are based on a successful environmental approval process.

How to Comment

Public Meeting
 @ the Island Rec Center
 March 3, 2022 | 4 - 7 PM

Project Website
www.SCDOT278Corridor.com

Project Email
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