

THE CONNECTOR

e-EDITION

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JULY 2025

SCDOT's Vision for Our Growing Future

A Message from Secretary Powell



This month, Secretary of Transportation Justin Powell speaks about South Carolina's economic and population boom, with **over one million new residents anticipated by 2040**. Momentum 2050, SCDOT's comprehensive new long-term plan, is designed to **proactively address the infrastructure needs** driven by this significant growth.

Phase One of Carolina Crossroads Paves the Way for Main Interchange Work



As the Carolina Crossroads project continues to transform one of South Carolina's busiest corridors, **Phase One has already delivered critical improvements** that set the stage for success.

"Phase One was the lead-in to the main interchange at I-20 and I-26," explained David Rogers, the Construction Manager for Carolina Crossroads. "We took a major part of this massive project and advanced the work to de-risk the main interchange."

Serving as the launching pad for the remaining phases of the project, the first phase enabled major bridge construction, including a **redesign of the Colonial Life Drive interchange**. This reconfiguration was a key milestone, resulting in the closure of the Bush River Road ramps to I-26 and **creating a more efficient traffic flow** through the area.

The new interchange design has already proven effective by separating I-26 and I-126 traffic at an earlier point and **reducing congestion at one of the project's most complex merge points**.

By taking early, strategic steps through Phase One, SCDOT has not only delivered immediate benefits to drivers but also **laid a solid foundation for the work ahead** on the main interchange.

Hurricane Helene Recovery Continues in Greenwood County

An Upstate Bridge Update



SCDOT and its partners are working to **replace the Townsend Road bridge in Greenwood County** after it was damaged by Hurricane Helene last year. Work began this past spring as crews have been working on building up the structural supports for the bridge. It is expected to reopen this fall. For now, those traveling through the area can **follow a detour** that is outlined [here](#).

US 76 Rehabilitation Project in Marion County

US-76 REHABILITATION PROJECT



SCDOT is **advancing key infrastructure improvements in Marion County**. A 5.05-mile stretch of US 76 is currently being upgraded, beginning just east of Mullins near Scotch Community Road and Harrington Road crossing the Little Pee Dee River, passing through the town of Nichols, and extending to the Lumber River at the Marion/Horry county line.

The upgrades include:

- Full depth asphalt patching
- Asphalt shoulder widening
- Milling
- Asphalt resurfacing
- New pavement markings
- Installation of rumble strips for enhanced safety
- Correction of shoulder drop-offs
- Concrete replacements
- Fresh grassing for roadside

These enhancements will **increase the safety, durability, and drivability** of this vital corridor in the Pee Dee region. The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2025.

Bridge over Thicketty Creek in Cherokee County Goes to Letting



This May, SCDOT **let 29 different construction projects throughout the state.** The bridge on Macedonia Road (S-59) in Cherokee County was included on this list of projects to be let.

Letting is the process of awarding contracts for construction projects through a formal bidding process.

Clay Richter, the Director of Construction at SCDOT, says **this process ensures transparency, fairness, and competitiveness** in the selection of contractors.

"We may have projects that can be developed in six to eight months. It may take multiple years depending on the level of detail needed for a particular project," Richter said. "We're typically seeing in the range of three to four months at a minimum, from a letting before you can actually start to see work on the ground."

Now that the Thicketty Creek bridge has gone to letting, the next step is the pre-construction phase. The **pre-construction phase is the initial planning stage** of a construction project, making sure everything is in order before groundbreaking. This phase includes detailed planning and ordering of any necessary materials.

"Some closures might take a while," Richter explained. "So whenever we close a bridge, or road... the detours can be frustrating. We ask the public to work with us and understand that we're doing this to build best situation possible. **We try to work as quickly as we can and get the road back open.**"



SC 61 Rural Road Safety Improvement Project in Colleton County

Colleton County Rural Road Safety Improvement Project (SC 61)



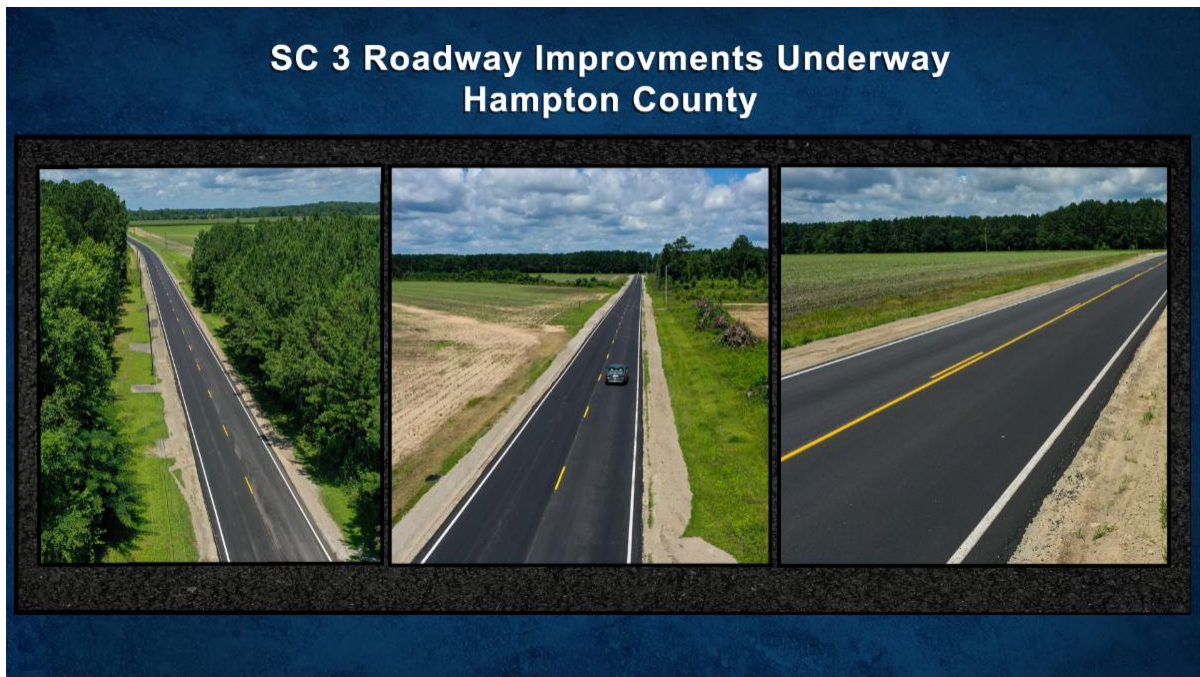
SCDOT completed upgrades along 9.5 miles of SC 61 in Colleton County to **improve safety and driving conditions**. Crews rebuilt the road with a stronger base and new asphalt, added 11-foot travel lanes, and paved 4- to 5-foot shoulders.

Safety features now include brighter signs, improved lane markings with reflectors, rumble strips to alert drifting drivers, smoothed pipe ends, and stronger guardrails. **These enhancements help drivers see better, stay on the road, and stay protected**, making for a safer, smoother ride through this rural corridor.

SC 3 Roadway Improvements Underway in Hampton County

SCDOT has launched a **major road improvement project** in Hampton County as part of its ongoing commitment to **safer and more efficient travel**. The work is taking place along SC 3 and includes a variety of upgrades aimed at restoring and strengthening the roadway.

Crews are resurfacing the pavement, performing full-depth patching, and laying new asphalt to extend the life of the road. Additional work includes the installation of milled-in rumble strips, updated pavement markings, enhanced guardrails, improvements to driveways and shoulders, and improvements for drainage. Construction is underway and is **scheduled for completion by fall of 2025**.



SCDOT Earns AASHTO Award for Drone Program Research

For the sixth time in eight years, SCDOT Research has earned a prestigious AASHTO High Value Research Award. Selected by AASHTO's Research Advisory Committee as one of the top 16 projects nationwide, this year's winning entry "**Transfer of Unmanned Aircraft Systems Technology to SCDOT for Enhanced Bridge Inspections**" is a joint effort between Clemson University's C2M2 and SCDOT, led by Dr. Joe Burgett and Rodrick Tucker. The project addresses the growing need for **safer, more efficient bridge inspections** as many of South Carolina's bridges near the end of their original lifespan.

The team developed a **specialized online training and a hands-on boot camp** that go beyond standard FAA drone certification, giving SCDOT inspectors the tools and skills to safely use drones in the field. With **higher-resolution imaging and safer inspection practices** already in place, the project has been awarded a Phase II to develop a statewide standard operating procedure. This effort not only modernizes SCDOT's inspection capabilities but positions the agency as a **national leader in drone-based infrastructure assessment**.



The Road to Success is Paved by SCDOT

Crews are on the move throughout South Carolina and the numbers speak for themselves. From interstates to neighborhood streets, **SCDOT is hard at work delivering smoother, safer roads across the state.**

With more than **a thousand miles paved already this season**, SCDOT has no plans of slowing down. As part of our long-term commitment to rebuild South Carolina's infrastructure, we are **committed to resurfacing roads in need** to make a safer South Carolina.

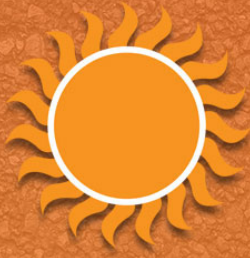


DISTRICT 1 THROWBACK

Construction of a **bridge on SC 555 (Farrow Road)** in Columbia on August 14, 1959.



Safety Spotlight: Heat Safety



HOT WEATHER

SAFETY TIPS FOR CREWS

Key reminders to help you stay safe on the job:

- Hydrate regularly throughout the day
- Take scheduled breaks
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing
- Use cooling gear such as towels or neck wraps



Know the warning signs of heat illness:

- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Confusion



Stay cool and safe.
Thank you for all that you do!



DEPARTMENT NEWS



Pictured above: SCDOT recently welcomed the summer interns for a day of learning and connection meeting agency leadership and gaining a deeper understanding of SCDOT's mission and operations.

Recent News:

SCDOT to accelerate replacement of bridge on Old Vaucluse Road over Interstate 20 in Aiken County

SCDOT announces US 76 bridge over the Chauga River in Oconee County fully open to traffic

SCDOT reopens Interstate 20 in Aiken County within 36 hours after Bridge Strike and Fire

Employee Updates (July 2025):

New Employees

Retirements

Promotions

In Memoriam

SCDOT is proud to recognize the recent retirements of:

Rob Bedenbaugh, P.E., C.P.M.
32 years of state service at SCDOT

Kenneth B. Eargle, P.E.
27 years of state service at SCDOT



Help us share the news! **Subscribe to the e-Edition of The Connector.**

[Subscribe to Newsletter](#)

[Recent Press Releases](#)

[View Current Job Openings](#)

Office of Public Engagement
media@scdot.org
(803) 737-1270

THE  CONNECTOR 



SCDOT Public Engagement | 955 Park St | Columbia, SC 29203 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!