

# FACT SHEET

(updated May 7, 2014)

## International Drive

**Project Scope:** Pave and widen approximately 5 ½ miles of roadway between SC Hwy 90 and River Oaks Drive (near SC 31 / Carolina Bays Parkway) in the fast-growing Carolina Forest area. This roadway will provide an alternate evacuation route for area residents and is intended to reduce congestion on US Hwy 501 between Conway and Carolina Forest / SC 31 / Carolina Bays Parkway.

**Original estimated cost:** \$6.5M

**Updated estimated cost:** \$15.5M (currently in the process of being validated due to changes in the Horry County / SC DNR Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) as approved by the SC Budget and Control Board on October 31, 2013)

**Original schedule:** Begin construction 2012 / Completion 2013

**Updated schedule:** Permits expected by late 2014. Begin construction late 2014 or early 2015 / Completion expected one year after the start of construction

## Project History:

**November 2006** Horry County's Capital Sales Tax Referendum passes

**November 2009** Design, right-of-way and permitting initiated

**July 2010** "Contract for Sale" between SCDNR and Horry County was executed for the necessary right-of-way to construct the improvements along the north side of the proposed alignment.

County committed to implement several "mitigation items" including the construction of three animal crossings required by SCDNR as grantor of a right-of-way (R/W) easement for International Drive.

This requirement increased the cost of the project by an estimated total cost of \$3M, and included the installation of 37,000 feet (7 miles) feet of barbed wire chain link fence (8' tall) along the proposed road.

**2010 - 2013** Ongoing development of engineering plans, right-of-way acquisition, and preliminary environmental studies. Project schedule is pushed back due to the continued delays of higher priority projects within the sales tax program (SC 707 Widening and Glenn's Bay Widening and Interchange) and because of changes to the agreement with SCDNR.

## **Current Status (as of May 2014):**

### Schedule:

- Original design was nearly complete, right-of-way acquisition is well underway (over 50% complete), and the environmental permit application was submitted in late November 2013.
- The environmental permit application was accepted by the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and placed on public notice (for comments) on December 11, 2013. The 30-day public notice / comment period was originally set to expire on January 10, 2014 and was later extended to February 10, 2014.
- As of May 7, 2014, comments from all agencies and the public have been received, and the issues are being worked through directly with the agencies. Formal responses to comments are currently being formulated and will be sent back to the ACOE during late spring / early summer of 2014.
- Receipt of the environmental permit is expected approximately nine months (best case) to approximately one year after the original late November submittal. This timeframe will require construction to begin no earlier than late 2014 or early 2015. It is expected that the newly completed roadway will be open to traffic approximately one year after the start of construction.
- The schedule to begin International Drive (priority #13) is also dependent upon the costs to construct the SC 707 Widening Project (priority #4) and the Glenn's Bay Road Widening / Interchange Project (priority #9) to ensure adequate funds exist within the program to complete the work on the higher ranked projects (per state law). The SC 707 bids have been opened and the low bid amount is in-line with the most recent cost estimates. The Glenn's Bay Road project costs won't be known until bids are opened for this higher priority projects later in 2014.
- The current local option sales tax program revenues and project budget validation projections indicate that all projects in the program will be completed as planned (including International Drive).
- A revised intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between Horry County and SCDNR was approved by the State of South Carolina Budget and Control Board on October 31, 2013. The revised IGA has allowed SCDNR to accept payment from Horry County at the appraised value of the right-of-way easement and it has reduced some of the requirements in the original contract agreement such that animal crossing structures are no longer required and standard SCDOT right-of-way fence can be used in lieu of the previously mandated 8' tall barbed wire fence.
- Current and upcoming activities include: revisions to the design of the road (vertical alignment) as required by changes to the requirements in the agreement with SCDNR, completion of right-of-way-acquisition, and completion of any modifications to the final design as required by any comments on the environmental permit application. Based on the comments received, the revised design will not require further changes to the environmental permit application or right-of-way acquisition boundaries.