



State Route 66, From State Route 34 in Bulls Gap to Near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66, Hawkins County, TN, PIN 107579.00

PUBLIC HEARING HANDOUT

June 5, 2025, From 5:00-7:00 PM EST

Bulls Gap School

315 Allen Drive

Bulls Gap, Tennessee 37711

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes to widen and realign State Route (SR) 66, from the intersection with SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in Bulls Gap to near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66, in Hawkins County, Tennessee.

Because the proposed project involves the use of federal funds, the project is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). TDOT and FHWA have prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the NEPA to identify and evaluate the environmental effects of the proposed project and to identify measures to minimize harm. The EA was approved by FHWA on April 15, 2025.

The EA has been prepared in accordance with FHWA's implementing regulations for NEPA ([23 CFR § 771](#)). FHWA and TDOT are the lead agencies for the proposed project; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District has been identified as a Cooperating Agency.

Hard copies of the SR-66 EA and technical appendices are available for public inspection at the following locations:

Hawkins County Courthouse 150 East Washington Street Rogersville, TN 37857	H.B. Stamps Memorial Library 407 East Main Street, Suite 1 Rogersville, TN 37857	Bulls Gap Town Hall 139 South Main Street Bulls Gap, TN 37711	TDOT District 17 Morristown Office 1825 State Street Morristown, TN 3781
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The SR-66 EA and technical appendices are also available to download electronically via the SR-66 project website: <https://tinyurl.com/SR-66Hawkins>

Additionally, hard copies of the SR-66 EA and technical appendices are available for the public to review tonight.

PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

This public hearing is being held in order to provide the public an opportunity to provide input on the approved SR-66 EA prior to completion of the final environmental document and meet the requirements of NEPA. NEPA requires that projects receiving federal funding or requiring federal actions (e.g., permits) undergo an assessment of their effects on the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment prior to the federal agency making a decision on the project (e.g., alternative selection, permit issuance). The project cannot proceed until this requirement has been successfully completed.

During the public hearing, a brief presentation will be given followed by a question-and-answer session. Representatives from TDOT will be present to address questions pertaining to the design of the Build Alternative along with the anticipated environmental impacts associated with it. TDOT also has representatives available to discuss the steps that would occur following the completion of the environmental phase of the project, including answering questions on the right-of-way acquisition process.

Public Comments received or postmarked by **June 26, 2025**, will be included in the official summary of the public hearing and incorporated into the final environmental document.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2006, TDOT completed a [Transportation Planning Report \(TPR\)](#)¹ which analyzed existing and projected traffic data and determined the feasibility of proposed improvements along an approximately 5.3-mile² segment of SR-66 from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in the Town of Bulls Gap to the Otes Community³ in Hawkins County. The [2006 TPR](#) evaluated modifying the existing two-lane road to an upgraded two-lane facility which would match the roadway lane and shoulder width geometrics (two 12-foot travel lanes with eight- to 12-foot shoulders) of the section of SR-66 from the Otes Community to the Town of Rogersville. As part of the [2006 TPR](#), four options were considered: Option A, Option B, Option C, and the No-Build Option. The [2006 TPR](#) recommended that one of the build options (Option A, Option B, or Option C) be implemented, but did not clearly specify a preference and stated the decision for which option to implement would be based on concurrence from the community and upon further review of both environmental and design data.

Based on the [2006 TPR](#), the TDOT 2007-2009 Multi-Modal Work Program⁴ identified the section of SR-66 from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in the Town of Bulls Gap to the Otes Community as a substandard rural highway and provided the initial funding for the proposed project's planning, environmental, and preliminary engineering studies.

Following completion of the [2006 TPR](#), Right-of-Way Plans (dated 10/02/2019) was developed for the section of SR-66 from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in the Town of Bulls Gap to near⁵ Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66. TDOT prepared a D-List Categorical Exclusion (CE) based on the Right-of-Way Plans (dated 10/02/2019) to document the potential impacts associated with the proposed improvements, which was approved by FHWA on May 6, 2020.

Following the completion of the 2020 D-List CE, TDOT and FHWA determined that due to the anticipated number of relocations, the proposed project no longer qualifies as a D-List CE. Therefore, the proposed project has been developed as an EA. The EA was approved by FHWA on April 15, 2025.

¹ <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/documents/government-how-do-i-documents/Studies/StatewidePlanning/studies-HawkinsSR66BullsGapToL5.3NearOtes-TPR.pdf>

² Since the development of the 2006 TPR, the total proposed project length has increased to approximately 5.70 miles.

³ Since the development of the 2006 TPR, the proposed project termini have been modified to "From SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in Bulls Gap to Near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66."

⁴ Please note that this document is not available online.

⁵ Please note that the Right-of-Way Plans (dated October 2, 2019) incorrectly listed the termini as "South of Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66." However, the proposed project would end near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The need for the proposed SR-66 project has been identified as the following:

- » Existing Roadway Geometric Deficiencies
- » Insufficient System Linkage
- » Need for Route Redundancy
- » Meet the Legislative Intent of the [“Improving Manufacturing, Public Roads, and Opportunities for a Vibrant Economy” \(IMPROVE\) Act](#)⁶

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of the proposed SR-66 project has been identified as the following:

- » Improve Roadway Geometric Deficiencies
- » Improve System Linkage
- » Support Route Redundancy
- » Meet the Legislative Intent of the [IMPROVE Act](#)



⁶ https://comptroller.tn.gov/content/dam/cot/orea/advanced-search/2017/2017_OREA_IMPROVEAct.pdf

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A No-Build Alternative and one Build Alternative have been evaluated in the EA. Each alternative is described in the subsequent text below.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative has been retained for detailed study and serves as a benchmark for comparison against the Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative would retain the existing state route and roadway configuration throughout the SR-66 project area except for those modifications to the roadway network that have been programmed and approved for implementation, as identified in [TDOT's 25-Year Long Range Transportation Policy Plan](#),⁷ [State Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#),⁸ and the [TDOT 10-Year Project Plan](#)⁹ and would allow for routine maintenance and safety upgrades.

Build Alternative

According to the Right-of-Way Plans (dated August 9, 2024), which serve as the basis of the EA, the Build Alternative would generally follow the existing SR-66 roadway alignment, except in locations where minor alignment shifts are needed to correct roadway geometric deficiencies. The Build Alternative would also widen the existing two-lane roadway configuration (which currently consists of one 10-foot-wide lane in each direction) to include the following (see Figure 1):

- » Two 12-foot travel lanes (one travel lane in each direction) and paved shoulders four- to ten-feet in width.
- » An intermittent 12-foot-wide two-way left-turn lane from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) to north of Goan Drive and from north of Berry Road to near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66.
- » Five-foot wide sidewalks from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) to north of Goan Drive.
- » Intermittent curb and gutter.
- » Guardrail, as required.

Once completed, the Build Alternative would provide a consistent typical section along SR-66 from SR-34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) to the county seat of Rogersville, as well as provide a link from Rogersville to Interstate 81 (I-81). The total proposed project length is approximately 5.70 miles.

The Build Alternative is included in the [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2023-2026 State Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\) as STIP # 23372066043](#).¹⁰

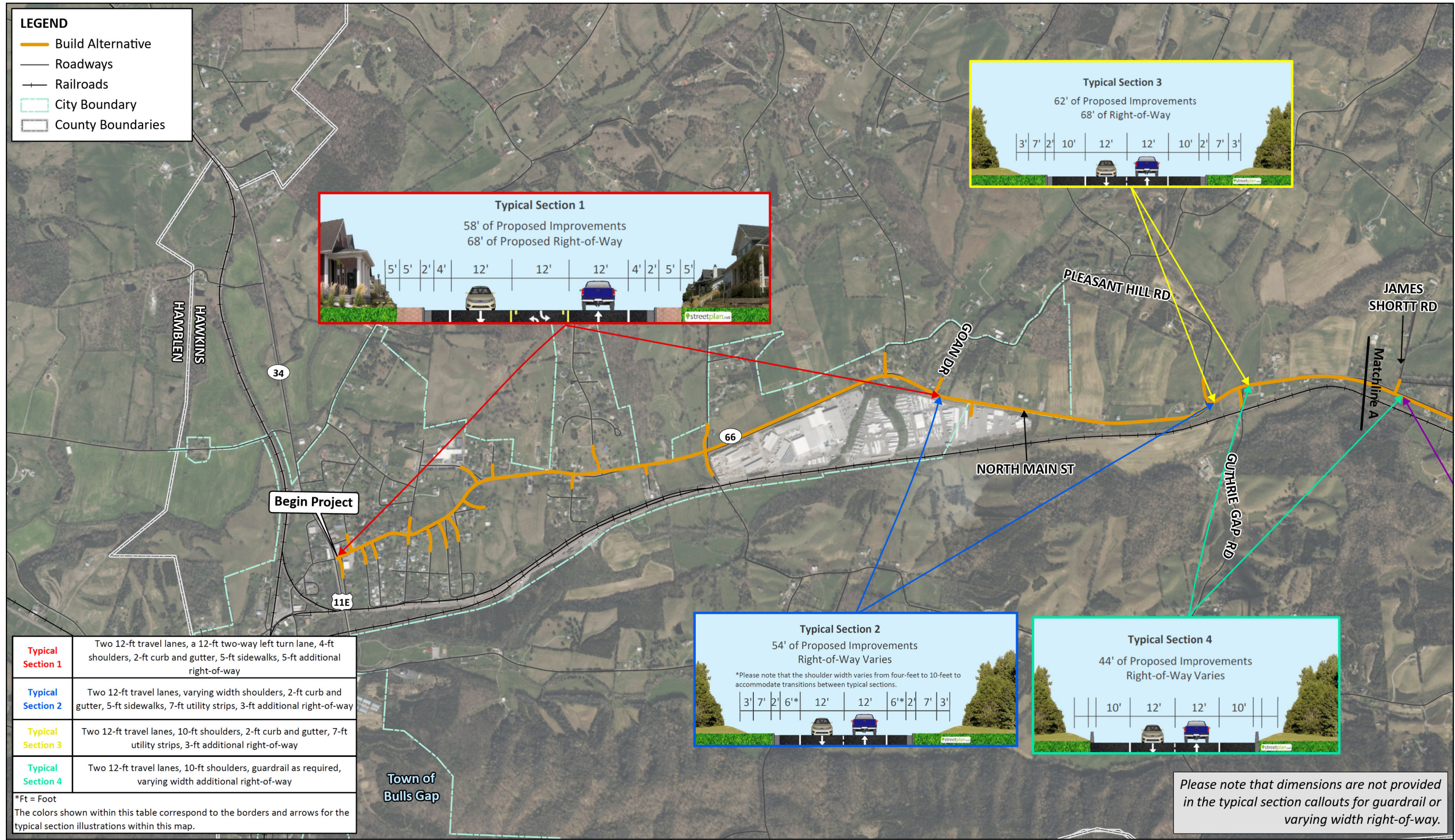
⁷ <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/long-range-planning-home/25-year-transportation-policy-plan.html>

⁸ <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/program-development-and-administration-home/program-development-and-administration-state-programs.html>

⁹ <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/build-with-us.html>

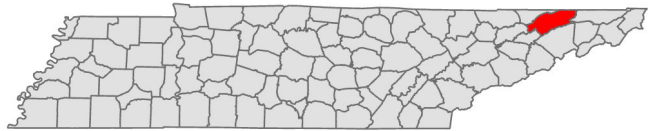
¹⁰ <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/programdevelopment/2023-2026-stip-draft/Tennessee STIP 2023-2026 Final R.pdf>

FIGURE 1: PROJECT LOCATION & TYPICAL SECTION MAPPING - PAGE 1



PROJECT LOCATION AND TYPICAL SECTION MAP - PAGE 1

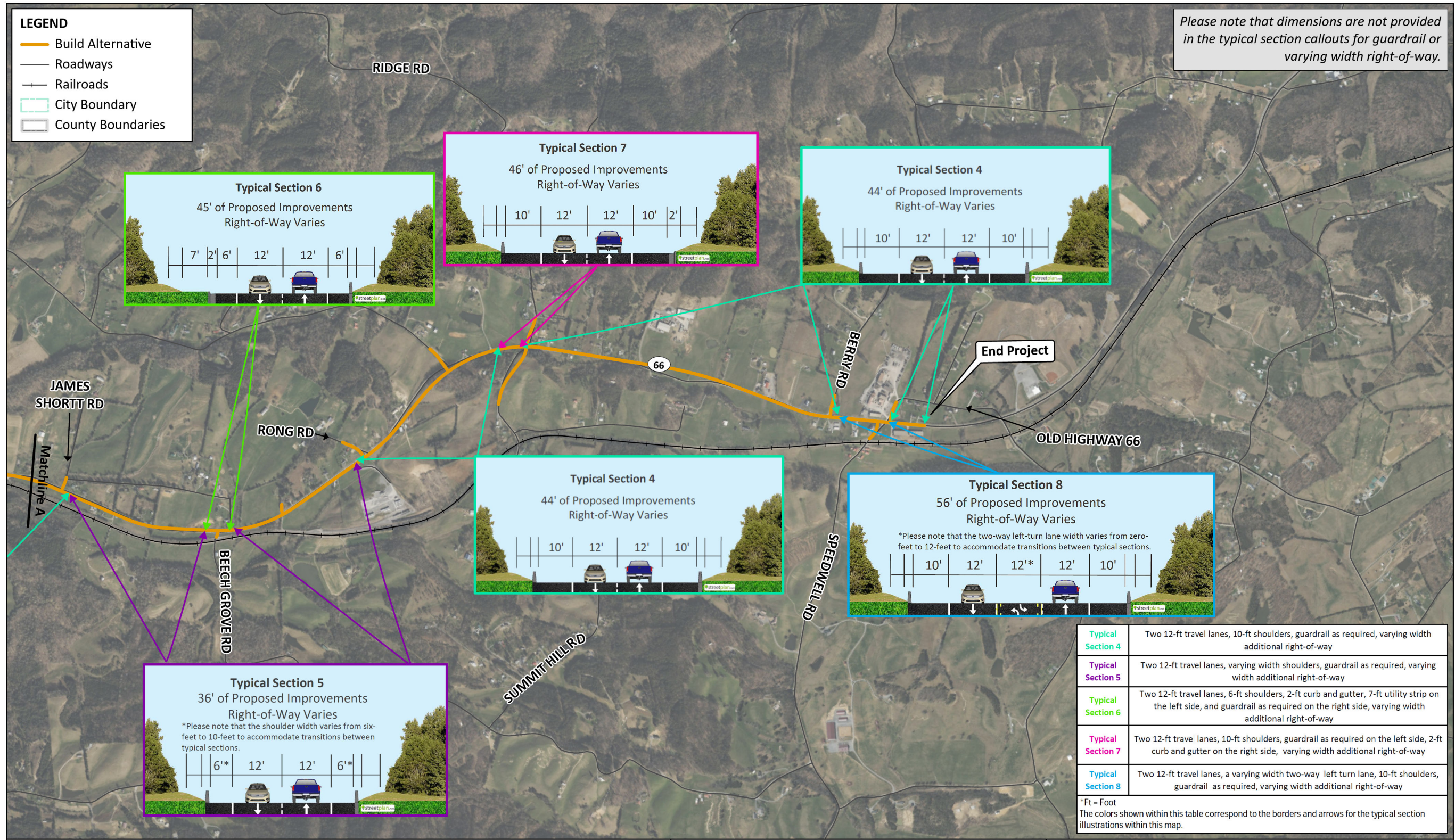
PROJECT STATE ROUTE 66
From State Route 34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in Bulls Gap to Near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66, Hawkins County, Tennessee, PIN 107579.00



0 0.25 0.5 Miles

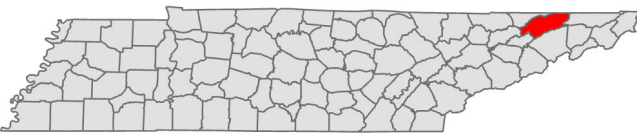


FIGURE 1 (CONTINUED): PROJECT LOCATION & TYPICAL SECTION MAPPING - PAGE 2



PROJECT LOCATION AND TYPICAL SECTION MAP - PAGE 2

PROJECT STATE ROUTE 66
From State Route 34 (US-11E, Andrew Johnson Highway) in Bulls Gap to Near Speedwell Road/Old Highway 66, Hawkins County, Tennessee, PIN 107579.00



0 0.25 0.5 Miles



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impact Category (Resource)		No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative
Land Use	Direct Conversion of Land to a Transportation Use	No Effect	Approximately 102.52 acres of land would be converted to a transportation use. This amount may be reduced as the proposed project moves through the project development process.
	Existing Land Use	No Effect	The Build Alternative would be inconsistent with existing land uses; however, impacts are anticipated to be minimal since this conversion would occur predominantly along existing SR-66.
	Zoning	No Effect	The Build Alternative would be inconsistent with existing zoning in the Town of Bulls Gap; however, impacts are anticipated to be minimal since this conversion would occur predominantly along existing SR-66. Zoning data is not available for Hawkins County.
	Future Land Use	No Effect	The limits of the Town of Bulls Gap Urban Growth Area are unknown; therefore, impacts from the Build Alternative cannot be determined. Future land use data is not available for Hawkins County.
	Planned Development	No Effect	Two planned developments were identified within the vicinity of the Build Alternative: an industrial facility for Southern Waste Services and a 4.8-megawatt Holston Electric power generation plant under development at the Natural Gas Liquids Supply Company fractionation facility. Right-of-way and/or easements may be acquired from the parcels on which these developments are located; however, no impacts are anticipated to any structures, and access would be maintained during construction.
	Legislation, Plans, and Policies	No Effect	The Build Alternative would be consistent with stated infrastructure and economic development goals.
	Farm Size and Agricultural Employment	No Effect	The Build Alternative could reduce the overall amount of available farmland and reduce the need for agricultural industry employees. However, the amount of farmland to be converted may be reduced, and agriculture is not a predominant source of employment in Hawkins County. Therefore, impacts are anticipated to be minimal.
Farmland	Century farms	No Effect	There is one recognized Century Farm that would be impacted by the Build Alternative.
	Prime Farmland	No Effect	Approximately 27.1 acres of prime, unique, and/or statewide or locally important farmland would be converted to a transportation use, which is approximately 0.52 percent of the total amount of prime, unique, and/or statewide or locally important farmland acreage found within Hawkins County.
	Impacts under the Farmland Policy Protection Act	No Effect	The Build Alternative received a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating of 109.7 points. Sites receiving a rating of less than 160 points are not given further consideration for protection and no additional sites need to be evaluated. The requirements of the Farmland Policy Protection Act have been fulfilled for the Build Alternative.
Transportation	Road Network	No Effect	The Build Alternative would widen the existing road and include minor horizontal and vertical alignment changes, primarily located in the Town of Bulls Gap, intended to meet current design standards.
	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	The No-Build Alternative would not support the infrastructure goals of the legislation, plans, and policies.	The Build Alternative would include five-foot sidewalks in the Town of Bulls Gap and paved shoulders four- to ten-feet in width, which would provide additional accommodations for bicyclists on SR-66.
	Freight Rail	No Effect	No Effect
	Planned Roadway Projects in the Vicinity of the Build Alternative	No Effect	No Effect
Community Impact, Relocations, and Economic Resources	Relocations of Residents or Businesses	No Effect	There are 58 potential residential relocations. There are also seven business relocations. In the event of relocations, there may be issues finding suitable replacement housing for any potential residential relocations. An examination of the Hawkins County residential real estate market near the SR-66 project area indicates an inadequate supply of available residential property to satisfy the relocation requirements of the 58 potential residential relocations. There is a larger inventory of homes in the Town of Rogersville (13 miles to the north), the City of Morristown (13 miles to the southwest), and the Town of Greeneville (17 miles to the southeast).
	Community Services and Facilities	No Effect	The Build Alternative would require partial acquisition from five community facilities (three churches, the East Tennessee Health Center, and Bulls Gap School) and the relocation of the East Tennessee Health Center. Due to the proximity of other medical facilities in the area, it is not anticipated that this relocation would have an adverse impact on the community. Access to all other community facilities would be maintained during construction.
	Community Stability and Cohesion	No Effect	Under the Build Alternative, impacts related to community cohesion have been determined to be moderate. The density and rural nature of the community following the relocation of residences and businesses would be consistent with the current density and rural nature of the existing community. Access to community facilities and services would be consistent with the current dispersed and rural nature of the existing community. It is unlikely that the Build Alternative would introduce a perceived barrier that discourages interaction across the roadway.
	Economic Conditions	No Effect	The Build Alternative is not anticipated to impact employment or unemployment rates in Hawkins County. The Build Alternative would support commuter/truck traffic on SR-66 and may encourage economic development.

Impact Category (Resource)		No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative
Air Quality	Transportation Conformity	No Effect	The Build Alternative is located within Hawkins County, which is in attainment for all regulated criteria pollutants. Therefore, the Build Alternative is not subject to conformity.
	Mobile Source Air Toxics	No Effect	The Build Alternative qualifies as a “Project with Low Potential Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSAT) Effects” and is not predicted to create adverse Mobile Source Air Toxic effects.
	Construction Air Quality	No Effect	The Build Alternative may cause temporary generation of construction-related pollutant emissions.
Noise	Noise	No Effect	The Build Alternative is anticipated to impact five residential noise receivers. However, the Build Alternative is not predicted to cause a substantial increase in existing noise levels or exceed the FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria.
	Construction Noise	No Effect	Construction activities associated with the Build Alternative may generate intermittent and temporary noise above existing noise levels. The generated noise levels would depend on the types of equipment utilized, the duration of the activities, and the distances between construction activities and nearby land uses.
Historic Resources		No Effect	Two National Register of Historic Places eligible historic resources were identified within the limits of the Build Alternative (Shadowland Farm and Berry Farm). The Build Alternative would have no adverse effect to these resources.
Archaeological Resources		No Effect	The Build Alternative would have no effect to National Register of Historic Places listed/eligible archaeological resources.
Native American Consultation		No Effect	Native American Consultation was completed for the proposed project. None of the tribes indicated that the Build Alternative would result in adverse impacts; however, they did request to be contacted in the event of an inadvertent archaeological finding. Additionally, the Cherokee Nation requested to be a consulting party.
Section 4(f) Resources	Section 4(f) Resources – Historic Architecture	No Effect	Two historic architecture sites within the Area of Potential Effects of the Build Alternative were found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, Shadowland Farm and Berry Farm. A Final Section 4(f) <i>De Minimis</i> Evaluation for impacts to these sites was signed by FHWA on March 12, 2025.
	Section 4(f) Resources – Archaeological	No Effect	No Effect
	Section 4(f) Resources – Recreational	No Effect	No Effect
	Section 4(f) Resources – Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges	No Effect	No Effect
Natural Resources	Perennial Streams	No Effect	Twenty-two perennial streams (approximately 2,340 linear feet) are located within the limits of the Build Alternative.
	Intermittent Streams	No Effect	Six intermittent streams (approximately 1,235 linear feet) are located within the limits of the Build Alternative.
	Wet Weather Conveyances	No Effect	Four wet weather conveyances (approximately 185 linear feet) are located within the limits of the Build Alternative.
	Ponds	No Effect	Nine ponds (approximately 0.33 acres) are located within the limits of the Build Alternative.
	Wetlands	No Effect	Sixteen wetlands (approximately 0.539 acres) are located within the limits of the Build Alternative.
	Water Quality	No Effect	One 303(d) listed stream, Whitehorn Creek, was found within the limits of the Build Alternative. Water quality may be impacted as a result of the Build Alternative.
	Threatened and Endangered Species	No Effect	Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was completed, and there would be “No Effect” to any federally protected species. The USFWS and TWRA (Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) requested the implementation of best management practices. TWRA requested that a site visit should be conducted by qualified TDOT personnel to ensure erosion control measures are followed. The Build Alternative is covered under the 2023 Memorandum of Agreement between TDOT, FHWA, and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Division of Natural Areas (TDEC DNA); therefore, coordination with the TDEC DNA was not completed.
	Geology	No Effect	Construction of the Build Alternative may result in impacts to geology, such as impacts to drainage and ground and slope instability.
	Floodplains	No Effect	Portions of the Build Alternative (approximately 2.36 acres) are located in or near a Federal Emergency Management Agency defined floodplain; however, there is no detailed study.
Visual Impacts		No Effect	The Build Alternative would not impact visually sensitive resources. The Build Alternative would have a neutral effect on overall visual quality, and areas where roads were not previously visible but would be visible under the Build Alternative are minimal.
Hazardous Materials		No Effect	In 2012, four hazardous material sites with a “low” potential for encountering hazardous materials were identified within the limits of the Build Alternative. An updated 2024 hazardous materials desktop review identified 10 potential hazardous materials sites within the limits of the Build Alternative (two of which had been previously identified in the 2012 review).
Construction and Operations		No Effect	Potential construction-related impacts are anticipated to be temporary and would not exceed the timeframe during which active construction of the Build Alternative would take place. As it relates to operations, the amount of fuel required to construct a highway project of this type is substantial, but temporary in nature, and generally leads to reduced operating costs once the proposed project is completed. Given that the Build Alternative is predominantly widening existing SR-66, it is not anticipated that fuel impacts related to Build Alternative would be more than the No-Build Alternative post construction.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Transportation projects are developed in four phases: Planning and Environmental Design, Design, Right-of-Way, and Construction. The following is an estimated timeline for various aspects of the proposed project.

Initiate Early Coordination with Federal, State and Local Officials	Quarter 3 of 2024
Conduct Environmental Technical Studies	Quarter 4 of 2024
Public Meeting	November 12, 2024
Notice of Availability / Environmental Assessment Approval	Quarter 2 of 2025
Hold NEPA Public Hearing	June 5, 2025
Approval of Final Environmental Document / Selection of Preferred Alternative:	Quarter 3 of 2025
Right-of-Way Acquisition Phase	2026
Construction Phase	2030

*Quarter 1 – January through March, Quarter 2 – April through June, Quarter 3 – July through September, Quarter 4 – October through December

**Forecasted dates are subject to change.

***Once the final environmental document is approved by the Federal Highway Administration, the Planning and Environmental Phase is complete.

RIGHT-OF-WAY RELOCATION PROCESS

Should a property be acquired, compensation would be at fair market value. The fair market value will be established by using independent real estate appraisers who will prepare, for TDOT's use, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

When an appraisal is necessary, the appraiser will contact each property owner and offer the owner the opportunity to accompany him/her on an inspection of the property. After the appraisal is complete, the TDOT Right-of-Way Appraisal staff will review, and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that everything relating to value has been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. Owners of property will be offered fair market value for their property rights, as it is TDOT's desire to pay fair market value for the necessary property.

TDOT will provide advance notification of proposed right-of-way acquisition. The TDOT Right-of-Way Office has the responsibility, once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. Before acquiring property, all properties are appraised based on comparable sales and land use values in the surrounding areas.

An information pamphlet, Relocation Assistance Program, outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The pamphlet also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments. The pamphlet is available for download from the TDOT Relocation Office website: <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/right-of-way-division/relocation-office.html>.

TDOT will make relocation assistance available to all eligible persons impacted by this project, including residences, businesses, farm operations, non-profit organizations, and those requiring special services or assistance. The TDOT Regional Relocation Staff will administer the relocation program under the rules, policies, and procedures set forth in the [Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970](#)¹¹, as amended, the [Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1972](#)¹², [implementing federal regulations](#), [Tennessee Code Annotated 13-11-101 through 119](#)¹³, [The State of Tennessee Relocation Assistance Brochure](#)¹⁴, and [Chapter IX of the State of Tennessee Department of Transportation Right-of-Way Manual](#)¹⁵.

Additionally, in the event that suitable replacement housing is not available in the immediate SR-66 project area, TDOT will work with individuals to identify alternate options, potentially including the construction of a new home. Both renters and mobile homeowners will also be compensated and will receive assistance from TDOT in the identification of, and relocation of their home to, a new location. Businesses subject to relocation under the Build Alternative will be compensated for their relocation to a new location including moving costs, incidentals, and the cost to reestablish the business in a new location.

If you have a question regarding the TDOT Relocation process, please call **1-800-546-0949 (toll-free)** and leave a voicemail message with your name, phone number and question. A TDOT representative will respond to questions within 7 business days.



¹¹ <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title42/chapter61&edition=prelim>

¹² <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/title-13/chapter-11/>

¹³ <https://law.justia.com/codes/tennessee/title-13/chapter-11/>

¹⁴ https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/right-of-way-division/brochures/New%20Residential_09-26-18.pdf

¹⁵ https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/right-of-way-division/ROW_Procedures_Manual.pdf

WAYS TO ASK A QUESTION OR MAKE A COMMENT

You are encouraged to provide comments and input on the project. Your input will become part of the official public record for this project. **Public Comments received or postmarked by June 26, 2025, will be included in the official comment summary of the public hearing.**

Questions

ONLINE COMMENT FORM: Complete an online comment form available on the SR-66 project website at <https://tinyurl.com/SR-66Hawkins> or by scanning the QR code.

EMAIL: Send an email to TDOT.Comments@tn.gov using the subject line State Route 66 Project.

Comments

Public Comments received or postmarked by **June 26, 2025** will be included in the official summary of the public hearing.

Verbal Comments

Record a verbal comment with the videographer tonight or call (800) 546-0949 (toll-free) and leave a voicemail message with your name, phone number, and comment.

Written Comments

- » Send a **Comment Card** or **Letter** by mail to:

State Route 66
C/O Kimley-Horn and Associates
10 Lea Avenue, Ste 400
Nashville, TN 37210

- » Send an **Email** to TDOT.Comments@tn.gov using the subject line State Route 66 Project.

- » Complete an **Online Comment Form** available on the SR-66 project website at <https://tinyurl.com/SR-66Hawkins> or by scanning the QR code.



PROJECT CONTACT

For additional information, please contact the following TDOT representative:

Eric Wilson, PE

TDOT Region 1 Project Development Manager
Email: Eric.Wilson@tn.gov | Phone: 865.594.0742

Project Website- <https://tinyurl.com/SR-66Hawkins>