



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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## Blue Ridge Parkway News Release

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### Blue Ridge Parkway Seeks Public Comment Regarding Bridge Replacement at I-26

(Asheville, NC) – The Blue Ridge Parkway-National Park Service is a cooperating agency with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on the proposed project to widen Interstate 26 in Buncombe and Henderson Counties. The Parkway bridge at Milepost 391.8, that crosses I-26, is proposed to be replaced as part of the widening project.

The spacing of the columns supporting the current Parkway bridge over I-26 does not accommodate the widening of I-26. To accommodate the widened interstate highway, the proposal is to realign Parkway on either side of the new bridge to improve safety and visitor experience, while still maintaining the character of the Parkway. The proposed realignment of the Parkway and the replacement bridge is approximately 1,200 feet (or 0.23 mile) in length.

Comments specific to the Parkway bridge replacement may be submitted electronically through the following link: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/bridgeoverI-26> through October 26, 2016.

#### **Background Information**

The NCDOT and FHWA also serve as the local and lead agencies, respectively, for overall project compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended. The overall project's NEPA compliance included preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement / Section 4(f) Evaluation (DEIS), which was approved by the FHWA in August 2016 and includes preliminary information about the bridge replacement project scheduled to begin in 2019. For more information, visit <https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/i26Widening/>

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

*The Blue Ridge Parkway, in linking the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, is dedicated to enhancing the outstanding scenic and recreational qualities of the corridor that it traverses; conserving unimpaired its significant natural and cultural resources, and promoting in perpetuity the public enjoyment and appreciation of the central and southern Appalachian Mountains. Learn more about the Parkway at [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri).*

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