

PROPOSED 2026 TRANSPORTATION REFERENDUM



BEAUFORT COUNTY PENNY

WHAT IS A PENNY TAX?

A Transportation Sales Tax, often called a penny tax, is a small, dedicated sales tax added to retail purchases within the County. The funds are collected gradually through everyday spending and used to support transportation infrastructure projects such as road improvements, safer intersections, and repaving.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO BEAUFORT COUNTY

Beaufort County is growing fast, and that growth is putting real pressure on our roads, intersections, and daily commutes. In response, County Council established the 2026 Transportation Advisory Committee: 15 residents, one from each Council District and local municipality, tasked with figuring out the smartest way to invest in the transportation improvements our County actually needs.

WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED

County Council voted to have the proposed sales tax referendum included on the November ballot for residents to make the final decision. The proposed referendum is an **nine-year** Transportation Sales Tax program worth approximately **\$780 million**, organized into three categories:



\$326M

Safety and Intersection Improvement Projects



\$205M

Widening Projects



\$249M

Resurfacing and Dirt Road Paving Projects



These are the improvements residents consistently point to as priorities: safer intersections, less congestion, and better-maintained roads across every part of the County.

HOW IT'S FUNDED AND WHO PAYS

This is a sales tax, meaning it's funded through everyday purchases, not property taxes. That means the cost is shared: residents and visitors alike contribute every time a taxable purchase is made in Beaufort County, including tourists and non-residents passing through. Everyday essentials, including groceries, medicine, mortgages, and rent, are exempt, so the tax is through general purchases rather than necessities.

OVERSIGHT OF PROJECTS AND FUNDS

This process was built to be transparent from the start:

- Recommendations came from a **resident-led committee**; every Council District and local municipality had a voice.
- The plan includes independent citizen committee oversight to monitor how funds are spent.
- The full list of proposed projects is publicly available at beaufortcountypenny.com, so residents can see exactly what's being funded, where, and why.

DECISION PROCESS

In May 2026, County Council voted to have the proposed sales tax referendum included on the November ballot for residents to make the final decision. Beaufort County voters will have two questions on their November ballot related to the transportation sales tax.

- If the transportation sales tax receives a majority vote, the one-cent sales tax will begin appearing on purchases in early 2027.
- If it does not receive a majority vote, no projects move forward, and County Council will have to consider another revenue source to fund needed infrastructure improvements.

Have questions?

Visit beaufortcountypenny.com for the full list of proposed projects, timelines, and updates, or email us at info@beaufortcountypenny.com.