

# Rob Bedenbaugh takes charge as Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinator

Director of Office of Engineering Support **Rob Bedenbaugh** has been given additional responsibilities as the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinator.

With the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) new funding has been established to develop and deploy electric vehicles and electric vehicle infrastructure across the nation. This position is necessary given the emerging nature of electric vehicles and their implications to the transportation network.

As the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinator, Bedenbaugh will:

- Review existing SCDOT and other state agency plans developed on the designation of alternate fuel corridors and the deployment of electric vehicle infrastructure.
- Develop a plan to facilitate the deployment of electric vehicle infrastructure using the funds provided in IIJA including potential corridor designations and locations for potential charging facilities.
- Develop proposed standards and policies to govern how electric vehicle infrastructure will be deployed on SCDOT right of way and public facilities. This includes charging station standards and in-



**Rob Bedenbaugh**

teroperability.

Bedenbaugh said, “SCDOT is excited to serve a key role in the initiative to increase access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure in South Carolina.”

Bedenbaugh will put together necessary committees and task forces needed to facilitate his assignments, as well as coordinate with relevant partner agencies such as the Office of Regulatory Staff.

Bedenbaugh will continue to serve as the Director of Office of Engineering Support.

# Thanks, Tony!

*Former employee thanks coworker for saving his life*

*The following letter to the editor appeared in The State newspaper in May. It is reprinted here with permission from The State.*

I want to thank a former coworker for saving my life on April 8 even though he was probably 100+ miles from me at the time.

Tony Sheppard is a former SCDOT director of traffic engineering. While in this position, his staff suggested that if the trees in the median along Lowcountry

stretches of I-26 were removed, deaths would be reduced.

After much effort, Tony convinced folks of the need for change. Deaths dropped when trees were cut, medians were graded and a high tensile barrier was installed.

So how did Tony save my life on April 8? I was returning from

Charleston when, at 70 mph, I was run into the media by a truck aggressively passing a tractor-trailer that was in the right lane. Lucky for me, there were no trees, the median was nicely graded and the cable barrier was in place.

When I got home, I called Tony to thank him for saving my life.

I know the public questions things that the SCDOT does, but the clearing of medians along I-26 and I-95 has saved countless lives, including mine. I thank Tony Sheppard for his tenacity in pushing for this life-saving effort.

**Michael A. Dennis**  
Gilbert

# Syrees Gillens Oliver promoted to Public Involvement Director

**Syrees Gillens Oliver** of Columbia is now the Public Involvement Director in the Environmental Services Office. She was previously a DBE Certification Program Manager.

In her new position, she will be responsible for managing public involvement policies and practices for the Planning and Environmental Divisions of SCDOT.

Oliver started her career at SCDOT in 2001 as an administrative assistant in Program Development East and RPG-1.

She has also worked as certification analyst in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Office and an Affirmative Action Officer.

Oliver is a native of Eutawville and graduated from Holly Hilly Roberts High School in 1992. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from Benedict College and a masters degree in Business Administration from Webster University.

In 2018, she was awarded the AASHTO Civil Rights Trailblazer Award and received Certified Public Manager certification. In 2019, she graduated from the SCDOT Lead Class.

Oliver attends Bethlehem Baptist Church where she serves on the public relations and greeters’ ministries and as the Gethsemane Organization Youth Su-



**Syrees Gillens Oliver**

pervisor. She is a member of the Order of the Eastern Star - Jehovah Chapter #203, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

# Kaylon Meetze is Rural Road Safety Manager in Traffic Engineering

**Kaylon Renee Meetze** of Lexington has been promoted to Rural Road Safety Manager in the Office of Traffic Engineering.

She will manage the Rural Road Safety Program which is making improvements along 1,250 miles of rural roads as part of SCDOT’s Strategic 10-Year Plan.

The position was previously held by Bryan Jones who retired.

Meetze started her career at SCDOT in 2015 as a construction projects inspection/manager at Lexington Construction B and Lexington Construction A from

2015 to 2017. In April 2017, she became the Assistant Program Manager of the Lowcountry Regional Production Group at SCDOT headquarters. She became the Assistant Safety Projects Manager in Traffic Safety in October 2019.

Meetze is from Lexington and graduated from Lexington High School in 2010. She earned an Associate in Science from Midlands Technical College in December 2012 and then received her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of South Carolina in December 2014.



**Kaylon Meetze**

She has three dogs – Rascal, Jasmine and Geronimo. She enjoys hunting, fishing, gardening and anything outdoors.

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