



PD&E STUDY
CORTEZ BRIDGE
 From SR 789 (Gulf Drive) to 123rd Street West



Financial Project Number: 430204-1-22-01

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach is an important part of the Cortez Bridge PD&E study.

FDOT is interacting with interested people through meetings with stakeholders, conducting surveys and publishing newsletters. At the beginning of the study, we attended the Cortez Fishing Festival and distributed a survey seeking input on what was important to the community and bridge users.

FDOT held a public kickoff meeting on April 30, 2013, early in the PD&E study process. About 170 people attended the three-hour open house meeting at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church fellowship hall in Bradenton. Staff discussed project issues with people who viewed aerial photographs of the existing bridge and the surrounding study area. A video explained the study process.

The study team gave presentations to various governmental groups. We received input from:

- Island Transportation Planning Organization (ITPO) – June 17, 2013
- Manatee County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) – June 18, 2013
- Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Technical Advisory Committee – July 8, 2013
- Sarasota/Manatee MPO Citizens Advisory Committee – July 11, 2013
- Sarasota/Manatee MPO board – July 22, 2013

Interested citizens may request a presentation to their group or organization by contacting FDOT project manager Tony Sherrard.

FDOT will hold an alternatives public workshop in early 2014 to present bridge replacement alternatives, the rehabilitation alternative and the no build option of continued maintenance of the existing bridge. We will conduct a formal public hearing in summer 2014 to present a recommended alternative and the no build alternative.

FDOT will determine the recommended alternative with input from local elected officials, residents, users and other agencies. The Federal Highway Administration approves the decision.

NEXT STEPS

As the PD&E study continues, we are busy doing a number of tasks. Engineers are identifying the number and types of repairs and the cost of the rehabilitation alternative. Testing will begin soon to determine the condition of the bridge deck, piles, railings, piers, mechanical components and the level of corrosion. Engineers also will determine the repairs needed to avoid posting a vehicle weight limit on the bridge.

We are developing the replacement alternatives and costs by establishing various bridge heights, alignments and typical sections, or how the roadway will look.

FDOT continues to collect information about the environment surrounding the bridge. You may have noticed divers surveying seagrasses within the project limits. We will continue to evaluate effects of various alternatives and select viable alternatives to present at a public workshop scheduled for early 2014.

STUDY SURVEY RESULTS

FDOT distributed surveys by U.S. mail prior to the public kickoff meeting in spring 2013 and received almost 850 completed surveys, which the study team reviewed. The survey results indicate:

- 51% favor rehabilitation of Cortez Bridge
- 43% favor replacement of the bridge

Of those in favor of bridge replacement:

- 38% prefer a high-level fixed bridge
- 19% like a mid-level drawbridge
- 33% prefer a low-level drawbridge
- 4% favor another option

We received surveys from the following locations:

	Rehabilitation	Replacement
• 11% -- Anna Maria	54%	43%
• 9% -- Bradenton	36%	58%
• 18% -- Bradenton Beach	52%	39%
• 16% -- Cortez	62%	33%
• 28% -- Holmes Beach	45%	50%
• 1% -- Longboat Key	14%	86%
• 17% -- Other	58%	33%

Interests listed most often on returned surveys include roadway traffic, access to the mainland, storm/emergency evacuation and bridge replacement types. Complete survey results are available on the study website www.cortezbridge.com.