



SUMMARY

Bridge Aesthetics Committee Meeting on August 12, 2020

Cortez Road (SR 684) from SR 789 (Gulf Drive) to 123rd Street West
Bridge Replacement Design (Manatee County)
FPID Number: 430204-2-52-01

LOCATION Virtual Meeting (via Teams)

TIME 9:00 am – 11:00 am

ATTENDEES *Committee Members*
Karen Bell, Tide Tables
Michael Bazy, Bradenton Beach Marina
Connie Morrow, Cortez resident and Bradenton Beach property owner

Project Team
Roxann Lake, Florida Department of Transportation (Project Manager)
Kaylene Johnson, Florida Department of Transportation
Darryl Richard, Florida Department of Transportation
Rachel Rodgers, LA Design, P.A.
Doug Hershey, Lochner (Consultant Project Manager)
Adrian Moon, WSP
Laura Turner, Laura Turner Planning Services

Unable to Attend *Committee Members*
Mayor John Chappie, Bradenton Beach
Joe Rodgers, Seafood Shack

PREPARED BY: Laura Turner **Date:** August 26, 2020

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has begun design plans for the Cortez Road bridge replacement from SR 684 (Gulf Drive) in Bradenton Beach to 123rd Street West in Bradenton. A preliminary meeting of the Bridge Aesthetics Committee was held on August 12, 2020.

Project Overview

Roxann Lake, FDOT Project Manager, welcomed the group and noted that she is available for one-on-one conversations at any time. Following introductions, a project overview was shared. From 2013 through 2019, a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study was completed for this bridge. The study's recommendation includes a high-level fixed bridge (65 feet) with the approaches connecting to existing local roadways.

Purpose of the Bridge Aesthetics Committee

As part of the PD&E study commitments, a Bridge Design Committee is to be created during the design phase. This committee, known as the Bridge Aesthetics Committee, will provide input and feedback on aesthetic design elements for the bridge and the approaches and membership will represent a range of perspectives. As community leaders, the Committee members will serve as liaisons with other local stakeholders – sharing what they've heard with the project team and in turn sharing what they learn from their constituents at each Committee meeting. This interactive approach will allow ideas and concerns to be addressed as they surface, allowing ample time for consideration. It is anticipated that the Committee will meet at least five times throughout the design process.

Presentation

Adrian Moon shared initial ideas about the bridge replacement and a copy of the PowerPoint slides are attached for reference. To promote discussion, several questions were posed.

- ***What do you think our goals should be?***
 - Be sure to include a range of perspectives, especially Cortez Village
 - Need to look at ways to make the bridge less massive, visually
 - Look at other examples that are already in place, showing them in the proper scale and context

- ***How can this bridge complement the area's history?***
 - Need to look to the future rather than the past; highlight benefits of the new bridge, such as ability to move boats without the drawbridge interruptions
 - Cortez Village has worked hard to protect their community and the impression is that this new bridge will tower over them
 - Look at how the construction of the road (associated with the bridge) will change the character of Cortez Village; more of a highway than a local street; traffic will be moving at a quicker pace [traffic calming will need to be a part of this design process]
 - Will this bridge be a duplicate of the Anna Maria Island bridge (to the north) or can there be some adjustments for this different setting? [The Cortez Bridge setting is in very different communities from the Anna Maria bridge; the FDOT District Secretary has committed that the same options that were made available for the Anna Maria bridge will be offered for the Cortez bridge; want the Cortez bridge to fit in and reflect its setting]

- ***Are there additional community considerations? What are your priorities?***
 - Concerns about construction impact, especially the ingress/egress at the west end; traffic is bad in this area today and construction may make it only worse? [Improving this intersection is not part of the bridge design project; however, a planning study that includes this intersection is almost complete and a PD&E study will follow which will address this intersection]
 - Will the new bridge be built while we continue to use the old bridge? [Yes; both lanes of traffic will remain open during construction; the construction of the bridge can be phased so traffic can continue to cross at the Cortez Road location without any detours]
 - Concerned about the timing of this project (want to avoid the mess that occurred with Gulf Drive); also how this project will be integrated and how communication will occur to let everyone know how to deal with the construction [These are maintenance of traffic issues which will be discussed in depth at other Committee

- meetings; at a future meeting, the team will show some trade-offs (between construction impacts and length of construction) for the Committee's consideration]
- Concerned for cyclists wanting to use the bridge to move between the mainland and the islands; with the big inclines at the landings, won't be able to do this [noted that these inclines will need to meet ADA requirements]
 - Concerned about safety issues associated those fishing off the bridge, pedestrians and cyclists sharing the same space; consider fishing opportunities under the bridge at each landing [This will be considered; there will be space under the bridge for golf carts; may consider some overlooks like the Howard Frankland bridge – benches, fishing, etc.]
 - Today, fishing on the Cortez Road bridge is at the center and to the east; there already is a dedicated fishing pier in Bradenton Beach just a few blocks south of the bridge
- ***Does the Committee value having a unique beam shape?***
 - Initial preference is to have thin ones, especially for the condos at the western touchdown; want to minimize any visual obstructions
 - Another consideration is to have arched ones
 - ***Are there examples you've seen elsewhere that you like?***
 - At future meetings the project team will show examples that include: day views and night views (lighting options); footings (waterline versus mudline), design stand out or blend in

General Discussion

- Committee would like to receive the latest renderings; do they show ground level at each end of the bridge or will the Committee be providing input? [All different locations and perspectives are provided; at this time the renderings are only to facilitate Committee discussion in understanding scale, height, etc.); Committee input will be requested and evaluated throughout the design process]
- Is fishing allowed from the Ringling bridge (in Sarasota)? [Don't believe so; remember with the high level bridge one will be too high above the waterline for fishing at the center of the span; project team will look for photos of other bridges to see how this is handled]

General Questions

- Was Cortez Village offered the chance to be represented on this Committee? [The team wants to be sure to include a range of perspectives on this Committee, including Cortez Village. Ms. Lake had previously reached out to Cortez Village and other local businesses as the Committee membership was assembled. In addition, she will work with Karen Bell and Michael Bazy on obtaining specific names so they can be approached about joining the Committee.]
- Can a copy of the latest renderings be shared with the Committee? [These renderings may be accessed by going to: <https://demo1.pbid.com/viz/cortezbridge/>; keep in mind that they are only for illustrative purposes at this time]
- Was there a similar aesthetics committee for the Anna Maria bridge? [Yes; design was completed 1 ½ years ago]

Project Contact

All questions and comments about this project should be directed to Roxann Lake (FDOT Project Manager).

FDOT – District One Project Manager
Roxann Lake, CPM
Phone: 863-519-2990
Email: Roxann.Lake@dot.state.fl.us

Action Items

- Roxann Lake will work the Karen Bell (Cortez Village contacts) and Michael Bazy (Bradenton Beach contacts) to identify additional Committee members
- The project team will review other existing bridges for aesthetics features along with how fishing opportunities are handled

Attachment – Meeting Presentation Slides