



# SUMMARY

## Bridge Aesthetics Committee Meeting on February 10, 2021

Cortez Road (SR 684) from SR 789 (Gulf Drive) to 123<sup>rd</sup> Street West  
Bridge Replacement Design (Manatee County)

FPID Number: 430204-2-52-01

**LOCATION** Virtual Meeting (via GoToMeeting)

**TIME** 10:00 am – 11:30 am

**ATTENDEES** *Committee Members*  
Jeff Vey, Bridgeport Condos (Bradenton Beach)  
Ann Marie Nicholas, Room with a Hue (Bradenton Beach)  
Connie Morrow, Cortez resident and Bradenton Beach property owner  
Joe Adorna, Cortez Park (Cortez)

*Others in Attendance*  
Alvimarie Corales, Sarasota-Manatee MPO  
Ryan Brown, Sarasota-Manatee MPO  
Dave Hutchinson, Sarasota-Manatee MPO

*Project Team*  
Roxann Lake, Florida Department of Transportation (Project Manager)  
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 (Cortez)  
Karen Bell, Tide Tables (Cortez)  
Michael Bazy, Bradenton Beach Marina

**PREPARED BY:** Laura Turner

**Date:** February 19, 2021

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is preparing design plans for the Cortez Road bridge replacement from SR 684 (Gulf Drive) in Bradenton Beach to 123<sup>rd</sup> Street West in Bradenton. The Bridge Aesthetics Committee (BAC) consists of community representatives from Cortez and Bradenton Beach, providing input on the bridge aesthetics. The group's fourth meeting was held on February 10, 2021. This summary provides the highlights of that meeting discussion, which followed a PowerPoint presentation (slides attached for reference). In addition, this meeting was recorded and the video may be viewed by using this link:

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#!/s/1f923543980e6a3054e6d296e3142690390d883426412f969a2ad4f1dc84047d>

Roxann Lake, FDOT Project Manager, welcomed the group and noted that she is available for one-on-one conversations at any time.

## **Agenda**

Following introductions, Adrian Moon reviewed the meeting agenda:

- Overview of refined pier options (based on input from the last BAC meeting);
- Discussion & selection of preferred pier option;
- Introduction to lighting;
- Discussion on overlooks;
- Additional feedback from the community; and
- Next steps.

## **Final Pier Options**

Based on the BAC input from the last meeting, the nine pier options have been pared down to three options. It was noted that the input was not only from the BAC members but also the communities they represent. Adrian Moon reviewed these options.

### **Concept C** (slides 4 to 7)

- Clean design, modern look; texture around the base of each pier
- Thinner design minimizes mass, but may make the bridge appear taller
- Based on BAC feedback
  - Added reduced scale base with opportunity for textured finish to be determined
  - Connected the pier caps to give it a cleaner look
- Opportunity for artistic relief within the base of inset, themes consistent with community history and character
- Overlooks at span over channel

### **Concept E** (slides 8 to 13)

- Dual arch design provides a more classic or historic look
- Based on BAC feedback – the scale of the base was reduced; less bulky
- Texture for renders changed to stacked coquina block finish
- Opportunity for alternate textured finishes; coquina, stacked stone, or shell pattern to be determined
- Overlooks at span over channel

### **Concept H** (slides 14 to 16)

- H shaped or straddle style pier with historic architectural details
- Large mass piers make a bridge appear lower relative to its surroundings
- Kept the arch in between the piers but removed the steel decorative arch
- Based on BAC feedback
  - Reduced architectural details to provide a cleaner look
  - Added cheek walls extending the deck; hiding gaps between bridge sections
- Opportunity for a variety of textured finishes to be determined later
- Overlooks at span over channel

### ***BAC Input on Pier Options***

Based on the BAC discussion (and input members collected from their communities), there was a group consensus to ***move forward with Pier Concept H*** for the following reasons:

- Doesn't block views;
- Visually looks lower;
- Includes cheek walls (covering gaps);
- Favors coquina-like texture, light coloring, and arch features; and
- Simple; uprights not as busy.

With this consensus, the engineering component of the bridge's design can move forward. It was noted that the textures and architectural details will remain simple (which will be further refined).

The BAC members shared their input on the pier options, including feedback from their respective communities.

#### Anne Marie Nicholas

- Still collecting input from community (concerns focusing on the bridge blocking views); noted that all three concepts keep or maintain views
- Prefers Concept H
  - Combines all of the elements the BAC discussed
  - Likes addition of cheek wall

#### Jeff Vey

- Sent the package to 55 Bridgeport residents for input
- Input split among two preferences
  - Architecture Elements – textures, etc.
  - Minimalist (Concept C) – more emphatic about this; don't want an imposing bridge; concerned about views; don't want bridge to impose on natural environment (herons, resident dolphins); keep it simple and graceful
- Concept C was bulky and chunky
- Have the bridge reflect its surroundings; add aesthetic elements without being too cartoonish
- Consider "sense of place" – natural beauty, laid back, sunrise/sunset
- Initially liked Concept C
  - Likes minimalist concept; use thin cap (from E and H) for Concept C; leaned toward Concept C with less mass (still too chunky)
- After discussion, supported Concepts E and H
  - Not a super structure
  - Concept H: ability to see views (likes the openness of Concept H as noted by Connie Morrow); compromise

#### Joe Adorna

- In process of sharing options with Cortez Park (located in Cortez, south and east of Tide Tables); noted that the community is on the waterfront with direct views of the bridge
- Community doesn't want a high bridge; anything that makes the bridge look lower is a positive
- Concept E – 1<sup>st</sup> choice; seems lower to the water; likes arches
- Concept H – 2<sup>nd</sup> choice; boxy with square pillar

#### Connie Morrow

- Received no input on Concept C
- Input received on Concepts E and H: liked simplicity of base and architectural elements
- Prefers Concept H
  - Open enough design that eye moves under the bridge and to the horizon and sky (with Concept E the eye stops at the pier arches)
  - Uprights not as busy; Concept E seems busier
  - Likes the cheek walls
  - Feels like the piers are holding up the bridge
  - Likes the lighter/blonde color

#### Other - Sarasota-Manatee MPO

- Alvimarie Corales
  - Personally, likes Concept E; similar to historic look of European bridges
  - No specific input from MPO on aesthetics
- Dave Hutchinson
  - Appreciates the process and feedback from the BAC and communities

#### **Lighting** (slides 17 to 29)

Lighting concepts were introduced to the group.

- Initial BAC guidance – focus on subtle lighting concepts that do not visually overwhelm or draw attention
- Temperature and intensity of lighting can be adjusted to suit community preference
- Pedestrian specific lighting and fixtures will be addressed at future BAC meetings
- LED lighting will be used; can be static (one color) or variable (ability to change color with control addition to the bridge)
- There is the ability to make a number of tweaks for the bridge lighting

#### Connie Morrow

- Community likes Concept H lighting
- Will go back to the community to find out preferences on pier face lighting

#### Joe Adorna

- Light only inside faces and not outside faces
- Lighting should not be a focal point

#### Jeff Vey

- Likes minimal lighting
- If use colors, use colors of sunsets and sunrises

#### Ann Marie Nicholas

- Use subtle up lighting
- Don't use too many different colors
- Too bright, won't be able to see the stars at night

At the next BAC meeting, lighting options will be prepared for the refined Pier Concept H.

- Looking at “lights on and off” and colors
- Number of pier faces lit (inside only, outside only, or combination)
- Consider direction of lighting (downlighting versus up lighting) with respect to environmental considerations (e.g., sea turtle nesting season)
- Need to consider saturations for lighting options with color; need additional input from communities on color
- Intensity of lighting – still want to be able to see stars

### **Overlooks (slide 30)**

Overlook concepts were shared with the group.

- Based on BAC Input – pedestrian overlooks will be limited to four locations around the navigational channel
- Shape and size of overlooks after final pier concept is selected
- Provide opportunities for public art, historic or educational plaques
- Pedestrian railings at overlooks can match the BAC selected rail or be unique to each location
- Will explore different treatments at next BAC meeting
- Any of the overlook shapes can be refined

### **General BAC Input**

- Like idea of information plaques – don’t overdo it
  - History about Cortez and Bradenton Beach
  - Horizon map – points out the landmarks being viewed
- Walkway along length of the bridge; helpful to add benches at each overlook; also nice break for walkers and cyclists
- Will obtain community input on shape – half moon versus soft square box
- No large message boards on either side of the bridge [confirmed that there will be none]

### **General Discussion**

- Concerns about change in access to bridge (approaches) in Cortez, especially for the businesses and residents (Cortez Park) closest to the bridge
- Cortez Park concerns about visuals at the bridge approach/touchdown (concrete walls, etc.)

### **Questions**

- Can the shell pattern slides be provided to the BAC? This information is helpful in explaining options with communities. [Yes, they will be part of the BAC meeting summary; note these are slides 9 to 11]
- Can the bridge design aesthetics (that the BAC is discussing) be used regardless of bridge height? [Yes; the BAC selected aesthetics are not bridge height dependent.]
- What is the plan for getting on and off the bridge during construction? Will there be detours? Which the two bridges [Anna Maria and Cortez] be under construction at the same time? [The Cortez bridge will continue to have only two travel lanes with each lane 12-foot wide. In addition, there will be two 10-foot wide shoulders. The wider shoulder can be used if a car stalls and can move out of the travel lane. Two lanes of

traffic will be maintained throughout the bridge construction so there will be no detours of traffic.]

- Is there the ability to change directions of the lanes (like in Washington, DC) to help control traffic during rush hour? [Traffic flow will not change during rush hour; however, for hurricane or emergency evacuations, local authorities will have the flexibility to use the shoulders during that time.]
- An individual expressed interest in receiving BAC meeting information; is that ok? [Yes; forward the contact information to Roxann Lake]

## Summary

- Concept H is the BAC consensus option.
- Lighting concepts should be subtle; also, include options without lighting.
- Overlook concepts should include: pedestrian railings; space for benches and receptacles; and plaques (history of the area as well as a horizon map that points out landmarks being viewed).
- Bridge design aesthetics being reviewed by the BAC can be used regardless of the bridge height.
- BAC selected aesthetics are not bridge height dependent.
- Next BAC meeting will cover
  - Decision on lighting options
  - Introduction to: pedestrian railing options, MSE walls, ornamental lighting, pedestrian lighting, and opportunities for public art
  - Items will be sent to the BAC before the meeting to allow time for reviews
- In between BAC meetings, email Roxann Lake with any comments or questions about the project

## 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](mailto:Roxann.Lake@dot.state.fl.us)

## Action Items

- Connie Morrow will email Roxann Lake with the contact information for the individual wanting to participate in future meetings.
- BAC members should forward comments from their communities directly to Roxann Lake rather than waiting for the next BAC meeting.
- The date for the next meeting has not been scheduled. The meeting will be held virtually from 10 am to 11:30 am. An information packet will be sent in advance of the meeting so the BAC members can review and share with their communities beforehand