

SUMMARY **DRAFT**

Meeting with Cortez Park & Tide Tables on March 1, 2021



**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 Cortez Park Clubhouse
12507 Cortez Road, Bradenton, FL 34210

TIME 10:00 am – 11:00 am

ATTENDEES **Cortez Park**
Joe Adorna
Gloria Weir
Jim Bresnahan

Tide Tables Restaurant
Robert Woodson
Gwen Woodson

Project Team
Roxann Lake, Florida Department of Transportation (Project Manager)
Doug Hershey, Lochner (Consultant Project Manager)
Laura Turner, Laura Turner Planning Services

PREPARED BY: Laura Turner **Date:** March 4, 2021 (REVISED)

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 123rd Street West in Bradenton. Representatives from Cortez Park requested a small group meeting with the project design team to changes as a result of the new bridge. This meeting was held on March 1, 2021 and this summary provides the highlights of the meeting discussion. The group was provided a handout, which included the design concepts, which are attached for reference.

Review of Latest Design Concepts

Doug Hershey reviewed the concepts with the group. These concepts are from the PD&E study. In May 2020, 30% design plans were submitted. It is anticipated that 60% plans will be submitted to FDOT in August 2021.

- The jug handle access road (on the northside of Cortez Road) will come under the bridge and connect to the existing Tide Tables driveway. The vertical clearance will be at least 16.5 feet, which is the standard clearance for a bridge going over a road.
- The northern half of the bridge will be constructed first; once in place, traffic will be rerouted to use the new bridge; will continue to have two lanes of traffic throughout construction; once the northern section is built the existing bridge will be demolished and then the southern section will be built

- Construction at the east end of the bridge likely to be done at night; times for night time construction can be specific in the construction documents; noted that Tide Tables closes at 8 pm
- Will need to look at the location of Annie's (north side of Cortez Road) in relation to the new bridge

Cortez Park Concerns

- Cortez Park leases the parking for the Recreational Vehicles (RVs), which is located east of the Tide Tables driveway. This is a source of income for the Park and concerns expressed about future access to these RV spaces.
- Need to check the leases for Park's use of FDOT right of way
- Page 1 of concept plans show sidewalk is 3 feet off the right of way line, which impacts the RV parking; can the sidewalk be moved closer to the roadway? [Will review to see if can move the sidewalk geometry]
- What will Cortez Park see at 125th Street West? [MSE wall]
- Lots along Cortez Road will still have backyards, which will look at MSE wall
- Concerns about cut through traffic – cars working their way through Cortez Park to get to Tide Tables rather than use the jug handle road; need to look at how this can be controlled
- Noted that after the new bridge is in place, Cortez Park will have only two entrances – from 125th Street at C and D Avenues; existing main entry (Central Avenue) will be gone
- Will need to have gates to discourage cut through between Cortez Park and Tide Tables (today, using traffic cones, which are removed during Tide Tables operating hours)

Tide Tables Concerns

- Currently, restaurant deliveries take place before 11 am, due to traffic and difficulties in accessing the restaurant from Cortez Road
- Concerned about ability for trucks to access restaurant once the new bridge is in place
- Concerned about future parking; several parking spaces are currently within FDOT right of way
- Concerned about construction vehicle storage and staging; suggested that occur on the north side of Cortez Road (perhaps where the retention pond will be created) instead of the southside at Tide Tables
- Noted that last time there was Cortez Road construction, Tide Tables parking lot was fenced off and used for vehicle storage (and only a few vehicles were stored); loss of parking spaces during this time
- MUST continue to have access to Tide Tables during and after construction [noted that the eastbound and left turn will remain in place during construction]
- Noted that restaurant closes at 8 pm
- Would like to have a traffic signal at the jug handle/127th Street

General Discussion

- MSE walls will be discussed at the next Bridge Advisory Committee meeting
- For westbound traffic, as the road narrows to one lane, drivers are using the right hand lane/shoulder to by-pass the cars to get to the one travel lane
- FDOT may be able to provide signage to Tide Tables to address the access and cut through concerns

- Don't want people living under the bridge; use this space for additional parking rather than park-like setting; don't want this area to become a destination in and of itself (which will only add to the traffic issues)
- Want as little impact as possible; likes the community the way it is today
- Current draw bridge opens once an hour from May through January; twice an hour in February, March, and April
- Heard that Hunters Point (new development on the north side of Cortez Road) will have its own access road for construction [FDOT is working with the Hunters Point developers to address access issues]; noted that units are being set up for rentals
- "Off season" is considered to be May through October

Questions

- How long will construction last? [about 30 - 36 months]
- When will construction begin? [early 2026; letting is July 2025 and it takes 3 to 6 months for the contractor to get started]
- Can you still make a left turn (eastbound on Cortez Bridge) onto the jug handle road? [yes; there will be separate turning lane; no traffic signal at this time]
- What is the laneage configuration on the bridge? [two 12-foot travel lanes, two 10-foot shoulders, and two 10-foot sidewalks; no median; cyclists can either ride in the shoulder or on the sidewalk]
- Will the sidewalk be protected from the roadway? [yes]
- Cortez Park has drained into the FDOT stormwater system for the last 50 years; will this change once the new bridge is in place? [will stay if tied into FDOT system today; existing water will go where it is today; there will be a new retention pond within the jug handle road]
- Why is Cortez Bridge being constructed before the Anna Maria bridge (to the north)? [Cortez Bridge is in worse condition]
- Will the new bridge eliminate traffic issues? [No, but it should address the back ups that occur when the existing draw bridge is open]
- When will more defined concepts be available for review? [60% plans will be submitted to FDOT in August 2021; team will need to respond to those review comments and revise accordingly which should occur by December 2021]
- What happens to emergency service access (to Cortez Park and Tide Tables) once the new bridge is in place; how will they reach Avenues A and B? [access via Avenues C and D]

Summary

- The project team will continue to work with Cortez Park and Tide Tables as design progresses; want to work out issues as much as possible
- Go to www.CortezBridge.com to review "fly through" videos; one includes the 65-foot bridge, which is what is being designed
- Safety is the top priority for FDOT
- Key issues to address:
 - Parking
 - Traffic
 - Drainage

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

- Joe Adorna or Gloria Weir will provide Roxann Lake with the RV specifications. The design team will use this information to review the bridge approach in relation to the current RV parking lot.
- Need to check the leases for Park's use of FDOT right of way
- Look at the sidewalks at Cortez Park (page 1 of concept plans) to determine if they can be moved
- Look at the potential solutions for anticipated cut through traffic – cars working their way through Cortez Park to get to Tide Tables rather than use the jug handle road

Attachment – Concept Plans

Cortez Park Meeting

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