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VENETIAN CAUSEWAY PD&E STUDY

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EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION DECISION MAKING NO. (ETDM): 12756



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FDOT Venetian Causeway PD&E Study Underway

In May 2014, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six initiated a Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study to examine the potential replacement or rehabilitation of the twelve existing bridges that comprise the Venetian Causeway. The causeway is approximately 2.5 miles long and is primarily a two-lane undivided facility that provides a major link between the City of Miami and the City of Miami Beach in Miami-Dade County, Florida. The causeway includes ten fixed span bridges and two bascule leaf span bridges over the Intracoastal Waterway (bridge numbers 874459, 874460, 874461, 874463, 874465, 874466, 874471, 874472, 874473, 874474, 874477, and 874481) extending from Bayshore Drive (City of Miami) to Purdy Avenue (City of Miami Beach).

The bridges were originally built in 1926 and have been designated as historic landmarks by the City of Miami and City of Miami Beach; they are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The project will take this historic designation into consideration and ensure that any decisions on improvements are coordinated through the County and a Task Force of representatives that reflect the local, state and federal interests of historic preservation. Given that the bridges are historic, rehabilitation options will be explored as part of the potential alternatives during the PD&E Study.

The causeway bridges are mainly short span reinforced concrete arch beam bridges. Each bridge section consists of two 12' travel lanes with 4' bike lanes and 4' sidewalks on each side. In 1995, the bridges underwent a major rehabilitation consisting of gunite repairs to the superstructure arch beams and full replacement of all sidewalks and railings. The western bascule bridge and its spans 17 through 41 were also replaced. Presently, the bridges exhibit severe deterioration because of their proximity to the very aggressive marine environment. These bridges do not meet current design and safety requirements.

What is a PD&E Study?

A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study is an important part of the transportation planning process and is conducted to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). During a PD&E study, FDOT determines the location and conceptual design of feasible alternatives for roadway or bridge improvements and analyzes their social, economic and environmental effects. Each PD&E Study conducted by FDOT includes a public involvement component which is aimed at soliciting feedback and input from business owners, residents and other stakeholders located in or near the area of a project. A No-Build Alternative, which considers leaving the bridges or roadways in their present state with routine maintenance, is a viable alternative considered throughout the study. A PD&E Study is finalized when the FHWA reviews the recommendations and provides a Location and Design Concept Acceptance (LDCA).

If a PD&E Study results in a Build Alternative being selected, the project may proceed to the next phase of development, which is the Design Phase. The Venetian Causeway Bridge project is currently in the PD&E study phase of a five-step process. The project study team is currently gathering information on various social and environmental factors in the project study area, including the location of threatened and endangered species, wetlands, historic resources, potential contamination sites as well as locations of homes, businesses and commercial

5 Key Steps in the Transportation Project Development Process

STEP 1: Long Range Planning:

In this step, FDOT and local governments conduct long-range transportation planning to identify and prioritize roadway and bridge projects.

STEP 2: Project Development and Environment Study (PD&E):

During this step, design options and their social and environmental effects are examined with feedback from the public.

STEP 3: Design:

In this step, detailed construction plans are prepared.

STEP 4: Right-of-Way Acquisition:

This phase of a transportation project involves the acquisition of necessary right-of-way, which is based on the construction plans.

STEP 5: Construction:

The roadway or bridge is built or rehabilitated during this phase.



buildings near the project corridor. Once alternative design concepts are developed, this information will be used to determine the potential effects of different alternatives on these social and environmental resources. The results of this effect analysis will be summarized in project reports which will be available at the official public hearing, which is currently scheduled to occur in December 2016.

Public Involvement Program an Integral Component of Venetian PD&E Study

A PD&E study process includes a robust Public Involvement Program to inform and involve all interested parties in how a planned project is developed. For the Venetian Causeway Bridge PD&E Study, this program is already underway. The project study team is gathering input from citizens and agencies within the project area. Public involvement activities will continue throughout the duration of the project.

Twelve (12) editions of the project newsletter, available in print and digital formats, are planned. Newsletter and other important information about the project will be distributed to:

- All individuals owning property within at least 300 feet of the right-of-way of the proposed project
- Neighborhood and civic associations in the study area
- Local, state and federal elected and appointed officials
- Local, regional, and state agencies and interest groups
- Stakeholders who request to be added to the distribution list

Each project newsletter will inform the public of the alternatives as they are developed and will provide notice of the planned Alternatives Public Workshop and public hearing. Public information meetings will be held during the PD&E Study and will include presentations given before the MPO and informal meetings and listening sessions with local community organizations, public officials, and public agencies. Meetings will provide information on the status of the project, design concepts being developed, and give stakeholders an opportunity to share their thoughts about the study's findings. A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Cultural Resource Committee (CRC) will be convened for this project.

Non-Discrimination Laws and Regulations

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Eman Gomaa, P.E., at 305-470-5219 or in writing at the Florida Department of Transportation, District Six, 1000 NW 111 Avenue, Room 6111-A, Miami, Florida 33172 or by email at eman.gomaa@dot.state.fl.us.

ESTIMATED PROJECT SCHEDULE

PD&E STUDY INITIATED **SUMMER 2014**

PUBLIC KICKOFF MEETING **SUMMER 2014**

This meeting will introduce the project and the study to the public and provide an opportunity to solicit questions, comments, and suggestions.

ALTERNATIVES PUBLIC WORKSHOP **SUMMER 2015**

At the Alternatives Public Workshop, the project alternatives that were developed will be presented to the public. The public's feedback and input will be solicited at the workshop.

PUBLIC HEARING **WINTER 2016**

At the Public Hearing, the selected project alternative will be presented to the public.

COMPLETE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT STUDY **SPRING 2017**

FDOT Needs Your Input! Join the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Venetian Causeway PD&E Study

Interested in participating in the CAC for this project? The CAC is an integral part of the public involvement program for this study. The CAC will meet four times over the course of the study.

For more information about CAC participation, or about this PD&E Study, please contact:

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