

# MINUTES

MARCH 10, 2021, 10 AM – 12:00 PM, SEED CENTER AND VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

## TAC MEMBERS PRESENT (QUORUM)

Stacey Dowden (City of Sulphur) (Chair)  
Nick Pestello (Port of Lake Charles) (Vice Chair)  
Health Allen (Lake Charles Airport)  
John Cardone (City of Lake Charles)  
Mary Bass Fontenot (Calcasieu Parish School Board)  
John Bruce (Calcasieu Parish)  
Brian Duplichan (City of Westlake)  
Seth Woods (LaDOTD – District 7)  
Carlos McCloud (FHWA La Regional Representative) (Non-Voting Member)  
Casey Lewis (LaDOTD Public Transit) (Non-Voting Member)  
Dawn Sholmire (LaDOTD State Planning Section) (Non-Voting Member)

## TPC MEMBERS PRESENT (QUORUM)

Wes Crain (Chair)

## LCMPO STAFF

Michael Hollier (Interim Executive/MPO Director)  
Jamie Gaines (Special Projects Manager)  
Walter Council (Planner III)  
Steve Jiles (Senior Transportation Specialist)  
Abby Coyle-Richard (Planner I)  
Edward Company (Planner I)  
Erin Whidden (Senior Software Developer)  
Michael Bernard (GIS Manager)  
Deborah Fanagan (Senior Transportation Specialist)  
Brennan Marque (GIS Analyst)  
Robert Smith (GIS Technician)

## GUESTS

Angela Murrell (LaDOTD)  
Ben Magallon (Alliance Transportation Group)  
Joe Umeozulu (LaDOTD)  
Kelli Van Norman (City of Lake Charles)  
Mike Huber (City of Lake Charles)  
David Cagnolatti (Phillips 66)  
Cindi Richard (City of Lake Charles)  
Tammy York (LaDOTD District 7)  
Lee Boyer (Bike/Ped Advocate)  
Jon Manns (Bike/Ped Advocate)  
Megan Hartman (Phillips 66)  
Cade McClemore (Calcasieu Parish)  
Clair Marceaux (IMCAL Board Chair)  
Paige Simpson (IMCAL)

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## 1. OPENING

### A. Roll Call

Ms. Stacy Dowden, TAC Chair, called the meeting to order. Mr. Mike Hollier called Roll to identify attendance. He stated there was quorum for Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). This was primarily a TAC meeting was TPC was invited.

### B. Introduction

Mr. Hollier introduced Ms. Lynn Maloney-Mujica, HNTB's project lead for H.003913 I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge project.

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## 2. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

### Ms. Maloney-Mujica Presentation

**Project Extent:** Nearing the end of the environmental review. Draft EIS expected this Spring/Summer 2021. Comments on project sponsors, permitting authorities, local officials, and the public. Final EIS may be finished by the end of 2021.

**Purpose:** Better system continuity, congestion and improved mobility, structural and functional deficiencies, and safety on the present I-10 bridge.

#### **Overview of Alternatives and Brief description of SWLARPC Methodology:**

Preliminary Build Alternatives (PBAs) 1, 3, and 5 were original alternatives presented to public. PBA 3 and PB5 were combined as the most reasonable course of action.

- Note the bridge alternatives are designed to overpass the contamination plume, that these recommendations successfully navigate this problem.
- Proposed improvements include a minimum of three through lanes in both directions, shoulders, center barriers, elimination of overhead clearance at crest, and lower bridge height (73ft).
- 3A, 3E, 5G, all meet design, structural, and design criteria while fulfilling project purpose.

**3A:** Makes no change to Sampson Street. Shifts access to the north in Westlake.

- Questions 1 (Q1): What is the justification for the offramp toward the south?
  - Answer 1 (A1): The community asked for a complete interchange.
- Q2: What is the vertical clearance of the north bridge?
  - A2: It is a movable bridge. Note: this could create a delay in traffic with this other bridge opening and closing. We [HNTB] will check on the number of delays expected per year.
- Q3: Traffic counts?
  - A3: It is not fully available currently, but will be made available.

**3E:** A complete interchange at lake Charles, you don't have to go around to enter.

- Q1: where is it intersecting exactly?
  - A1: It is easier to note from comparison against Google Map or review of our direct documents of the site.

**5G:** No Sulphur Avenue extension which will remain as it is today while Sampson Street is greatly affected rising to an interchange. Complete grade separation above railroad extension.

- Q1: rough order magnitude of cost between options?
  - A1: We will present momentarily on cost.
- Q2: Miller Street, what happens to the railroad lines.
  - A2: We will discuss this also because it has a great impact.



**Comparative Analysis (Preliminary and Subject to Change):**

Comparative Analysis		PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE			
Resource / Issue	Criterion	No-Build Alternative	Alternative 3A	Alternative 3E	Alternative 5G
Section 4(f)/6(f)	Number of Sites Impacted	0	2	2	2
Cultural Resources	Number of Historic Sites Impacted	0	1	1	1
	Number of Archeological Sites Impacted	0	1	1	1
Habitat Impacts	Federally Protected T&E Species	NC	None	None	None
	Bald Eagle Nest	NC	Within 650 feet	Within 10 feet	No Impact
Wetlands	Number of Acres Impacted	0	41.4	48.4	36.9

Habitat requires an army corps of engineers permit for wetlands impact, since Sulphur Avenue extension requires a permit.

PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE		No-Build Alternative	Alternative 3A	Alternative 3E	Alternative 5G
Railroad Opt 1 / Opt 2					
Neighborhood Cohesion	North of I-10 / South of Sulphur	NC	No	No	Yes No
Land Use	Sulphur Extension	NC	Induced	Induced	NC
Visual Intrusion	Lakefront	NC	Intrusive	Intrusive	Least Intrusive
	Sampson Street	NC	NC	NC	Improved
Safety	Number of Crashes 2042	428	418	446	424
	Number of At-Grade RR Crossings	3	3	3	1
Utility, ROW Costs Not Included	Construction (\$ Million 2020)	0	\$898	\$963	\$764
	50-Yr Operations & Maintenance (\$ Million 2020)	\$465	\$401	\$484	\$436
	Other Costs	0	\$173	\$185	\$147
Cost Estimates	Total Project Costs		\$1,472	\$1,632	\$1,347

Regarding 3A and 3E Sulphur Avenue bridge, HNTB anticipates a change in land use regulation toward increase commercial use in Westlake side as traffic flow increases substantially here as a project outcome.

Estimated project costs are 3A (\$1.5 billion), 3E (\$1.6 billion), and 5G (\$1.3 billion).

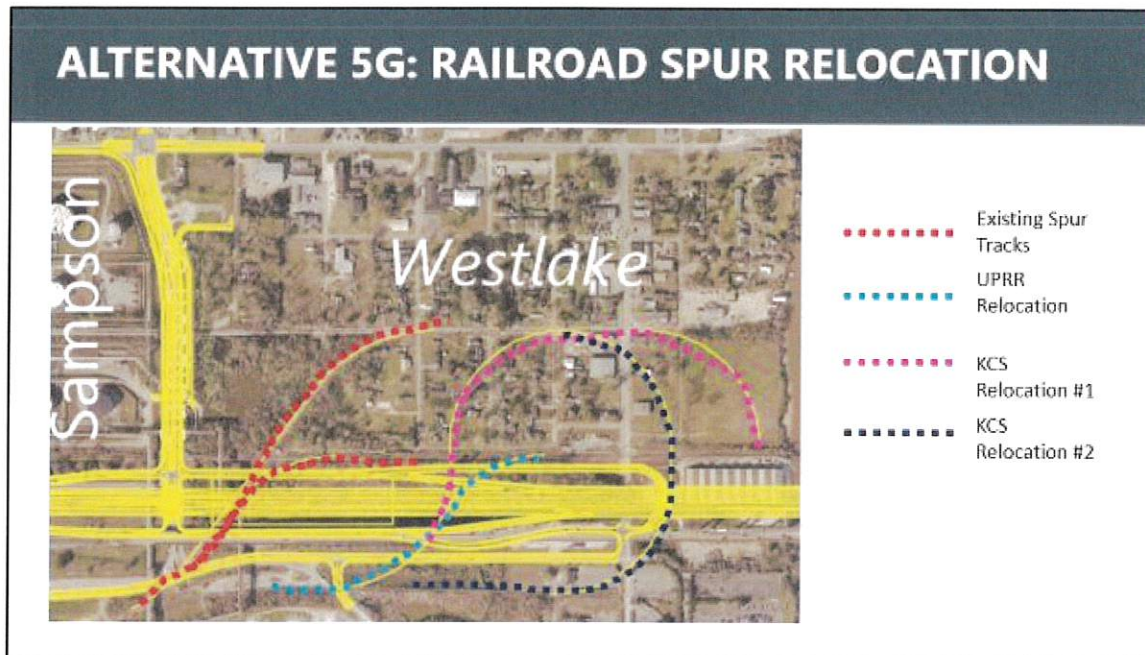
<b>PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE</b>						
Resource / Issue	Criterion	No-Build Alternative	Alternative 3A	Alternative 3E	Alternative 5G	
Phase I ESA	No. of Confirmed RECs within/adjacent to the ROW	19	37	37	38	
	No. of Potential RECs within/adjacent to the ROW	27	49	49	50	
	Number of RECs within/adjacent to the ROW	46	86	86	88	
<i>Railroad Opt 1 / Opt 2</i>						
Relocations	Number of Residential Structures	0	12	12	21	10
	Number of Commercial Structures	0	10	10	10	13
	Number of Industrial Structures	0	5	5	7	7
	Number of Other Structures	0	3	3	3	3
	Total Number of Structures	0	30	30	41	33
<i>Railroad Opt 1 / Opt 2</i>						
Right of Way	Additional Acres to be Acquired	0	82.54	87.54	71.02	70.69
<i>Railroad Opt 1 / Opt 2</i>						
Traffic Noise	Number of Impacted Receptors	379	408	407	386	388
Navigation	Number of Known Operations	0	2	2	2	2



### Railroads in Westlake:

Railroad options have significant impacts on relocations if pursuing alt 5G, which is a notable consequence.

As soon as we have a preferred alternative, we will engage the railroads. That analysis will take significant staff time, so will only be pursued if relevant.



*This picture depicts railroad rerouting as an outcome of the alternatives.*

- Comment 1 (C1): There are already development plans for this railroad relocation area that impacts this site.
  - Ms. Maloney: What does Mayor Bob Hardey have in mind regarding relocation?
  - Reply: Mostly concerning Miller Avenue.
  - SWLARPC: We're going to work with him and redevelop this section of town.

Sampson Street has continuing railroad crossing delays during prolonged closures at present.

5G would close Sampson Street during construction for up to 2 years, however, remembering costs, this is acceptable to the public according to those engaged in previous public meeting.

**Tolling I-10 Bridge:**

All bridge alternatives will be tolled. The traffic numbers will be the same and the tolling revenue will be the same.

- C1: Lake Street on ramp needs to be looked at, the merging room may be inadequate and should be looked at on Toucan.
- C2: If there is a toll on the new bridge, people may avoid the bridge and direct toward existing I-10, which will reduce the success of the project.
  - A1: HNTB will include this perspective in our reports and continue to look at the entire network.
- Q1: How will tolls be collected?
  - A1: Tolls will be electronic.

**TOLLING TRAFFIC AND REVENUE**

- Approximately 25% of the traffic on I-10 and the bridge would be diverted to I-210.
- A nominal toll rate of \$1-2 would provide substantial revenue that makes tolling a feasible option for funding of the bridge.
- Financial feasibility will be refined by the proposers for the Public Private Partnership (P3) that LADOTD has already announced.
- Note: no matter which alternative is selected, all crossings of the Calcasieu River (except I-210) will be tolled.

**HNTB**

DOT will build using private public partnerships.

**John Manns Bike/Ped Presentation** [Volunteer representing Bike/Ped community]:

Most bike riders want the ability to cross the Calcasieu river, which presently is not an option available to bikers, but would like to highly recommend it on the south side of the new I-10 bridge, with access and landings in Westlake and Lake Charles.

- Keeping steepness low on the new bridge is a key aspect of this plan, significantly dropping the bridge height is very helpful to bike/ped utilization.
- There are currently 22 interstate bridges with bike/ped paths included.
- Bike/ped ferry was examined as an alternative to path on the bridge, with a couple of drawbacks regarding cost and maintenance of operations.

There is significant future development and bike/ped paths being proposed for both sides of the river that will connect with this bridge if a bike path is included. Although that network may not be built today, it is central to other work being done.



### **Outstanding Questions:**

Q1: Do these additional amenities projects fall within the approved budget?

- A1: *[Mike Hollier as IMCAL Executive/LCMPO Director]* No. Generally, you can anticipate 10% of a project for amenities.
- A1: *[Ms. Maloney-Mujica]* The DOT was adamant about not maintaining a bike/ped path. They will only maintain vehicle portion of bridge. Louisiana state law prevents construction of bike/ped path on interstate bridge, however we suspect there will be an exception granted as they've done before if it is the desire of the community.

Q2: [Question about the railroad]

- A2: Ultimately this must be approved by the railroad entities. So, we are working with the existing infrastructure and planning with their concerns in mind.

Q3: *[Mike Huber from City of Lake Charles Planning Director]* The existing spur would be an ideal place for the new spur. Why not take the part north of the 1-10, and put 3-4 tracks and put everything next to one another?

- A3: *[Ms. Maloney-Mujica]* The overpass is too low to accommodate this concept, creating problems with EIS, but worthy consideration. We can bring idea to the railroad if 5G is selected as the alternative.
- A3: *[Mike Hollier]* The Westlake rep is not here but will certainly be at policy meeting.

Q4: *[TAC member]* How are we supposed to make a technical recommendation if we don't know what the outcome will be with this respect?

- A4: That's a valid point, but it is a new point that we haven't been able to consider until now. Having said that, we're here because in the Lake Charles area, everyone wants this done now and correctly, and in coordination. So, without slowing down the EIS are you willing to move forward knowing there is a solution to this problem? (Yes). So do not feel pressured to make a recommendation before you're ready to make a recommendation.

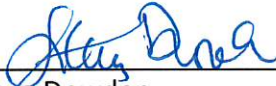
Q5: *[Claire Marceaux representing as IMCAL Board Chair and local I-10 bridge coalition]* Would TAC be willing to set up a meeting between other planning agencies and organizations before recommendation. This will help us stay on the same page about changes being made.

- A5: *[Mike Hollier as IMCAL Executive/LCMPO Director]* We're going to keep moving forward, however significant overlap between our policy board and those other relevant organizations. We may also invite everyone to policy meeting when it is held so all interested parties can leave meeting understanding the outcome.

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3. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bruce motioned to adjourn the TAC meeting. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Kevin Melton. The Chair called for a vote on the Motion. The Motion was passed unanimously.



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Stacy Dowden  
Chair



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Michael Hollier  
Executive/MPO Director