

**SCOPE OF SERVICES**  
**New Orleans East Industrial Canal Crossing**  
**Safety and Access Planning**  
**Stage 0 Feasibility Study**  
**RPC Task A-1.22IHNC; FY-22 UPWP**

**Preliminary Purpose and Need**

This project will identify, from existing bridges, a potential walking and bicycling crossing of the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (INHC) between the Florida Avenue Bridge and Lake Pontchartrain and present a conceptual plan for improving the structure and its approaches to allow for accessible and safe non-motorized use of the facility. There is currently no such crossing available to walkers and bicyclers, who are therefore unable to access services on either side of the canal, or to connect to the city-wide bicycle network.

**Study Location**

The Inner Harbor Navigational Canal, locally known as the Industrial Canal, is a man-made waterway connecting Lake Pontchartrain, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and the Mississippi River. The study area will focus on the upper segment of the canal, specifically north of the Florida Avenue Bridge and south of the Lake Pontchartrain outlet. Within this study area, to the west of the canal, are the City Planning Commission's Planning District 6 (Gentilly) and 7 (Marigny, Bywater, St. Claude, St. Rich, Desire) census tracts 17.01, 170.2, 133.02, and 137.02). To the east is Planning District 9 (New Orleans East) (census tracts 17.20, 17.24, and 17.51).

**Background**

The Industrial Canal completely separates New Orleans East from the remainder of New Orleans. There are four non-rail crossings in the study area, three of which are owned by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) and the last owned by the Port of New Orleans. Listed from north to south they are:

- Senator Ted Hickey Bridge (Seabrook Vehicular Bridge/Lakeshore Dr./LA 1264) - LADOTD
- Danziger Bridge (US Hwy 90./Chef Mentour Hwy.) - LADOTD
- I-10 Highrise Bridge – LADOTD
- Almonaster Avenue Bridge – Port of New Orleans

Due to traffic conditions, roadway design/functional class, or operational status, none of these are currently conducive to safe non-motorized travel, and I-10 is inaccessible to such users. Those on bicycle, wheelchair, or foot are therefore faced with an impenetrable, or at the least an extremely dangerous barrier when seeking opportunities on the opposite side of the canal. This is particularly problematic given the demographics of this area, which include a high number of low-income households and households without a car.

To increase accessibility to services for residents of New Orleans East and eastern Gentilly/Desire, to increase connectivity and equitable coverage of the city's rapidly expanding walking and bicycle network, and to improve safety for non-motorized users, this study seeks to identify a feasible location for non-motorized users to safely cross the Canal and to conceptually design that crossing. Given the minimum navigable width and height requirements of the Canal, it is likely that a new facility exclusive to non-motorized travel is not a near term solution, so it is expected that any improvements would be on an existing facility. The study will therefore assess each existing roadway bridge to determine which could most feasibly facilitate non-motorized crossing of the canal and serve the most people walking or biking, then conceptually identify design improvements that would be needed to ensure safe passage for non-motorized travelers.

### **TASK 1: PROJECT TIMELINE AND KICK-OFF MEETING**

The Consultant will prepare a draft project schedule in Gantt format, including major milestones for the tasks and subtasks below, which must be approved by the RPC project manager. After approval, any deviations from the schedule must be authorized by the project manager.

The schedule will be presented to RPC staff at a kick-off meeting, which will take place no later than two weeks after the notice to proceed is issued. The prime and all subconsultants must attend the kickoff meeting.

*Task 1 Deliverable(s): Project Schedule, Kickoff Meeting Agenda and Minutes*

### **TASK 2: PROJECT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Consultant will assist the City of New Orleans in establishing and supporting a Project Management Committee (PMC) to guide the technical work effort and to review the Consultant's work products. The PMC will, at the least, include representatives from the City of New Orleans Office of Transportation, City of New Orleans Districts D and E, City of New Orleans Office of Community Engagement, DOTD District 02, RPC, the Port of New Orleans, the Regional Transit Authority, Bike Easy, identified community groups in the study area, and other stakeholders as deemed appropriate.

The PMC will meet four times during the study effort. In addition, the Consultant will conduct meetings with elected officials and other local leaders and organizations as necessary to discuss the project's purpose and need and project-related opportunities and concerns.

*Task 2 Deliverable(s): PMC Invite List, Meeting Agenda, Minutes*

### **TASK 3: FACILITY PROFILES**

A comprehensive investigation effort will be made at the location to allow an accurate assessment of each the four potential crossing facilities:

1. Seabrook: west service road (Leroy Johnson Dr/Leon C. Simon Dr) to Downman Rd
2. Danziger: Desire Pkwy to Downman Rd

3. I-10

4. Almonaster: France Rd to Jourdan Rd

These narratives will include but may not be limited to the following, pending PMC discussion:

**Condition** - age, historic Status, structure, surface, fixed or movable, if movable, average number of daily bridge openings

**Crash History** – A crash history of the facility and the approaches to the facility (as defined in Task 3) will be determined for the past 5 years, including:

- Number and type of “correctible crashes”. (defined as head-on, right-angle, and left-turn collisions). RPC will provide crash data to the consultant for this task.
- All fatal and severe Injury crashes, regardless of mode or type
- Crashes involving non-motorized users

**Speed Study** – Vehicle travel speeds will be collected at the facility to perform a speed study following the methods defined by DOTD’s EDSM VI.1.1.1 and the DOTD Traffic Engineering Manual.

**Geometry** - lane configuration, lane width, shoulder width, sidewalk width, span length, grade of each bridge and their approaches, including on-ramps, off-ramps, and/or staircases from the bridge structures.

**Land Use and Access** - An assessment of the surrounding land uses, demographics, and transportation infrastructure adjacent to the facility (within a 2-mile radius of each approach). The assessment should include:

- demographics of residents near the facility (potential origins)
- commercial activities and services near the facility (potential destinations)
- walking and bicycle infrastructure, including substandard infrastructure (ex. sidewalks less the 5’ wide, non-ADA compliant curb ramps, etc.), or lack of infrastructure (sidewalk gaps, absence of pedestrian signals, etc.) (non-motorized connectivity to the facility)
- transit facilities (multimodal considerations for non-motorized users)

**Motorized Traffic** - 7-day, 24-hour traffic volume counts will be conducted for the facility. These counts will contain hourly subtotals and include vehicle classification amounts. Counts must be completed during a 7-day period that does not include a holiday or special event not typically seen at the site. Per DOTD traffic data collection policy, consultant will review the 24 hour counts and recommend a peak AM, Mid-day, and PM peak period to RPC PM. The RPC project manager will review and recommend approval or otherwise comment on changes required.

**Public Transit** – A profile of transit use on the facility will be conducted, including ridership profiles on each bus line that uses the bridge and on/off activity at bus stops within ¼ mile of the bridge (data will be provided by RPC).

**Walking and Bicycling Activity** - Automated bicycle and pedestrian counts shall be collected using a DOTD-evaluated methodology described in LTRC 16-4SA (“Pedestrian and Bicyclists Count -

Developing a Statewide Multimodal Count Program,” specifically Appendix D “Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Data: A Guide for Louisiana” - <https://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/pdf/2019/Appendix%20D.pdf> ) Prior to initiating Task 3, the consultant shall prepare a memo describing the count methodology and validation process to be employed. This methodology must be approved by the before commencing counts.

**Latent Bicycling Demand** - The consultant will employ a methodology for each facility that will show a quantitative measure of the potential demand for bicycling and walking if that facility had adequate safety measures (i.e., protected lanes, lower speed, etc.), and will allow a relative comparison of latent demand among all facilities. Prior to initiating Task 3, the consultant shall prepare a memo describing the methodology to be employed in estimating bicycling latent demand, consistent with best practices described in FHWA’s “Guidebook on Methods to Estimate Non-Motorized Travel” ([https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/docs/guidebook1.pdf](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/docs/guidebook1.pdf)) or comparable guidance. This methodology must be approved by the Project Manager before deployment.

**Walking and Bicycling Stress Measure** - The consultant will employ a methodology for each facility that will show a qualitative measure of the existing walking and bicycling conditions on each facility, and will allow a relative comparison of non-motorized stress among all facilities, as well as an estimated improvement in quality of facilities with conceptual improvements (task 5). Prior to initiating Task 3, the consultant shall prepare a memo describing the methodology to be employed in estimating bicycle and walking stress/quality on the bridges, consistent with best practices, such as NACTO’s “Urban Streets Design Guide” and San Francisco’s “Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index” (PEQI). This methodology must be approved by the Project Manager before deployment.

*Task 3 Deliverable(s): Detailed Facility Profile Report*

#### **TASK 4: CROSSING ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT**

The consultant, in coordination with the PMC, will develop high level evaluation criteria to determine the most suitable facility for potential walking and bicycle improvements.

*Task 4 Deliverable(s): Alternatives Assessment Matrix & Report*

#### **TASK 5: CONCEPTUAL PLAN LAYOUT**

The Consultant will prepare a conceptual layout for the crossing that addressed the conditions described in Task 5 and incorporates input from the PMC. The layout will show the proposed conceptual design overlaid on an aerial photograph and a simplified street grid. The consultant will show the conceptual design in cross section view. The layout shall follow to the extent applicable the LADOTD Roadway Design Procedure and Details Manual, AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide

The concept drawings will describe a roadway design for the facility that will permit safe passage by non-motorized users. The design will reduce conflicts between such non-motorized users and motorized travel, with consideration given to existing speeds, vehicle class use, vehicle capacity, potential conflict points, connectivity to existing walking and bicycle infrastructure, access to nearby origins and destinations, and access to public transit stops. For each of these alternatives, the consultant will, to the extent possible at

this stage of project development, establish preliminary cost estimates associated with engineering design, environmental actions, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and contingencies.

*Task 5 Deliverable(s): Conceptual Layout Report for each Facility deemed feasible by the PMC, including overlay on satellite photography, cross section, and artistic visualization*

#### **TASK 6: DEVELOPMENT OF STAGE 0**

A draft report with all documentation described above will be submitted to the PMC. The report will include the conceptual layout of alternatives and descriptions of the proposed feasible alternatives.

Pending comments from PMC, Consultant shall finalize report and prepare the Stage 0 Feasibility Study, documenting the information and analysis described above.

The MPO will engage with the local public agency (LPA) following the completion of the Stage 0 report to determine a recommended alternative, should the LPA decide to advance the project. The consultant will prepare MPO Stage 0 checklists (ref. LA DOTD Program Development and Project Delivery System Manual, Chapter 4: Stage 0 Standard Operating Procedure, MPO Checklist for Stage 0-Preliminary Scope and Budget Worksheet, and MPO Stage 0 Environmental Checklist) for the recommended alternative.

*Task 6 Deliverable(s): LADOTD Stage 0 Documentation*

#### **TASK 8: FINAL DELIVERABLES**

Six (5) printed copies of each report, and 3 electronic format (pdf including all maps and visualizations) will be submitted by the consultant to the RPC for distribution. All data graphic work will be submitted to the RPC in native software file format ( e.g. \*.shp for GIS, etc.).

An Adobe .pdf version and a Microsoft .docx version of the final report will also be provided and include all accessory documentation created during the course of the study, specifically including the FHWA – CAPX files generated in \*.xlsx format.

**TIMELINE: 10 Months**

**BUDGET: \$90,000**