

**US 11 Corridor Study
(LA 433 to Fremaux Ave.)
Slidell, Louisiana
Stage 0 Feasibility Study
RPC Task No. SL-1.24; FY-24 UPWP**

Introduction

The Regional Planning Commission in coordination with the City of Slidell is conducting a feasibility study for the qualitative assessment and potential modification of US 11 (Front Street) from US 190B to LA 433 which could include travel lane modification, streetscaping, integration of walking and bicycling features, water management and resilience enhancements, and related improvements which would enhance safety, multi-modal use, and improve the quality of life for all users. This request builds upon previous planning studies undertaken by the City of Slidell and is in accordance with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) emphasis on improving safety and planning for all roadway users.

Project Background

The City of Slidell is working to enhance and revitalize Olde Towne Slidell. To accomplish this, the City has undertaken two planning studies, Olde Towne Slidell Master Plan completed in January 21, 2023, and the Olde Towne Slidell Waterfront Master Plan, completed in October, 2022. These two documents outline a multitude of strategies and projects which are central to the revitalization of Olde Towne Slidell. Out of these planning processes, the City has identified US11 from US190B to LA433 as a key element that needs to be addressed to improve the area's livability, economic vitality, and walking and biking connectivity.

Study Purpose

The purpose of the study is to identify conceptual improvements which can be taken along the heavily trafficked US11 between US190B and LA433. The improvements shall focus on advancing the planning principles as laid out in the Olde Towne Master Plan of, "maintaining inter-connected streets that are pedestrian-friendly and bike-friendly, enhance streetscapes to be attractive, safe, and interesting, include the adjacent context, and accommodate parking without degrading Olde Towne's convenience and appearance."

Study Need

Based on previous planning processes undertaken by the City of Slidell, improvements to US 11 from US190B to LA433 have been identified as necessary. The City of Slidell Olde Town Master Plan specifically identifies Front Street as an area of concern for accessibility between the Olde Towne area and Heritage Park.

Therefore, to accomplish the goals outlined in the Olde Towne Master Plan and address areas of concern identified by the City, a feasibility study of US11 from US190B to LA 433 is necessary.

Study Geography



The project corridor is the portion of US 11 located between the intersections of LA 433 (Bayou Liberty Road) and US 190B (Fremaux Avenue). The corridor length is approximately .75 miles.

Task 1 - Project Management

1A: Project Timeline and Kickoff Meeting

The consultant will organize an internal kick-off meeting that will take place within two (2) weeks of the Notice to Proceed, to be held in-person or virtually at the discretion of RPC. The kickoff meeting will include the RPC Project Manager, RPC's public outreach coordinator (and other RPC staff as appropriate), the Consultant Project Manager, and a representative from each subconsultant. This meeting will address logistical details for the conduct of the project, including data sharing, invoicing requirements, RPC's Area of Interest Title VI Assessment and Standards, and other project expectations. The consultant will prepare a detailed project schedule including major milestones (PMT meetings, site visits, draft reviews, final report submission, etc.) to be submitted and reviewed at the project kick-off meeting.

1A Deliverable: Task Product will include detailed project schedule with timeline and major milestones.

1B: Project Management Team (PMT)

The consultant will assist RPC in establishing and supporting a Project Management Team to guide the technical work effort and to review the consultant's work products. The PMT will consist of the RPC, City of Slidell, the LADOTD District 62 Traffic Operations Engineer or their designee for LADOTD District 62, and other stakeholders, as appropriate. The consultant will provide all necessary agendas, handouts and exhibits one week in advance of PMT meetings for RPC review and approval and prepare summary minutes of the meetings.

The PMT will meet not more than four times during the study effort. These meetings may be in a virtual setting. The consultant will be responsible for organizing the virtual meetings and will identify the venue (i.e. Zoom, MS Teams, gotomeeting, etc.) to be used.

1B Deliverables: *Task products will include meeting agendas, handouts, summary minutes and support graphics. A report of meeting activities and outcome, with a copy of the sign in list, will be made available to attendees within 10 days of each meeting.*

1C. Stakeholder and Community Meetings

In consultation with RPC, the consultant will arrange meetings with other stakeholders in the area to discuss the project's purpose and need and project-related development opportunities and concerns, as they arise and as appropriate. These meetings will include the Mayor and the Slidell City Council.

The consultant shall be responsible for arranging and conducting up to two (2) community meetings at different phases of the project to solicit public input on the feasibility study. These meetings may be conducted in an in-person or virtual setting at the discretion of RPC. Meetings shall be publicized and conducted in accordance with the RPC's Public Involvement Plan and Title VI Program. The consultant shall work with jurisdictions and organizations representing communities within the project area of interest (AOI) to distribute information about these community meetings along with other opportunities for community input.

1C Deliverables: *Task products will include meeting agendas, handouts, presentations, summary minutes and support graphics. Summary minutes will be made available to the RPC within ten (10) business days of all stakeholder and community meetings, with an original copy of the sign – in sheet (and/or a full list of virtual attendees) for inclusion with the final report.*

Task 2 - Existing Data and Plans

2A. Plan Review and Inventory

Prior to initiating other deliverables, the consultant will review existing data and studies addressing the project area. The PMT will assist the consultant in compiling available data addressing land use and zoning, transportation, utilities, area demographics and environmental conditions within the study area.

The consultant will review previous plans within or relevant to the study area, including but not limited to:

- Olde Towne Slidell Master Plan (City of Slidell)
- Olde Towne Slidell Waterfront Master Plan (City of Slidell)
- Slidell 2040 Comprehensive Plan (City of Slidell)

The project team shall coordinate with appropriate stakeholders to ensure integration of this study with other ongoing projects, which may include (but are not limited to):

- Stage 0 Feasibility Study US190B/Fremaux Avenue Sidewalk Study (Regional Planning Commission)
- Front Street and Fremaux Avenue Pedestrian Improvements (LADOTD SPN H.011775)

The consultant shall identify any recent (since 2010) projects implemented within or otherwise affecting the study area, and to the extent possible shall identify recent maintenance history of roadways within the project area.

As a component of the existing conditions report, the consultant will prepare a standalone memo summarizing data and projects reviewed during Task 2, to be used as a basis for subsequent tasks.

Deliverables: *Products will include a task report summarizing existing plans and studies for the corridor, incorporating an inventory of data available for the project area, describing coordination efforts with any ongoing planning efforts or*

projects within the study area, and identifying implemented projects affecting the study area. The consultant shall describe within the Task Report how plans and data are to be used in the development of the plan and completion of subsequent tasks.

2B. Fatal and Serious Injury Crash Data Review

The RPC will provide the consultant with a five-year history of fatal and serious injury crashes, and crashes of all severities for non-motorized users, by location within the project area. This includes all non-motorized crashes along US-11 study corridor. The consultant will review the *Louisiana Pedestrian Crash Study*, LADOTD's HSIP list, and LADOTD's Roadway Departure Implementation Plan, and identify if any segments within the study area are identified as segments that have a high potential for safety improvement.

2B Deliverables: *The consultant shall prepare a memo summarizing findings from the review of the crash data and describing how these data will inform subsequent tasks. The consultant shall prepare maps and tables summarizing crash data for inclusion in PMT presentations and the final report.*

2C. Demographic Profile

To review community equity, access and general impacts in the study area, an Area of Interest (AOI) will be established by the RPC. The RPC will provide the consultant with geographic demographic and employment data, including measures identifying socio-economically distressed neighborhoods. The consultant shall describe within the Task Report how these data are to be used in the development of the plan.

2C Deliverables: *Task report summarizing findings from Subtask 2C.*

2D. Land Use and Design Regulations

The consultant shall identify and review applicable local and state permitting, land use, and roadway design standards and regulations applicable to the study area in consultation with the PMT, including but not limited to: the DOTD Road Design Manual, applicable parish or municipal design standards on local roadways, and land use and design regulations in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO). The consultant shall identify and describe these regulations and standards in the Task Report, to be used as a basis for subsequent tasks.

2D Deliverables: *Task report summarizing findings from Subtask 2D.*

2E. Transportation Vulnerability Data Review

The RPC will provide the consultant with the most recently available data indicating the transportation system's vulnerability to various natural hazards within the study area. The consultant will consult with the City of Slidell and DOTD to determine if the vulnerability accurately reflects conditions in the study area, and to identify additional vulnerable locations if appropriate.

2E Deliverables: *The consultant shall prepare a memo summarizing findings from the review of the vulnerability data and describing how these data will inform subsequent tasks. The consultant shall prepare maps and tables summarizing crash data for inclusion in PMT presentations and the final report.*

Task 3 - Data Collection

3A. Infrastructure and Utilities Data

The consultant shall conduct field work and use any relevant data from Task 2 to identify existing infrastructure conditions and utilities within the project study area. The consultant shall document information on roads within the study area, including lane widths, shoulder widths, available right-of-way, pavement and sidewalk conditions, intersections, and transit stops. The consultant shall inventory existing utilities and facilities including gas, water, electric, sewer, drainage, elevation, lighting, striping, signage, and signals.

Information shall be documented in an appropriate geospatial/machine-readable spreadsheet format with accompanying maps/graphics showing infrastructure and utilities within the study area.

3A Deliverable: *Maps and geospatial data documenting pavement conditions infrastructure and utilities information. The consultant will coordinate with RPC's GIS Coordinator to ensure compliance with RPC standards and industry best practices related to GIS products and printed mapping.*

3B. Motorized Traffic Counts

7-day, 24-hour bidirectional traffic volume counts will be conducted on specified segments of the project corridor at three locations. 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.

Traffic counts will be required on the segments as follows:

US11 (Front Street), between:

- Fremaux Ave (US 190B) and Pennsylvania Ave.
- Bayou Liberty Road (LA 433) and Fremaux Ave (US 190B)
- Sgt. Alfred and Bayou Liberty Road (LA433)

3C. Non-Motorized Data Collection

Automated 24-hour, 7-day bicycle and pedestrian counts shall be collected at the above referenced locations 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>). Counts should be collected during the same period as motorized traffic counts. As a part of the data collection, temperature and weather conditions will be recorded.

3D. Speed Data Collection

Single point speed data will be collected at the above 2 locations on the project corridor. At a minimum, sample sizes should include at least 100 free-flow vehicles or two hours of collection, whichever threshold is met first. The technique the consultant intends to use to collect speed (traffic counter, RADAR/LIDAR, third party data) must be described in the project proposal and ultimately approved by the PMT. At each location, the following will be documented:

- The posted speed limit
- The percent of vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit
- Standard deviation of speeds, to determine the amount variation between high and low end
- 50th percentile speed
- 85th percentile speed
- 95th percentile speed

3E. Turning Movement Counts (TMCs)

The consultant will undertake weekday and weekend turning movement counts at up to 8 locations using the peak periods identified in Task 3C. Consultant shall document passenger vehicle, truck, bicycle, and pedestrian usage at each identified intersection for a three (3) hour period adjacent to the discerned AM and PM peak hour (1 hour before, 1 hour after). It is anticipated that turn movement counts will be required at the following sites listed below. Final locations will be approved by the RPC project manager before counts commence.

Front Street at:

- 1st Street
- Erlanger Ave.
- Bouscaren St./ Carey St.
- Cousin St.
- Robert St.
- Driveways at Olde Towne Centre (2)
- Cleveland Ave.

Deliverable: Task report describing task 3 road characteristics and all collection methods, data collected, and analysis of data collected. The consultant will note daily weather conditions and the low and high temperatures for each day data is collected.

Information shall be documented in an appropriate geospatial/machine-readable spreadsheet format with accompanying maps/graphics showing infrastructure and utilities within study area. The consultant will coordinate with RPC's GIS coordinator to ensure compliance with RPC standards and industry best practices related to GIS products and printed mapping.

Task 4 – Existing Conditions Evaluation Report

With the documentation prepared in the previous task the consultant will prepare a report that:

- Summarizes existing planning efforts or implemented projects that would have a potential impact or are otherwise related to non-motorized travel on the US-11 corridor.
- Analyze, map, and describe the safety conditions of the corridor based on the provided 5-year crash data.
- Describe the motorized traffic conditions of the roadway using data collected in the previous tasks.
- Describes in detail existing and potential conflicts with motorized traffic for bicyclists and pedestrians on the US-11 corridor.
- Describes locations within the study area where transportation infrastructure may be vulnerable to natural hazards.

Deliverable: An existing conditions report for the corridor.

Task 5 - Conceptual Plan Development

Based on the findings from Tasks 2-4, the consultant will review, summarize, and make recommendations that improve/enhance operational efficiency and safety for all modes where opportunities exist to do so both in the field and in policy. The Consultant will review and recommend FHWA proven safety countermeasures where feasible. The Consultant will also review and make recommendations consistent with the City and LADOTD policy, informed by the newest available AASHTO Guidance on Bicycle Facility Design, NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, and NACTO Urban Street Design Guide. The consultant will also recommend strategies to enhance the transportation system's ability to withstand natural hazards, particularly as they relate to water management. The recommendations should be consistent with, and complementary to, the recommendations found in the Olde Towne Slidell Waterfront Master Plan.

Draft concepts will be developed that may include alternatives deemed feasible by the PMT. Said concepts should be developed to a level of detail sufficient to communicate to professionals and to the general public and provide context that incorporates the existing built environment.

These concepts may incorporate elements such as new or upgraded sidewalks/ paths, protected bikeways, separated bicycling and walking paths, signage, striping, lighting, augmented pedestrian crossings, wayfinding, ADA improvements, roadway diets, speed modification, and other measures to enhance the safety and connectivity of

the corridor, consistent with LADOTD design standards (EDSM II.2.1.14). Additionally, the concepts may include elements to enhance infrastructure resilience and livability such as green infrastructure (e.g., rain gardens, permeable pavements, street trees, etc.), grey infrastructure (e.g., improvements to street drainage), and streetscaping.

Deliverable: *Conceptual plan with visualizations of the proposed improvements and conceptual design alternatives. The visualizations will focus on three segments of the corridor as defined by the PMT.*

Task 6 - Program of Projects

Based on the analysis conducted in the previous tasks and input from the public meetings, the consultant will provide the PMT with a prioritized list of both short- and long-term improvements, describing the transportation deficiency, type of proposed improvements, and an estimated cost. Before beginning this task, the consultant will prepare a memo to the PMT describing the prioritization methodology that will consider immediacy of need, ease of implementation, and potential to implement alongside other initiatives.

To the extent possible, the consultant should identify opportunities wherein RPC could work with, LADOTD District 62, and The City of Slidell to advance these improvements towards project level design and implementation using various funding sources including STP50-200K attributable funds, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds, and Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) funds, among others.

Deliverable: *A methodology matrix for prioritizing projects (without cost); a prioritized program of projects with associated costs; visual maps of potential projects by cost, type and priority.*

Task 6 – Draft and Final Report

All deliverables should be aggregated into a draft final document for review by the PMT before the project has been billed at 85%. The PMT and RPC staff may recommend changes to be addressed before a final plan is approved. The consultant will provide ten (10) hard copies of the final plan (including appendices), as well a digital copy on a USB drive with all accompanying data. Six (6) hard copies of the final report will be delivered to the Regional Planning Commission and four (4) hard copies shall be delivered to the City of Slidell.

Consultant shall finalize alternatives and prepare/submit the Stage 0 Feasibility Study, documenting the information and analysis described above. All studied alternative(s) deemed feasible by the PMT will be described in the Stage 0 Report.

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, Checklist for MPO Stage 0-Preliminary Scope and Budget Worksheet, and Stage 0 Environmental Checklist) for the recommended alternative.

Deliverable:

Budget: \$84,000

Timeline: Ten months