

South Lafourche Airport Access Corridor

Stage 1 - Environmental Assessment

Lafourche Parish, Louisiana

Purpose and Need

The South Lafourche Airport Access Corridor Project includes a connector road and vertical lift span bridge designed to improve the safety, quality of life, state of good repair, sustainability, and economic competitiveness of Lafourche Parish, Port Fourchon, South Lafourche Leonard Miller, Jr. Airport, the State of Louisiana, and the United States.

Completion of this project will allow residential, commercial, and airport traffic to divert from rural, two lane undivided highways with high crash rates to a safer and more efficient four lane divided highway. Project implementation will avoid major structural repairs to a neighboring bridge and save Lafourche Parish future operations and maintenance costs of neighboring bridges. Additionally, the project will minimize the impact of Port Fourchon on coastal wetlands, improve community resiliency during hurricanes and other national disasters, decrease vehicle emissions, improve emergency response times, and allow for greater economic growth near the Airport, at the Port Fourchon, and in Lafourche Parish.

The Project will consist of approximately 0.4 miles of a new connector road from the four lane divided highway, LA 3235, to the rural two lane undivided highway, LA 1, which runs adjacent to Bayou Lafourche to the west, as well as, 0.1 miles of new, vertical lift span bridge connecting LA 1 to the rural two lane undivided highway to the east, LA 308 and Airport Road, over Bayou Lafourche.

Range of Alternatives

Earlier in the project development process, studies were conducted assessing the merits of alternative roadway alignments and different bridge improvements. Making improvements to the three state highways (LA 1, LA 308, and LA 3235) were considered, as were improvements to the upstream and downstream bridges.

Following the Parish's evaluation of the cost and environmental impacts of these various approaches, a preliminary alignment was selected for further study. The alignment, shown in the figure to the right, is being further studied in the environmental assessment. There will also be an evaluation of different design alternatives which will be developed in collaboration with agencies and the public. The Range of Alternatives currently includes: (see opposite side)

Alternative 1: Conventional Stop-Controlled intersections at LA 1 and LA 308, and

Alternative 2: Roundabout intersections at LA 1 and LA 308, and

Alternative 3: Taking no-action, the No Action Alternative.



Study Area Description

For the Environmental Assessment, there will be different study areas used for the analysis of different types of impacts. The analysis of potential for economic impacts, for example, will be both regional and local. Traffic impacts will be evaluated at nearby Bayou crossings, and at nearby connections between LA 3235 and LA 1.

The primary study area will be used for the evaluation of potential, direct impacts. Direct impacts consist mostly of those resulting from construction of the new bridge and roadway. The primary study area includes the land surrounding the three proposed intersections and a long narrow parcel of land that runs generally east to west from Bayou Lafourche and LA 1 to LA 3235.

Methodology

The Range of Alternatives may be revised following the April 2015 Public Meeting, based on input received at the meeting. The Range of Alternatives will then be evaluated. Each alternative will be evaluated with respect to many issues, many of which are described below. Should the Environmental Assessment (EA) under preparation reveal no “significant” adverse effects, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued.

There are no parks or wildlife areas in close proximity to the study area; and the project is not likely to have a direct impact on any churches, cemeteries, or community resources. Cultural resources will be considered in terms of historic standing structures, archaeological sites, and Native American tribal concerns. Field work has already been completed and determined that there are no jurisdictional wetlands in the study area. Impacts that are still being studied include effects on traffic, traffic-related noise, and real estate acquisitions.

Schedule and Costs

The Draft Environmental Assessment will be made available for public and agency comment in the summer of 2015. Design should be completed in 2016, with construction starting in 2017. The overall project cost is estimated to be \$30 million.

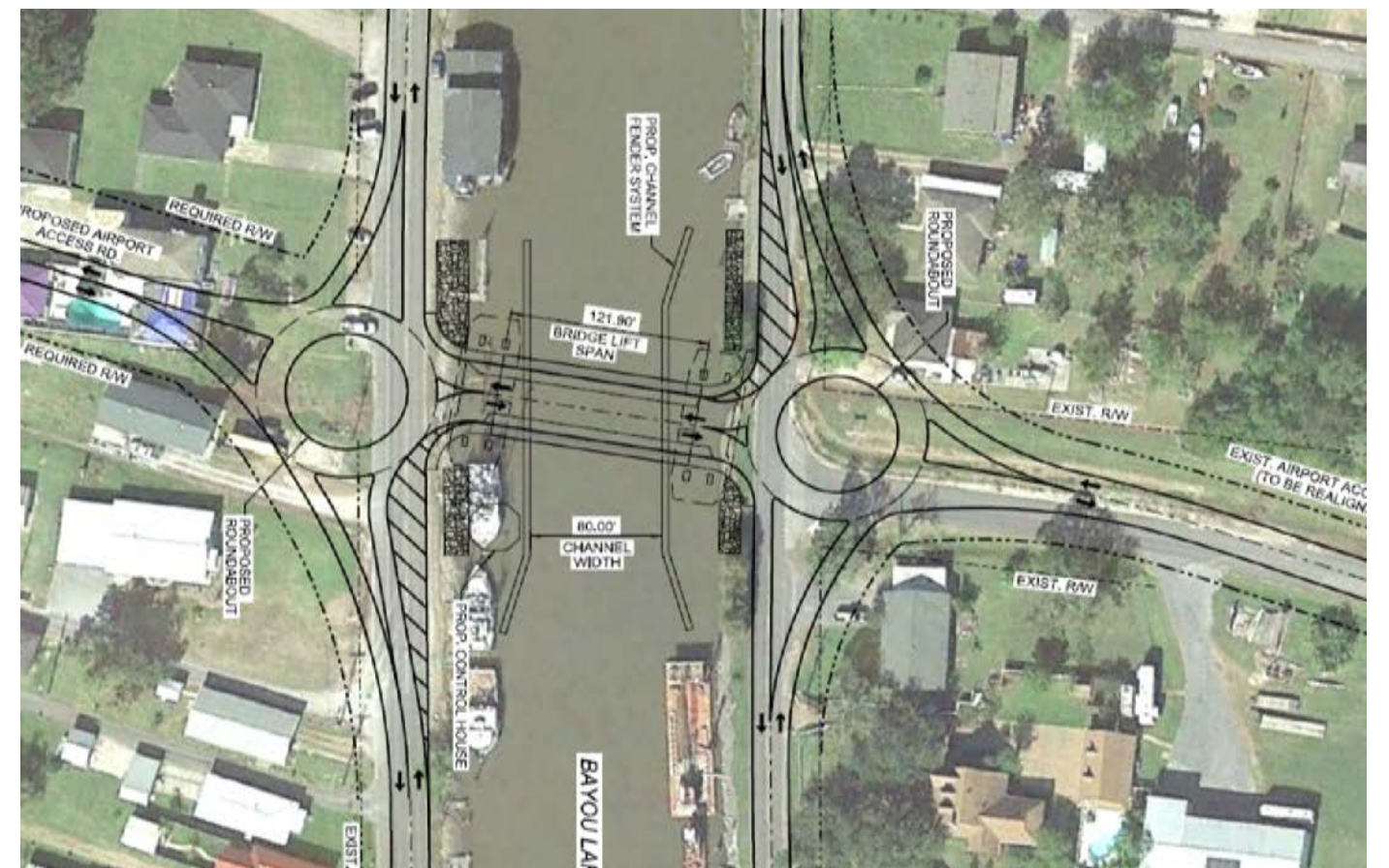
Opportunities for Public Input

Please complete a comment card at today’s meeting. Have neighbors send in their comments or call the project office. When the draft Environmental Assessment is released a public hearing will be held, and proper hearing notification will be provided.

Project Contact Information: 504-799-1344 or derek.chisholm@aecom.com



Alternative 1 – Conventional Intersections



Alternative 2 – Roundabout intersections