

**I-10 NEW ORLEANS MASTER PLAN:  
PORT ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS  
RPC Project NOI10Plan  
State Project No. H.012837**

**Project Description**

The purpose of this project is to create a plan or a program of projects that will make operational and capital improvements to the I-10 corridor at its junction with US 90B (aka I-910) to address severe congestion on the corridor. Particular emphasis will be given to heavy truck movements coming into and out of the Port of New Orleans via the Tchoupitoulas/Annunciation Street ramps, and their access to the eastbound and westbound I-10 in the New Orleans CBD.

As documented in several recently completed or ongoing studies, congestion on the Interstates serving the New Orleans Central Business District (CBD) is a serious problem and one that is getting worse over time. The increasing congestion is coincident with land use development pressures in this area of the city, and the majority of studies have focused on Interstate congestion as it relates to passenger vehicles. Relatively few similar efforts have addressed the impact of commercial vehicles on the corridor. Despite this, commercial vehicle volumes on the corridor near the New Orleans Central Business District (CBD) are forecast to increase at a more rapid rate than passenger vehicle volumes. The most significant driver of increased commercial vehicle traffic will be trade volume growth at the Port of New Orleans, with the vast majority of Port-related truck traffic using the sections of I-10/910 near the CBD to access the Port's uptown terminals. Commercial vehicle traffic is therefore a critical yet largely unstudied component in maintaining the long-term efficiency of I-10/910 as a primary route into, through, and out of central New Orleans.

To address the relative lack of Interstate planning efforts specifically focused on commercial vehicle traffic, this Master Plan will analyze the impact of freight movements on I-10/910 in and near the New Orleans CBD, inclusive of the following corridor segments:

- I-10 Eastbound from the Carrollton Avenue on-ramp to the Basin Street off-ramp.
- I-10 Westbound from the Orleans Avenue on-ramp to the Carrollton Avenue / US 61 off-ramp.
- I-910 (US 90B) Riverbound from the I-10 merge to the Tchoupitoulas Street off-ramp.
- I-910 (US 90B) Lakebound from the Tchoupitoulas Street on-ramp to the I-10 merge.
- All on and off ramps within the above-stated corridor segments.
- I-910 (US 90B) service road(s) at Calliope Street.
- Eastbank segments of the I-910 (US 90B) HOV lane, including access ramps at Convention Center Boulevard and Magnolia Street.

Particular attention will be given to Port-generated traffic, especially near the Tchoupitoulas and Annunciation Street ramps. It is anticipated that this freight-focused Plan, in conjunction with other passenger-focused planning efforts, will result in strategic recommendations that together will contribute to the more efficient movement of people and goods on I-10/910.

**Task 1: Project Management Committee**

A Project Management Committee (PMC) will guide the planning analysis, review study findings, and develop recommendations for advancement by the Regional Planning Commission, Louisiana

Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD), the Port of New Orleans and the City of New Orleans Department of Public Works. With support from RPC staff, the consultant will be responsible for facilitating PMC meetings, including but not limited to arranging meeting times and locations, preparing presentation materials, and maintaining meeting records.

### **Task 2: Data Collection**

The consultant will compile all existing, relevant data and will collect new data as necessary. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) counts, AM and PM peak hour turning movement counts and truck classification data will be required. Available traffic data from RPC, the Port of New Orleans, LDOTD, the New Orleans Downtown Traffic Conditions Study, and from other related studies will be collected and evaluated prior to undertaking additional counts. Any additional traffic data collected as part of this Plan will be formatted for use with the RPC's Regional Traffic Counting Program, as directed by RPC staff. Traffic data will be used to prepare model simulations of how the travel corridor works under existing and alternative future scenarios. The results of the model simulations will be presented to the PMC.

The Port of New Orleans will provide up-to-date current and forecast truck traffic from the Port's uptown terminals along with origin/destination data. The origin/destination data should provide enough detail to determine the percentage of trucks going to the Westbank, I-10 westbound and I-10 eastbound.

The most recent aerial photography from available sources will be used to develop a base map of the study area.

The consultant will also review and summarize previously completed and ongoing plans and studies related to this planning effort. These include but are not limited to: *Convention Center Transportation Master Plan (Urban Systems - Feb., 2013)*; *Truck and Traffic Operations Study Port of New Orleans (Volkert – August, 2013)*; *New Orleans Hospitality Zone ITS Study (Stantec – Feb., 2013)*; *Convention Center Boulevard Traffic Study (Stantec – Sept., 2014)*; *Tchoupitoulas Corridor Signage and Striping Plan (N-Y Associates, April, 2015)*. These studies are available for review in hard copy format only at RPC offices.

### **Task 3: Stakeholder Involvement**

Stakeholder involvement under this study will include individual meetings with key stakeholders including but not limited to the Port of New Orleans, LDOTD, RPC and City of New Orleans Department of Public Works. The meetings will be structured to obtain input from the stakeholders to identify concerns, interests, available data, and potential project alternatives.

### **Task 4: Development of Environmental Inventory and Purpose and Need**

The consultant will develop a draft purpose and need statement as well as an environmental inventory that identifies environmental constraints and resources within the study area. The PMC will review the draft statement and inventory, and comments will be incorporated as appropriate.

The purpose and need will be the basis for development of conceptual alternatives. The environmental inventory will inform the development of conceptual alternatives to avoid and/or minimize the impact to sensitive environmental resources and avoid potential fatal flaws.

### **Task 5: Conceptual Alternatives and Traffic Analysis**

Under guidance from the PMC the consultant will develop conceptual alternatives that improve freight movement on the Interstate, connecting access facilities, and complement the recommendations of other, more passenger-focused planning efforts. Alternatives will include projects that may be completed over the short, medium and long terms. These will range from low-cost, quick-turnaround operational improvements to large-scale construction projects. Preliminary estimates of probable cost will also be developed for conceptual alternatives.

The consultant will analyze at-grade conceptual alternatives using Synchro. New ramps and capacity improvement concepts on I-10/910 and associated ramps will be evaluated at a macro level using the Regional Travel Demand Model. The RPC will perform Regional Travel Demand modelling, with proposed network improvements provided by the consultant.

The Port will provide forecast port truck traffic. Growth rates and projected traffic volumes for travel demand will be derived from the Downtown Traffic Analysis Study (on-going) and the Regional Travel Demand Model in conjunction with the port provided data.

The modeling results and traffic analysis will be used to compare the improvement to traffic operations between conceptual alternatives for current and forecast traffic volumes during AM and PM peak periods where available.

### **Task 6: Feasibility Analysis**

A feasibility analysis will identify potentially reasonable and feasible alternatives for further consideration in the LDOTD Stage "0" process. The consultant will develop an implementation plan for a program of projects based on the results of Tasks 1-5 and the feasibility analysis. Projects will be delineated by their potential implementation timeframe: short, medium or long term. Proposed implementation timeframes will be based on funding availability, feasibility, project development requirements, and other considerations. Following the satisfactory completion of this effort, RPC may authorize development of a full Stage "0" Feasibility Study to be advertised at that time.

### **Task 7: Deliverables**

The results of Tasks 1-6 will be documented and summarized in a draft report. The PMC will review the draft and comments will be addressed in the final report.

The final deliverable will consist of ten (10) hard copies of the final report and ten (10) CD disks of the completed report in pdf format, as well as all associated data provided in electronic format as directed by RPC staff. The RPC will be responsible for distribution of the report to LDOTD, the Port of New Orleans, City DPW, and other state and government agencies for their use.

**TIMELINE: 15 Months**

**BUDGET: \$338,666**