NEW ORLEANS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR
ST. CLAUDE BRIDGE (LA46) FEASIBILITY STUDY
FOR IMPROVED BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSIT USE
(RPC Task A-1.16; FY-16 UPWP)

Background
St. Claude Bridge is a movable bascule truss bridge constructed in 1919 spanning the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (IHNC) lock system and the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana. It is located on state route LA 46 which lies approximately a quarter mile inland and parallel to the Mississippi River. The roadway segment between Poland Avenue and Reynes Street includes the St. Claude Bridge and is well used by bicyclists and pedestrians. It experiences frequent bicycle and pedestrian crashes due to multiple factors including physical constraints, increasing bicycle and pedestrian usage, and because it functions as a major truck route and connector between St. Bernard Parish and Orleans Parish.

The bridge design originally included two vehicle lanes and two Norfolk Southern railroad tracks that were later converted to two more vehicle lanes and two 3-foot pedestrian walkways that terminate at stairways that lead to dead-end streets adjacent to the bridge. The pedestrian walkways are not compliant with today’s ADA standards and the design places users at risk of crime. The surrounding residential neighborhoods reflect substantially higher transit, bike and pedestrian modes of travel than other areas of the city and this trend is growing. St. Claude Bridge, like many bridges built across America in the early 20th century, poses a serious choke and conflict point for non-motorized traffic movement.

For many years the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed a large scale replacement of the St. Claude Bridge and widening of the IHNC lock to accommodate growing maritime traffic. The effort has faltered due to community concerns over the magnitude and potential impacts of the project as well as its high costs. This scope will consider relatively minor modifications to the existing bridge and roadway design that can be more readily assimilated into the neighborhood fabric.

Project Purpose
The goal of this project is to improve safety for non-motorized users of the St. Claude Bridge and approach roadways and improve livability in surrounding neighborhoods. This evaluation will assess alternate solutions to safely accommodate bicycle, pedestrian and transit moves between Poland Avenue and Reynes Street. Emphasis will be to evaluate the structure and approaches for engineering modifications that would widen the current non-motorized pathways.

The evaluation will seek ways to meet ADA compliance and integrate best design practices to reduce opportunities for crime against bicyclists and pedestrians. It will document current non-motorized safety
problems from existing reports\textsuperscript{1}, review the current traffic patterns and crash data for motorized and non-motorized traffic, document the existing bridge and roadway design and develop short and long term physical retrofits that can be feasibly implemented and that provide real solutions to reduce non-motorized fatalities and severe injuries in this segment of roadway.

The consultant will develop two alternates: The first will be an on-street alternate (for bicycles) and the second will be a widening of the current side path (separated from traffic) for pedestrian and bicycle movements. The on-street alternate will assess truck lane usage, height clearances on the bridge and the potential for modifying the median to create more lane width. The separated path alternate will consider availability of right-of-way on the levee and approach roadway, bridge constructability and ramp design, whether connecting to the side street or as part of the bridge approach. Cost estimates will be developed for each study alternative.

Each alternative will take into account operations relative to current transit stops on top of the bridge and assess the potential for transit stop relocation and its impact on design of each alternative. Each alternative will take into consideration potential security improvements for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users in the design as may be identified in the course of this evaluation. The primary focus of the evaluation, however, is the feasibility, constructability and cost estimation for potential bridge and approach roadway modifications.

Timeline

This project will be completed by June 30, 2016.

Project Management

The consultant will meet quarterly with the Project Management Team to update status and discuss ongoing project issues. The PMC will help guide the analysis, review findings, and develop recommendations for further consideration and advancement. PMC representatives will include RPC, the Port of New Orleans, City of New Orleans, and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

Stakeholder Involvement

A Technical Advisory Committee will also be established to include key representatives for entities that own land and facilities or operate in this corridor, or that have jurisdiction over the IHNC waterway, the St. Claude Bridge and the approach roadway. At a minimum it will include the Port of New Orleans, the City Department of Public Works, U.S. Coast Guard, the Corps of Engineers, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development traffic, safety and bridge design representatives, the Regional Transit

\textsuperscript{1} A useful initial evaluation of the corridor was produced by the University of New Orleans Department of Planning and Urban Studies called “Connect the 9: Bridging St. Claude for All Users”, dated May 9, 2012. Data and information collected in that report may be leveraged where it overlaps with data compilation requirements in this Scope of Work. A copy of the report has been placed on RPC’s web site.
Authority, the Orleans Levee Board, and RPC. The NOPD, Harbor Police and community will be consulted on security issues in one designated meeting for additional input.

**Data Collection**

The consultant will collect relevant roadway, bridge and maritime data from available data sets that will inform the feasibility of physical and operational recommendations. Ownership of all facilities will be determined along with traffic data. All data that is collected and compiled by the consultant will be documented in the appendices of the final report.

**Roadway Traffic Data**

The consultant will compile roadway traffic counts from all available sources for bicyclists, pedestrians, RTA transit boardings and disembarkations, ADT for cars and commercial vehicles (categorized by axle), posted/actual speeds, crash data, and forecast growth of all traffic on LA 46 between Poland Avenue and Reynes Street.

Data Sources:  RPC, State DOTD, RTA

Pedestrian and bicycle movements will be observed by the consultant prior to the design to inform the complete picture and understanding of route choice when bicycle and pedestrian movements are non-standard (crossing lanes, use of short-cuts, wrong way riding, etc.) The consultant will work with the TAC to understand security concerns and research best practices for designing against crime around bridges.

Data Sources:  NOPD, Port of New Orleans Harbor Police, DPW

**Maritime Traffic Data**

The consultant will compile maritime Average Daily Traffic and forecast growth for the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal from available sources to determine current and forecast bridge openings.

Data Sources:  Port of New Orleans, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Bridge, Sidewalk and ADA Compliance Data**

The consultant will collect, compile and document all relevant information about the St. Claude Bridge from available sources including construction type, design, materials, span, load capacity, counter weights, maintenance history, bridge surface, clearances below and beside the bridge, and vehicle restrictions by lane (height, weight, width, speed). Sidewalk construction type, condition and sidewalk configuration over and on the bridge approaches will be reviewed and documented. The consultant will document requirements for ADA compliance per 2011 PROWAG.

Data Sources:  Port of New Orleans, State DOTD, DPW, PROWAG
Findings

The consultant will present as findings two alternate treatments for road and bridge retrofits as concept level design plans with cost estimates based on data collection, and analysis of general feasibility, constraints, and constructability. These recommendations will include appropriate signage, pavement markings, crosswalk treatments and potential bus stop relocations that improve non-motorized safety. Recommendations for phased short and long term retrofits will be considered and recommendations will be included in the report.

Mapping, Data Use and Report Protocols

The consultant will enter into a Data Sharing Agreement with the RPC for use of imagery and data that RPC may provide. The consultant will follow all RPC citation protocols for these products. The final report and all documentation will follow RPC documentation protocols to be provided at the kick-off meeting.

Draft Review

A draft of the report (five copies) with all documentation described above will be submitted to RPC for distribution to the PMC for review by, at the latest, 85% of project completion. The report will include the conceptual layout of each alternative. The report text will describe each alternative including other supporting measures, i.e. crosswalk, striping, median improvements, potential pedestrian signals and related cost information. The draft report will be developed in consultation with the PMC and developed in a format suitable for transmittal by RPC to LADOTD. DOTD Stage 0 and environmental checklists will be included in the draft and final report.

Deliverables

Following review and approval of the draft submission, the consultant will provide RPC with seven (7) bound copies of the Final Stage 0 Feasibility Study Report and supporting documentation. The report shall include the concept plans detailing bridge structure modifications, technical and operational constraints associated with each study alternative, and potential sidewalk and approach designs, and cost estimates. Detailed data collected or compiled will be made a part of the appendices. The consultant will provide 7 hard copies and 7 CD’s of the report in .pdf and .docx formats. All photos, illustrations, shapefiles and/or CAD files that may be created for this project shall be provided on the CD’s.

Study Budget

$50,000