

STAGE 0 FEASIBILITY STUDY
US 190B /Fremaux Ave. Sidewalk Feasibility Study
(US 11 to Town Center Blvd)
Slidell, Louisiana
RPC Task No. SL-1.23; FY-23 UPWP

A. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) emphasis on pedestrian safety and development of alternative modes of transportation, the Regional Planning Commission is undertaking an evaluation of sidewalk conditions and needed ADA improvements along the US 190B (Fremaux Avenue) corridor in between US 11 and Town Center Parkway in the City of Slidell, LA. The project will be carried out in coordination with the City of Slidell and LADOTD District 62 office. The RPC is requesting statements from qualified firms to provide professional planning services in support of this study.

B. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Study Purpose

Purpose of the study is to review pedestrian conditions along the US 190B corridor between US 11 and Town Center Boulevard and provide concept options for upgrading existing pedestrian facilities, constructing new facilities where they currently do not exist and providing construction cost estimates for feasible alternatives.

Study Need

The need for the study was identified by the City of Slidell in response to constituent concerns related to safety and access for households without vehicles to commercial activities in the corridor and in the Town Center development. Walkability within the city was a key component of the recently completed Slidell 2040 Comprehensive Plan (adopted in February of 2022). The plan lists as one of its transportation strategies as to “. . .ensure that major arterials are accessible to bicycles and pedestrians in the core of the city.”

These local goals are in accordance with RPC’s own policy of increasing the modal share of walking and bicycling by improving accessibility and safety on the non-motorized transportation network. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) also places strong emphasis on pedestrian safety and development of alternative modes of transportation.

Study Objectives

The technical Consultant will conduct a field evaluation and develop quantities and cost estimates for this 1.5 mile section identifying:

- (i) Needed sidewalk repairs or replacement, including ADA compliance needs;

- (ii) The installation of new sidewalks where none currently exist between @ 450 feet east of 11th Street and ending at Town Center Boulevard, a distance of approximately 4,000 feet.
- (iii) An assessment for implementing crosswalks at signalized intersections of US 190B in the corridor

C. STUDY GEOGRAPHY

The project corridor is the approximate 1.5 miles of US 190B between US Hwy 11 (Front Street) and Town Center Parkway in the City of Slidell, LA. To the east of 11th Street the road is sometimes referred to as Shortcut Highway. The eastern terminus of the corridor is near an I-10 on and off ramp, as well as the Fremaux Town Center mixed use retail development. US 190B continues east beyond this study area terminus, eventually ending at US 190. The western terminus of the study area, at US Hwy 11, is also near Heritage Park, a large municipal recreation facility. The corridor provides direct access to a mixture of commercial and public facilities, including a U.S. Post Office and a Greyhound Bus Station. Single family residential development exists directly to the north and south of the corridor.



TASK 1: PROJECT MANAGEMENT

1A: Kickoff Meeting and Project Timeline

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, a representative from each subconsultant, the City of Slidell, St. Tammany Parish, and LADOTD District 62. 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 (PMC meetings, site visits, draft reviews, final report submission, etc.) to be submitted and reviewed at the project kick-off meeting.

***Deliverable:** Task product will include detailed project schedule with timeline and major milestones and a summary of the kickoff meeting.*

Task 1B: Project Management Committee

The Consultant will assist RPC in establishing and supporting a Project Management Committee to guide the technical work effort and to review the Consultant's work products. The PMC will include the RPC, the City of Slidell Engineering Department, DOTD District 62, St. Tammany Parish, and representatives from other city/parish agencies as deemed appropriate. The consultant will be responsible for organizing and facilitating all PMC meetings, including identifying appropriate in-person or virtual venues as directed by RPC, and preparing and delivering content (including briefings, presentations and visuals) for all meetings. The Consultant will provide all necessary agendas, handouts and exhibits in advance of the PMC meetings for RPC review and approval and prepare summary minutes of the meetings.

The PMC will meet three times during the course of the study effort: at the kick-off meeting, to review inventory findings, and to discuss study recommendations. In addition, the Consultant will as necessary conduct meetings with elected officials and other local leaders and organizations in the area to discuss the project's purpose and need and project-related opportunities and concerns. The Consultant will receive prior approval from RPC prior to initiating these contacts and prepare summary meeting minutes for review and discussion with the PMC.

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

TASK 2: SITE INVESTIGATION, DATA COLLECTION, & ANALYSIS

2A: 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 how these data are to be used in the development of alternatives promulgated herein.

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

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 190B study corridor. The consultant will review the *Louisiana Pedestrian Crash Study* and identify if any segments within the study area are identified as segments that have a high potential for safety improvement related to pedestrian crashes. 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 PMC presentations and the final report.

***Deliverables:** Task report summarizing findings from Subtask 2B, along with maps, tables, and other appropriate geospatial products documenting fatal and serious injury crashes. 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 3: TRAFFIC DATA

Prior to initiating Task 3, the consultant shall prepare a memo describing the proposed approach and work plan for site investigation and data collection. This memo shall include a description of the methodology and validation process to be employed for 24-hour motorized and non-motorized counts, speed analysis, and turning movement counts. This memo must be approved by the Project Management Committee before initiating Task 3.

3A. 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:

US 190B (Fremaux Ave and Shortcut Hwy), between:

- US 11 and Sergeant Alfred Drive
- Sergeant Alfred Dr. and 7th Street
- 7th Street and Town Center Blvd

3B. 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.

3C. Speed Data Collection

Single point speed data will be collected at the above 3 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 PMC. 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

3D. Turning Movement Counts (TMCs)

The consultant will undertake weekday and weekend turning movement counts at up to ten (10) 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.

- US 190B at Sergeant Alfred Dr.
- US 190B at 7th Street
- US 190B at Town Center Blvd.

3E. Infrastructure & Utilities Inventory

The consultant shall conduct field work and use any relevant data from various sources, (utility companies, the city, the parish, DOTD etc.) to identify existing infrastructure conditions and utilities within the project study corridor. The consultant shall document information on roads within the study area, including lane widths, shoulder widths, available right-of-way, pavement and sidewalk conditions (presence, width, condition, ADA accessibility), intersections, and trees, landscaping, and other vegetation in the right-of-way. The consultant shall inventory existing above and below-ground utilities and facilities including gas, water, electric, sewer, drainage, elevation, lighting, striping, signage, and signals

The Consultant will conduct a complete field visual inspection of existing sidewalks within the study area. This examination will include an assessment of sidewalk width and condition as well as a review of handicap ramps for compliance with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards. This evaluation will include coordination with RPC and LADOTD District 62 on the results of the field survey and evaluation and development of quantities and cost estimates for needed improvements. Site visits will be conducted, and supplemental data collected as necessary in order to gather and record information regarding utilities, poles, traffic signals, signage, pavement markings, curb types, and other

obstructions which may need to be relocated in order to accommodate pedestrian sidewalk improvements and ADA facilities within existing rights-of-way. It is anticipated that certain proposed (new) improvements may require further detailed study or warrant analyses by LADOTD that would be outside the scope of the present study effort. Improvements that would require additional review will be identified and summarized by the consultant.

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 temperature 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 the 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: CONCEPTUAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Working with the PMC and using the information discerned in Task 3, the Consultant will prepare a conceptual improvement plan to bring existing or missing sidewalks and ADA ramps into compliance with current standards, including typical sections, minor geometric improvements, restriping of existing crosswalks, replacement signage, and other measures to bring the existing sidewalks up to standard and into ADA compliance. The plans (which will be in GIS format) will identify utilities and other potential obstructions that could influence the concept's feasibility, timing, costs, and ability to implement proposed sidewalk and ADA improvements. Recommendations for new crosswalks or pedestrian signals will be identified, but these items will need to be addressed as separate follow-on study efforts in accordance with state procedures and warrant analysis requirements.

The City of Slidell is currently working to add pedestrian crossing safety measures to the intersection of US 11 at US 190B, per LADOTD SPN H.011775. The consultant will review these plans and insure consistency between the two efforts.

The Consultant will prepare visualizations of the proposed improvements and conceptual design alternative(s), helping the community understand the design intent by using before and after graphic perspectives for important nodes and before and after graphics in plan view for the study area. The Consultant should anticipate that one public informational meeting may be required to provide information and receive comments on the proposed improvements. The Consultant will develop quantities and unit cost estimates for the study section including estimated cost of final design and potential funding sources to improve existing sidewalks and ADA ramps, including existing striping and signage replacement. It is anticipated that the City may elect to submit this project for funding consideration through LADOTD's Transportation Alternatives Program, or other FHWA/ USDOT funding sources.

Deliverable: *Conceptual Plan*

TASK 5: DRAFT REVIEW

A draft of the report (ten copies) with all documentation described above will be submitted to RPC for distribution to the PMC for review by, at the latest, 75% of project completion. The report will include the conceptual layout of each analysis section. The report text will briefly describe the purpose and need for the project and include a detailed conceptual layout of recommended sidewalk improvements, ADA ramp locations, and other supporting measures, i.e., existing crosswalk striping, as agreed to by the PMC. The draft report will be submitted to the PMC for review and in a format suitable for editing and digital notation/mark-up and suitable for transmittal by RPC to LADOTD. DOTD Stage 0 Environmental and MPO checklists will be included in the draft and final report. Draft documents should be in a format suitable for editing and digital notation/mark-up.

Deliverable: Draft Final Report

TASK 6: FINAL DELIVERABLES

Following review and approval of the draft submission, the Consultant will provide RPC with ten (10) bound copies of the Final Stage 0 Feasibility Study, documenting the information and analysis described above. All studied alternative(s) will be described in the Stage 0 Report, including the preferred alternative as recommended by the Project Management Committee. The Stage 0 Report will include completed Stage 0 checklists (ref. LADOTD Program Development and Project Delivery System Manual, Chapter 4: Stage 0 Standard Operating Procedure, Checklist for Stage 0 – Preliminary Scope and Budget Worksheet, and Stage 0 Environmental Checklist). Ten printed copies of the report and 10 disks in electronic format (pdf including all maps and visualizations) will be submitted by the Consultant to the RPC for distribution. All survey and engineering feasibility work will be submitted to the RPC in CAD and/or GIS format.

The RPC 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.

Deliverable: Ten printed copies of the report and 5 PDF and an editable Microsoft Word version, as well as digital versions of all maps, visualizations, and associated GIS files saved on three USB drives.

*Deliverables will be submitted by the Consultant to the RPC for distribution. All analysis work products and electronic files will be submitted to the RPC. All data collected as part of this effort will be provided to the RPC in formats designated by RPC staff. Submittals accomplished in CAD and/or *.shp file format will be consistent w/ RPC standards.*

The Consultant will prepare overall visualizations and “meeting-ready” graphics of the proposed improvements to be used in outreach efforts conducted by the City at its discretion to help the community understand the design intent by using before and after graphics in plan-view for the corridor and key destinations.

TIMELINE **Eight Months**

Budget **\$65,000**