

# Big Carlos Pass Bridge

## Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study

---

Public Hearing  
January 28, 2021



Welcome to the Lee County Department of Transportation's or Lee County DOT, public hearing for the Big Carlos Pass Bridge Project, Development and Environment, or P D and E, study. We appreciate your attendance and participation. At tonight's hearing, you will have the opportunity to offer comments about the proposed bridge replacement of the Big Carlos Pass Bridge in Lee County.



Slide 2

Our agenda includes:

a segment that will go over information about the webinar and how to follow along, we will then start the project presentation,

and after the presentation is complete, the public will have the opportunity to make comments. Those attending the GoToWebinar may submit their comments in the question pane of the webinar.

The slide features a decorative header with blue and green wavy lines. It contains two main notification boxes. The left box has a white background and a blue border, containing a blue audio waveform icon and a blue ear icon with a diagonal slash through it. Below these icons is a dark blue rectangular box with a white play button icon on the left and white text stating: 'This meeting is being recorded.' and 'The recording will be posted on the project website.' The right box has a white background and a blue border, containing a blue speaker icon with sound waves. Below the icon is black text stating: 'All attendees will be placed in **“Listen Only”** mode throughout the meeting.' A small blue number '3' is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

This meeting is being recorded.

The recording will be posted on the project website.

All attendees will be placed in **“Listen Only”** mode throughout the meeting.

3

Slide 3

- This meeting is being recorded and will be available after the hearing on the project website.
- All attendees will be placed in the “Listen Only” mode throughout the meeting

**For technical issues,  
visit GoToWebinar  
online at:**

[Support.goto.com](https://support.goto.com)

Or through your confirmation email, click on  
[check system requirements \(below\)](#):

**How To Join The Webinar**

Wed, Nov 4, 2020 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM EDT

Add to Calendar: [Outlook® Calendar](#) | [Google Calendar™](#) | [iCal®](#)

1. Click the link to join the webinar at the specified time and date:

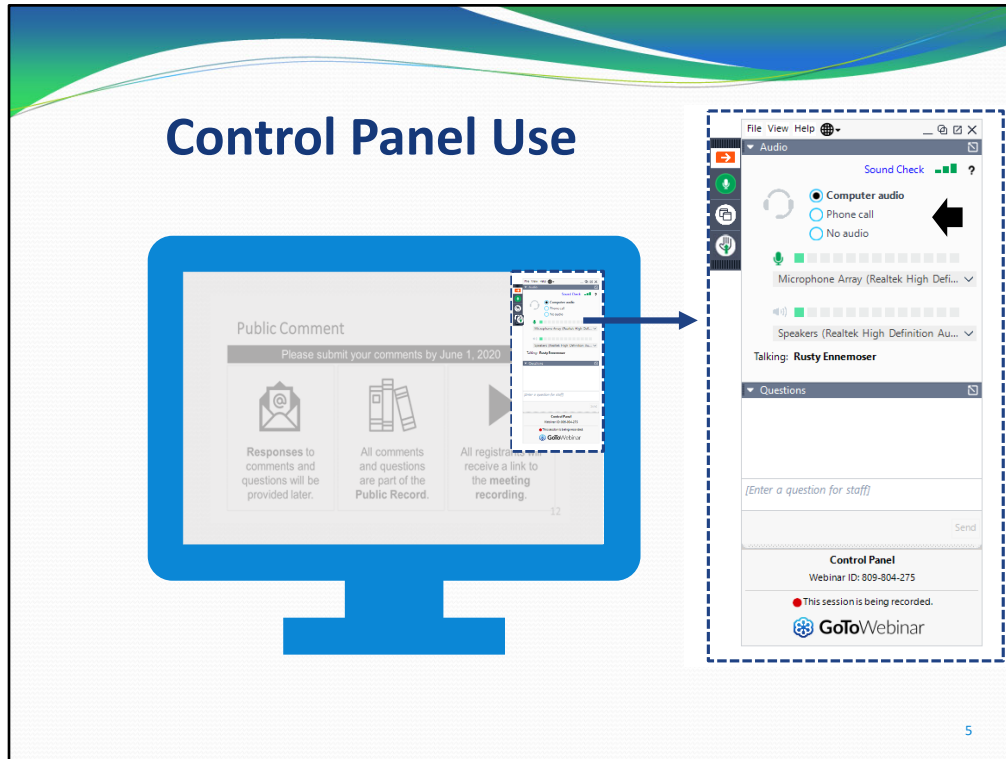
[Join Webinar](#)

Note: This link should not be shared with others; it is unique to you.  
Before joining, be sure to [check system requirements](#) to avoid any connection issues.

4

Slide 4

For technical issues during the meeting, please visit GoToWebinar online at: [Support.goto.com](https://support.goto.com). OR through your confirmation email, click on the “check system requirements” link to avoid any connection issues during the meeting.



## Slide 5

- On your computer or device screen, you should see something that looks like this in the upper-right corner, if not click on the red arrow to show the panel.
- To listen to the meeting, your computer or device speakers are selected by default.
- If you prefer to listen by phone, select "Phone Call" in the Audio pane of the control panel and dial-in using the information displayed.

## Information for Dial-in Attendees



**Dial-in listeners**



**Paper copy of meeting  
presentation**  
(requested or downloaded  
before the meeting)

[www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com](http://www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com)

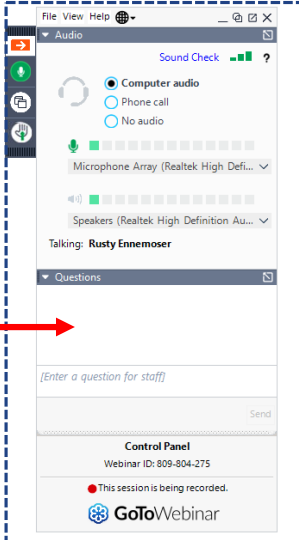
6

### Slide 6

- For those who dialed into the meeting on a telephone line and are viewing a hardcopy of the slide presentation requested or downloaded before the meeting, the presenter will announce the page number of the slide being shown on the screen.
- The slides are available for download at [www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com](http://www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com).

**We want your input during the meeting!**

Type your comments in the control panel **Questions pane**.



**We will read your comments into the record at the end of public comment, all correspondence will be posted on the website later.**





7

Slide 7

- You can submit comments by typing them into the Questions pane on the control panel. Click on the questions tab to display this area.
- Comments can be submitted at any time during the hearing.



# Public Comment

During meeting	After meeting
 <p>Type comments in the <b>Questions pane</b> on the control panel.</p>	<p>1. TMarquardt@leegov.com </p> <p>2. Lee County Department of Transportation 1500 Monroe Street Fort Myers, FL 33901 </p> <p>3. 239-533-8530 </p>

[www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com](http://www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com)

8

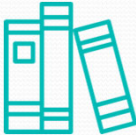
## Slide 8

- The County encourages the public to participate in the Big Carlos Pass Bridge PD&E Study by submitting comments.
- There are multiple ways to do this.
- As mentioned earlier, you can type your comments in the Question pane on the meeting control panel during today's meeting.
- If you dialed in using a telephone line, you can submit your comments after the meeting by using the mail, email, or telephone information shown on the slide.
- You may also submit comments in-person tonight and drop them in the comment box.
- This information is also available on the website.




# Public Comment

Please submit your comments by February 11



All comments and questions are part of the **Public Record**.



All registrants will receive a link to the **meeting recording**.

9

## Slide 9

- All comments and questions submitted through these options are part of the public record for this hybrid hearing and will be considered by the County during project decision-making.
- The recording of this meeting will be linked to a follow-up email to all persons having registered for the meeting.
- The meeting video link will also be posted on the project website.
- The public comment period will remain open through February 11th to accommodate the public who view the meeting video after the live event.

## Public Notice

 Property owner/tenant letters	 Emails to project contacts list	 Project website
 Florida Administrative Register	 Newspaper	 Social media

10

### Slide 10

- Public notice for this hybrid public hearing, including information on how to access the meeting platform, was provided in letters to property owners and tenants in the project area, a posting in the Florida Administrative Register, in emails to persons on the project contacts list, on social media feeds, and other notification methods.
- Notice was also posted on the project website.



## Title VI Information

The Lee County Department of Transportation solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to Lee County compliance with Title VI may do so by contacting:

**Joan LaGuardia, (239) 533-2314 or  
[jlaguardia@leegov.com](mailto:jlaguardia@leegov.com)**

11

Slide 11

Title VI information

The Lee County Department of Transportation solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to County compliance with Title VI may do so by contacting:

**Joan LaGuardia, (239) 533-2314 or [jlaguardia@leegov.com](mailto:jlaguardia@leegov.com)**



## Environmental Review

- The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation, or FDOT, pursuant to 23 United States Code Section 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

12

### Slide 12

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation, or FDOT, pursuant to 23 United States Code, Section 327, and a Memorandum of Understanding, dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

# Objective of the PD&E

- Evaluate and document engineering and environmental considerations to determine the type and location of necessary improvements.

The PD&E Study is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and Federal and State laws and regulations.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION  
  
Florida Department of Transportation  
In cooperation with the US Coast Guard  
  
BIG CARLOS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT  
District: FDOT District 1  
County: Lee County  
ETDM Number: 14301  
Financial Management Number: 445323-1-21-01  
Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A  
Project Manager:  
  
The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated

13

## Slide 13

The objective of this P D and E study is to evaluate and document engineering and environmental considerations that will aid Lee County in determining the type and location of necessary improvements to the Big Carlos Pass Bridge. This P D and E study is being conducted and will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, which will qualify this project for federal funding.

## Why Are We Here?

- Bridge was built in 1965 and is now over 55 years old
- Functionally obsolete
- Scour critical
- Critical Infrastructure asset



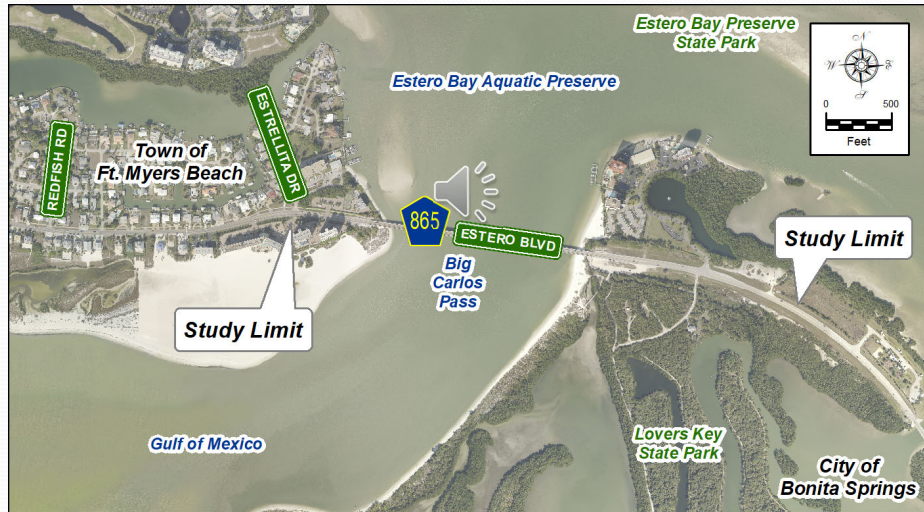
14

### Slide 14

Completed in 1965, the Bridge spans Big Carlos Pass, connecting the Town of Fort Myers Beach with the City of Bonita Springs. The need for the project is based on a number of deficiencies of the existing bridge resulting from age and long-term exposure to the aggressive saltwater environment. As one of only two bridges serving the chain of islands forming Estero Bay, the Big Carlos Pass Bridge is a critically important infrastructure asset that must be maintained, making this project a high priority for both the County and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.



## Study Area



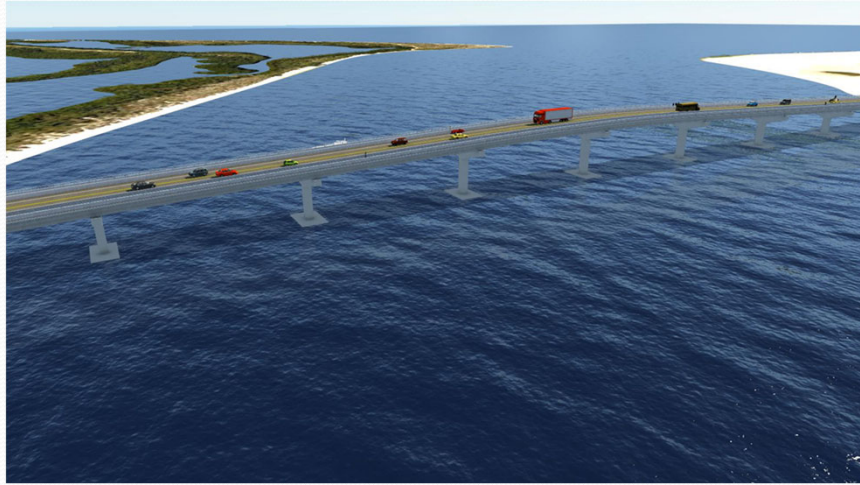
15

### Slide 15

The study focused on the bridge and roadway approaches from approximately Estrellita Drive south to the entrance of Lovers Key State Park, a distance of about 0.6 miles. The project team developed and evaluated several alternatives including the no-build rehabilitation alternative, a new low-level drawbridge and a high-level fixed bridge. On January 18, 2018, Lee County DOT held an alternatives public meeting to present alternatives for rehabilitating or replacing the bridge. Based on your comments and additional environmental and engineering analyses, a preferred build alternative was selected.



## BoCC Approved/Preferred Alternative- Fixed Span Bridge, Gulf Side



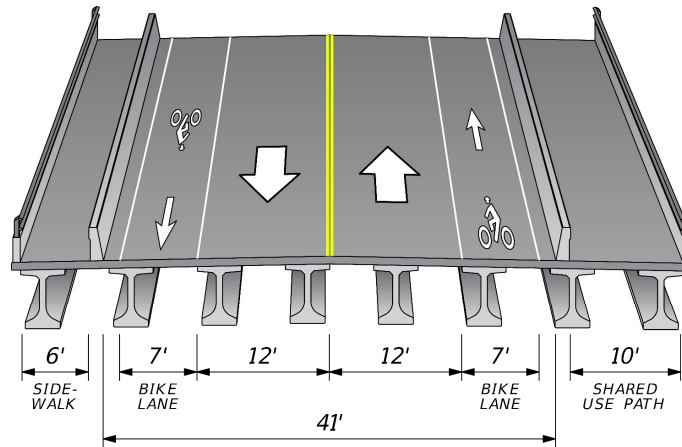
16

Slide 16

On December 18, 2018, the Lee Board of County Commissioners approved the fixed span bridge on the Gulf side of the existing bridge as the preferred alternative.

The bridge has a vertical clearance of 60 feet at the relocated navigation channel.

## Preferred Fixed Span Bridge - Section



### Slide 17

The bridge will include two 12-foot travel lanes, 7-foot bike lanes, a 10-foot shared use path on the west side and a 6-foot sidewalk on the east side. The bridge would be constructed to the west, or Gulf side, of the existing bridge.

## No-Build Rehabilitation Alternative



18

### Slide 18

Throughout this study, a “no-build rehabilitation” alternative is also considered and will remain a viable alternative until the completion of the study. The “no-build rehabilitation” alternative assumes that the existing bridge will be rehabilitated then require replacement in 20 years.



## No-Build Rehabilitation Alternative

Advantages of the no-build alternative include:

- No modification of the existing bridge elevation;
- No horizontal shift of the roadway approaches or bridge location;
- No relocation of the Lovers Key State Park bridge-side access point; and
- No relocation of the Lovers Key Beach Club access point.

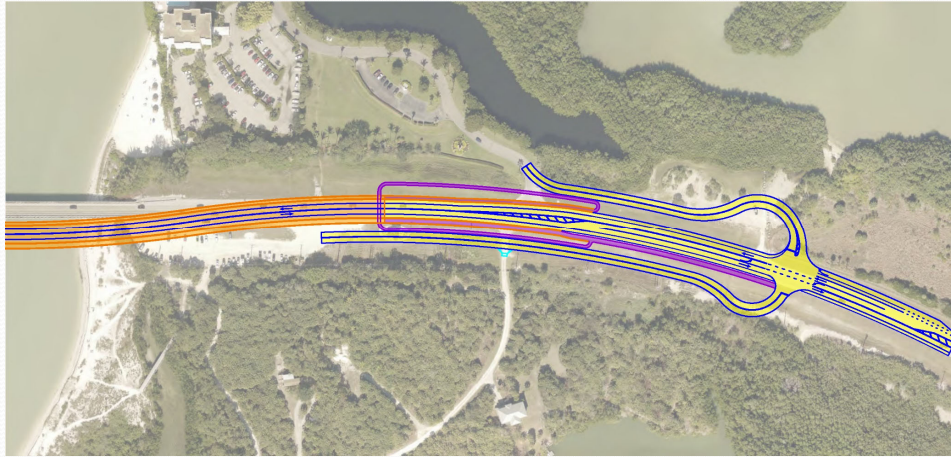
19

Slide 19

Advantages of the no-build alternative include:

- No modification of the existing bridge elevation;
- No horizontal shift of the roadway approaches or bridge location;
- No relocation of the Lovers Key State Park bridge-side access point; and
- No relocation of the Lovers Key Beach Club access point.

## Preferred Build Alternative Replaces Access



20

Slide 20

There is no relocation of the Lovers Key State Park bridge-side access point; and no relocation of the Lovers Key Beach Club access point.

The preferred alternative provides new/relocated access to the Park and the club.

**\*Note this is a transition slide, the existing aerial is shown then the preferred fades in.**





## No-Build Rehabilitation Alternative

Disadvantages of the no-build alternative include:

- Requires costly rehabilitation of the existing bridge
- Requires complete reconstruction of the bridge in 2040
- Does not meet the project's purpose and need
- Does not improve the substandard 3-foot sidewalk widths
- Does not accommodate a shared-use path

21

Slide 21

Disadvantages of the no-build alternative include:

- It requires costly rehabilitation of the existing bridge;
- Requires complete reconstruction of the bridge in 2040;
- Does not meet the project's purpose and need;
- That it does not improve the substandard 3-foot sidewalk widths; and it;
- Does not accommodate a shared-use path;

The no-build rehabilitation alternative remains a valid option and will continue to be evaluated until the completion of this study.

## Environmental and Socioeconomic Factors



- Threatened and endangered species
- Wetlands and floodplains
- Stormwater management and permitting
- Noise
- Right-of-way requirements and relocations
- Contamination
- Cultural and historic resources
- Land use
- Air quality
- Construction effects
- Aesthetics

22

### Slide 22

Lee County DOT evaluated environmental and socioeconomic factors relating to the proposed widening improvements in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and other federal requirements. The evaluation considered the effects of replacing the bridge on:

- Threatened and endangered species
- Wetlands and floodplains
- Stormwater management and permitting
- Noise
- Right-of-way requirements and relocations
- Contamination
- Cultural and historic resources
- Land use
- Air quality
- Construction effects and
- Aesthetics



## Threatened and Endangered Species

- Gulf Sturgeon
- Smalltooth Sawfish
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle
- Green Sea Turtle
- Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle
- Piping Plover
- Wood Stork
- Florida Bonneted Bat
- West Indian Manatee



23

### Slide 23

Threatened and endangered species are allowed special protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and Florida statutes. Lee County DOT assessed species within the project limits, and through ongoing coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, it is anticipated that the proposed project “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect” the existence of certain federally listed threatened or endangered species. The animal species include the:

- Gulf Sturgeon
- Smalltooth Sawfish
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle
- Green Sea Turtle
- Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle
- Piping Plover
- Wood Stork
- Florida bonneted bat, and the
- West Indian Manatee

## Threatened and Endangered Species

- Golden Leather Fern
- Sanibel Island Lovegrass
- Snowy Plover
- Little Blue Heron
- Tricolored Heron
- Roseate Spoonbill
- American Oystercatcher
- Black Skimmer
- Least Tern



24

### Slide 24


In addition, “no adverse effect anticipated” has been determined for the following state listed threatened or endangered species:

- Golden Leather Fern
- Sanibel Island Lovegrass
- Snowy Plover
- Little Blue Heron
- Tricolored Heron
- Roseate Spoonbill
- American Oystercatcher
- Black Skimmer, and the
- Least Tern

Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the final status of these species is ongoing. If the Preferred Alternative is approved by the Florida Department of Transportation Office of Environmental Management, Lee County DOT will continue to work closely with environmental agencies, in design and construction, to meet all environmental permitting requirements.

# Cultural Resource Assessment

- Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act as amended after 1966
- SHPO Concurrence was granted on December 16, 2019



STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
TECHNICAL REPORT COVERSHEET

KS0326-08  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPAIRED  
6011

CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Florida Department of Transportation  
District One  
Big Carlos Pass Bridge Replacement  
Limits of Project: From Estrella Drive to south of the Lowery Key State Park Entrance  
Lee County, Florida  
Financial Management Number: A463023-1-29-01  
ETDM Number: 14201  
Date: November 2019

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT.

25

## Slide 25

A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey was prepared in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Research and field testing have indicated that the proposed improvement will have no effect on the surrounding historic resources. Historic resource coordination was conducted with the State Historic Preservation Officer, and concurrence with the project findings was granted on December 16, 2019.

# Wetlands and Floodplains

- Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands
- Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management
  - 2.34 acres of wetlands
  - 0.16 acres of surface waters
- Floodplain compensation is not required because the project area is tidally influenced



26

## Slide 26

Lee County DOT evaluated wetlands and floodplains within the project limits in accordance with Executive Orders 11990 (*"eleven nine ninety"*), "Protection of Wetlands," and 11988 (*"eleven nine eighty-eight"*). "Floodplain Management." The proposed improvements may impact an estimated 2.34 acres of wetlands and 0.16 acres of surface waters. Floodplain compensation is not required because the project area is tidally influenced. Compensatory mitigation for this project will be completed through mitigation banks and other mitigation options that satisfy state and federal requirements. Final determination of wetland jurisdictional boundaries and mitigation requirements will be coordinated between Lee County and permitting agencies during the final design phase of the project.

# Traffic Noise Analysis

- Title 23 CFR, Part 772, Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise



27

## Slide 27

Lee County DOT conducted a traffic noise analysis consistent with requirements outlined in Title 23 CFR, Part 772, Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise. The prediction of traffic noise levels was performed using FHWA's Traffic Noise Model or T N M. For the Preferred Alternative, one residence out of 433 noise sensitive sites evaluated is predicted to experience a future noise level that exceeds the Noise Abatement Criteria. Noise barriers were not found to be a feasible mitigation measure for the affected residence.



## View the Evaluation Matrix

EVALUATION FACTORS	No-Build Alternative (Rehabilitation)	Preferred Alternative
Vertical Navigation Clearance	24.5 ft	60 ft
Horizontal Navigation Clearance	50 ft	90 ft
Right-of-Way Impacts		
Parcels Impacted	0	0
Relocations (Business/Residential)	0/0	0/0
Right-of-Way Acquisition	0 ac	0 ac
Social, Natural, and Physical Resources		
Species/Habitat Potential Impacts	None	Medium
Potential Contamination Sites (Medium/High)	0/0	0/1
Wetland and Surface Water Impacts	0 ac	2.5 ac
Seagrass Impacts	0 ac	0 ac
Live Bottom Impacts	0 ac	0 ac
Archaeological and Historic Site Impacts	None	None
Traffic Noise Impacts	None	Low
Public Parks and Recreational Areas Impacts	None	Low

28

### Slide 28

This project is not expected to change future land use patterns on, nor result in, adverse impacts to water quality and air quality. Minimal construction effects are expected.

Environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed bridge replacement have been summarized in an evaluation matrix, which is on display tonight. Lee County DOT representatives are available this evening to discuss this with you.

## Project Cost

Estimated Project Costs (2017 Dollars)	No-Build Rehabilitation Alternative	Preferred Fixed Bridge Alternative
Design (10% of Construction Cost)	\$2,448,000	\$4,135,000
Right-of-Way	\$0	\$0
Roadway Construction	\$0	\$5,426,000
Bridge Construction	\$24,478,000	\$35,919,000
CEI (10% of Construction Cost)	\$2,448,000	\$4,135,000
Subtotal, Initial Capital Investment	\$29,374,000	\$49,615,000
Bridge Lifecycle Maintenance and Operations	\$10,846,000	\$38,157,000
Total Project Cost	\$40,220,000	\$87,772,000
Life of Alternative	20 years	75 years

Slide 29

The estimated cost to rehabilitate the existing bridge that would last for 20 years then would have to be replaced is 40.2 million dollars. The estimated cost to replace Big Carlos Pass Bridge which would have an estimated life span of 75 years is 87.8 million dollars. The cost breakdown is shown on the evaluation matrix in your handout.

Lee County DOT has programmed the funding for construction in fiscal year 2021/2022.

Lee County DOT will complete the Big Carlos Bridge PD&E study by spring 2021 ("twenty-twenty one"). The study schedule is on display this evening.



## Projects Documents

- Fort Myers Beach Public Library at 2755 Estero Blvd, Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931
  - Library hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday; closed on Sunday
- Lee DOT office at 1500 Monroe Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Fort Myers, Florida 33901 Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday
- [www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com](http://www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com)

30

Slide 30

We encourage you to review the project information tonight, complete the comment form in your handout and drop it in one of the boxes provided, or if you prefer, you may mail or email your comments postmarked by February 11, 2021, to the address on the comment form.

Project information and graphics showing the proposed improvements will be available for public viewing at two locations until February 18, 2021. The location is the Fort Myers Beach Public Library at 2755 Estero Blvd, Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931. The library is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday; closed on Sunday. The second location is the Lee County DOT office at 1500 Monroe Street, third floor, Fort Myers, Florida 33901. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may also visit the project website at [www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com](http://www.BigCarlosBridgeProject.com) for the latest study information.

## Federal Requirements

- Federal Highway Act of 1968, as amended
- Chapter 23, United States Code 128
- Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1500 through 1508
- Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 771
- Section 339.155, Florida Statutes
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended

31

### Slide 31

This public hearing is conducted in accordance with the Federal Highway Act of 1968, as amended; Chapter 23, United States Code 128 (“one twenty eight”); Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1500 through 1508 (“fifteen hundred through fifteen oh eight”); Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 771 (“seven seventy one”); Section 339.155 (“three thirty nine point one fifty five”), Florida Statutes; and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

## Federal and State Requirements

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Florida Statutes, Section 120.525; Section 286.011; and Section 335.199
- Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 24
- Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1506

32

Slide 32

Lee County DOT advertised this hearing consistent with federal and state requirements. This hearing is conducted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Florida Statutes, Section 120.525; Section 286.011; and Section 335.199; and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 24 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1506 (“fifteen oh six”).

Anyone who feels he or she has been discriminated against with regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status may complete one of the forms located at the sign-in table and mail the completed form to the address listed on the poster board.

**Thank you for your interest and  
participation in this study and  
joining us this evening.**



Thank you for your interest and participation in the Big Carlos Pass Bridge Project Development and Environment study public hearing, and for taking the time to join us this evening.