Welcome to the Public Alternatives Workshop for the Dunedin Causeway Bridges Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The purpose of this informal workshop is to provide you with an opportunity to learn more about the alternatives currently under consideration, ask questions, and express your comments and concerns. A brief video presentation will be shown continuously and can be viewed anytime between 5:00 pm and 7:15 pm.

Information about the conceptual design and possible impacts of the various alternatives are on display. Project Team representatives will be available to answer questions and listen to your ideas. We look forward to your input!

About the Project

Pinellas County, in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is conducting a PD&E study to evaluate rehabilitation or replacement of the existing bridges along Dunedin Causeway. The limits of the study extend from west of Royal Statis Arnis Parkway on Honeymoon Island to the intersection of Gary Place/Gary Circle on Ward Island. The Main Bascule (movable) Bridge connects Ward Island to the causeway. The low-level fixed Tide Relief Bridge connects the causeway to Honeymoon Island. The study is primarily focused on the two bridges. Improvements to Causeway Boulevard, the causeway beaches and recreation areas will not be included in this study.

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Alternatives Considered

A Kick-Off Open House was held on March 31, 2015, to introduce the study to the community. More than 250 questionnaires and comment forms were received by the County from the Open House and during the post-meeting comment period. Since this meeting, the project team conducted a preliminary screening analysis of nine replacement alternatives for the Main Bridge, two replacement alternatives for the Tide Relief Bridge and rehabilitation of both bridges.

In addition to engineering issues, this evaluation considered potential environmental impacts including impacts to wetlands, wildlife and habitat; impacts to recreation areas, visual impacts and utilities. Based on preliminary screening and public input received at the Kick-Off Open House, three replacement alternatives for the Main Bridge and one replacement alternative for the Tide Relief Bridge were selected for further detailed study and evaluation. Rehabilitation would not improve the very narrow pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the bridges and was eliminated from further consideration. An evaluation matrix which compares characteristics and potential impacts of the viable alternatives is included on the back of this handout.

Viable Alternatives Presented at Today’s Workshop

Detailed evaluation of the following viable alternatives was conducted.

No-Build (for Both Bridges)

Only routine maintenance would be performed as needed to keep the bridges open to traffic until safety issues would require them to be closed. Repair or replacement would be considered at a later date. This alternative will be considered viable until after the public hearing.

Replacement of the Tide Relief Bridge

The new bridge would have a minimum vertical navigational clearance of 14.5 feet, which is approximately two feet higher than the existing bridge navigational clearance. At its highest point, the new bridge would be about nine feet higher overall than the existing bridge and would be constructed in phases to maintain traffic.

Replacement of the Main Bridge

The existing movable bridge, which provides 20 feet of navigational clearance in the closed position, would be demolished and replaced with a new two-lane bridge. Three alternatives providing different vertical clearances for navigation are currently under consideration. All three are located on approximately the same alignment as the existing bridge and require a temporary bridge to maintain traffic during construction.

Low-Level Movable Bridge – Minimum vertical clearance 21 feet
Mid-Level Movable Bridge – Minimum vertical clearance 35 feet
High-Level Fixed Bridge – Minimum vertical clearance 65 feet

Bridge Aesthetics

Based on public comments to date and results of the Visual Preference Survey distributed at the Kick-Off Open House in March 2015, two aesthetic themes were selected, Modern and Florida Vernacular. These themes were incorporated into the 3D models and architectural renderings for the viable replacement alternatives. The models, animations and renderings can be viewed in the video presentation, on the monitors and boards on display, and on the 3D virtual reality headset.

What Happens Next

After tonight’s meeting, we will review your Comments and determine a Recommended Alternative. Additional opportunities for public input will be provided before a “Preferred Alternative” is selected.

• The Recommended Alternative, along with the No-Build Alternative, is expected to be presented at a Public Hearing in November 2016.
• The Recommended Alternative will require approval from FHWA after all Public Hearing comments are considered.

You can also provide your input anytime during the study by:

• Submitting your comments via the “Contact Us” page on the project website at http://www.pinellascounty.org/dunedincauseway
• Emailing your comments to Nancy McKibben, County Project Manager at nrmckiben@pinellascounty.org

Visit the Project Website at http://www.pinellascounty.org/dunedincauseway

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to compliance with Title VI and Title VIII may do so by contacting Mr. Paul Valenti, Pinellas County Office of Human Rights, 400 S. Ft. Harrison Ave, Suite 400, Clearwater, FL 33756, (727) 464-4890, (727) 464-4431 (VOICE/TDD), pvalenti@pinellascounty.org.