



Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting

Harbor Bridge Replacement Project Improvements to US 181 at the Harbor Bridge over the Corpus Christi Ship Channel

July 8, 2014 – 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Oveal Williams Activity Center, 1414 Martin Luther King Drive, Corpus Christi, TX

Meeting Summary

Display Items

1. Schematic of Preferred (Red) Alternative
2. Boards showing proposed 4(f) parks mitigation
3. Board showing proposed mitigation for impacts to low-income and minority neighborhoods
4. Boards showing examples of context sensitive solutions

Handouts

1. Meeting agenda
2. Proposed mitigation for impacts to low-income and minority neighborhoods
3. Survey on context sensitive solutions

Welcome and introductions

Christopher Amy, TxDOT Environmental Coordinator and project manager for the Harbor Bridge Project, opened the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, welcomed participants, and asked each member to introduce themselves. He introduced the project team and then introduced the meeting facilitator, Susan Howard of TxDOT. Sixteen CAC members signed in at the meeting and were introduced. In addition, 13 members of the public were in attendance.

Christopher reviewed the status of the Harbor Bridge project, explaining the activities that had taken place since the last CAC meeting in early January 2014. He noted that TxDOT and FHWA are now working on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which includes considering and responding to all of the public and agency comments received through the end of the public comment period on March 18, 2014. Christopher also summarized all of the public involvement activities that have taken place since the beginning of 2014: neighborhood open houses, storefront meetings, the public hearing and extended public comment period, and additional stakeholder meetings to get input on proposed mitigation. Susan then reviewed the CAC meeting agenda and meeting ground rules. She explained the format of the meeting—group

discussions of the proposed mitigation as well as of community preferences for the look and feel of areas around and under the new bridge (otherwise known as context sensitive solutions).

Group Discussions of the Proposed Mitigation for Impacts to Minority and Low-Income Neighborhoods and Section 4(f) park mitigation

CAC members were divided into four separate groups to review and discuss the proposed mitigation for impacts to minority and low-income neighborhoods, as well as context sensitive solutions. Two project team members sat at each table to facilitate and take notes on the table discussions.

To introduce these discussions, Christopher reminded the group that they had already seen a conceptual mitigation plan and the proposed park mitigation actions at the previous CAC meeting, at the public hearing, and at neighborhood open houses. He noted that the conceptual mitigation plan has since been updated with community input and will be revised again with the input received at this evening's meeting.

Table discussions were followed by simultaneous polling to determine individual preferences on the various types of proposed mitigation. Table discussions and the results of the simultaneous polling are summarized below.

Topic: Livability Enhancements—Proposed Mitigation

- 1. TxDOT would develop a Community Sustainability Plan for the Northside neighborhoods for possible implementation by others. Among other matters, it would identify grant opportunities to further the goals and strategies of the Plan.*

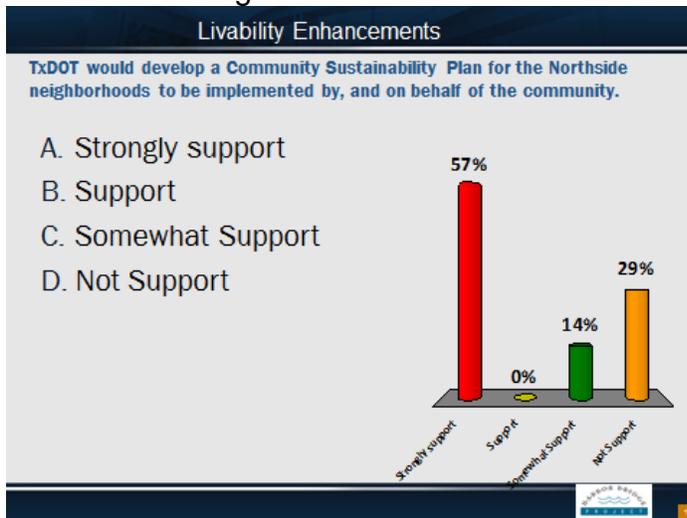
Input from CAC Members during Table Discussions

What communities will be left to plan for?

- Need to hear back from federal agencies – need follow up.
- What communities will be left to plan for?
- Visuals needed (3D model of bridge would be helpful).
- Spend money where it will have the best use; concern regarding best use of tax dollars.
- TC Ayers needs better lighting
- Concern about having all community input, not just a few environmental justice concerns.
- Need to know more about Recommended Alternative before commenting.
- Community engagement is a key component in development of the plan; strong citizen participation is needed.
- The area should be a historical district.
- Sustainability = decent housing, how do we accomplish?

- Most homes are older and in need of repair and revitalization
- Suggestions: encouraging building/redevelopment with developers and homeowners.
- Grant money should be used to redevelop homes.
- Sustainability should re-focus on new vision of the neighborhood, not continue on the same track.
- Need a way to preserve the historical value of the neighborhood in the plan.
- Sustainability = homeowners /recreation/historical/infrastructure.
- Funding of the plan?
- Build on existing city plans; look at all plans and proposed projects.
- North Beach more separate from Downtown.
- Fold in Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team information.
- Use what is still functional (e.g., Lichtenstein Bldg on Chaparral – façade used as memorial).
- Put in sustainability plan how to revitalize these abandoned structures.
- Preserve artwork and history.
- Mitigation should be beneficial for everyone.

Results of Polling

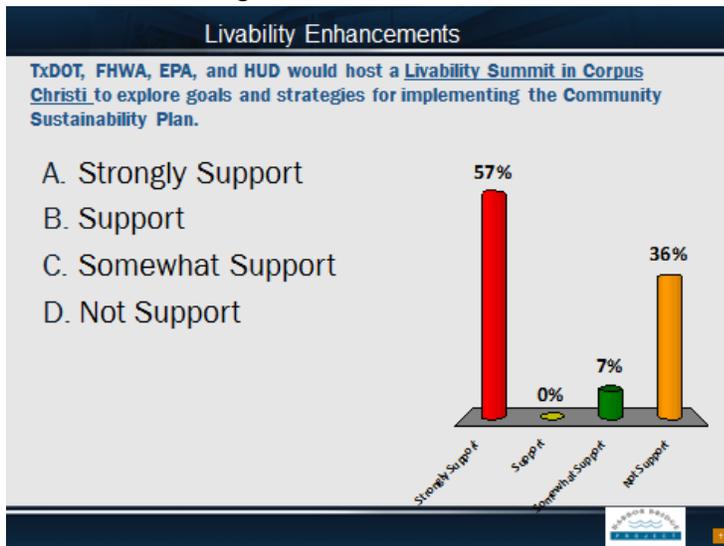


2. *TxDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD), would host a Livability Summit in Corpus Christi to explore goals and strategies for implementation of the Community Sustainability Plan by others.*

Input from CAC Members during Table Discussions

- Livability Summit – other plans? Lack of utility for summit? Land use for livability, connectivity; connect rather than separate.
- Livability Summit – good for identifying grant opportunities. Walkability summit held already.
- What role would HUD and EPA play?

Results of Polling



3. *TxDOT would construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities to connect the Northside neighborhood parks and recreation areas, including the Oveal Williams Senior Center, the swimming pool, and Solomon Coles Recreation Center.*

Input from CAC Members during Table Discussions

- Needs to be safe/well lit with security cameras; great in concept but crime is a major concern; maybe for use in the daytime. Who would fund lighting?
- Dangerous area – How will alarms be addressed? How will people know what alarms mean?
- Favorable to connect trail, but add crosswalks and have as much accessibility as possible.
- Safety concern: add crosswalk with stop light for pedestrians.
- Want to make sure the bike lane is separated from the road; need dedicated trail.
- Include historical/neighborhood markers.
- Pedestrian-friendly is important; lessen impact for those on foot – location is key.
- Four existing bike/ped plans already—compare any new plans with these.

Polling Results

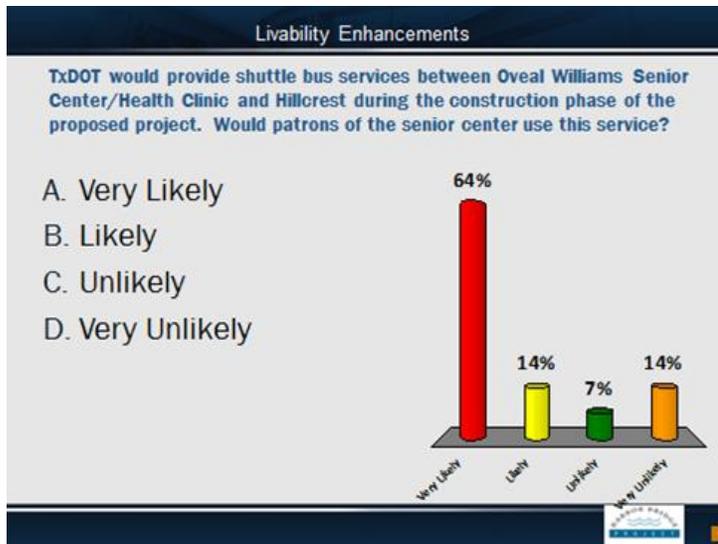


4. *TxDOT would provide shuttle bus service between the Senior Center/Health Clinic and the Hillcrest neighborhood during the construction phase of the project.*

Input from CAC Members during Table Discussions

- Consider RTA's existing B Line shuttle which would overlap with this. May already provide as much as would be needed. People will be more impacted by dust and construction.
- Shuttle to doctor as mitigation is inadequate – not enough.
- Project should not be done in first place.
- Environmental Justice impacts have not been addressed.
- Absolutely.
- Maybe also to schools, pharmacy, grocery stores.
- What about after the construction phase?
- Demand/response service needed.

Polling Results



Topic: Recreational Enhancements—Proposed Mitigation

5. *TxDOT would develop a new Washington Park to replace the repurposed T.C. Park, enhance Dr. H.J. Williams Park, enhance T.C. Ayers pool and trail, and enhance Ben Garza Park. (These proposed mitigation measures have been extensively discussed with the community, including the CAC, previously and were reintroduced for further discussion at this CAC meeting.)*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Alarms with explanation.
- Emergency call boxes.
- Why community garden when fallout is possible?
- Cover needed on grown food or flowers – due to benzene or VOCs.
- Soil testing.
- Flower beds only.
- Improvements to T.C. Ayers very positive (also needs lighting).
- Park improvements are not mitigating Environmental Justice issues.
- Dedicate area for historical space for black history. They are closing the Washington Head Start program (decided last week).
- Washington – consider cost of mitigation there.
- St Paul built a new park recently.
- Covered basketball courts at Washington and Williams.
- Use of old brownfields.
- Community garden – pollution/ contamination. Maybe raised beds?
- Washington Park – need for cleanup.
- Check GIS map for old city dump sites.

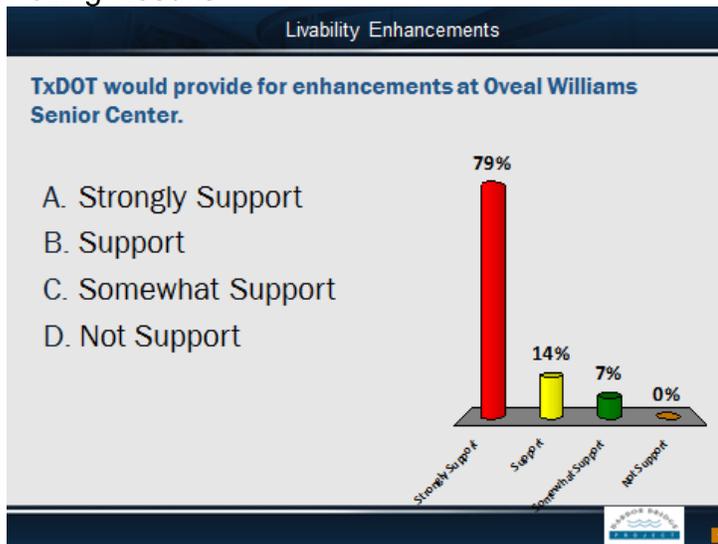
6. *Enhancement to recreational facilities at Oveal Williams Senior Center.*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- New air conditioning.
- Van for transportation for people who cannot get here.
- Used to have more activities here – arts/ceramics—need more programs:
 - Garden
 - Library/reading room with computer lab
 - Organized outings/field trips
 - Chair volleyball
 - Improved kitchen facilities (oven, stove)
 - Water aerobics at T.C. Ayers; transportation from Senior Center
 - Zumba class.

- Dr. Scott published a book, people saw it and added to it, and they are producing a second book.
- Would like to see people important to the neighborhood on the retaining walls for high visibility.
- Stand-alone work to document neighborhood history
- Unsure how much is the center currently used? Need to ask those who use it.
- Satellite library location (including computer skill training)
- Garden (existing).
- Maintain services; may not need many new ones in the future.
- Good use of tax dollars?
- Master Gardener classes (with Parks and Rec Dept.)

Polling Results

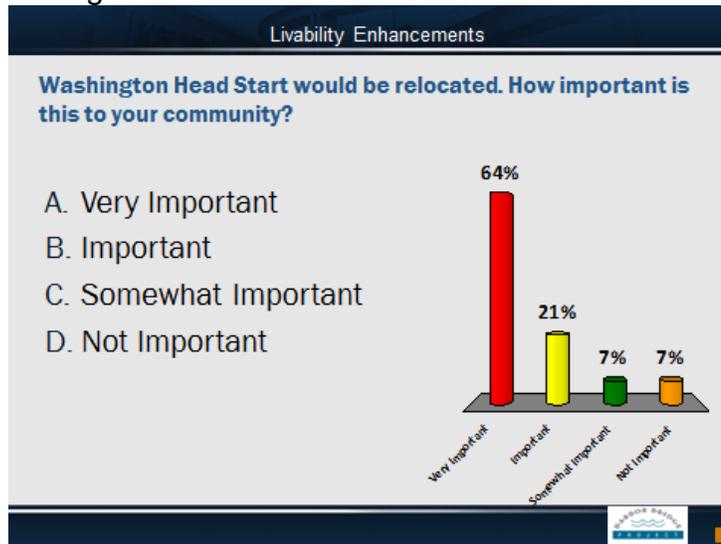


7. *Relocation of the structure used for the Washington Head Start Program (currently located at Washington Elementary School site).*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Possible locations: Oak Park Elementary, Driskoll Middle School.
- Solomon Coles is for teen mothers (issue with breathing fumes).
- Give transportation to families of Head Start kids when moved.
- Need new facilities for Head Start program.
- They are closing the Washington Head Start program (decided last week)
- Why is it in a portable building to begin with? Needs to be located very nearby (walking distance).
- Move to old CCISD building next to Miller High School.
- Where are people who will use Head Start in this area?

Polling Results



Topic: Historic Preservation—Proposed Mitigation

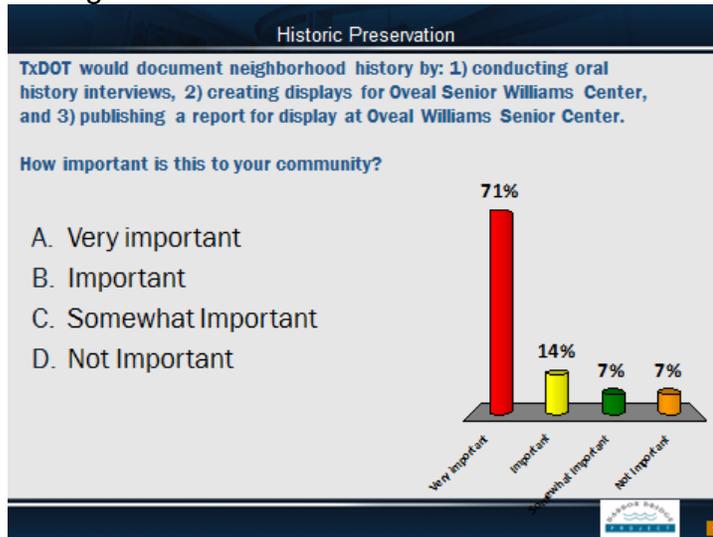
8. *Document neighborhood history by: conducting oral history interviews; creating displays for the Oveal Williams Senior Center; and publishing a report to be displayed at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Display history at the libraries, university, many areas
- Written history; four bodies buried near Washington Elementary in family cemetery.
- Boundaries of Hillcrest cemetery not accurate.

- Bayview Cemetery boundaries not correct.
- Similar effort conducted for churches' centennial celebrations.
- Memorialize the history of the bridges.
- At what point in time do you go back to establish "history"?
- Publicize the history wall at Oveal Williams.
- Trail markers.
- Similar efforts have already been put forth. Should be conducted by the community itself; sometimes more beneficial for everyone (private funding).
- Important to preserve history for future generations. Use the tax money here or it will go somewhere else.
- Hire members of the community to do the work – clause that contractors must hire locals.
- I-37 removed historic areas.
- Start with City Landmark Commission.
- Need to preserve North Beach history.
- City can donate property; e.g., Boston Freedom Trail.
- Important to document history.
- Historical markers on hike and bike trail or Washington Park.
- Find students who would be interested in project.
- Statues of historical figures.

Polling Results



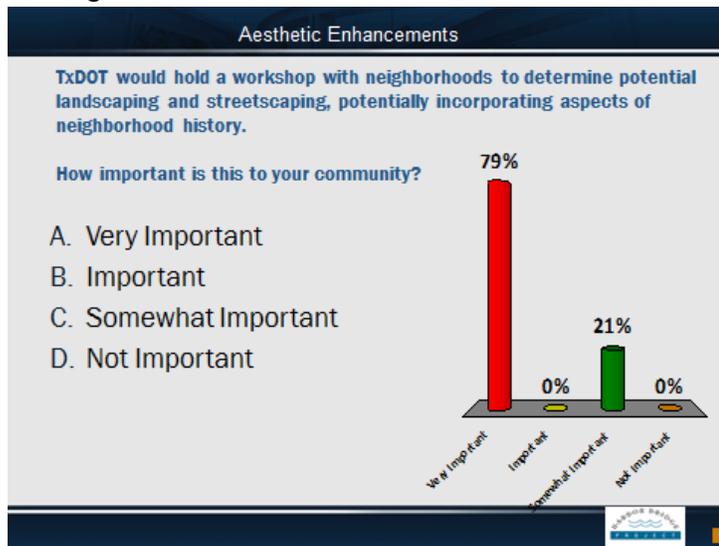
Topic: Aesthetic Enhancements—Proposed Mitigation

9. TxDOT would hold a workshop with affected neighborhoods to determine potential landscaping and streetscaping within the right of way of the project and within bicycle and pedestrian facilities (discussed below), potentially incorporating aspects of neighborhood history (e.g., murals).

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Lighting under the bridge.
- Different lighting from existing bridge.
- New development (adverse industrial) is happening because of new bridge.
- Graffiti could impact murals.
- Important to maintain the bridge as a landmark.
- Care for safety under the bridge with proper lighting.
- City will need more employees to take care of landscaping; it is great to plan all of these ideas but they have to take care of these parks. They need to remain desirable to be enjoyable.
- Opinions on trails/design should be left to those who have the expertise in order to create a self-sustaining park/trail.
- More palms; landscaping important.
- Soften the impact.
- Will it be lit? Yes, some lighting.
- Alternative ways to light the bridge (maybe solar).
- Focus on overpasses; artwork on railing systems to reflect history (e.g., Western theme in Kansas City).
- Get away from prototypes and more toward thoughtful design.
- Good idea to get community input.
- Stormwater mitigation – use specific plant species.
- Good example: Cal Allen overpasses with themes; Kansas City (western theme), Portland (dolphins and cranes).
- Could use historical design features.
- Community amphitheater under the bridge (e.g., Boston).
- Oral interviews—use a CAC member to get public input.
- Neighborhood connectivity important.
- Low-impact development important.
- Use drought tolerant plants.

Polling Results



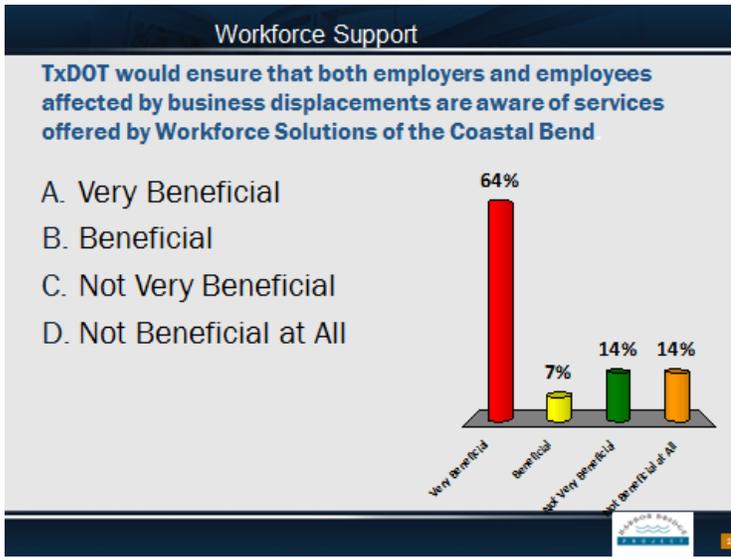
Topic: Workforce Support—Proposed Mitigation

10. *TxDOT would mail notice to both employers and employees affected by the displacement of businesses to make them aware of the services offered by Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend. TxDOT has the necessary mailing information for employers. TxDOT will ask the employers for the best method to give notice to their employees.*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Need better paying jobs in neighborhood.
- Always beneficial.
- Determine the need and address it.
- Demographics?
- Workforce works with individuals all over the city. We (CAC members) want to ensure that members of this community would get priority.
- You should have a target market (mail outs by zip code).
- What about the employers themselves?
- TxDOT work with City to relax code enforcement to preserve viability of existing businesses (e.g., those that take advantage of their proximity to the highway).
- TxDOT make employees aware before, during, and after construction.
- The more information the better.

Polling Results

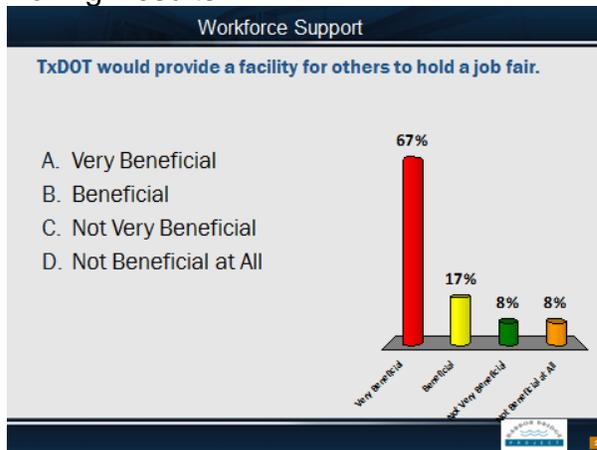


11. *TxDOT would provide a facility for others to hold a Job Fair.*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Suggest hosting job fair in the community (Oveal Williams Senior Center)
- Suggest having more than one job fair to provide more opportunities to community/neighborhood members.
- Job fair – visibility from the highway (location).
- Job fair a good idea even for the larger community.

Polling Results



Topic: Traffic Noise Abatement—Proposed Mitigation

12. *TxDOT would construct reasonable and feasible noise barriers to minimize traffic noise, consistent with existing FHWA and TxDOT noise policies.*

Input from CAC Members During Table Discussions

- Why are noise walls needed?
- What would be the height of the walls?
- Trucks should use Bureson to reduce noise.

Presentation on Context-Sensitive Solutions

Christopher Amy defined and provided examples of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) to the CAC members. He introduced Summer Lawton of HNTB who guided the CAC members through a survey form as she discussed safety, mobility and “look and feel” opportunities within the neighborhoods. She focused on enhancements to connectivity along the proposed hike and bike trail and within the neighborhood parks. Other survey questions were asked to better understand how the community travels within and near the Harbor Bridge project area. Summer presented representative imagery of aesthetic treatments that could be applied as well as conceptual photo simulations of multiple points along the proposed hike and bike trail. The conceptual photo simulations helped the CAC members and other meeting attendees visualize the scale of the proposed Harbor Bridge improvements and where CSS opportunities exist along the proposed hike and bike trail.

All 16 CAC members in attendance participated in the CSS Survey. The results of the CSS Survey are identified below. It is important to note that this information helps identify preferences and existing uses, but there is variability in the results. Each member completed the form from their perspective, and some did not provide answers to all of the questions.

GENERAL

1. What community or neighborhood do you live in or represent? _____

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 6 – Hillcrest | 1 – Portland |
| 2 – Northside/Washington-Coles | 1 – Crosstown & Leopard |
| 1 – Southside | 1 – North Beach Harbors |
| 1 – Refinery Row | 1 – Downtown |
| 1 – Dona Park | |

2. What aspects of the community are most important to you?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 7 Neighborhood Parks | 9 Other (please specify) _____ |
| 2 Neighborhood Pool | People (3); Museum Black History in Corpus (1); Housing (1); Safety (1); Complete Streets (1); Historic Cemeteries (1); Livability (1) |
| 10 Sidewalks | |
| 8 Civic Spaces | |

SAFETY

3. Please rank the importance for each of the following hike and bike trail safety elements:
(Refer to image board for examples.)

| | Very important 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Not important at all 5 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Roadway Lighting | 13 | 1 | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Path Lighting | 13 | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1 |
| Pavement Types (see examples) | 11 | 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Pavement Markings on Crosswalks | 11 | 2 | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing Signs/Signals | 11 | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1 |
| Other ___Historical Integration_____ | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other ___Safety_____ | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other ___Bridge Lighting LED_____ | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

MOBILITY

4. Rank what type of transportation is most important to your community.

Name of neighborhood _____

When identified, neighborhoods were consistent with responses noted in Question 1.

| | Very important 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Not important at all 5 |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Car | 13 | <input type="radio"/> | 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Walk | 7 | 1 | 5 | 1 | <input type="radio"/> |
| Bicycle | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Public Bus | 10 | 2 | <input type="radio"/> | 2 | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other _____ | <input type="radio"/> |

5. When you bike, walk or ride the bus where do you travel?

Walk

| To | From |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| King High School Track | |
| | Living |
| Along Beach | No. Beach |
| Food and Entertainment | Home |
| Comal-Alameda Bus Stop | |
| Coles School | Oveal Williams |
| School-Shopping | West Broadway to Port Street |

Bike

| To | From |
|-------------|------------------|
| Over bridge | No. Beach |
| Parks | Home |
| Coles | HJ Williams Park |

Bus

| To | From |
|-----------|------------------|
| Downtown | No. Beach |
| Groceries | Home |
| Downtown | HJ Williams Park |

6. Do you plan to travel on the planned shared use path located on the new bridge between the Northside Neighborhoods and North Beach?

9 Yes 3 No 3 Maybe

7. On your typical route, what are the most important street intersections you use when walking or biking?

5 N. Port Ave. and Winnebago St.

3 Sam Rankin St. and Lake St.

2 Lake St. and New US 181 Frontage Rds.

2 N. Staples St. and Winnebago St.

2 I-37 and N. Staples St.

4 Other _____

Sam Rankin St./Staples St. Intermingled area tied together by cross streets (1); Sam Rankin St. and Lobo St. (1); I-37/Chaparral Ave. (1); Surfside Blvd. – Timon Blvd. (1)

LOOK AND FEEL

8. When viewing the highway from your neighborhood, please rank the following as to what is most important to you. (Refer to image board for examples.)

| | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| Landscape (trees, flowers) | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| Look & feel of columns, walls, sidewalks | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| Lighting (type of illumination) | 9 | 1 | 3 |

9. Related to an overall theme that could be applied to parks within your neighborhood, please rank your favorites. (Refer to image board for examples.) **1 most favorite – 7 least favorite:**

| | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 | Rank 4 | Rank 5 | Rank 6 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| History | 9 | | | 2 | | |
| Ocean/Waves | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | |
| Recreation/Tourism | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | 1 |
| Texas Pride | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Wildlife/Birding | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Boating/Fishing | 2 | | 1 | | 2 | 3 |
| Other: Neighborhood History | no ranking provided | | | | | |

10. If history is your favorite theme for parks, which of the following would you prefer the most?

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 8 | History of your local Neighborhood (which one) _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North/Northside Original neighborhood in which Black people were living; the only place they lived in Corpus Christi? (1) • Hillcrest (2) • Comment: <u>Which is</u> the history of C.C. ☺ |
| 4 | History of Corpus Christi |
| <input type="radio"/> | History of the State of Texas |

11. What additional information would you like to share with the team?

- We submitted a letter to C Amy.
- CCPD input should be solicited for park security.
- We need to build the most beautiful bridge in the country.
- Get it done!
- Exits on North Beach should be limited to trucks exiting (going south) on the Burluson exit only. This would help reduce noise levels in the Harbors neighborhood. We have noise now; most people do not want it to increase.
-
- Please continue to stress the height of the bridge as it relates to the ground level.

Christopher adjourned the CAC meeting after allowing time for public comment. No public comments were received.