

1 **8.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

2 Agency coordination and public involvement are crucial to the successful completion of transportation
3 infrastructure projects. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Corpus Christi District and the
4 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have engaged government agencies, key stakeholders, and the
5 public in the planning process for the proposed US 181 Harbor Bridge Project. The proposed project has
6 been open to comment regarding the scope, the need and purpose, proposed alternatives,
7 environmental impacts, and other project-related information. TxDOT and FHWA have recorded and
8 considered all comments received as of the date that this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft
9 EIS) has been issued, and will continue to consider all comments received until the planning process is
10 complete.

11
12 This section of the Draft EIS documents the scoping, public, and agency coordination process, and
13 includes the following:

- 14
- 15 • Notices of Intent;
 - 16 • Coordination Plan;
 - 17 • Public and Agency Scoping Meetings;
 - 18 • Agency Coordination;
 - 19 • Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings;
 - 20 • Neighborhood Meetings;
 - 21 • Stakeholder Meetings;
 - 22 • Public Meeting;
 - 23 • Newsletter; and
 - 24 • Project Website.
- 25

26 The public hearing and public comment period results will be recorded in the Final EIS.

27

28 **8.1 NOTICE OF INTENT**

29 TxDOT and FHWA first published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on May 20, 2005 for the
30 proposed improvements to US 181 at the Harbor Bridge. In that NOI, the US 181 Harbor Bridge Project
31 was described as involving the replacement of the existing Harbor Bridge and approaches where US 181
32 crosses the Corpus Christi Ship Channel. The project limits were as follows:

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- 34 • Northern limit: US 181 and Beach Avenue, north of the Corpus Christi Ship Channel but
35 south of the Nueces Bay Causeway;
- 36 • Southern limit: SH 286/Crosstown Expressway between Morgan Avenue and Baldwin
37 Boulevard;

- 1 • Eastern limit: I-37 and Shoreline Blvd. in the Corpus Christi Central Business District (CBD);
2 and
3 • Western limit: I-37 and Nueces Bay Boulevard.
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5 On March 20, 2007, a revised NOI was published to advise the public that the study limits described in
6 the 2005 NOI had been expanded. The primary change was to the southern limit, which would have
7 extended the project along SH 286/Crosstown Expressway to SH 358 (South Padre Island Drive). On
8 November 3, 2010, the revised NOI published in 2007 was rescinded, via a notice in the *Federal Register*,
9 because of changes in the scope (managed toll lanes) and project limits.

10
11 TxDOT and FHWA published a new NOI on June 22, 2011 in the *Federal Register* and on July 8, 2011 in
12 the *Texas Register*. The NOI also was published in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* on July 10, 2011. As
13 stated in the 2011 NOI, the project limits are as follows:

- 14
15 • Northern limit: US 181 and Beach Avenue, north of the Corpus Christi Ship Channel but
16 south of the Nueces Bay Causeway;
17 • Southern limit: SH 286 (Crosstown Expressway) between Morgan Avenue and Baldwin
18 Boulevard;
19 • Eastern limit: I-37 and Shoreline Boulevard in the CBD; and
20 • Western limit: I-37 and Nueces Bay Boulevard.
21

22 The NOI established the preliminary contents of the Draft EIS, the required approvals by the federal
23 government, details for scoping, and procedures expected for coordination and public involvement
24 based on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. See **Appendix K** for a copy of the
25 2011 Harbor Bridge NOI.
26

27 **8.2 PROJECT COORDINATION**

28 In 2011, TxDOT and FHWA prepared a Project Coordination Plan to facilitate and document the lead
29 agencies' structured interaction with the public during the project development process. The plan also
30 documents how this interaction and coordination would be accomplished. The Project Coordination
31 Plan was prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable,
32 Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU) (23 USC Section
33 139), and was formally approved by FHWA in October 2011.
34

35 In the Project Coordination Plan, the Cooperating and Participating agencies for the proposed project
36 are identified, along with their respective roles and responsibilities. Cooperating agencies are defined in
37 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.5 as federal agencies with jurisdiction by law or special
38 expertise pertaining to the proposed project. Participating agencies include local, state, and federal
39 resource agencies with a special interest in the proposed project. The list of Cooperating and
40 Participating agencies is found in **Table 8.2-1**.
41

1 8.2.1 Scoping Process

2 Public and agency scoping meetings were held on June 23, 2005, May 17, 2007, and on August 9 and
 3 October 27, 2011. Agency scoping was held to elicit information and comments from the Cooperating
 4 and Participating agencies about the development of the need and purpose for the proposed project;
 5 identification of the boundaries of the study area; environmental and engineering constraints as well as
 6 known or potentially significant issues; process and methodologies for alternatives development and
 7 evaluation; the range of alternatives; and the proposed project schedule. In addition, agency scoping
 8 was used to gather agency input on the Project Coordination Plan and Need and Purpose Statement,
 9 and to answer questions about the proposed project. Meeting summaries for these meetings are not
 10 included in this document since they apply to an earlier project scope and associated NOI; therefore, the
 11 meetings are not applicable to the current project. However, these summaries can be found on the
 12 project website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com.

13
 14 In January 2011, TxDOT and FHWA began the process of pre-scoping with the potential Cooperating and
 15 Participating agencies listed in the Project Coordination Plan. The objective of pre-scoping was to give
 16 agencies a head start on project scoping, which was intended to enable the scoping process to proceed
 17 more efficiently. Eleven agencies were sent letters asking whether they wished to participate in the
 18 proposed US 181 Harbor Bridge Project by participating in scoping meetings and reviewing documents.
 19 Their responses to this letter are documented in the Project Coordination Plan and are included in
 20 **Appendix B**.

21
 22 Following the pre-scoping process, the formal scoping process was initiated on July 20, 2011. Scoping
 23 letters were sent to federal, state, and local agencies, Native American tribes, and other interested
 24 parties. As a result of the scoping process, three agencies agreed to be Cooperating agencies, 14
 25 agencies requested to be Participating agencies, and two agencies requested to be interested parties
 26 (see **Table 8.2-1** and **Appendix B**). Responses to the scoping letters were not received from Native
 27 American Tribes; additional coordination with Native American Tribes was conducted under Section 106
 28 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

29

Table 8.2-1 Participating and Cooperating Agencies		
Agency Name	Role	Responsibilities
Federal Agencies		
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Cooperating Agency	Review and comment on possible effects to air quality, under Section 309 of Clean Air Act, and water quality
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)	Cooperating Agency	General Bridge Act of 1946 – bridge permit jurisdiction
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Cooperating Agency	Review and comment on possible effects to HUD-assisted and insured multifamily housing facilities
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Participating Agency	Section 404 Clean Water Act permit jurisdiction

Table 8.2-1 Participating and Cooperating Agencies		
Agency Name	Role	Responsibilities
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	Participating Agency	Analysis of project effects on prime farmland, under Farmland Protection Policy Act
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Participating Agency	Wildlife, habitat, and Threatened and Endangered Species, including Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act permit jurisdiction
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Participating Agency	Review and comment on possible effect to marine fisheries in compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006
National Park Service (NPS)	Participating Agency	Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program
State Agencies		
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	Participating Agency	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303)
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)	Participating Agency	Review project impacts to hazardous material sites, and compliance with the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES); designated state representative for EPA
Local Agencies		
City of Corpus Christi	Participating Agency	Identification and resolution of project effects to parks and areas within the city limits and area of extraterritorial jurisdiction
City of Portland	Participating Agency	Identification and resolution of any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environment effects within the City's jurisdiction
San Patricio County	Participating Agency	Identification and resolution of any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental effects within the County's jurisdiction
Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	Participating Agency	Proposed project with respect to Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Transportation Improvement Program. Identification of issues relating to safety and mobility, system interconnectivity, and project effects to minority and low income populations

Table 8.2-1 Participating and Cooperating Agencies		
Agency Name	Role	Responsibilities
Port of Corpus Christi	Participating Agency	Identification of issues related to the Corpus Christi Ship Channel and Port properties including shipping, safety and commerce
Coastal Bend Council of Governments	Participating Agency	Identification of planning and coordination of issues relative to local governments
Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)	Participating Agency	Identification of issues related to public transportation relative to the cities and counties in the RTA
Other Interested Parties		
Historic Bridge Foundation	Interested Party	Comment on impacts to historic bridges
Citizens for Environmental Justice	Interested Party	Expressed interest in Participating in the project. Group has a particular interest in air quality in neighborhoods adjacent to the refineries.

1 Source: US 181 Harbor Bridge EIS Team 2013

2

3 8.2.1.1 Public Scoping Meetings

4 Scoping for the proposed US 181 Harbor Bridge Project included two agency/public scoping meetings on
5 August 9, 2011 and October 27, 2011, as well as agency/public scoping meetings associated with
6 previous NOIs, which were held on June 23, 2005 and May 17, 2007.

7

8 The meetings served as a forum for disseminating information about the project and for obtaining public
9 input on the scope of issues to be addressed during the preparation of the Draft EIS. Specifically these
10 scoping meetings gave the community an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Project
11 Coordination Plan, the Need and Purpose Statement, the range of alternatives, the alternatives
12 evaluation process, and other project information. Each meeting began with an open house session
13 during which project team members interacted with meeting participants to answer questions and listen
14 to participants' opinions and concerns about the project. The materials distributed at these meetings
15 generally consisted of a project fact sheet, a map of project area, comment forms, and newsletters. The
16 following displays were available for viewing: map showing project and study limits; an environmental
17 constraints map; an aerial map showing possible project corridors; and typical sections. The open house
18 portion of the meeting was followed by a presentation and comment session. The meetings were
19 followed by a 30-day comment period and a scoping meeting summary report was prepared for each
20 meeting. Materials from the public scoping meetings are on the project website
21 (www.ccharborbridgeproject.com).

22

1 August 9, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting

2 As specified by SAFETEA-LU, this first scoping meeting after the publication of the 2011 NOI provided
3 resource agencies, stakeholders, and members of the public an opportunity to review and provide
4 comments on the draft Project Coordination Plan, which includes the Need and Purpose Statement, and
5 an explanation of the methodology of analysis and level of detail for the alternatives analysis.

6
7 A public notice of the August 9, 2011 public scoping meeting was published on August 4, 2011, in the
8 *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* and on August 4, 2011, in the *Portland News*. Both the *Caller-Times* and the
9 *Portland News* ran news stories on the scoping meeting. The project newsletter, which contained a
10 notice about the meeting, was mailed to the project mailing list of about 450 individuals. The meeting
11 also was advertised on local community calendars and on the project website.

12
13 A total of 76 individuals (including 11 TxDOT staff members and other project team members) registered
14 their attendance at the public scoping meeting, which was held from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the TxDOT
15 Corpus Christi District Office located at 1701 South Padre Island Drive in Corpus Christi. Twelve people
16 spoke at the meeting and another nine people submitted written comments. Comments included
17 support for bicycle/pedestrian facilities on the proposed bridge, support for the Red Alternative, support
18 for preserving cohesion of Uptown and Downtown Corpus Christi, concern for the high costs of the new
19 bridge, general concerns about the new bridge, and the suggestions that TxDOT consider a tunnel as a
20 replacement of the Harbor Bridge as well as an alternative to the west of the existing proposed
21 alternatives.

22
23 Comments from the meeting were documented and addressed by the project team in the Scoping
24 Meeting Summary Report (see **Appendix K**). As a result of the public scoping meeting, the design team
25 added the Tunnel Alternative and the West Alternative to be considered in the Draft EIS document.

26
27 October 27, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting

28 The second scoping meeting, held on October 27, 2011 at the Solomon Ortiz Center at 402 Harbor Drive
29 in Corpus Christi, covered the revised draft Coordination Plan, including the revised Need and Purpose
30 statement, the range of alternatives, including new alternatives suggested by the agencies and the
31 public, and the methodology and level of detail for the alternatives analysis. Again the meeting
32 participants had an opportunity to review the information presented and provide comments. Public
33 notice of the meeting was published in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* on October 13, October 20, and
34 October 26, 2011 and in the *Portland News* on October 13 and October 20, 2011. TxDOT also
35 distributed a press release and a postcard announcing the public scoping meeting was sent to
36 individuals on the Harbor Bridge mailing list. A meeting notice was also posted on the project website.
37 A news story on the scoping meeting ran on October 28, 2011 in the *Caller-Times*.

38
39 A total of 37 individuals (including three project team members) registered their attendance at the
40 public scoping meeting, which ran from 4:30 – 8:00 p.m. Four elected officials or representatives of
41 elected officials signed in as well.

1
2 At this meeting, two new proposed alternatives were introduced: the West Alternative and the Tunnel
3 Alternative, both based on comments submitted by the public at the August 2011 public scoping
4 meeting. Eleven individuals spoke at the meeting and six individuals and/or organizations submitted
5 written comments. Comments included the need to prioritize environmental justice considerations,
6 concern about security issues associated with the Blue Alternative, need for early public
7 communications, need to understand how proposed alternatives will be evaluated, and support for the
8 Red Alternative (see **Appendix K**).

9
10 **8.2.1.2 Agency Scoping Meetings**

11 Agency scoping meetings were held on August 9, 2011 and October 27, 2011 on the same dates as the
12 public scoping meetings, as well as on June 23, 2005 and May 17, 2007. The meetings served as a forum
13 for disseminating information about the project and for obtaining public input on the scope of issues to
14 be addressed during the preparation of the Draft EIS. Specifically these scoping meetings gave agencies
15 an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Project Coordination Plan, the Need and
16 Purpose Statement, the range of alternatives, the alternatives evaluation process, and other project
17 information. The meetings followed a similar format as the public scoping meetings, structured with a
18 meet and greet session followed by a presentation and allocated time for questions and comments. All
19 comments were recorded and addressed by the project team. Meeting summaries for the 2005 and
20 2007 meetings are not included in this document but can be found on the project website at
21 www.ccharborbridgeproject.com.

22
23 August 9, 2011 Agency Scoping Meeting

24 TxDOT and FHWA held an agency scoping meeting on August 9, 2011 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. at the TxDOT
25 Corpus Christi District office. Twenty-four agencies and Native American tribes were invited to the
26 scoping meeting with a formal letter sent approximately a month before the meeting. Twenty-one
27 agency representatives attended the meeting. The following agencies were represented:

- 28
- 29 • City of Corpus Christi
 - 30 • City of Portland
 - 31 • Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning
 - 32 • Organization
 - 33 • Coastal Bend Council of Governments
 - 34 • Port of Corpus Christi
 - 35 • Regional Transit Authority
 - 36 • San Patricio County
 - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
 - General Services Administration (GSA)
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - U.S. Coast Guard
 - Former U.S. Federal Judge Hayden Head (U.S. Courts)
 - U.S. Marshall's Office

1 Ten agency representatives made verbal comments at the meeting and two representatives submitted
2 written comments. Comments addressed the following topics:

- 3
- 4 • General bridge permit required for new bridge;
- 5 • Section 4(f) concerns;
- 6 • Concerns regarding the Blue Alternative;
- 7 • Projected completion date of EIS and Record of Decision (ROD);
- 8 • City of Corpus Christi's ability to attract funding for proposed project;
- 9 • Independent utility of project;
- 10 • Current condition of bridge;
- 11 • Design of proposed new bridge;
- 12 • Time needed to determine preferred alternative;
- 13 • Need for local entities' support in moving the project forward;
- 14 • The effect of proposed bridge traffic on local air quality; and
- 15 • Coordination Plan comments (from the EPA).
- 16

17 October 27, 2011 Agency Scoping Meeting

18 The second agency scoping meeting, held on October 27, 2011 at the Solomon Ortiz Center, covered the
19 revised draft Coordination Plan, including the revised Need and Purpose statement, the range of
20 alternatives, including the Tunnel and West Alternatives suggested by the agencies and the public, and
21 the methods and level of detail.

22
23 Twenty-four agencies and Native American tribes were invited to the scoping meeting with a formal
24 letter sent approximately a month before the meeting. Eight agency representatives attended the
25 meeting. The following agencies were represented:

- 26
- 27 • City of Corpus Christi
- 28 • San Patricio County (County Judge)
- 29 • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 30

31 One agency representative made a verbal comment at the meeting and two representatives submitted
32 written comments. Comments include the following: need to move project forward more quickly, and
33 support for the Red Alternative.

34 35 **8.2.2 Agency Coordination**

36 During the completion of the Draft EIS, agency coordination took place to gather input and information
37 from agencies with jurisdictions relevant to the proposed project. This input was valuable to TxDOT and
38 FHWA during analysis of proposed alternatives and further coordination with agencies is expected to
39 take place during preparation of the Final EIS.

1 8.2.2.1 Cooperating Agency Coordination

2 Three Cooperating agencies were identified from the scoping process: EPA, USCG, and HUD.
3 Throughout the process of developing the Draft EIS, the Cooperating agencies received Draft EIS
4 chapters for early review. Comments received were documented and addressed in the Draft EIS to the
5 extent possible. On July 24, 2013, TxDOT met with the EPA in the Dallas, Texas office to discuss
6 environmental justice concerns, air quality regulations, and to address comments received by EPA in
7 early 2013. On July 24, 2013, TxDOT and FHWA also met with HUD to discuss the updated Project
8 Coordination Plan and the accelerated schedule for the project. On September 9, TxDOT met with HUD
9 in Corpus Christi, where the group participated in a project field visit. TxDOT met with the USCG on
10 September 13, 2013. TxDOT and FHWA also held a workshop with HUD on November 6, 2013 to review
11 the Draft EIS and facilitate the submittal of comments on the document. Additional meetings with all
12 Cooperating agencies are planned for the period during the preparation of the Final EIS.

13

14 8.2.2.2 Resource Agency Coordination

15 Coordination efforts with resource-based agencies included meetings with Coastal Bend Bays and
16 Estuaries Program (CBBEP), USFWS and TPWD were scheduled to seek guidance from the agencies
17 regarding ecology concerns in the project area. The first meeting was held on March 6, 2013 with a
18 representative from the CBBEP in Corpus Christi. The purpose of the meeting was to acquire
19 clarification and additional information on the listed and candidate avian species in the project area. A
20 second meeting was held on March 7, 2013 with USFWS, TPWD, and TxDOT in Corpus Christi. The
21 meeting was held to discuss potential project impacts to natural resources and to gain additional
22 information on rare, listed, and candidate species potentially occurring in the project area.

23

24 8.2.3 Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee

25 The Harbor Bridge Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed and met on October 20, 2007 in two
26 locations: Corpus Christi and Portland so as to reach interested individuals and stakeholders on both
27 sides of the Harbor Bridge. Since these meetings took place under a previous NOI, summaries of these
28 meetings are not included in this document, although they are available on the project website at
29 www.ccharborbridgeproject.com. After a new NOI was issued in 2011, TxDOT and FHWA determined
30 that it would be more appropriate to have both a CAC and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to
31 ensure that all facets of the community are represented. Therefore, after the 2011 NOI was published,
32 TxDOT and FHWA reactivated the CAC and formed a new TAC. Three meetings of the current CAC and
33 TAC were held in 2012 on January 11, June 21, and October 18. The CAC and TAC met on July 11, 2013
34 and another set of meetings is planned for the early winter of 2014.

35

36 Members of the CAC were recruited from neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed project and include
37 neighborhood property owners, residents, business owners, service providers, and advocacy groups.
38 Potential CAC members could nominate themselves or be nominated by others. TxDOT/FHWA made
39 the final decisions regarding CAC membership based on a process that included considering a target size
40 for the committee (up to 30 members) and the following criteria for individual members:

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- Broad representation of stakeholder interests;
- Diversity;
- Geographical representation within the project area;
- Demonstrated interest in the Harbor Bridge project; and
- Willingness to make time commitment needed for CAC participation.

The mission of the CAC is as follows:

- To receive project team reports on the progress of the project in relationship to established schedules and project milestones;
- To promote public awareness and understanding of the project; and
- To advise TxDOT/FHWA on the community's preferences regarding the project as well as the best approach for communicating with the public.

TAC members are individuals who either have a particular interest or expertise related to the proposed project, and include elected officials, and representatives of local Participating agencies (e.g., the City of Corpus Christi, the Port of Corpus Christi), as well as business organizations, the educational community, and civic organizations.

Potential TAC members could nominate themselves or be nominated by others. TxDOT/FHWA made the final decisions regarding TAC membership based on a process that included considering a target size for the committee (up to 30 members) and the following criteria for individual members:

- Broad representation of stakeholder interests;
- Diversity;
- Demonstrated interest in the Harbor Bridge project;
- Professional experience in the technical areas applicable to the project; and
- Willingness to make the required time commitment for TAC participation.

The mission of the TAC is as follows:

- To review and monitor environmental studies and engineering products;
- To provide feedback to TxDOT/FHWA;
- To promote public awareness and understanding of the project;
- To share information learned at TAC meetings with others in their field and to bring back to TAC meetings any feedback received as a result of this information sharing; and
- To assist TxDOT in identifying environmental impacts and mitigation strategies for those impacts.

1 The format of the CAC and TAC meetings has evolved from a presentation/discussion session to a more
2 interactive, facilitated session at the request of the CAC and TAC members.

3

4 *8.2.3.1 CAC Meetings*

5 January 11, 2012 CAC Meeting

6 The January 11, 2012 CAC meeting was held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center
7 located at 1414 Martin Luther King Drive in Corpus Christi. Approximately 14 CAC members were in
8 attendance.

9

10 The agenda for the meeting included the following discussion topics:

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- 12 • Project status;
- 13 • Project Need and Purpose;
- 14 • Alternatives evaluation process, and
- 15 • Public involvement activities for the project.

16

17 During the meeting, CAC members raised questions about the project's progress and an update on the
18 Draft EIS documentation process, given that a scoping process had taken place during 2011. Meeting
19 participants requested estimates of the total cost of bridge construction, asked FHWA and TxDOT to
20 consider the effects of alternatives on nearby neighborhoods, and asked about right of way acquisition,
21 among other topics. TxDOT responded to all questions during the meeting and these responses are
22 documented in the meeting summary in **Appendix K**.

23

24 CAC members had various suggestions for public involvement strategies during the Draft EIS
25 documentation, including effective ways of advertising public meetings (e.g., running public service
26 announcements on radio or TV), using social media, and creating project visualizations. Several CAC
27 members requested that future CAC meetings not be held on Wednesdays based on several schedule
28 conflicts for members of the committee (this request was accommodated in subsequent meetings).

29

30 More detailed information on this meeting is documented in a meeting summary available on the
31 project website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com and in **Appendix K**.

32

33 June 21, 2012 CAC Meeting

34 The June 21, 2012 CAC meeting was held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
35 Approximately 14 CAC members were in attendance.

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37 The agenda for the meeting included the following discussion topics:

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- 39 • Review of proposed project Need and Purpose;
- 40 • Review of evaluation of project alternatives (including elimination of the Tunnel and Blue
41 Alternatives because they did not meet the project Need and Purpose);

- 1 • Status of Project;
- 2 • Status of Community Impact Assessment; and
- 3 • Public involvement.

4
5 The format of the meeting included a brief presentation followed by a facilitated discussion. The
6 discussions among CAC members covered the NEPA process, project schedule, opportunities for public
7 comment, and T.C. Ayers Park, among other topics. More detailed information on this meeting is
8 documented in a meeting summary that can be found on the project website at
9 www.ccharborbridgeproject.com or in **Appendix K**.

10 11 October 18, 2012 CAC Meeting

12 The October 18, 2012 CAC meeting was held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
13 Approximately 16 CAC members were in attendance.

14
15 The meeting agenda consisted of a review of project status, a review/group discussion of the
16 preliminary designs for the four proposed build alternatives, and an overview of upcoming public
17 involvement activities. The meeting format consisted of facilitated group discussions of each of the four
18 alternatives based on a review of the preliminary alternatives. To guide discussion, CAC members were
19 asked to consider the effect that each proposed alternative might have on their neighborhood, and their
20 preference for any particular alternative.

21
22 In general, CAC members viewed the Green Alternative as having both positive and negative impacts.
23 They also saw the Red Alternative in a positive light. CAC members raised both positive and negative
24 issues associated with the Orange Alternative, which generally was considered to be less favorable than
25 the Red Alternative. In general, CAC members considered the West Alternative to be the least desirable
26 of the four alternatives. More detailed information is documented in a meeting summary that can be
27 found at the project website (www.ccharborbridgeproject.com) or in **Appendix K**.

28 29 July 11, 2013 CAC Meeting

30 The July 11, 2013 CAC meeting was held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
31 Approximately 15 CAC members were in attendance.

32
33 The meeting agenda consisted of an overview of project status, a review/group discussion of the revised
34 preliminary designs, and a review of upcoming public involvement activities. The preliminary designs
35 were modified to provide additional access for local drivers and to avoid Section 4(f) parks and historic
36 properties. The meeting format consisted of a brief update on the status of the project and facilitated
37 group discussions of each of the four proposed alternatives (July 2013) that had been revised since
38 December 2012. To guide discussion, CAC members were asked what they noticed about the revised
39 designs and how these design changes would affect their neighborhood and Corpus Christi.

1 CAC members generally noted that the Red Alternative would provide benefits such as better
2 connectivity for surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown area and drawbacks such as possible
3 new congestion on I-37 frontage roads. During the group discussions, some CAC members indicated
4 that they liked the revised preliminary design for the Orange Alternative (July 2013). CAC members saw
5 the West Alternative as having the fewest benefits. They noted that the Green Alternative had a
6 number of benefits including maintenance of existing traffic and street patterns, better ramps to I-37,
7 and fewer community impacts.

8
9 More detailed information on this meeting is documented in a meeting summary that can be found on
10 the project website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com or in **Appendix K**.

11 12 *8.2.3.2 TAC Meetings*

13 January 11, 2012 TAC Meeting

14 The January 11, 2012 TAC meeting was held from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
15 Approximately 25 TAC members were in attendance.

16
17 The agenda for the meeting included the following discussion topics:

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- 19 • Project status;
- 20 • Project Need and Purpose;
- 21 • Alternatives evaluation process; and
- 22 • Public involvement activities for the project.

23
24 During the meeting discussions, TAC members requested clarification related to how Measures of
25 Effectiveness are determined and used during the alternatives analysis process. TxDOT representatives
26 explained in detail how these measures are used—refer also to **Section 2.1.3**—to see if alternatives
27 meet the project Need and Purpose. Several TAC members expressed their desire to see the project
28 move forward more rapidly and emphasized the importance of the bridge for communities on both its
29 north and south sides. A few individuals indicated their disapproval of the Tunnel Alternative. TAC
30 members also expressed ideas about engaging the community during the project and stressed the need
31 for consistent messages.

32
33 More detailed information on this meeting is documented in a meeting summary found on the project
34 website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com or in **Appendix K**.

35 36 June 21, 2012 TAC Meeting

37 The June 21, 2012 TAC meeting was held from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
38 Approximately 20 TAC members were in attendance.

1 The agenda for the meeting included the following discussion topics:

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- 3 • Review of proposed project Need and Purpose;
- 4 • Review of evaluation of project alternatives (including elimination of the Tunnel and Blue
5 Alternatives because they did not meet the project Need and Purpose);
- 6 • Status of Project;
- 7 • Status of Community Impact Assessment; and
- 8 • Public involvement.

9

10 The format of the meeting was a facilitated discussion following a brief presentation. The discussions
11 among TAC members covered the following topics: need for robust public involvement; effects of
12 proposed project on community cohesion; concerns about the safety and security of the West
13 Alternative; importance of the aesthetics of a new bridge; and preference for the Red Alternative.

14

15 More detailed information on this meeting is documented in a meeting summary found on the project
16 website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com or in **Appendix K**.

17

18 October 18, 2012 TAC Meeting

19 The October 18, 2012 TAC meeting was held from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
20 Approximately 13 TAC members were in attendance.

21

22 The meeting agenda consisted of a status report on the project, a review/group discussion of
23 preliminary designs, and a brief overview of upcoming public involvement activities, including the public
24 meeting. The meeting format consisted of facilitated group discussions of the Green, Red, Orange and
25 West Alternatives based on a review of the preliminary design drawings. To guide discussion, TAC
26 members were asked to consider the effect that each proposed alternative might have on their
27 neighborhoods, and their preference for any particular alternative. Preservation of pedestrian facilities
28 was emphasized for all the alternatives.

29

30 In general, the Green Alternative was not viewed as an improvement to the transportation facility from
31 a planning perspective. The alternative is viewed as less favorable compared to the other alternatives.
32 In general, TAC members viewed the Red Alternative in a positive light, noting that this alternative
33 would offer new opportunities for economic development and different land uses in the entertainment
34 district. TAC members raised both positive and negative issues associated with the Orange Alternative,
35 which generally was considered to be slightly less favorable than the Red Alternative. In general, TAC
36 members considered the West Alternative to have the most negative effects and to be the least
37 desirable of the four alternatives. They cited safety, access, and environmental issues. More details on
38 this meeting are found in a meeting summary on the project website and in **Appendix K**.

39

40

41

1 July 11, 2013 TAC Meeting

2 The July 11, 2013 TAC meeting was held from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Oveal Williams Senior Center.
3 Approximately 15 TAC members were in attendance.
4

5 The meeting agenda consisted of a brief project update, a review/group discussion of revised
6 preliminary designs, and a brief overview of upcoming public involvement opportunities. The meeting
7 format consisted of facilitated group discussions of each of the four alternatives based on a review of
8 the preliminary design drawings (July 2013) that have been revised since December 2012. To guide
9 discussion, TAC members were asked what they noticed about the revised designs and how these design
10 changes would affect their neighborhood and Corpus Christi.
11

12 TAC members indicated the Green alternative had both positive and negative impacts associated with it.
13 As a result of their facilitated discussions, TAC members identified benefits and a few drawbacks
14 associated with the Red Alternative. The Orange Alternative was the second favorite option for at least
15 one of the TAC members. For others, the drawbacks of this alternative were predominant. TAC
16 members considered the West Alternative to have more drawbacks than benefits. More detailed
17 information on the meeting is documented in the meeting summary in **Appendix K**.
18

19 **8.2.4 Neighborhood Meetings**

20 In the fall of 2012, a total of eight neighborhood meetings were held in the project area. Venues
21 included churches, public facilities, and recreation centers in the Portland, North Beach, South Central,
22 Northside, Westside and Refinery Row communities (see **Table 8.2-2** for a summary and **Figure 3.5-4** for
23 a map of these communities). The purpose of the neighborhood meetings was to engage community
24 members in the project, and to gather their expertise and opinions regarding their communities.
25 Various efforts for advertising the meetings were made throughout each neighborhood. For each
26 neighborhood meeting, post cards were mailed to all the residents within the zip code in which the
27 meeting was held. Posters were placed at bus stops and local businesses, such as restaurants,
28 laundromats, and public facilities. Flyers were sent home with students in the schools in parent packets.
29 Each poster/flyer contained information including the date and location of the meeting, the website
30 address, and information regarding future meetings. Some of the outreach materials were prepared in
31 Spanish and English.
32

33 Approximately 160 community members participated in the neighborhood meetings. The meetings
34 were held in the evenings in facilities within close proximity to residents of the community. The
35 neighborhood meetings consisted of an introductory meet and greet session where attendees viewed
36 the provided maps of the build alternatives to identify any key components of the build alternatives as
37 well as historic aerial photographs displaying some neighborhoods pre-I-37 construction. Formats for
38 the meetings varied, but generally included a brief summary of the status of the project, followed by a
39 question and answer session. Comments were recorded and addressed by the project team. The
40 neighborhood meetings provided a perspective from the local residents on the impact the build

1 alternatives would have on their daily lives. The comments received led to alterations to the build
2 alternatives in order to reduce impacts to the community.

3
4 Attendees were asked to complete a community survey (see **Appendix F**) requesting the residents to
5 identify facilities utilized by the particular neighborhood, and other concerns related to community
6 cohesion. The survey was provided in English and Spanish. Brochures were provided to attendees
7 detailing future dates related to public meetings, the link to the website to find the community survey,
8 and a brief status update of the project. For each community meeting, a member of the project team
9 was available to answer any questions in Spanish. Community meeting summaries are provided in
10 **Appendix K**.

11

Table 8.2-2 Neighborhood Meetings			
Date	Community	Location	Number of Attendees
September 20, 2012	North Beach	The Breakers Condominiums to the Corpus Christi North Beach Associations	25
October 15, 2012	Northside	St. Paul United Methodist Church	30
October 23, 2012	South Central	Kelsey Memorial United Methodist Church	15
November 5, 2012	Westside	Antonio E. Garcia Arts & Education Center	6
November 8, 2012	Northside	Oveal Williams Senior Center Members Lunch	30
November 8, 2012	Westside	Oak Park Elementary School	17
November 12, 2012	Portland	Portland Community Center	25
November 13, 2012	Refinery Row (Dona Park and Academy Heights)	St. Theresa Parish	8

12 Source: US 181 Harbor Bridge EIS Team 2013

13
14 In the fall of 2013, two community meetings were held to discuss park improvements proposed for
15 mitigation of possible effects of the proposed build alternatives. On September 23 and 26, 2013, TxDOT
16 and the City of Corpus Christi Parks Department held two neighborhood meetings at the Oveal Williams
17 Senior Center and at the Ben Garza Park gymnasium, respectively, to determine community reactions to
18 proposed mitigation of 4(f) park properties in Corpus Christi. Meeting participants were asked for their
19 reactions to proposed mitigations covering T.C. Ayers Park, Lovenskiold Park, Ben Garza Park, Dr. H. J.
20 Williams Memorial Park, and the Rincon Channel Wetlands Interpretive Overlook, as well as to a
21 proposed new park (Washington Park). Seventy individuals attended the two meetings and their
22 reactions to proposed mitigation were generally positive. Some individuals requested enhancements to
23 the proposed mitigation such as additional bathrooms, lighting, security, and parking for existing parks
24 and proposed new park.

25 26 **8.2.5 Stakeholder Meetings**

27 Three stakeholder meetings were held with business owners and developers in the Corpus Christi area
28 on November 13, 2012. Representatives included the Port of Corpus Christi, the Texas State Aquarium,

1 the USS Lexington, the SEA District, and two representatives from the restaurant industry in North
2 Beach. The purpose of the stakeholder meetings was to have a discussion with local businesses owners
3 regarding the four proposed alternatives in relation to their business. Feedback included a range of
4 responses from community and economic impact to the City of Corpus Christi's long-term goals in
5 relationship to the stakeholders. Discussion with the Port included current and future navigation trends.
6 Comments from tourism industry representatives suggested the importance of separating truck traffic
7 from other traffic and tourists, especially at the Beach Avenue exit. Emphasis was also placed on
8 maintaining connectivity to the North Beach area with the downtown businesses. It was made clear
9 that the North Beach tourism industry is dependent on the efficient access between downtown and
10 North Beach.

11
12 A meeting was held with the Environmental Summit Environmental Justice Working Group on October
13 16, 2012 where several items were discussed among the members and attendees, including TxDOT staff.
14 The Group focused the discussion primarily on efforts by the Port of Corpus Christi Authority to
15 implement its Environmental Management System and improve its overall performance with regard to
16 environmental compliance and pollution prevention. There was also discussion regarding the City of
17 Corpus Christi's Local Emergency Planning Committee and its event notification and response service
18 regarding local refineries. Concern from members was noted with respect to the ability of Port tenants
19 to reduce the frequency of fugitive dust leaving their fencelines and entering adjacent neighborhoods,
20 and regarding the issue of evacuation of disabled residents. TxDOT did provide an update on the project
21 development and provided copies of the project community survey.

22 23 **8.2.6 Public Meeting**

24 TxDOT and FHWA held a public meeting for the US 181 Harbor Bridge Project on December 4, 2012 from
25 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Solomon Ortiz Center in Corpus Christi. A total of 139 individuals (five of whom
26 were TxDOT employees) registered their attendance at the public scoping meeting. Ten elected officials
27 or representatives of elected officials signed in as well.

28
29 The purpose of the meeting was to provide updated information and receive comments on the
30 proposed project, including the Need and Purpose for the project and the preliminary schematic
31 drawings for the four proposed build alternatives. The No-Build alternative was also discussed.

32
33 The meeting consisted of a one-and-one-half-hour open house followed by a TxDOT presentation and a
34 public comment session. Displays showing the Green, Red, Orange, and West Alternatives, and the
35 historic resources survey were available for review and comment. Visualizations of the proposed build
36 alternatives were also on display. A project fact sheet, project location map, and comment card were
37 given to each individual who signed in to the meeting. Project team members were available to interact
38 with the public, local representatives, and answer questions. Members of the public were given an
39 opportunity to deliver a verbal comment or leave a written comment.

40

1 Public notice of the meeting was published in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* on November 20, 2012 and
2 December 2, 2012 and in the *Portland News* on November 28, 2012. In addition, meeting notices
3 appeared in the *PennySaver* on November 28, 2012; in the *South Texas Catholic* on December 1, 2012; in
4 the *Senior News* on December 1, 2012; and in Spanish in *El Tejano* on December 1, 2012. Radio spots
5 advertising the meeting were run on Clear Channel Radio stations from November 26 – December 4,
6 2012. TxDOT also distributed a press release/media advisory and 100 posters advertising the meeting
7 were distributed to 37 community and retail locations in the project area. In addition, a postcard
8 announcing the public meeting was sent to approximately 9,000 individuals living in zip codes in the
9 project area and a newsletter that publicized the meeting was sent to the Harbor Bridge mailing list. A
10 meeting notice also was posted on the project website.

11
12 Seven individuals delivered verbal comments at the meeting and one person dictated comments to the
13 court reporter. No written comments were received. The verbal and dictated comments are
14 documented in the Public Meeting Summary Report which can be found on the project website at
15 www.ccharborbridgeproject.com or in **Appendix K**.

16
17 Public comments fell into the following general categories: access to downtown Corpus Christi, alternate
18 methods of crossing the Corpus Christi Ship Channel; access problems at the northern limit of the
19 proposed project; reasons for elimination of Blue Alternative; participation in neighborhood meetings;
20 and total cost of the project.

21

22 **8.3 ONGOING EFFORTS**

23 **8.3.1 Stakeholder Meetings**

24 To maintain public involvement efforts as the project moves forward, several steps have been taken to
25 continue communication. TxDOT has expressed on several occasions their availability to meet with
26 individuals, organizations, or other interested stakeholders to discuss the project at any time and
27 continue to maintain an open door policy for any questions or comments. The EIS team has created an
28 ongoing list of comments provided by the public with a subsequent response step in the documentation
29 process. The list, which is documented in the Administrative Record for the proposed US 181 Harbor
30 Bridge Project, is constantly being updated to respond to the public comments from the neighborhood,
31 TAC/CAC, stakeholder, and public meetings. And finally, TxDOT continues to emphasize the importance
32 of public input in the Harbor Bridge project to ensure that all parties in the community are fairly
33 represented.

34
35 **Table 8.3-1** below lists some of the stakeholder and small meetings with various organizations that have
36 taken place.

37

Table 8.3-1 Stakeholder Meetings			
Date	Organization	Location	Number of Attendees
November 11, 2011	Corpus Christi Beach Association	Breakers Condominiums, North Beach, Corpus Christi	20
February 8, 2012	Rotary Club of Southside Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi Country Club	40
March 22, 2012	Downtown Corpus Christi Kiwanis Club	Wells Fargo Bank Building, Corpus Christi	24
September 10, 2012	Texas A&M Corpus Christi	Technical Writing Class at Texas A&M Corpus Christi	20
September 17, 2012	City of Corpus Christi Transportation Advisory Committee Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee	City Hall, Corpus Christi	11
October 8, 2012	Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce Infrastructure Committee	Port of Corpus Christi	12
October 18, 2012	Corpus Christi MPO – Technical Advisory Committee	Regional Transportation Authority	10
November 2, 2012	Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce – Infrastructure Committee	Port of Corpus Christi	12
November 19, 2012	Association of General Contractors Local Chapter	Local Office	20
November 20, 2012	City of Corpus Christi – City Council	City Hall	20

1 Source: US 181 Harbor Bridge EIS Team 2013

2 3 **8.3.2 Newsletters**

4 TxDOT created the newsletter, *News from the Bridge*, to communicate with the public about the
5 proposed projects. Newsletters were published and distributed in April 2006, May 2007, July 2011, July
6 2012, November 2012, and April 2013. These newsletters were mailed/emailed to a mailing list of about
7 550 and were distributed at public meetings and CAC/TAC meetings. Additional newsletters are planned
8 in upcoming years to provide updates on the status of the Draft EIS and Final EIS. Copies of the
9 newsletter can be found on the project website at www.ccharborbridgeproject.com and in **Appendix K**.

10 11 **8.3.3 Project Website**

12 TxDOT created a website for the proposed project (www.ccharborbridgeproject.com) and continues to
13 update the site regularly. The site contains announcements of upcoming events, a project history,
14 graphics and maps, and details on public involvement activities. The website includes a link for online
15 completion of the community survey in both English and Spanish.

16 17 **8.4 NEXT STEPS**

18 The next steps in the public involvement process for the US 181 Harbor Bridge Project include
19 publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIS, the public and agency comment period,
20 and a formal public hearing in the first quarter of 2014. Prior to the issuance of the Draft EIS to the
21 public, Cooperating agencies received a preliminary Draft EIS for review and comment. TxDOT and

1 FHWA addressed these comments before publication of the Draft EIS. When the NOA is published in the
2 *Federal Register*, the *Texas Register*, and in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* and the *Portland News*, the
3 Draft EIS will be distributed to federal, state, and local agencies, and parties of interest, and will be made
4 available to the public at the locations listed in the Distribution List provided at the end of this
5 document. The Draft EIS will also be published on the US 181 Harbor Bridge Project website.
6 Publication of the NOA begins the public and agency comment period.

7

8 The Final EIS and later the Record of Decision for this proposed project will consider the public and
9 agency comments on the Draft EIS. The Final EIS will be issued by TxDOT and FHWA and released to the
10 public with an NOA published in the *Federal Register*, the *Texas Register*, and the *Corpus Christi Caller-*
11 *Times* and the *Portland News*, and on the US 181 Harbor Bridge Project website. Additional notification
12 of the Final EIS will be sent to the project's distribution list of Cooperating and Participating Agencies
13 and interested parties.

14