The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will hold the Citizens Informational Workshop #2 (CIW #2) on Thursday, October 21, 2010 to provide an update on the Topsail Island Bridge Replacement Project. The workshop will be informal, with NCDOT Project Team members available to discuss the project. Citizens may drop in at anytime during the workshop hours.

Project Update

NCDOT proposes to replace the existing swing bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway on NC 50/210 in Surf City, as this bridge has been determined to be structurally deficient, and functionally obsolete. A bridge is structurally deficient when it has elements that need to be monitored and/or repaired to maintain its structural integrity. It does not mean that the bridge is unsafe. A bridge is functionally obsolete when its layout no longer meets current design standards for width of shoulders and rails.

Based on citizens’ feedback at the previous workshop, held on June 25, 2009, eighteen alternatives were developed to replace the existing bridge and to potentially realign the approaching NC 50/210 roadway.

Preliminary screening for environmental impacts was prepared for all the alternatives. The Project Team eliminated four alternatives from further study based on unacceptable environmental impacts. Alternatives eliminated include Alternatives 1, 8, 9, and 12. The remaining fourteen alternatives are shown on Page 2 of this newsletter. It should be noted that some of these fourteen study alternatives follow the same alignment, however they differ in elevation and type of replacement structure. For example, Alternative 5 is a high-level fixed bridge, where as Alternative 5A is a mid-level movable bridge.
Based on similarity and proximity, the Project Team has divided the fourteen study alternatives into three groups as follows: Northern Alternatives Group, Central Alternatives Group, and Southern Alternatives Group.

- The Northern Alternatives Group includes four alternatives, located between 500 feet and 2,000 feet north of the existing bridge. Under each northern alternative, the existing bridge would be replaced with a high-level fixed bridge; having waterway clearance of 65 feet.

- The Central Alternatives Group includes four alternatives, located within 500 feet north or south of the existing bridge. Under each central alternative, the existing bridge would be replaced with a movable bridge. Alternatives 5A, 7, and 10A are mid-level movable bridges with a waterway clearance of 30 feet. Alternative 6 is a low-level movable bridge with a waterway clearance of 15 feet, which is the same as the existing bridge.

- The Southern Alternatives Group includes six alternatives, located between 500 feet and 2,500 feet south of the existing bridge. Under each southern alternative, the existing bridge would be replaced with a high-level fixed bridge; having waterway clearance of 65 feet.

**Questions for the Community**

Now that alternatives have been developed, we need your continued input on narrowing the number of alternatives for further study. Following are a few sample questions we would like you to think about prior to arriving at the workshop on October 21:

- Do you have property that will be directly impacted by one of the alternatives? If so, which alternative? What is the address of this property and how are you currently using the property (residential, business, vacation)?
- Do you prefer the bridge to be replaced to the north, south, or near the existing location?
- What is your preferred alternative in EACH of the three groups (Northern, Central, and Southern Group)?
- What are the reasons for choosing your preferred alternatives?
- Are there any other bridge alternatives that are not shown on the maps that you feel should be considered?
- Do you have other issues or ideas that you would like to share concerning the replacement of the bridge?
- What makes this community important to you?

**What’s Next?**

Your input (along with potential environmental impacts and costs) associated with each alternative will be used by the Project Team as they continue narrowing the number of alternatives. Results of the detailed study of the remaining alternatives will be presented at the next Citizens Informational Workshop #3 tentatively scheduled for the Fall of 2011.