



TOPSAIL ISLAND BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT TEAM
 8008 Corporate Center Drive, Suite 410
 Charlotte, NC 28226

What's Next?

The next step in the project development process is to prepare alternatives. Each alternative will be evaluated based on environmental impacts, costs and how well they meet the purpose and need. Results from the designs and comparisons will be presented to the public at the next Citizens' Informational Workshop scheduled for Fall 2010.

Be Informed...Be Involved

Continued public involvement and participation is a very important part of the project development process. The Project Team will continue to provide frequent project updates as major milestones are reached. Citizens are encouraged to stay involved and obtain project information from any of the following sources:

- Access the project web site at: <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/TopsailIslandBridge>. All of the material presented at the CIW #1 is available on this website.
- Add your name to the project mailing list to receive future project correspondence.
- Contact the Project Team members to provide input or ask any questions via the Toll-Free Project Hotline at

1-877-392-5996

- Mail or email your comments and questions to:

Topsail Island Bridge Replacement Project Team
 8008 Corporate Center Drive, Suite 410, Charlotte, NC 28226

email: topsailislandbridge@rsandh.com



Topsail Island Bridge Replacement Project

Issue 2 / March 2010

TIP No. B-4929



Project Overview and Public Outreach Efforts

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to build a new bridge to replace the existing swing bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway on NC 50/210 in Surf City. This newsletter provides an update on this public outreach process.

A series of Public Officials Meetings were held on June 24-25, 2009 with Topsail Beach, Surf City, and North Topsail Beach community representatives. The first Citizens' Informational Workshop (CIW #1) was held on June 25, 2009 at the Surf City Community Center.

The workshop was an informal open house with over 350 citizens in attendance. The attendees were first shown a video that provided an overview of the study bridge, potential bridge types, and the project schedule. They also had an opportunity to interact with Project Team members, ask questions, share ideas, draw new bridge alignments on aerial mapping, and complete comment cards. A summary of public comments is shown on page 2.

Coordination with Environmental Agencies

The feedback obtained from the CIW #1 was presented at the first public agency Merger meeting. The Merger process consists of a series of meetings devoted to streamlining the project development and permitting processes, agreed to by the US Army Corps of Engineers, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Division of Water Quality, and Wildlife Resources Commission), Federal Highway Administration, and NCDOT and supported by other stakeholder agencies and local units of government. To this effect, the Merger process provides a forum for appropriate agency representatives to discuss and reach consensus on ways to facilitate and satisfy regulatory requirements.

The first Merger meeting was held on August 20, 2009. The intent of this meeting was to agree on the project's Purpose and Need and Study Area. The environmental agencies agreed on the following:

Need for Proposed Action – Structurally deficient, functionally obsolete bridge

Purpose of Proposed Action – Improve bridge safety and functionality

Design Study Area – This was developed based on feasible alternatives suggested during CIW #1 and developed by the Project Team. This study area is shown in Figure 1 on page 3 of this newsletter.

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 shoulders, and rails.

Project Schedule

- **June 25, 2009**
CIW #1 – Project Information
- **Fall 2010**
CIW #2 – Evaluation of Alternatives
- **Fall 2011**
Environmental Assessment Complete
Corridor Public Hearing
- **Spring 2012**
Selection of Preferred Alternative
- **Summer 2012**
Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Complete
- **Fall 2012**
Design Public Hearing
- **2013***
Right-of-Way Acquisition Begins
- **2015***
Construction Begins

* Based on 2009-2015 NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program, which will be updated in summer 2010.



The following are some of the additional comments, ideas, or concerns collected from the workshop attendees:

General Ideas

- Have public meetings on Saturday to allow more people to attend.
- Form a steering committee of local citizens.
- Speed up the process.
- Speak to affected landowners on a more personal one-on-one basis.

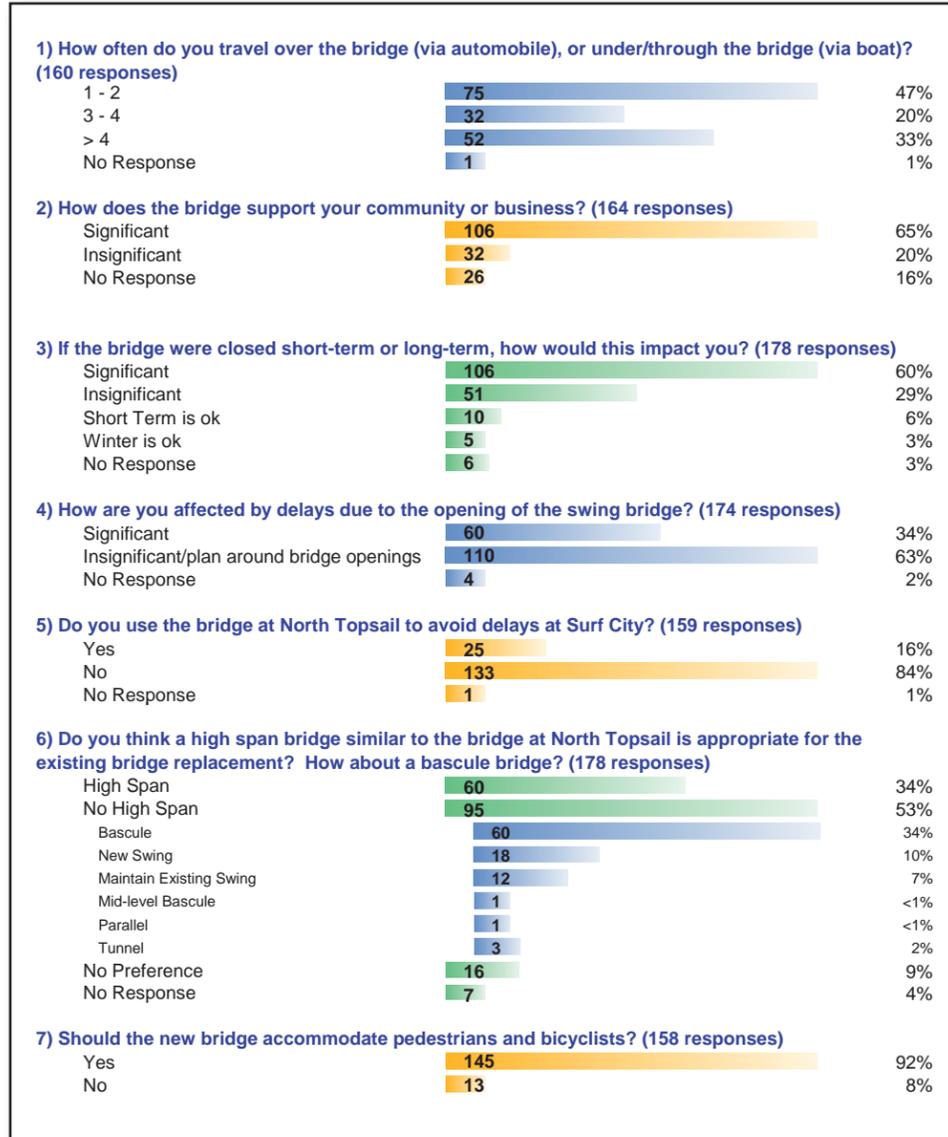
Citizens' Concerns

- Need to have access to the island during construction.
- What will happen to the park by the bridge?
- Avoiding disruption to property and business owners should be a major priority.
- The closing of the bridge for boat traffic has a horrible affect on traffic flow.

Design Suggestions

- New bridge should have four-lanes and should reflect the scenic community of Surf City.
- High-rise is the best economical choice. Without a high-rise bridge, congestion will only get worse.
- Bascule bridge is the answer.
- Repair existing bridge. Minimize long-term impact to property and business owners and maintain Surf City's character.
- Build a third bridge at the south end of island.

At CIW#1, a total of 170 comment cards were collected at the workshop along with over 100 phone calls, emails, or written correspondence. These comments have been categorized and tallied to provide an overall picture of the responses and citizens' preferences, as shown below:



- Adapt the design of the Ocean Isle Beach bridge to fit Topsail.
- A draw bridge at a higher elevation would allow for fewer bridge openings.
- Replace the swing bridge with a new swing bridge.
- Provide a bridge that safely allows for walkers and bike riders.

Project Location and Study Area

