Executive Summary

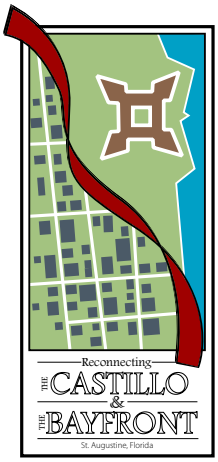
Development of Alternative Design Options

February 7, 2011

Reconnecting
THE CASTILLO & THE BAYFRONT
St. Augustine, Florida

Halback
DESIGN GROUP
Creating Compelling Environments to Live, Work, and Play

City of St. Augustine



The Purpose of this Document

The Halback Design Group Team has completed the second of three major tasks in the "Reconnecting the Castillo and the Bayfront" planning study. This included the development of a series of **design issues** (elements influencing the design), six (6) **preliminary alternates**, and six (6) **final alternates**. This document is meant to serve as an executive summary to present a concise review and analysis of the alternative design phase.

Table of Contents

The Paul S. Sarbanes "Transit in Parks" Grant Program

The following synopsis of the grant program is provided by the Federal Transit Administration:

The Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program was established to address the challenge of increasing vehicle congestion in and around our national parks and other federal lands. America's national parks, wildlife refuges, and national forests were created to protect unique environmental and cultural treasures, but are now facing traffic, pollution and crowding that diminishes the visitor experience and threatens the environment. To address these concerns, this program provides funding for alternative transportation systems, such as shuttle buses, rail connections and even bicycle trails. The program seeks to conserve natural, historical, and cultural resources; reduce congestion and pollution; improve visitor mobility and accessibility; enhance visitor experience; and ensure access to all, including persons with disabilities. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation, together with the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service.

Next Steps

If the community decides to move forward with the project and seeking grant funding, it is important to note that this is only the **first of many steps in a multi-phase, multi-year process**.

According to the Federal Transit Administration, the next Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks grant opportunity will be advertised in mid-February with a **mid-April submission date**. If the City of St. Augustine is successful in obtaining implementation funding, the award will likely be made in late 2011.

"Moving People" / Mobility Options

At its core, this project is about moving people in a variety of transportation modes. These include both traditional, i.e. vehicular, and alternative means, including bicycles, trolley trams, horse carriages, and walking.

While alternative transportation is a project goal, it is also important to the community to maintain the same amount of vehicular traffic volume on SR A1A.

Approximately 17,000 vehicles per day travel along SR A1A through downtown St. Augustine. The two lanes of the Bridge of Lions and the two lanes of San Marco Avenue / West Castillo Drive are connected with four lanes (Avenida Menendez and South Castillo Drive).

However, these four lanes do not always lead to improved traffic flow and efficiency. Traffic is slowed along this corridor due to a number of factors, including the following:

- **Tourists unfamiliar** with the City and looking for direction
- Vehicles **stopped in the south-bound left turn lane**, waiting to enter the Castillo de San Marcos parking lot
- Vehicles travelling **north-bound trying to make a left turn** onto Hypolita Street and Orange Street
- **Trolley trams and horse carriages** in the travel path
- Vehicles **queuing for the Bridge of Lions** - note that the south-bound left lane becomes an extended turn lane
- Vehicles entering / exiting **on-street parking**
- **Irregular lane widths** that narrow from Avenida Menendez to South Castillo Drive

Needs from the Community

- Improved traffic flow & efficiency.
- Improved directional signage & orientation.
- Expanded queue space for the Bridge of Lions.
- Reduced impact from trolley trams & carriages.
- Drop off / loading at the Castillo de San Marcos for buses & trolley trams.
- Designated bike lanes or paths.
- Improved pedestrian connections between the VIC, Castillo de San Marcos, and downtown.
- Improved crosswalks & widened sidewalks.
- Improved access to the bayfront.

Design Issues

National Park Service parking area

The 2007 master plan for the Castillo de San Marcos calls for a **re-design of the existing parking lot** that will reduce the foot print to allow restoration of the glacis (defensive earthworks).

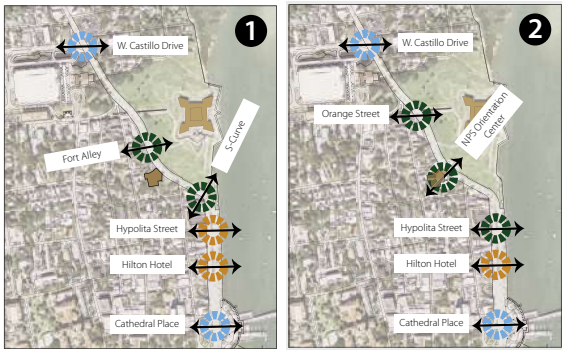
The new parking lot, roughly half the current size, needs to accommodate handicap accessible parking and the loading/unloading of buses and trolleys. The design of the parking lot is integral to the overall function of the traffic corridor. Turning lanes, traffic lights and crosswalks need to create safe entry and exit points (1) for the parking lot as well as (2) efficient pedestrian and vehicular traffic along and across the corridor.

Working with the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument personnel and the new visitor center design team, a new parking area has been developed with a joint trolley stop / bus loading area on the west side of the parking area. This provides direct access to the new visitor center, downtown, and the Castillo.

Crosswalk Locations & Traffic Calming

According to a 2008 pedestrian study, over **650 pedestrians** per day cross north of the Fort Alley. Given that **80% of visitors** and **60% of residents** primarily walk to get around downtown, **crosswalks are critical links** in reconnecting the Castillo and the bayfront. Pedestrian-actuated crossings and brick crosswalks also contribute to **traffic calming**. Although the same amount of vehicular traffic can pass through the corridor, it is important to focus the drivers on the pedestrians in this important civic space. However, proper placement and traffic light interconnection / synchronization can also **improve pedestrian safety and efficient vehicular traffic flow**.

Crosswalk placement should consider the following: (1) pedestrian safety, (2) wayfinding / signage / orientation, (3) vehicular traffic flow, (4) distance between crossings, and (5) proximity to destinations.



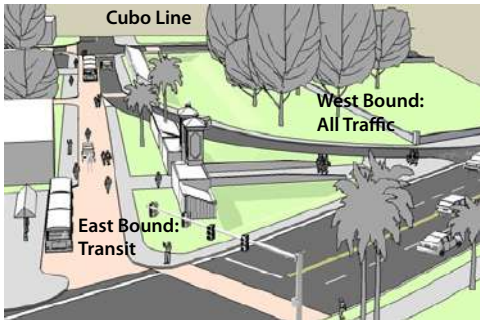
Option 1: Fort Alley, S-Curve
Option 2: Orange Street, NPS Center (vehicular), Hypolita Street
Option 3: Fort Alley, NPS Center
Option 4: Orange Street, NPS Center

During the public participation process, the community noted the need to have safe pedestrian crosswalks at the existing locations (Fort Alley, S-Curve), the new Castillo visitor center, and at Orange Street (connecting to the VIC) and Hypolita (connecting to the bayfront).

Orange Street

Orange Street is the **main pedestrian connection** between the Historic Downtown Parking Facility and downtown St. Augustine's main destinations, including St. George Street and the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument. Five different options were developed.

Some members of the community were interested in closing Orange Street down completely (from Cordova Street to South Castillo) for pedestrians, trolley trams, and horse carriages only. While many in the community expressed interest in doing so for the east-bound traffic, there was direct concern about removing the ability to travel west-bound. Traffic counts collected in December 2010 supported these concerns, with nearly twice as many vehicles moving west between Cordova Street and South Castillo Drive.

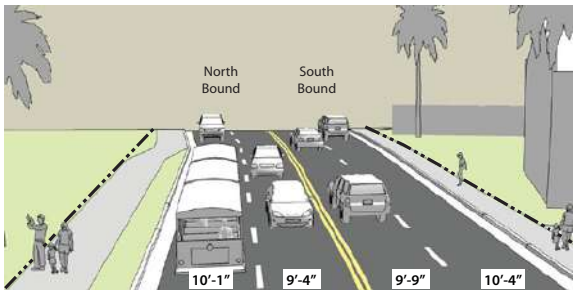


Roadway Cross Sections

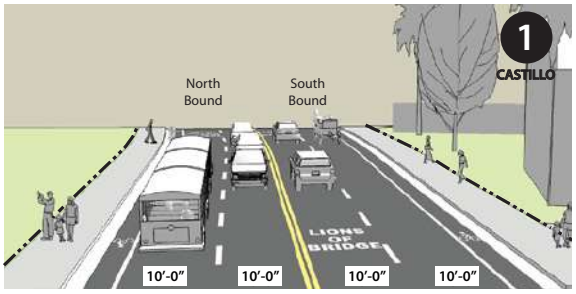
During the Design Issues phase, three cross sections were developed. These are provided below, in addition to the existing cross section.

Generally, the options are to maintain four lanes (two in each direction), to add designated transit lanes in each direction (for carriages and trolley trams), and to use three lanes (one lane north bound). The community noted that for one north bound lane to be acceptable, the same amount of traffic should be able to move through the corridor. A 10' lane width is utilized for multiple lane configurations, which is the narrowest width FDOT can approve (by exception). An 11' lane is used in any one-lane configuration.

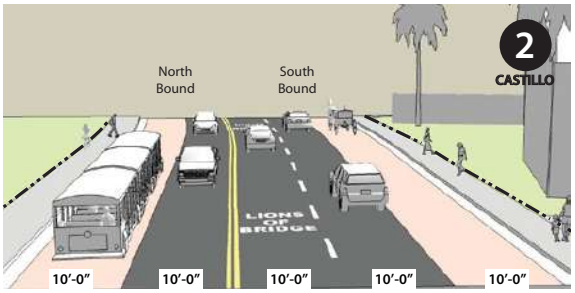
South Castillo Drive



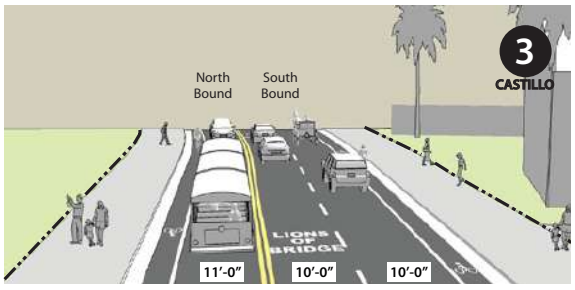
Existing Conditions



Option 1SC: Four Lanes

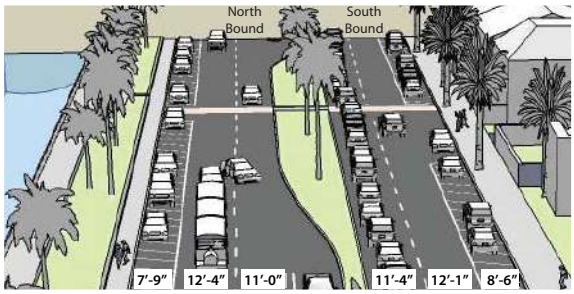


Option 2SC: Three Lanes + Transit Lanes

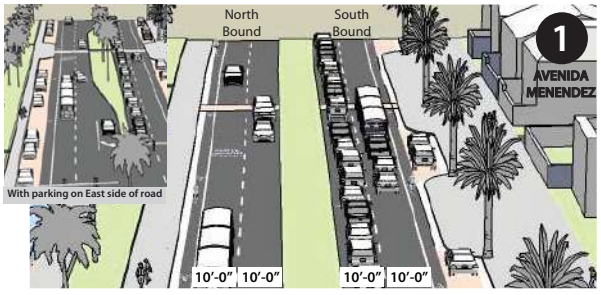


Option 3SC: Three Lanes

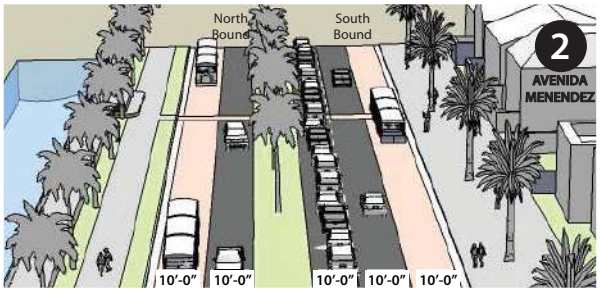
Avenida Menendez



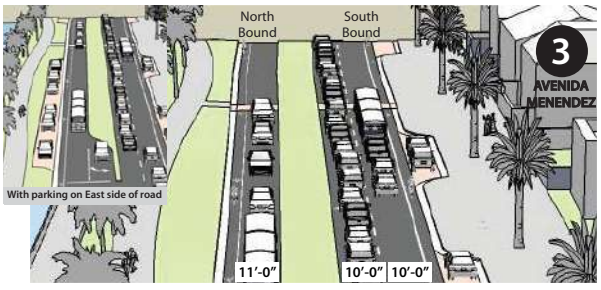
Existing Conditions



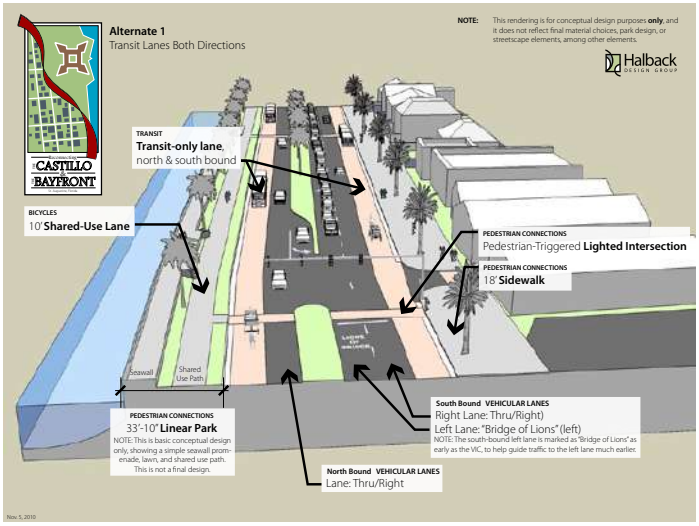
Option 1AM: Four Lanes



Option 2AM: Three Lanes + Transit Lanes



Option 3AM: Three Lanes

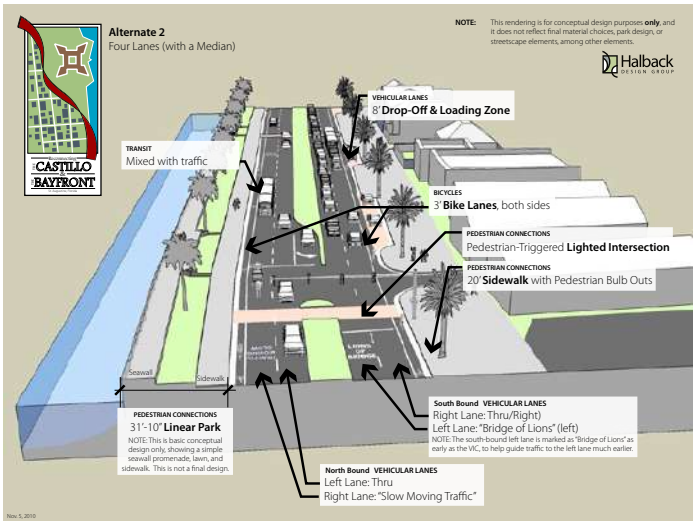


Alt. 1: Three Lanes

Alternate 1 includes **two dedicated lanes** for alternative traffic and **three lanes for vehicular traffic** Northbound vehicular traffic is limited to one lane.

Parking is eliminated on both sides of Avenida Menendez.

Bicycles are accommodated on a shared use path

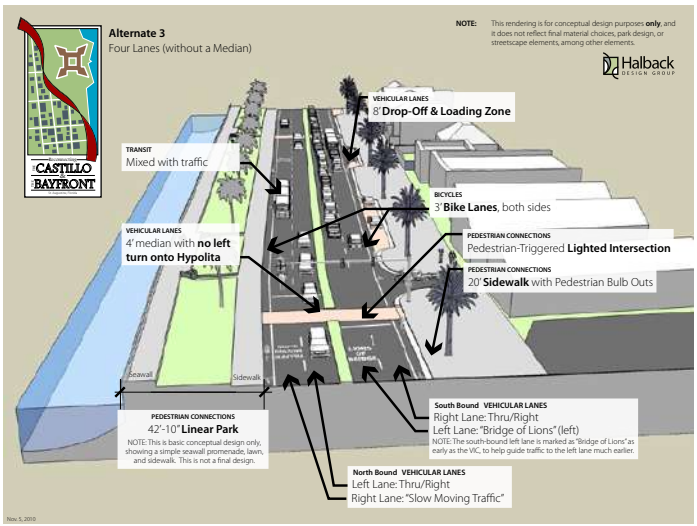


Alt. 2: Four Lanes with a Median

Alternate 2 **maintains existing traffic patterns** with two lanes for both south-bound and north-bound traffic.

Parking is eliminated on the East side of Avenida Menendez and limited to drop-off and loading only on the West side. Pedestrian bulb-outs on the West side reduce the distance of pedestrian crossings

Bicycles travel along dedicated bike lanes.



Alt. 3: Four Lanes Without a Median

Alternate 3 **maintains existing traffic patterns** with two lanes for both south-bound and north-bound traffic with a reduced median. There is **no left turn lane onto Hypolita Street**.

Parking is eliminated on the East side of Avenida Menendez and limited to drop-off and loading only on the West side. Pedestrian bulb-outs on the West side reduce the distance of pedestrian crossings

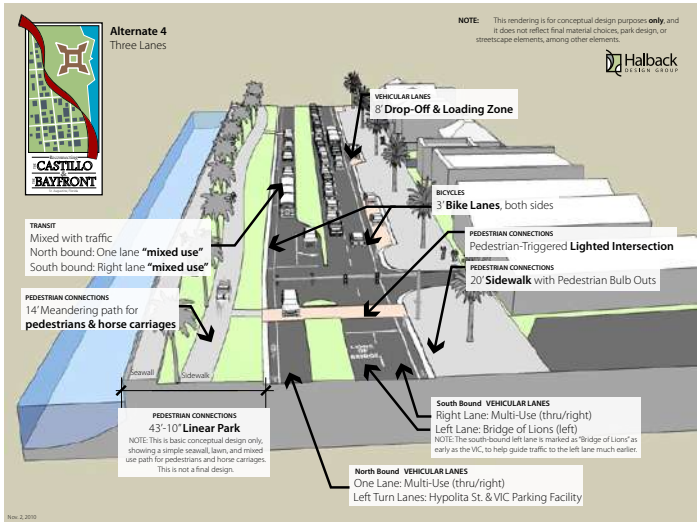
Bicycles travel on dedicated bike lanes.

Alt. 4: Three Lanes

Alternate 4 explores a **three lane configuration**. Essentially, it is the same layout as alternate 1, except that the dedicated transit lanes have been removed.

Parking is eliminated on the East side of Avenida Menendez and limited to drop-off and loading only on the West side. Pedestrian bulb-outs on the West side reduce the distance of pedestrian crossings

Bicycles travel on dedicated bike lanes.

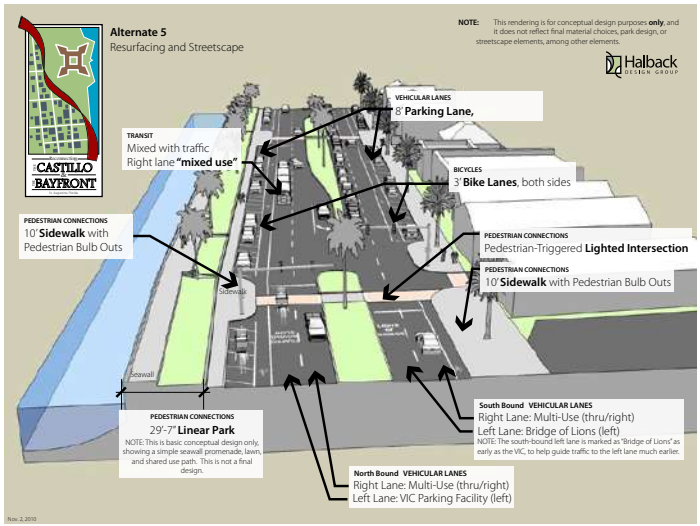


Alt. 5: Resurfacing & Streetscape

Alternate 5 is focused on k**eeping the roadway in its current configuration** with streetscaping along the roadway.

Pedestrians are provided with pedestrian bulbouts and expanded sidewalks.

Bicycles travel on dedicated bike lanes.

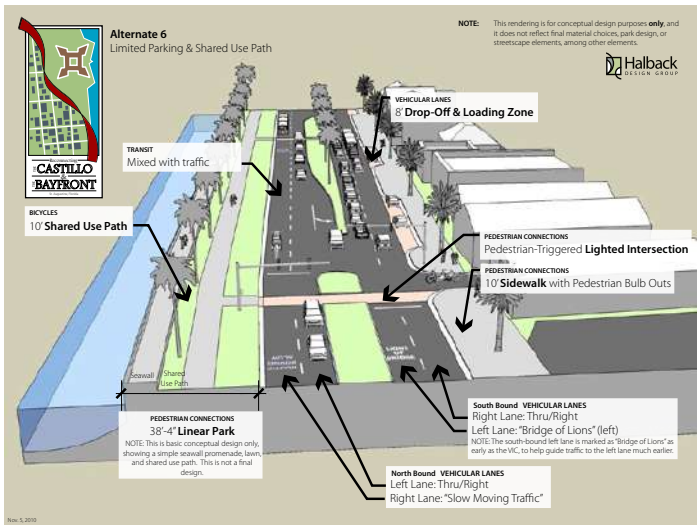


Alt. 6: Limited Parking & Shared Use Path

Alternate 6 **maintains the existing roadway configuration** while reducing the width of the road by limiting parking.

Parking is eliminated on the East side of Avenida Menendez and limited to drop-off and loading only on the West side. Pedestrian bulb-outs on the West side reduce the distance of pedestrian crossings

Bicycles are accommodated on a shared use path.



Public Participation: The Four "Takeaways"

This project has been marked by an extensive public participation process. Hundreds of stakeholders and community members have participated through numerous public meetings (120+ attendees), email correspondence (250+ emails), and the project website (550+ visits). There are four primary "takeaways," which are utilized in developing alternates 7-12:

Takeaway #1: Horse carriages have a major impact on traffic flow

1. The route decision by the City Commission will have a direct impact on the chosen alternate.
2. Horse carriages, as the slowest mode of transportation, can create a major impediment.
3. Horse carriages may transverse in a dedicated pathway or an automobile lane.

Takeaway #2: Parking along the bayfront (east) can be removed, but not without regards for impacts

1. A total of 17 parking spaces (+17 additional spaces if the carriage stand is relocated from the bayfront) along the east side block views of the bayfront, prevent smooth traffic flow, and impede pedestrian connections and flow. Parking and service on the west side should remain.
2. While capacity is still available in the parking garage and other City lots, the City should continue to implement their traffic and parking plan by adding new facilities.

Takeaway #3: Smooth out traffic flow & connections to Anastasia Island

1. Help vehicular traffic to move more efficiently, while also providing alternative mobility options.
2. Improve connections to Anastasia Island, which is currently serviced with a small left turn lane.

Takeaway #4: The National Park Service lot will soon be reconfigured with a central intersection

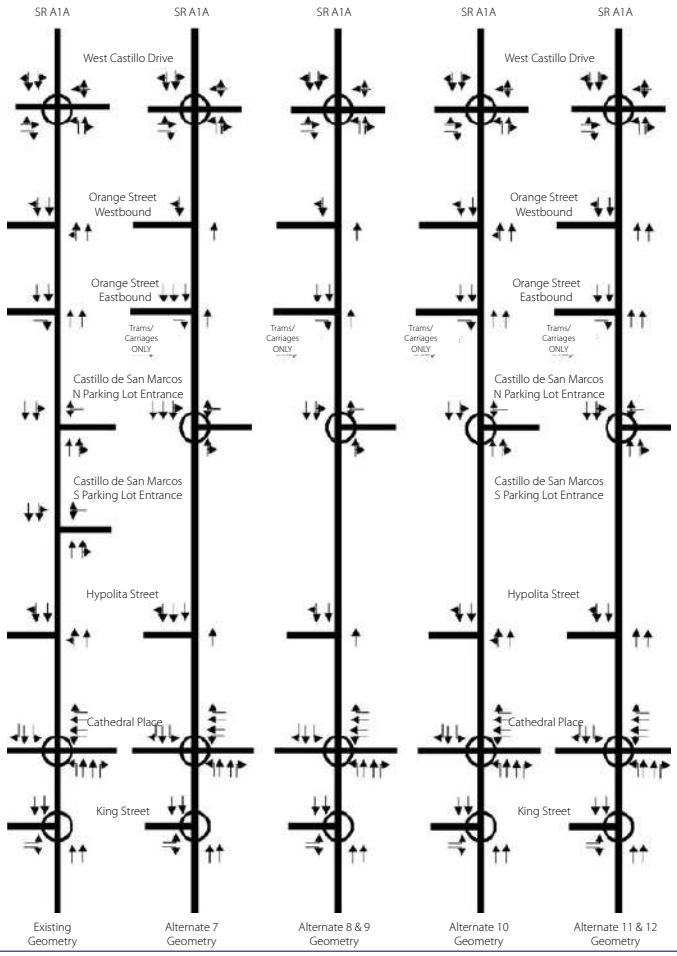
1. The NPS management plan for the Castillo notes that the parking will be reduced to generally half of the current size. A joint trolley / bus loading area on the west side is also proposed.
2. One centralized vehicular / pedestrian intersection is preferred.

Traffic Analysis

The following alternates (7-12) have been analyzed to ensure that each functions at the **same or better level of service**. As listed on each of the following pages, all alternates are evaluated for three weekday time periods: AM peak hour, NOON peak hour and PM peak hour. The existing traffic signals are not interconnected but operate fully actuated. All traffic signals for the alternatives are assumed to be **fully actuated / interconnected** to optimize traffic flow.

Utilizing the collection traffic data, the intersection analysis is based on the Synchro 7 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) signalized intersection software to estimate the operational level of service (LOS), the Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) and the Arterial Level of Service. All the study intersections for each alternative operate at an **acceptable LOS C or better** and each study intersection has a **Volume to Capacity (V/C) ratio of less than 1.0**.

The Arterial LOS indicate that the proposed alternatives will not adversely impact the overall operational level of service for the roadway segment of SR A1A between West Castillo Drive and King Street. For all five of the proposed Alternatives, the **LOS remained generally the same** as under the existing configuration. There are **nominal improvements in estimated speed and delay conditions** for all Alternatives.



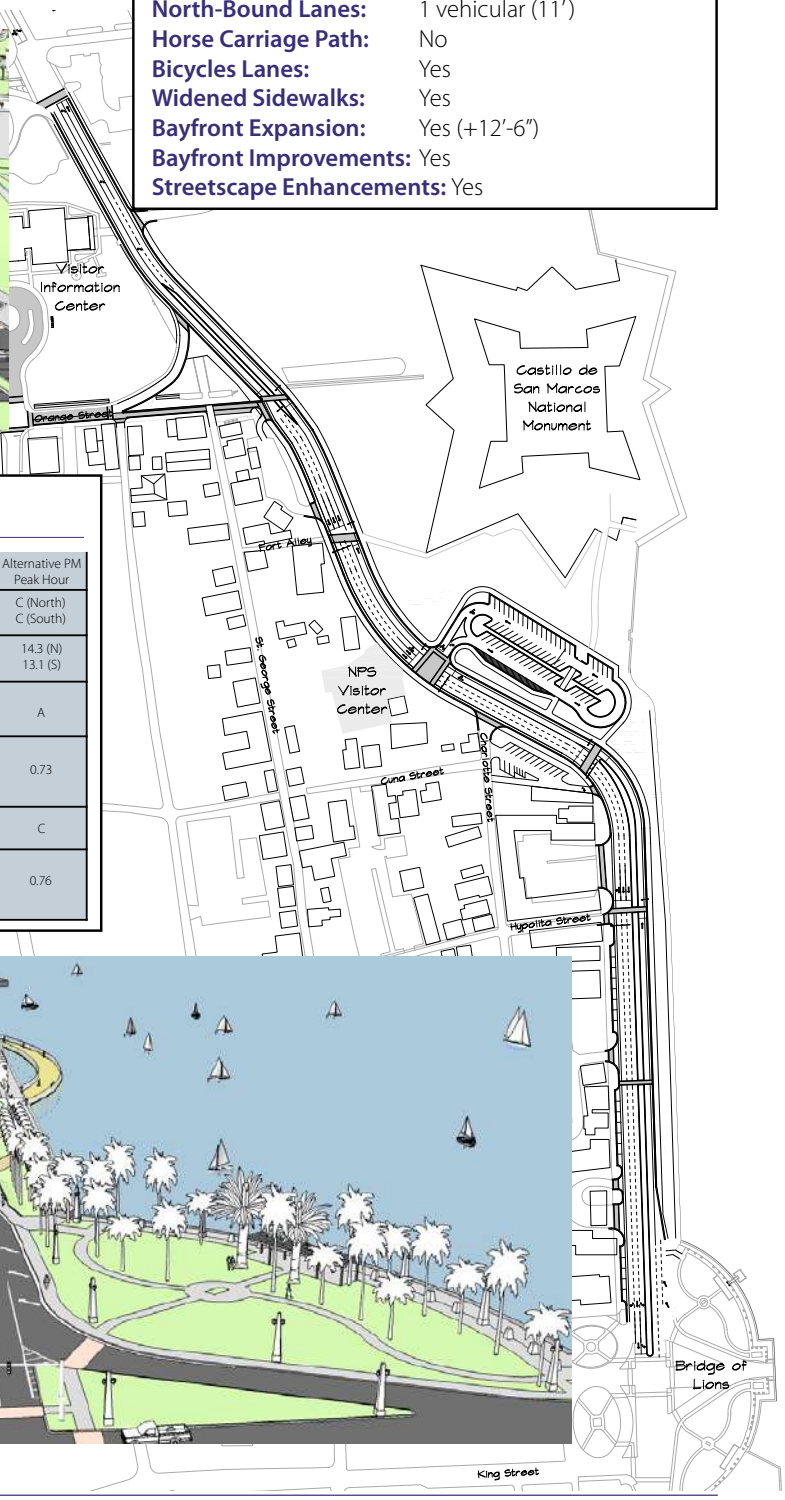
Alt. 7: 3 South Bound, 1 North Bound

This alternate assumes that the City Commission selects a south-bound route for the horse carriages. Starting at Orange Street, there are 3 south-bound lanes and one (1) north-bound lane.

Alternate 7 Stat Sheet

South-Bound Lanes:	3 vehicular (10' each) Left: Bridge of Lions Center: Thru Right: Slow Moving Vehicles
North-Bound Lanes:	1 vehicular (11')
Horse Carriage Path:	No
Bicycles Lanes:	Yes
Widened Sidewalks:	Yes
Bayfront Expansion:	Yes (+12'-6")
Bayfront Improvements:	Yes
Streetscape Enhancements:	Yes

South Castillo Drive



Alternate 7 Traffic Analysis

	Existing AM Peak Hour	Alternative AM Peak Hour	Existing NOON Peak Hour	Alt.NOON Peak Hour	Existing PM Peak Hour	Alternative PM Peak Hour
Arterial Level of Service	C (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) D (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)
Arterial Speed	14.0 (N) 17.0 (S)	18.3 (N) 17.7 (S)	12.2 (N) 15.8 (S)	15.0 (N) 12.6 (S)	10.6 (N) 15.4 (S)	14.3 (N) 13.1 (S)
Intersection: Bridge of Lions LOS	B	B	A	A	A	A
Intersection: Bridge of Lions Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.46	0.46	0.60	0.52	0.73	0.73
Intersection: Ripley's LOS	A	A	B	C	B	C
Intersection: Ripley's Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.30	0.44	0.52	0.74	0.57	0.76

Avenida Menendez

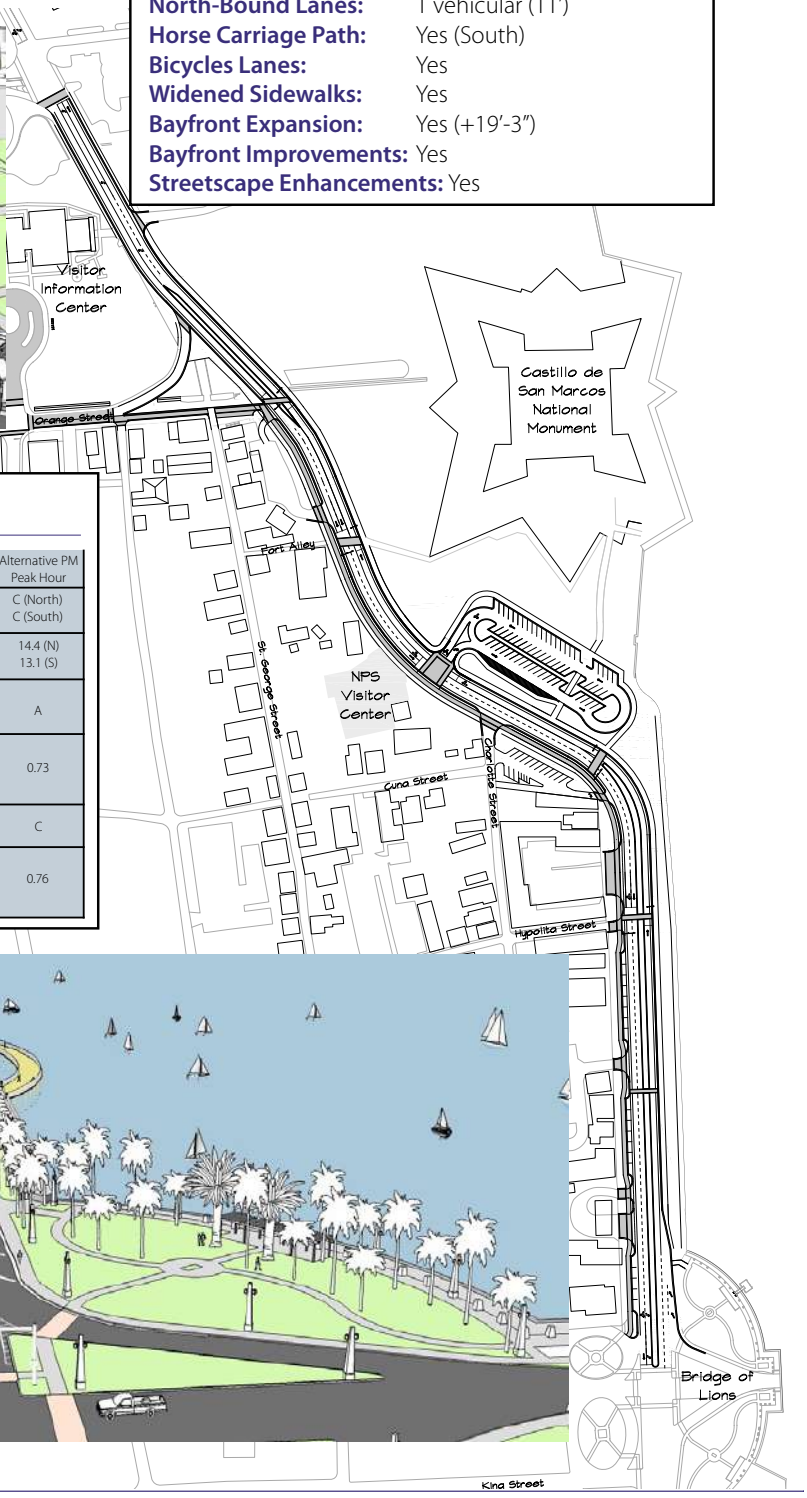
Alt. 8: 2 South Bound, 1 North Bound

While this alternate also assumes a south-bound route, the third lane referenced in Alternate 7 is converted into a horse carriage only pathway, which is separated from the roadway and runs along the sidewalk.

Alternate 8 Stat Sheet

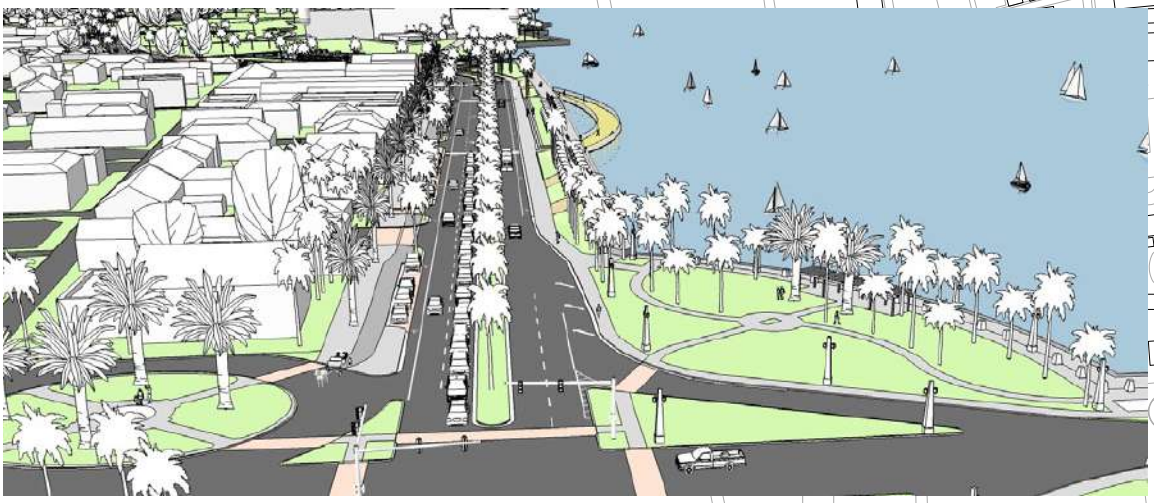
South-Bound Lanes:	2 vehicular (10' each) Left: Bridge of Lions Right: Thru/Right Dedicated Carriage Pathway
North-Bound Lanes:	1 vehicular (11')
Horse Carriage Path:	Yes (South)
Bicycles Lanes:	Yes
Widened Sidewalks:	Yes
Bayfront Expansion:	Yes (+19'-3")
Bayfront Improvements:	Yes
Streetscape Enhancements:	Yes

South Castillo Drive



Alternate 8 Traffic Analysis

	Existing AM Peak Hour	Alternative AM Peak Hour	Existing NOON Peak Hour	Alt.NOON Peak Hour	Existing PM Peak Hour	Alternative PM Peak Hour
Arterial Level of Service	C (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)
Arterial Speed	14.0 (N) 17.0 (S)	17.4 (N) 15.6 (S)	12.2 (N) 15.8 (S)	16.3 (N) 13.2 (S)	10.6 (N) 15.4 (S)	14.4 (N) 13.1 (S)
Intersection: Bridge of Lions LOS	B	B	A	A	A	A
Intersection: Bridge of Lions Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.46	0.46	0.60	0.60	0.73	0.73
Intersection: Ripley's LOS	A	A	B	C	B	C
Intersection: Ripley's Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.30	0.47	0.52	0.77	0.57	0.76



Avenida Menendez

Alt. 9: 2 South Bound, 1 North Bound

This alternate assumes that the Commission selects a north-bound route for the carriages. The pathway from Alternate 8 is shifted to the east side, and a carriage-actuated signal at Orange Street gets the carriages across while minimizing traffic impacts.

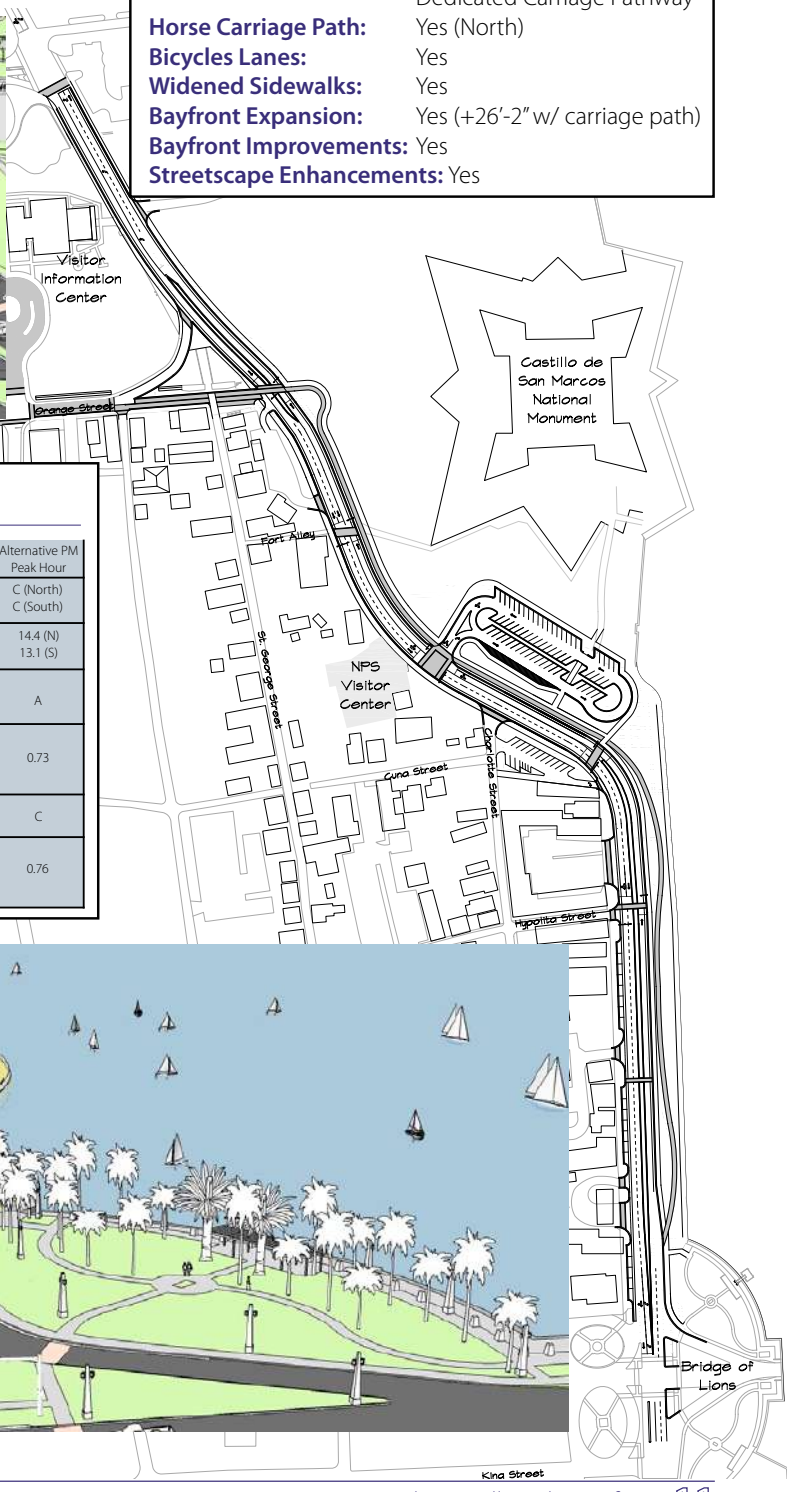
Alternate 9 Stat Sheet

South-Bound Lanes: 2 vehicular (10' each)
Left: Bridge of Lions
Right: Thru/Right

North-Bound Lanes: 1 vehicular (11')
Dedicated Carriage Pathway

Horse Carriage Path: Yes (North)
Bicycles Lanes: Yes
Widened Sidewalks: Yes
Bayfront Expansion: Yes (+26'-2" w/ carriage path)
Bayfront Improvements: Yes
Streetscape Enhancements: Yes

South Castillo Drive



Alternate 9 Traffic Analysis

	Existing AM Peak Hour	Alternative AM Peak Hour	Existing NOON Peak Hour	Alt.NOON Peak Hour	Existing PM Peak Hour	Alternative PM Peak Hour
Arterial Level of Service	C (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)
Arterial Speed	14.0 (N) 17.0 (S)	17.4 (N) 15.6 (S)	12.2 (N) 15.8 (S)	16.3 (N) 13.2 (S)	10.6 (N) 15.4 (S)	14.4 (N) 13.1 (S)
Intersection: Bridge of Lions LOS	B	B	A	A	A	A
Intersection: Bridge of Lions Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.46	0.46	0.60	0.60	0.73	0.73
Intersection: Ripley's LOS	A	A	B	C	B	C
Intersection: Ripley's Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.30	0.47	0.52	0.77	0.57	0.76

Avenida Menendez

Alt. 10: 2 South Bound, 2 North Bound

This alternate maintains the existing lane configuration and many of the existing curb lines. Streetscape elements and pedestrian improvements are made on both the East and West sides of the corridor.

Alternate 10 Stat Sheet

South-Bound Lanes: 2 vehicular (varies, existing)
Left: Bridge of Lions
Right: Thru/Right
North-Bound Lanes: 2 vehicular (varies, existing)
Horse Carriage Path: No
Bicycles Lanes: No
Widened Sidewalks: No (along west side)
Bayfront Expansion: Yes (+7'-10")
Bayfront Improvements: Yes
Streetscape Enhancements: Yes

South Castillo Drive

Alternate 10 Traffic Analysis

	Existing AM Peak Hour	Alternative AM Peak Hour	Existing NOON Peak Hour	Alt.NOON Peak Hour	Existing PM Peak Hour	Alternative PM Peak Hour
Arterial Level of Service	C (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) D (South)
Arterial Speed	14.0 (N) 17.0 (S)	17.3 (N) 15.6 (S)	12.2 (N) 15.8 (S)	16.4 (N) 14.1 (S)	10.6 (N) 15.4 (S)	14.49(N) 12.8 (S)
Intersection: Bridge of Lions LOS	B	B	A	A	A	A
Intersection: Bridge of Lions Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.46	0.46	0.60	0.60	0.73	0.73
Intersection: Ripley's LOS	A	A	B	C	B	C
Intersection: Ripley's Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.30	0.47	0.52	0.70	0.57	0.76

Avenida Menendez

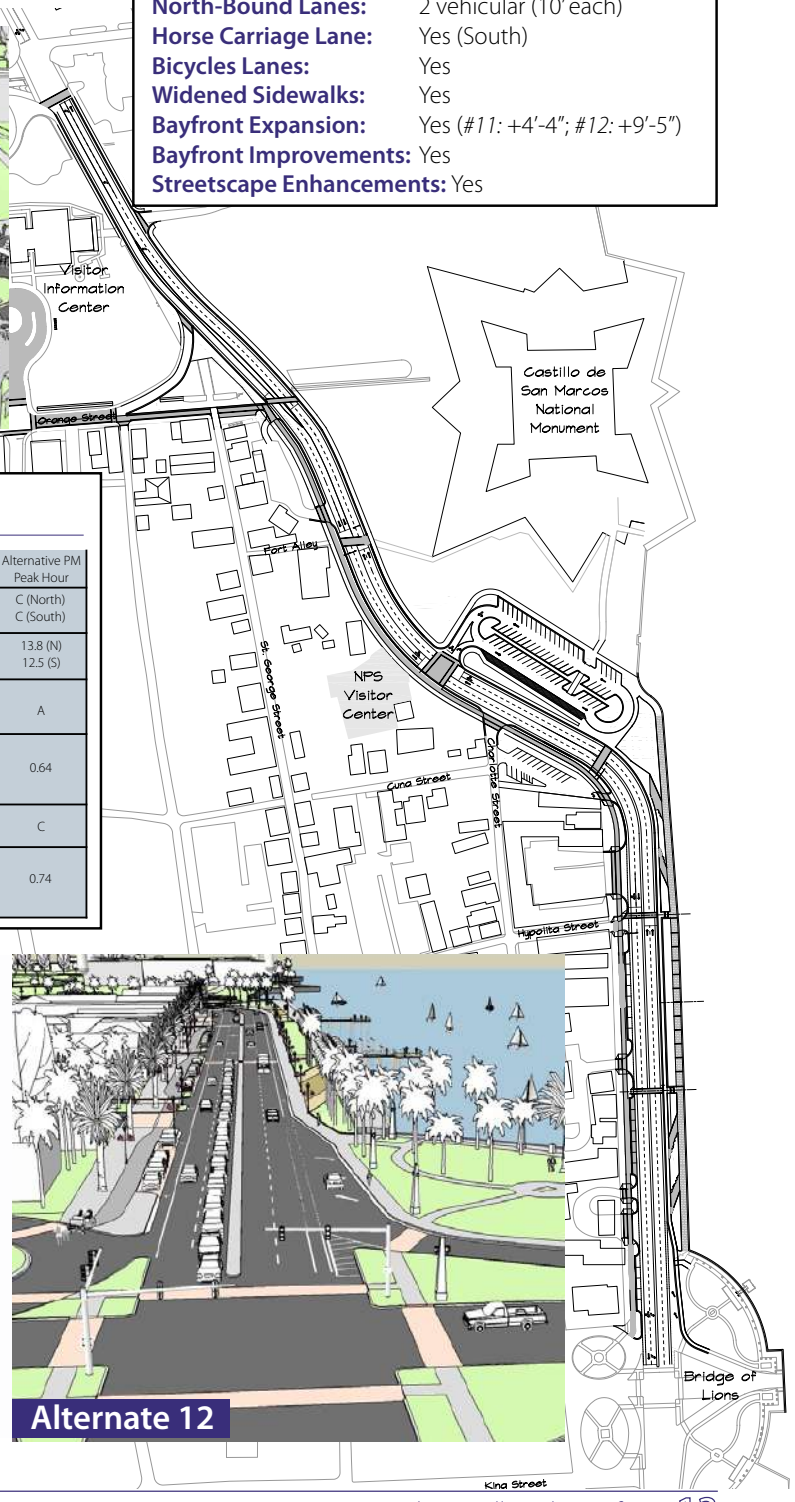
Alt. 11/12: 2 South, 2 North Bound

These alternates assume that the Commission selects a south-bound route and dedicated pathway for carriages. The only difference between the two is a 10' planted median (in 11) and a 4' concrete median with a larger bayfront park (in 12).

Alternate 11 & 12 Stat Sheet

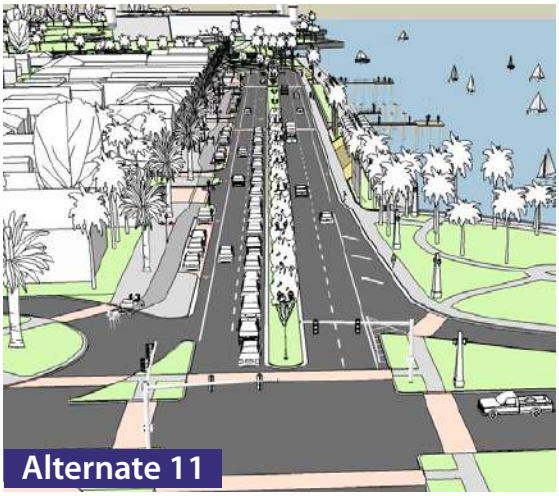
South-Bound Lanes:	2 vehicular (10' each) Left: Bridge of Lions Right: Thru/Right Dedicated Carriage Pathway
North-Bound Lanes:	2 vehicular (10' each)
Horse Carriage Lane:	Yes (South)
Bicycles Lanes:	Yes
Widened Sidewalks:	Yes
Bayfront Expansion:	Yes (*#11:* +4'-4"; *#12:* +9'-5")
Bayfront Improvements:	Yes
Streetscape Enhancements:	Yes

South Castillo Drive



Alternate 11/12 Traffic Analysis

	Existing AM Peak Hour	Alternative AM Peak Hour	Existing NOON Peak Hour	Alt.NOON Peak Hour	Existing PM Peak Hour	Alternative PM Peak Hour
Arterial Level of Service	C (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)	D (North) C (South)	C (North) C (South)
Arterial Speed	14.0 (N) 17.0 (S)	17.3 (N) 15.6 (S)	12.2 (N) 15.8 (S)	16.4 (N) 13.0 (S)	10.6 (N) 15.4 (S)	13.8 (N) 12.5 (S)
Intersection: Bridge of Lions LOS	B	B	A	A	A	A
Intersection: Bridge of Lions Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.46	0.46	0.60	0.60	0.73	0.64
Intersection: Ripley's LOS	A	A	B	C	B	C
Intersection: Ripley's Volume to Capacity Ratio	0.30	0.29	0.52	0.74	0.57	0.74



Avenida Menendez

Bayfront Park

The Bayfront Park provides a pedestrian connection between the Bridge of Lions / Plaza de la Constitucion and the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument. This important civic space is currently underutilized and is showing signs of age and disrepair.

The conceptual design for the park, shown to the right, creates a connection between the many themes, stories, and historic time periods surrounding the site.

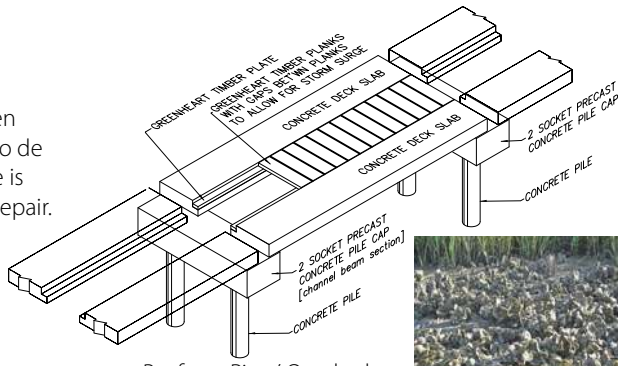
A **widened promenade** provides a scenic walkway along the reintroduction of the granite cap that once graced the seawall. This cap, along with the associated railing and lighting, provides a wonderful place for residents and visitors to look out towards the inlet, Anastasia Island, and the fort.

Also returning to the bayfront after a 50+ year absence are a series of **piers and overlooks** that allow users to walk over the water to look back towards the City and the fort while watching porpoise feeding along the newly restored oyster clutches. Historically placed pier pilings interpret the evolution of boardwalks along "Bay Street" (Avenida Menendez).

A **large gathering lawn**, or "**El Césped**," is provided between the two main crosswalks and piers. Large steps surrounding the lawn provide informal seating, while the lawn itself can be used for picnics and watching boats or the "Fireworks over the Matanzas."

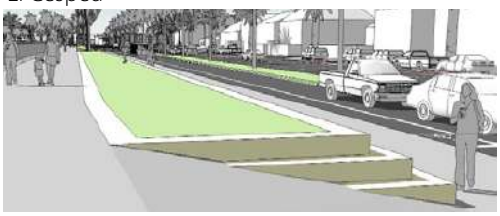
The natural environment of St. Augustine is interpreted throughout. Depressions are filled with marsh grass and palms, which are also used to begin treating stormwater runoff. Low "dunes" with sea oats and red cedars connect these depressions.

Simple, elegant lines help to better connect the downtown with the bayfront and the Castillo de San Marcos while not out-competing the rich landmarks on either end. The design helps to better integrate the city with the waterfront, a relationship that was impacted with the 1960s expansion. The urban form is slightly peeled back to reveal (but not replicate) the natural landscape.



Bayfront Pier / Overlook with Oyster Clutches

El Césped



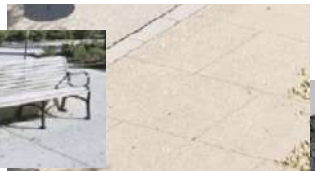
Streetscape Materials

The streetscape utilizes many of the same material as the Bayfront Park, including items such as coquina concrete, clay bric pervious pavers, and the City light standards. Low maintenance, authentic materials will be used throughout the corridor.

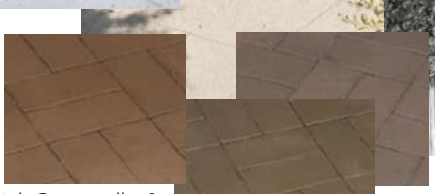
Lighting Family

Street Furniture

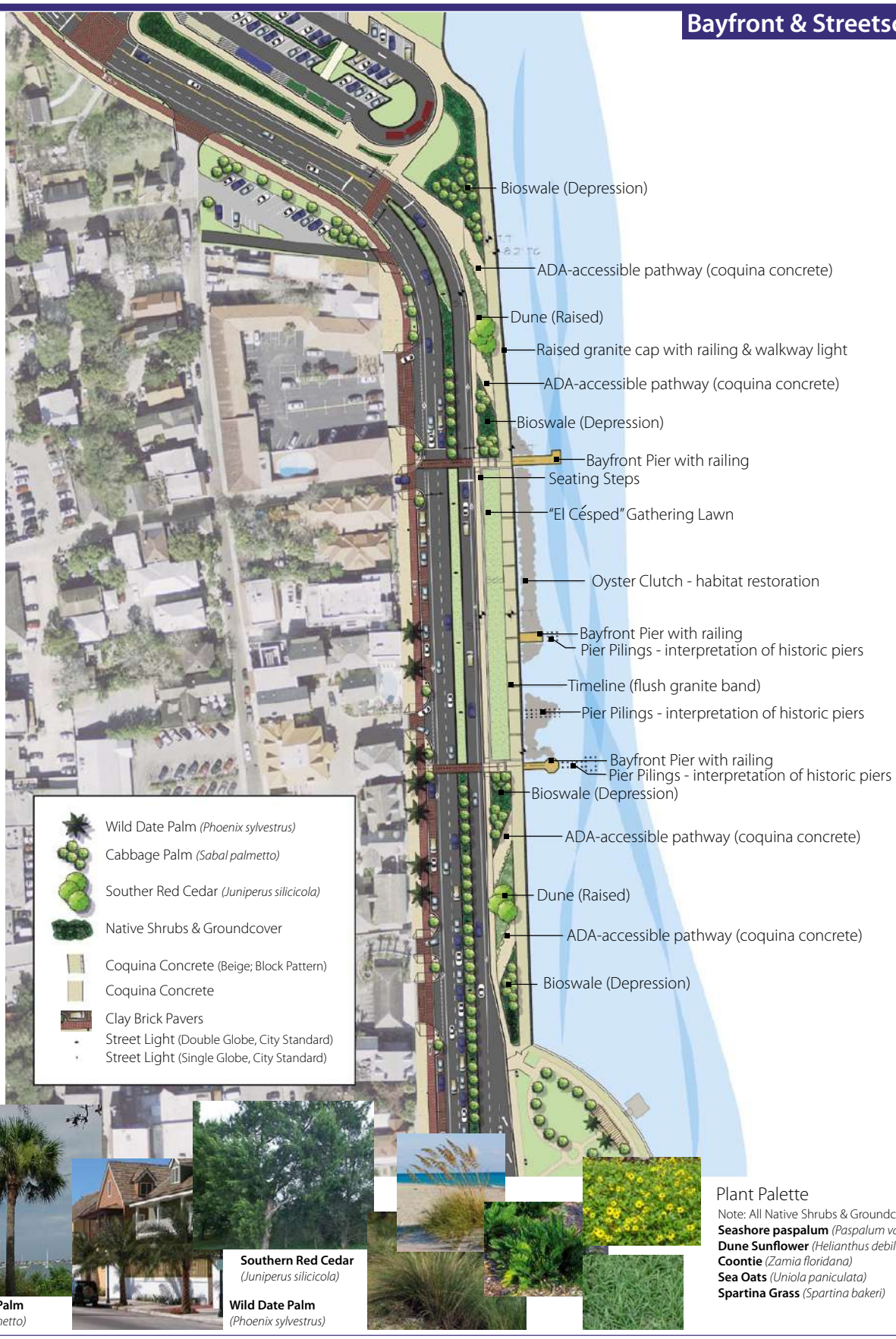
Coquina Concrete



Pervious Pavement
for NPS lot



Brick Crosswalks & Carriage Pathway



Cabbage Palm
(Sabal palmetto)

Southern Red Cedar
(Juniperus silicicola)

Wild Date Palm
(Phoenix sylvestrus)

Plant Palette

Note: All Native Shrubs & Groundcovers

Seashore paspalum *(Paspalum vaginatum)*
Dune Sunflower *(Helianthus debilis)*
Coontie *(Zamia floridana)*
Sea Oats *(Uniola paniculata)*
Spartina Grass *(Spartina bakeri)*

Permitting

There may be select environmental analyses that are required in order for the project to proceed to implementation. The type and extent of the environmental analysis depend upon the alternate selected, the policies of the federal and state jurisdictional agencies, and the interpretation of the policies by those entities' staff. In addition, permits will be required by federal, state and local agencies, the extent of which depends on the alternate selected and the estimated impact of the selected alternate.

Environmental Analysis

The federal government requires that development of any federally funded improvement follow a process that includes planning, analysis of alternatives, environmental evaluation, preliminary engineering, final design and construction. The environmental analysis is an important step in the project development process mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, as well as Florida regulations. All environmental analysis require an identification of the type, severity and mitigation commitments for all unavoidable impacts.

From a Federal standpoint, the minimum environmental documentation that would be required would be a Categorical Exclusion (CatEx or DCE). The project sponsor submits information to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regarding the anticipated impact. FTA must concur with the findings of the analysis in order to meet NEPA requirement; or may request additional information before making a determination. Depending on the alternate and extent of the anticipated impact, FTA could require an Environmental Assessment (EA), a full disclosure document, which at FTA's determination, could require investigation of many or few anticipated social, environmental and economic impacts. The desired result of an EA is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that provides the legal finding that justifies the decision not to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is a lengthy and extensive environmental analysis process which results in a Record of Decision (ROD).

From a state standpoint, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has a process that somewhat mirrors the Federal process. Utilization of the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Manual and associated processes result in a set of documents that meet NEPA, the Council of Environment Quality (CEQ) and other federal and state laws, rules and regulations. This process or part of this process may be required based on the extent of the impact of the respective alternate on the state roadway facility, outlined by an Environmental Class of Action Determination. If no federal funds are involved, the state may require a State Environmental Impact Review (SEIR).

Permits

The construction of the proposed alternates may require permits for federal, state and local regulatory agencies prior to implementation. These permits will vary based on the alternate selected and will be identified and required as part of the above summarized environmental process. Permits that may be required include, but are not limited to the following: Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and St. John's River Water Management District for storm water and drainage modifications; State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and National Parks Service regarding historic places, parks and buildings; Florida Department of Transportation for pavement/laneage and design modifications, driveway permits, drainage connections and signal warrants; Environmental Protection Agency for discharge; and Florida Department of Environmental Protection for environmental resources. In addition, there may be local permits required by the City of St. Augustine.

Of particular concern may be the bayfront piers/overlooks. However, since the proposed piers will cumulatively be below the 2,000 square foot (SF) threshold, not allow docking of vessels, and not impact the Federal Channel, the likely approach will be to permit them through the Florida Department of Environmental Projection (FDEP). FDEP typically issues a Noticed General Permit for structures under 2,000 SF and can issue federal authorization under the same permit.

For more information on the "Reconnecting the Castillo & the Bayfront" project, visit the project website:

www.halback.com/rcb/project.html