

New Orleans Rail Gateway Program

Jefferson and Orleans Parishes
State Project No. H.005168

Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation Alternatives Meeting

November 13, 2025



Thank you for attending today's public meeting for the New Orleans Rail Gateway Program Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation Study.

We hope you find this meeting interesting and informative.

Special Assistance



- **If you require special assistance due to a disability in order to participate in today's public meeting, please see a Study Team representative at the Welcome Table.**
- **Si usted necesita ayuda especial debido a una discapacidad con el fin de participar en la sesión pública de hoy, consulte a un representante de nuestro equipo en la mesa de bienvenida.**



If you require special assistance due to a disability in order to participate in today's public meeting, please see a Study Team Representative at the Welcome Table.

Alternatives Meeting Format



- **The meeting follows an informal, or “open house” style format**
 - **Present an overview of the Alternative’s Development**
 - **Discuss the Alternatives developed with Study Team Representatives**
 - **Solicit input on the Alternatives developed**
 - **Learn how to receive Study information and participate in the decision-making process**



Tonight’s public meeting is an informal, open-house style or open forum format.

The meeting consists of:

- A video presentation of the alternatives developed,
- The opportunity to speak with Study Team Representatives,
- Obtain your comments on the alternatives developed, and
- Let you know how to stay informed and involved.

To get the most out of this presentation, please refer to the materials that were handed out at the Welcome Table.

After you’ve listened to this presentation, review the project exhibits, talk with Study Team representatives, and give us your comments.

This public meeting is an important part of the transportation decision-making process, and your input is encouraged and appreciated.



THIS IS A PLANNING STUDY



- This Study is evaluating possible transportation improvements
- The information presented at today's meeting is for **Public Review**
- **No decisions have been made** on the study outcomes
- The Study will take **another year to complete**
- At the end of the Study, if a decision is made to move the Project forward, **it will take several years to complete**

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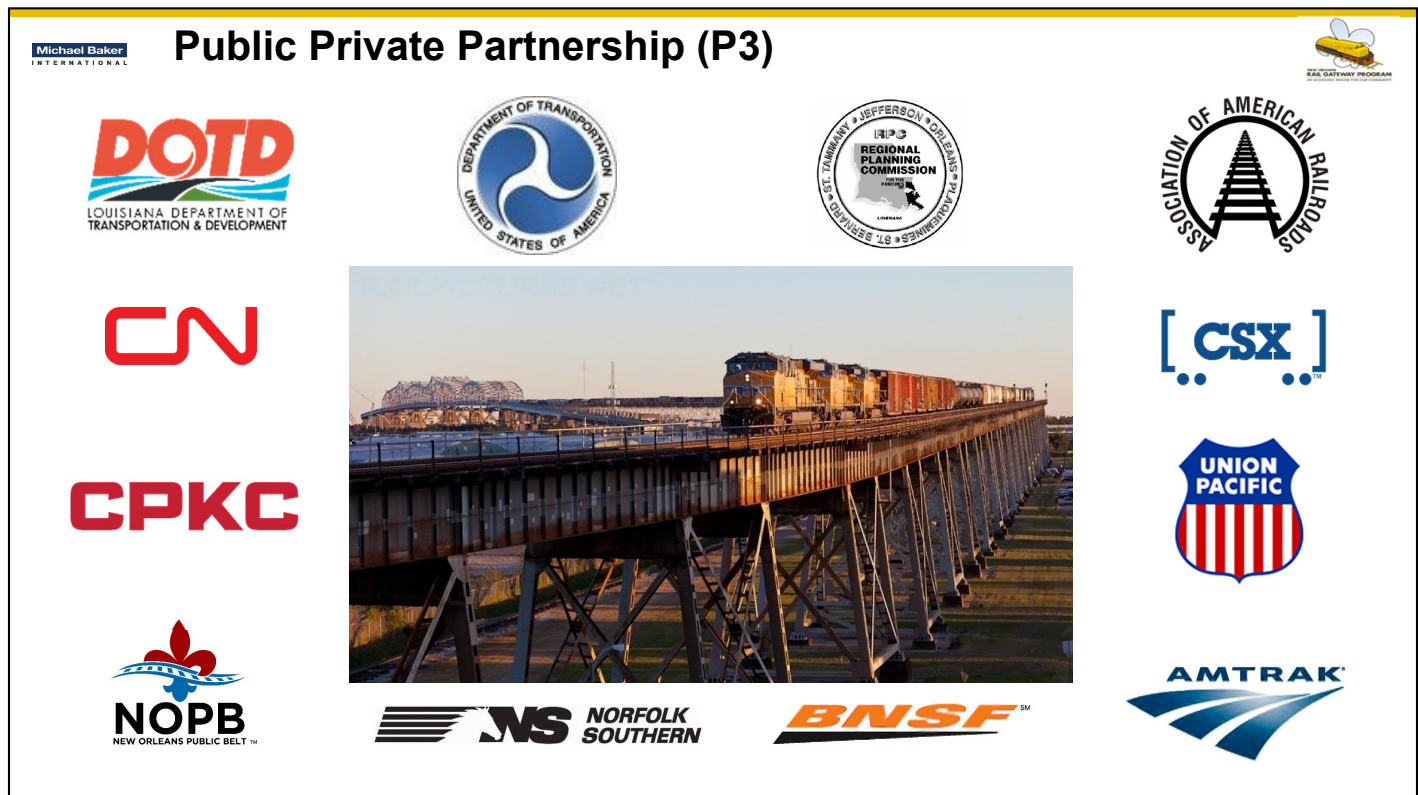
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The New Orleans Rail Gateway Program, and this Study are being advanced through a Public Private Partnership between the:

- Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development,
- Federal Railroad Administration,
- Federal Highway Administration,
- New Orleans Regional Planning Commission,
- Association of American Railroads representing the six Class 1 Railroads operating in the New Orleans metropolitan area,
- New Orleans Public Belt Railroad, and
- Amtrak

to collectively investigate solutions to reduce highway crossing delays and improve rail service.

Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation Goals



- **Increase economic competitiveness and improve air quality by reducing vehicle congestion and delay**
- **Support Hospital expansion and Regional economic development**
- **Improve safety by eliminating one or both at-grade crossings**
- **Decrease crossing maintenance costs**
- **Increase freight fluidity through the NORG and the Port of New Orleans**



The goals identified at the beginning of this study included:

- Increase economic competitiveness and improve air quality by reducing vehicle congestion and delay,
- Support Hospital expansion and Regional economic development,
- Improve safety by eliminating one or both at-grade crossings,
- Decrease crossing maintenance costs, and
- Increase freight fluidity through the NORG and the Port of New Orleans.



The Study Area is roughly bounded on the west by Deckbar Avenue; on the north by the Earhart Expressway (LA 3139); on the east by Monticello Avenue; and on the south by River Road (LA 611).



Alternatives Development Process



- **Process Involved Six (6) Major Steps**
 - **Step 1 – Determine Existing and Forecast Future Roadway Traffic Volumes**
 - **Step 2 – Determine Existing and Forecast Future Railroad Traffic Volumes and Resultant Roadway Traffic Delay**
 - **Step 3 – Evaluate if Conditions warrant grade separating the crossings**
 - **Step 4 – Establish the Project's Purpose and Need**
 - **Step 5 – Develop Alternatives**
 - **Step 6 – Screen the Alternatives against the Purpose and Need and Environmental Features to identify a Build Alternative carried forward**

The process for developing the alternatives followed six basic steps:

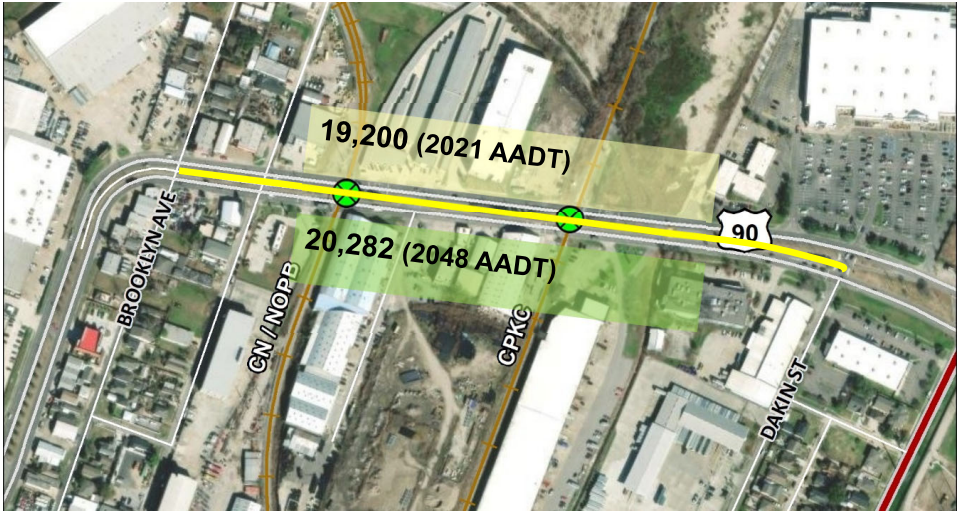
- Step 1 – Determine existing and forecast future roadway traffic volumes
- Step 2 – Determine existing and forecast future railroad traffic volumes and the blocked crossing roadway traffic delay
- Step 3 – Evaluate if conditions are met to grade separate the crossings
- Step 4 – Establish the Project's Purpose and Need
- Step 5 – Develop Alternatives, and
- Step 6 – Screen the Alternatives to identify alternatives carried forward



Step 1 – Existing and Future Roadway Traffic Volumes



- Existing (2021) Traffic Volumes – consistent with other area planning studies
- Future (2048) Traffic Volumes – Projected 5.6% growth

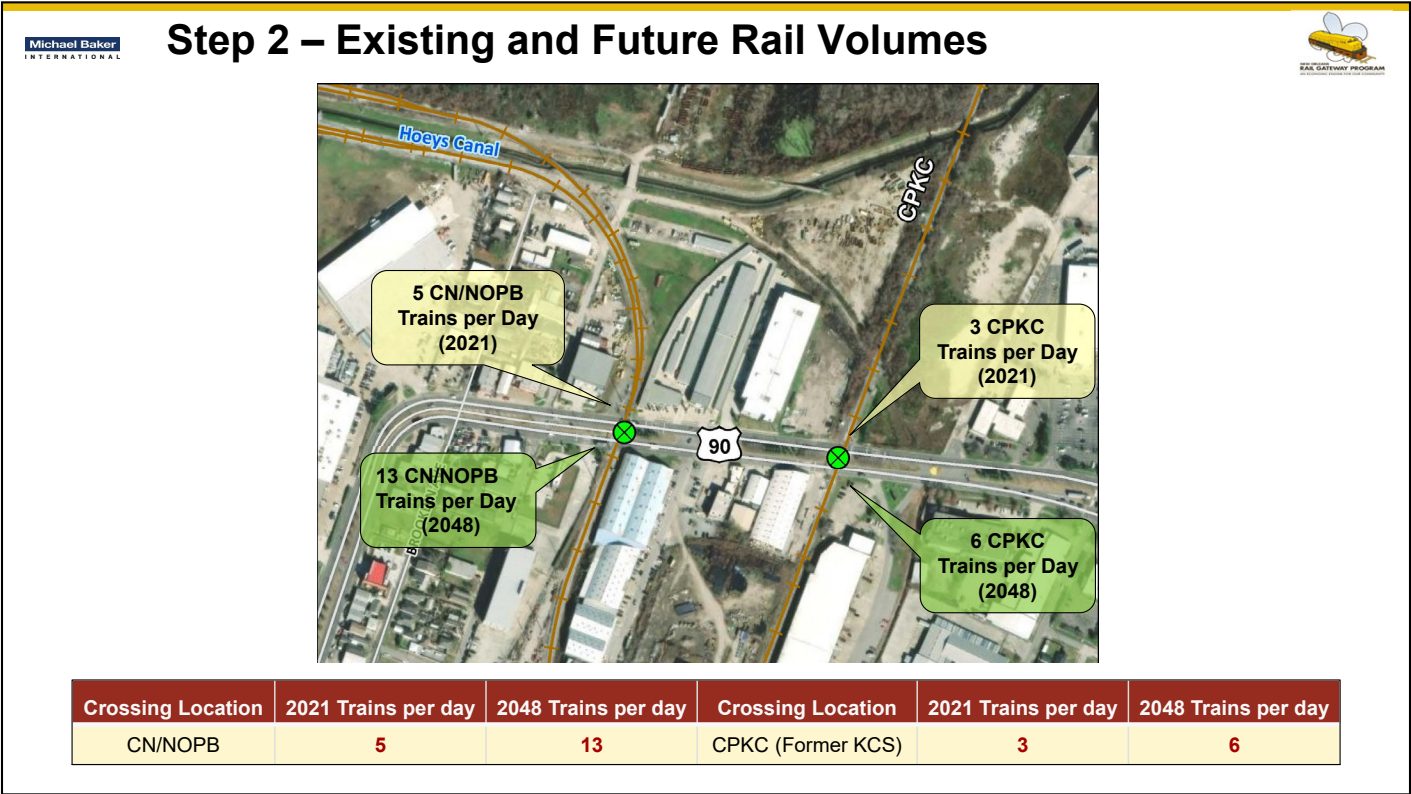


NOTE: AADT – Average Annual Daily Traffic

Jefferson Highway between Brooklyn Ave and Dakin St	
Functional Classification	Principal Arterial
Speed Limit	35 mph
2021 AADT	19,200
2048 AADT	20,282

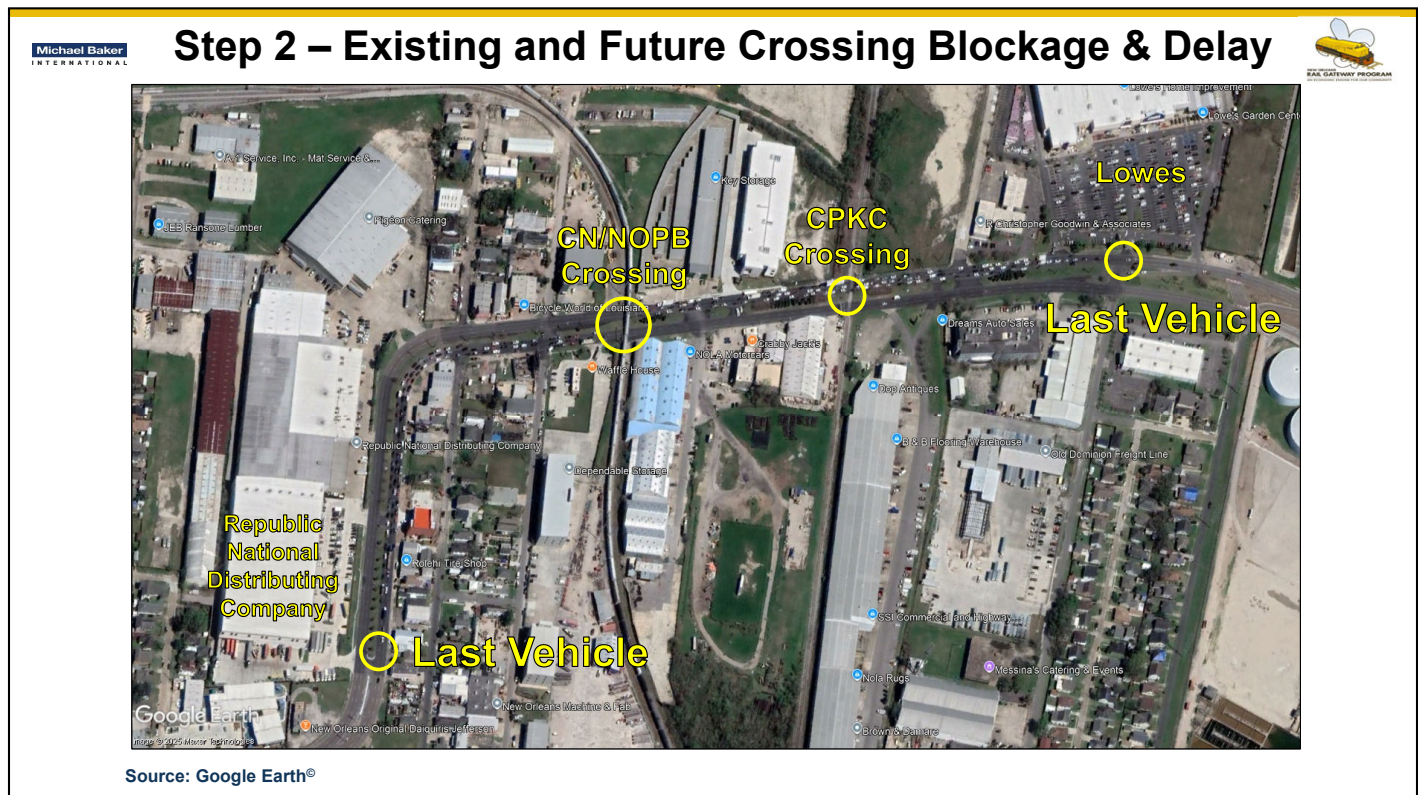
In 2021, the average annual daily traffic along Jefferson Highway within the Study Area was 19,200 vehicles per day.

By the 2048 forecast year, average annual daily traffic is expected to increase to 20,282 vehicles per day.



On average, in 2021 there were 5 trains per day at the CN/NOPB crossing and 3 trains per day at the CPKC crossing.

By 2048, the daily train crossings are expected to increase to 13 trains at the CN/NOPB crossing and 6 trains at the CPKC crossing.



This March 23, 2022, Google Earth image shows the traffic backed up while a train is blocking the CN/NOPB crossing. The train is approximately 2 miles long and traveling at perhaps 5 to 7 miles per hour.

The east bound traffic is backed up approximately 1,500 feet - around the bend, extending back to the Republic National Distributing Company.

The westbound traffic is backed up approximately 1,600 feet across the CPKC crossing and extending back to Lowes.

Step 2 – Existing and Future Crossing Blockage & Delay



- Existing (2021) Train Volumes – Train Car data
- Future (2048) Train Volumes – Forecast at 3.0% compound growth rate based on Port of New Orleans growth forecasts

Crossing Location	Mean Train Speed (mph)	Mean Train Length (feet)	Existing Year 2021			Year 2048 No Build		
			Trains Daily	Total Crossing Blockage (mpd)	Total Vehicle Delay (vhpd)	Trains Daily	Total Crossing Blockage (mpd)	Total Vehicle Delay (vhpd)
CN/NOPB (West) Crossing	6.5	3,738	5	45.1	40.8	13	118.6	52.6
CPKC (formerly KCS) (East) Crossing	6.5	4,768	3	33.6	59.7	6	68.0	69.9

NOTE: mpd – minutes per day | vhp – vehicle hours per day

Blocked crossings due to train movements were calculated using train car data.

On average, the number of hours vehicles are delayed at these crossings varies from approximately 41 hours each day in 2021 at the CN/NOPB crossing to approximately 70 hours each day in 2048 at the CPKC crossing.



Step 3 – Grade Separation Warrants



- FHWA Warrant Guidance – when grade separation should be considered

Warrant Condition	CN/NOPB Crossing		CPKC Crossing	
Vehicle delay exceeds 30 vehicle hours per day (vhpd) with consideration for cost effectiveness	+	40.8 (52.6)	+	59.7 (69.9)
Other Warrant Conditions	-	Not Met	-	Not Met

NOTE: Values 2021 (2048)

Federal Highway Administration guidance identifies warrant conditions to be considered in evaluating whether an at-grade crossing is a candidate for grade separation.

Only one of FHWA's warrant conditions are applicable to these Jefferson Highway crossings, the daily vehicle delay due to blocked crossings.

Both crossings exceed these warrant conditions.

Step 5 – Alternatives Considered



The No-Build and four (4) Build Alternatives were considered:

- **No-Build Alternative** – No improvements, only normal maintenance activities and planned safety improvements
- **Build Alternative 1** – Realign the CN/NOPB track to the CPKC At-Grade Crossing location
- **Build Alternative 2** – Realign the CPKC track to the CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing location
- **Build Alternative 3** – Grade separate Build Alternative 1
- **Build Alternative 4** – Grade separate Build Alternative 2

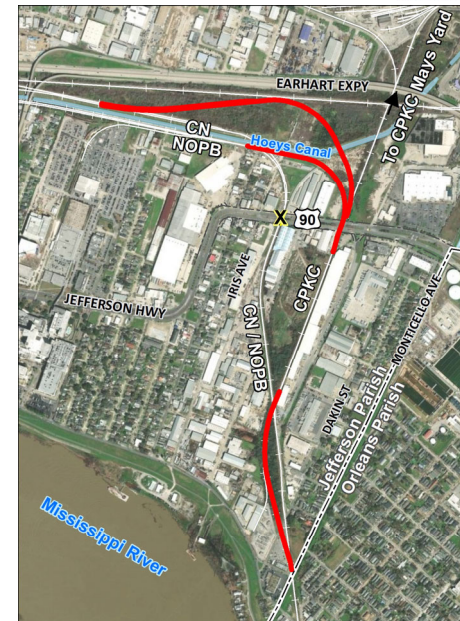
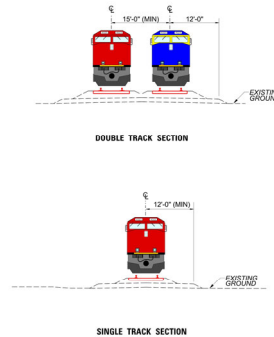
The No-Build and four (4) Build Alternatives were considered:

- No-Build Alternative – No improvements, only normal maintenance activities and planned safety improvements,
- Build Alternative 1 – which realigns the CN/NOPB track to the CPKC At-Grade Crossing location,
- Build Alternative 2 – which realigns the CPKC track to the CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing location,
- Build Alternative 3 – which grade separates Build Alternative 1, and
- Build Alternative 4 – which grade separates Build Alternative 2.

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Step 5 – Build Alternative 1

- Realigns the CN/NOPB track to the CPKC At-Grade Crossing location with a two-track crossing
- Removes the existing CN/NOPB At-Grade crossing
- CPKC At-Grade Crossing remains
- Jefferson Highway remains unchanged



Legend
Build Alternative 1
Proposed Rail
Remove RR Crossing

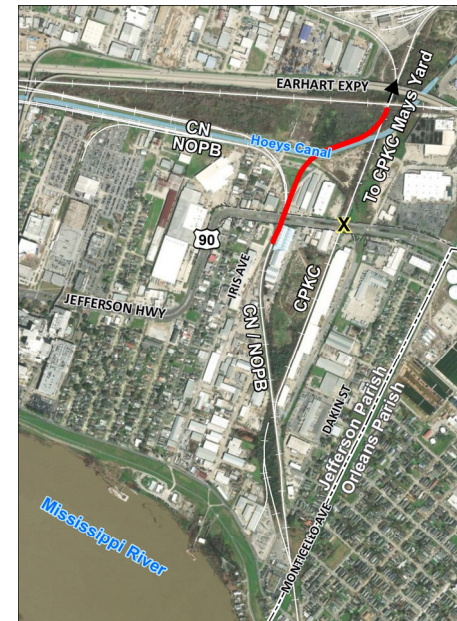
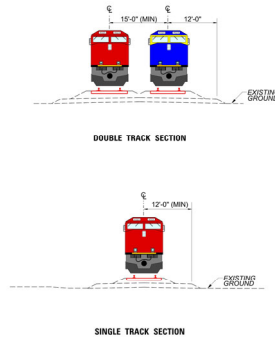
Build Alternative 1:

- Realigns the CN/NOPB track to the CPKC At-Grade Crossing location with a two-track crossing, and
- Removes the existing CN/NOPB At-Grade crossing.
- The CPKC At-Grade Crossing remains, and
- Jefferson Highway remains unchanged.

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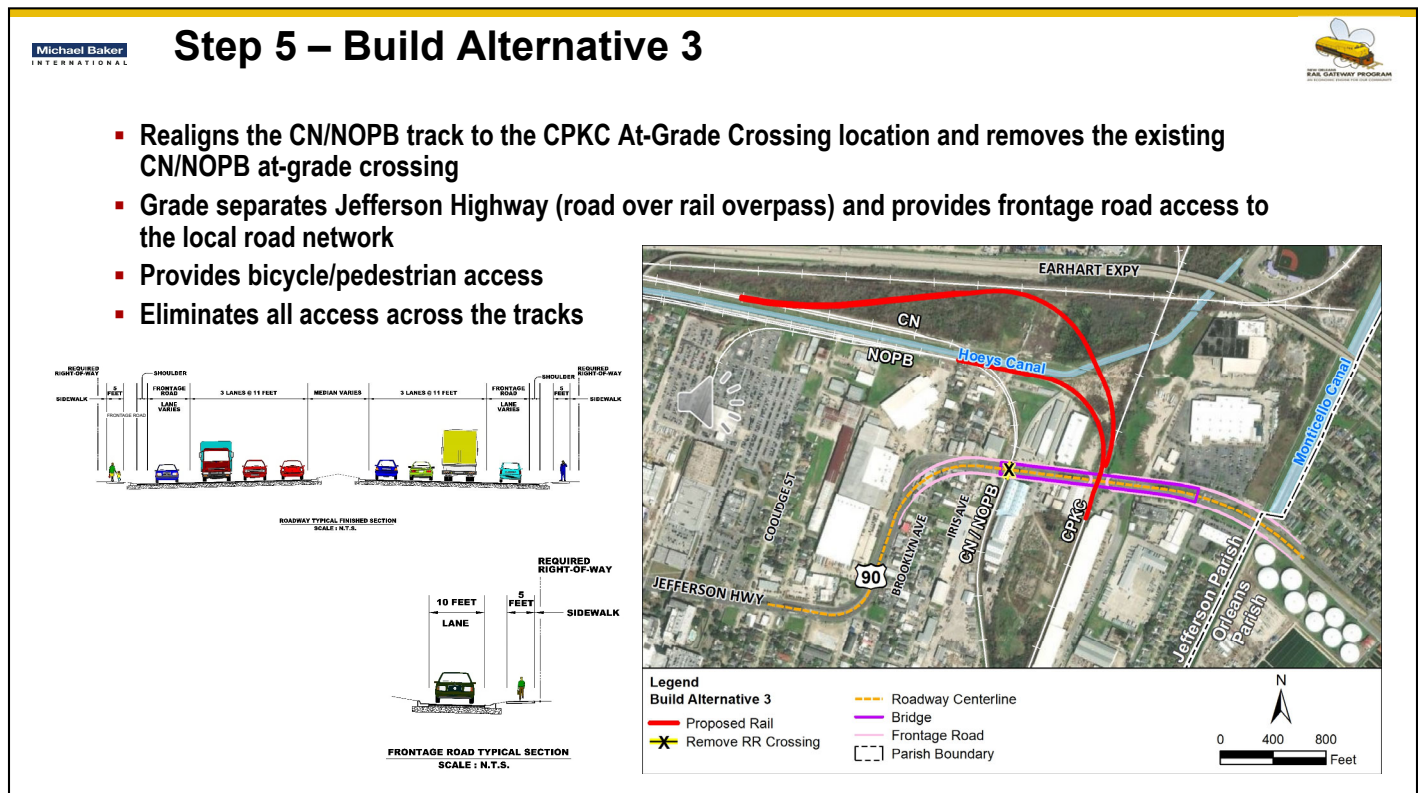
Step 5 – Build Alternative 2

- Realigns the CPKC track to the CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing location with a two-track crossing
- Removes the existing CPKC At-Grade crossing
- CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing remains
- Jefferson Highway remains unchanged



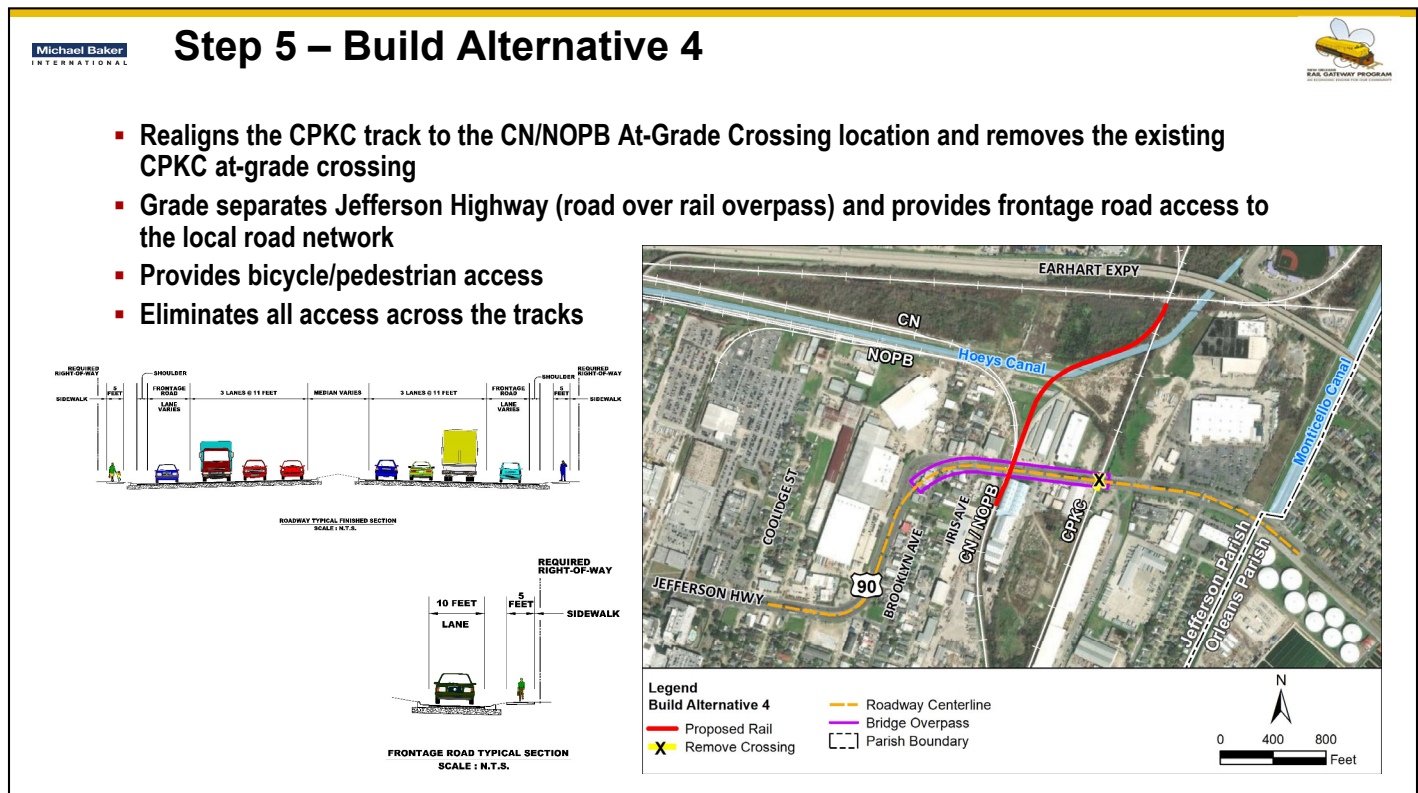
Build Alternative 2:

- Realigns the CPKC track to the CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing location with a two-track crossing, and
- Removes the existing CPKC At-Grade crossing.
- The CN/NOPB At-Grade Crossing remains, and
- Jefferson Highway remains unchanged.



Build Alternative 3:

- Grade separates Build Alternative 1 with a road over rail overpass and provides frontage road access to the local road network.
- It provides bicycle/pedestrian access consistent with the Jefferson Parish Bicycle Master Plan by providing sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes.
- It eliminates all access across the tracks.



Build Alternative 4:

- Grade separates Build Alternative 2 with a road over rail overpass and provides frontage road access to the local road network.
- It also provides bicycle/pedestrian access by providing sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes.
- It also eliminates all access across the tracks.



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Step 6 – Alternatives Screening

Purpose and Need	No Build	Alternative			
		1	2	3	4
Improve Safety	–	–	–	+	+
Improve Mobility					
Level of Service during Train Crossing Event	–	–	–	+	+
Daily AM & PM Peak Period Delay	–	–	–	+	+
Queueing	–	–	–	+	+
Emergency Response	–	–	–	+	+
Improve Multimodal Connectivity	–	–	–	+	+
Support Economic Development	–	–	–	+	+
Improve/Encourage a Shared-Use Environment	–	–	–	+	+

Build Alternatives 1 and 2 were both eliminated from further consideration

The display board in the Exhibits Area presents the evaluation in detail

The No Build and four Build Alternatives were evaluated against the Project's Purpose and Need – improving safety, mobility and multimodal connectivity; supporting economic development, and improving/encouraging a shared-use environment.

Build Alternatives 1 and 2 were both eliminated from further consideration because neither alternative satisfied the Project Purpose nor addressed the Project Need.

Display boards in the Exhibits Area present the evaluation in detail.



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Step 6 – Alternatives Screening

Environmental Resources Impacts & Other Criteria	No Build	BUILD ALTERNATIVE Grade Separated	
		3	4
		Realign CN/NOPB to CPKC and Grade Separate	Realign CPKC to CN/NOPB and Grade Separate
Land Use			
Right of Way Acquisition (acres)	0.0	9.7	5.3
Rezoning from Industrial to Transportation Use (acres)	0.0	4.9	4.7
Future Tulane University Athletic Fields (acres) – Is future development impacted?	0.0	4.8 Trisects parcels	0.6 Parcel boundary take
Transportation			
Roadway Network – Is crossing related congestion and delay eliminated?	–	+	+
Rail Transportation – Are rail traffic operations impacted?	+	less maintenance	less maintenance
Transit – Are NORTA and JP Transit bus delays eliminated?	–	+	+
Pedestrians & Bicyclists – Are bikelped opportunities enhanced?	–	+	+
Potential Property Impacts			
Commercial (each) – Displaced Partial	0 0	10 5	11 7
Residential (each)	0	1 partial	2 partial
Vacant Property (each)	0	2 partial	2 partial
Community Facilities (each) – Are Parks, Hospitals, Schools, Fire Stations, etc. impacted?	0	0	0
Public Safety – Is crossing safety and delivery of emergency services improved?	–	+	+
Noise & Vibration – Will there be noise or vibration impacts?	+	Potential impacts	Potential impacts
Railroad Support	N/A	–	+
Estimated Cost (x \$1,000,000)	\$ 0.0	\$ 99.5	\$ 98.6

N/A – Not applicable

Environmental Resources Impacts & Other Criteria	No Build	BUILD ALTERNATIVE Grade Separated	
		3	4
		Realign CN/NOPB to CPKC and Grade Separate	Realign CPKC to CN/NOPB and Grade Separate
Other Environmental Resources			
Water Wells (each) – Active Abandoned	0 0	1 5	0 2
Cultural Resources (each) – National Register Listed or Eligible Sites	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials Sites	0	No known sites	No known sites
Wetlands (acres)	0.0	0.3 (NWI)	0.0 (NWI)
100-Year Floodplains	0	Potential impacts	Potential impacts
Navigable Waterways Crossed	0	0	0
Coastal Zones	+	Potential impacts	Potential impacts

NWI – based on National Wetland Inventory

The No-Build and Build Alternatives 3 and 4 were evaluated against 21 different environmental resources and other criteria.

Step 6 – Alternatives Screening



Environmental Resources Impacts and Other Criteria	No Build	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Potential Property Impacts			
Commercial (each) – Displaced Partial	0 0	10 5	11 7
Residential (each)	0	1 partial	2 partial
Vacant Property (each)	0	2 partial	2 partial
Landuse			
Right-of-Way Acquisition (acres)	0.0	9.7	5.3
Rezoning from Industrial to Transportation Use (acres)	0.0	4.9	4.7
Future Tulane University Athletic Fields (acres)	0.0	4.8 (Trisects parcels)	0.6
Railroad Support	N/A	Not supported	Supported

The No-Build and Build Alternative 4 were retained for further study

The impacts to commercial properties along Jefferson Highway are due to the roadway realignment and addition of the frontage roads, and are for the most part, nearly identical.

- Build Alternative 3 would displace 10 businesses and partially impact 5 others
- While Build Alternative 4 would displace 11 businesses and partially impact 7 others
- Build Alternatives 3 and 4 only differ in landuse and railroad support.
- Build Alternative 3 would have a greater impact to, and trisect vacant parcels purchased by Tulane University for future athletic fields.
- Build Alternative 4 is the only alternative supported by CN, CPKC and NOPB.

The No-Build and Build Alternative 4 were retained for further study.



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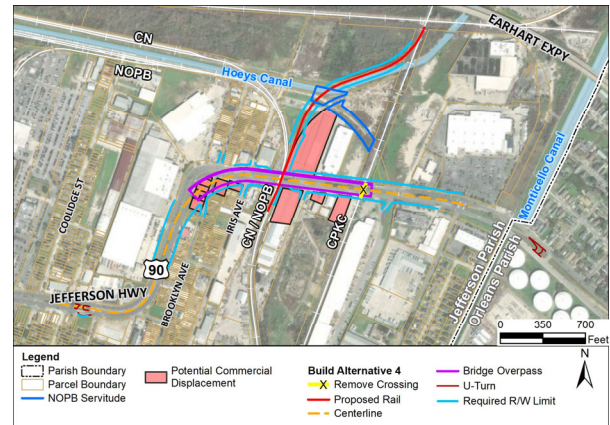
Step 6 – Potential Property Impacts

Displaced Businesses (11)

- Available Lighting
- Lowe's Radiator Shop
- Bohnenstiehl Electric
- Shades of Light
- Jenbo International
- Blest Auto
- Jefferson Battery
- Key Storage
- NOLA Motorcars
- Crabby Jack's
- Building Specialties

Partially Impacted Businesses (7)

- R&A Auto
- B&B Automotive
- Rolehi Tire Shop
- Bicycle World of Louisiana
- BB Commercial Solutions
- The Storage Center
- Crescent City Industrial Services



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Build Alternative 4



Video is for illustrative purposes only

Build Alternative 4 would look similar to this.

Display boards can be viewed in the Exhibits Area.



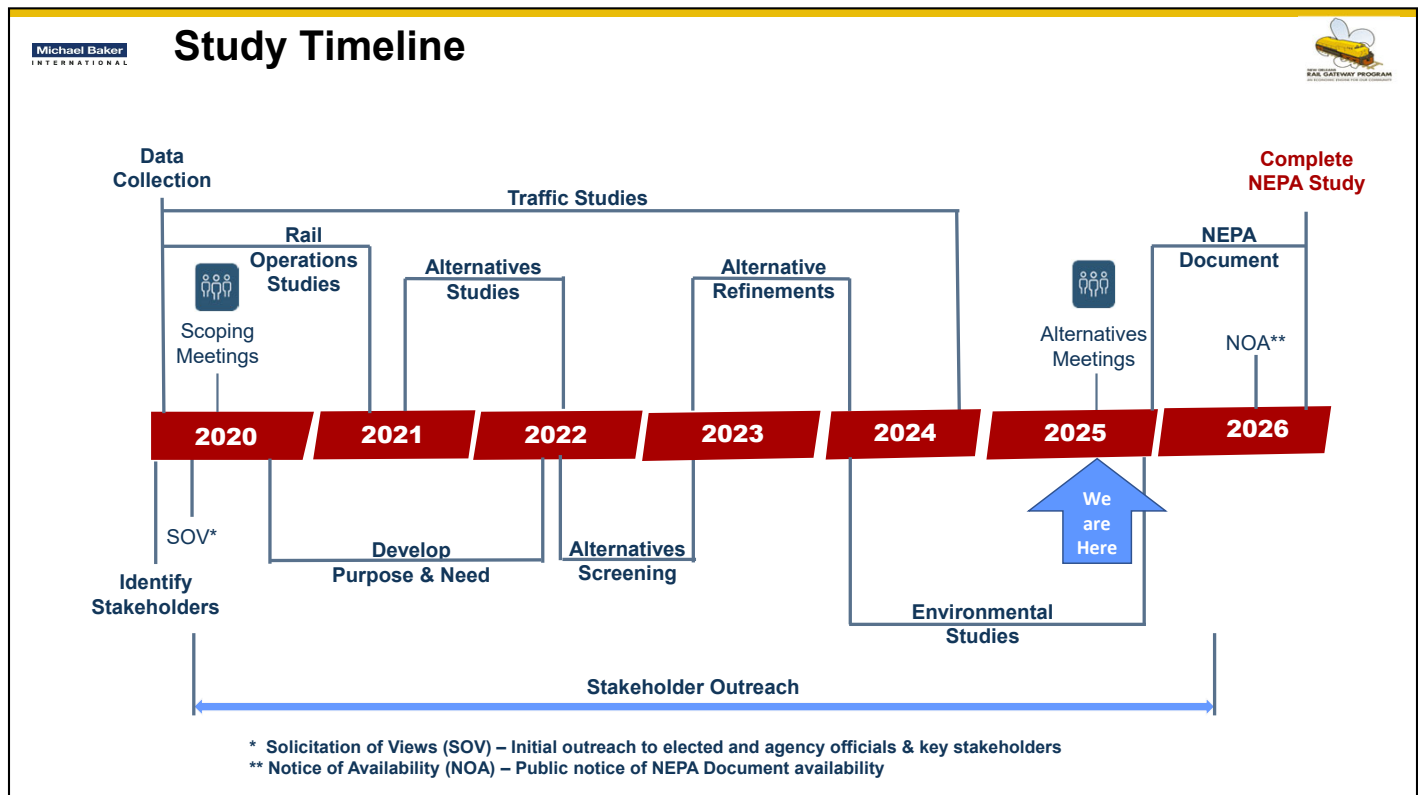
Build Alternative 4 Environmental Studies



- **Noise & Vibration**
- **Threatened & Endangered Species**
- **Wetlands and Water Resources**
- **Hazardous Materials**
- **Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources**

Environmental studies are underway for Build Alternative 4, including:

- Noise & Vibration
- Threatened & Endanger Species
- Wetlands and Water Resources
- Hazardous Materials, and
- Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources



The study will take at least another year to complete the on-going studies and NEPA document. The study is anticipated to be completed in late-2026.

We Want to Hear From You!



- **Comment Forms are available at Tonight's Meeting or at www.dotd.la.gov/about/office-of-multimodal-commerce/rail/freight-and-passenger-rail/new-orleans-rail-gateway-program/jefferson-highway-rail-crossing-relocation-study-documents/**

- **Submit at this meeting**
- **USPS Mail to:**
 - NORG – Jefferson Highway Rail Study
c/o The Hawthorne Agency, Inc.
P.O. Box 56845
New Orleans, LA 70116
- **Email to: NORG@mbakerintl.com**
(Subject: NORG Jefferson Highway Rail Study Comment Form)
- **Include your contact information to receive future study notices**
- **Comment forms received at this meeting or post-marked/emailed no later than **November 24, 2025**, will be included in the public record**

We want to hear from you!

If you want to comment about the study or this presentation, please complete the Comment Form you received at the Welcome Table. The comment form is also available on DOTD's Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation webpage and can be downloaded and printed for sending via USPS mail or email.

Comment forms must be received or postmarked no later than November 24, 2025, to become part of the public record.

Please complete your full name and contact information. Anonymous comments cannot be fully considered.



Stay Involved!



- **Provide your contact information to receive:**
 - Newsletters
 - Future Study Notices

- **Contact us:**
 - Telephone - (504) 488-6196
 - Email - NORG@mbakerintl.com
 - Subject: Jefferson Highway Rail Study
 - USPS Mail
 - New Orleans Rail Gateway Program
 - Jefferson Highway Rail Study
 - c/o The Hawthorne Agency, Inc.
 - P.O. Box 56845
 - New Orleans, LA 70116



- **Visit the DOTD Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation Study web page**
www.dotd.la.gov/about/office-of-multimodal-commerce/rail/freight-and-passenger-rail/new-orleans-rail-gateway-program/jefferson-highway-rail-crossing-relocation-study-documents/

Please provide your contact information to receive newsletters and future notices.

You can contact us any time during the study by telephone, email and USPS Mail as listed here.

This contact information and study information are posted on DOTD's Jefferson Highway Rail Crossing Relocation webpage.



Thank you for Watching!



THANK YOU



This public meeting is an important part of the transportation decision-making process, and your input is encouraged and appreciated.

After this presentation, please review the project exhibits, talk with Study Team and DOTD Right-of-Way representatives, and give us your comments.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask one of the Study Team representatives. We're all wearing name badges. **Remember, the only bad questions are the ones not asked!**

Thank you again for attending today's public meeting!