



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Brian Pedrotti, Community Development Director

BY: Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Traffic Way Bridge Replacement Project

DATE: August 2, 2022

SUMMARY OF ACTION:

A recommendation to City Council to adopt the IS/MND for the project will provide necessary environmental clearance in order to proceed with final design for the project.

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

The City has secured grant funding that will pay approximately 88% of the project costs. Nevertheless, over \$1.4 million is required from the City to pay for the remainder of the project costs.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission review the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the proposed Traffic Way Bridge Replacement project and adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council adopt the IS/MND.

BACKGROUND:

The Traffic Way Bridge was constructed in 1932 and consists of six spans of 38 feet each, for a total bridge length of 228 feet. The bridge was originally part of the highway system and was relinquished to the City in 1960. The bridge is a cast-in-place reinforced concrete tee-beam with a longitudinal construction joint near the bridge centerline. The bridge measures 40 feet between curbs and has 6-foot sidewalks on both sides with an open concrete railing that is mounted to the edge of the bridge. The bridge originally carried four lanes of traffic but was reconfigured in 2008 to have three lanes of through traffic with shoulders for a Class II bike route. The Traffic Way Bridge is a reinforced concrete structure which is supported by abutments on each end of the bridge as well as concrete piles.

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In 2016 a Caltrans inspection revealed signs of deck cracking, failed expansion joints, spalling concrete, concrete abrasion, and creek channel erosion. In March 2018, Caltrans determined the bridge to be a high risk and identified the bridge as a replacement project. The purpose of the project is to replace the scour critical bridge, improve public safety, stabilize Arroyo Grande Creek, and reduce future maintenance costs. If the bridge is not replaced, the condition will continue to deteriorate and eventually bridge closure will be required.

On July 24, 2018, the City Council approved an updated Master Service Agreement and Program Supplement Agreement for the replacement of the Traffic Way Bridge in order for the City to expend Federal or State funds through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) on this project.

On October 8, 2019, the City Council approved the contract for consultant services with Quincy Engineering, Inc. for design of a replacement bridge on Traffic Way. Over the past couple of years, the design team has reviewed closure options, completed the geotechnical samplings and report, completed a topographic survey prepared the necessary environmental studies, prepared the IS/MND, coordinated with various utility companies and have the design about 55% complete.

In June, City staff completed the review of the IS/MND prepared by SWCA (a subconsultant for Quincy). On June 21, 2022 the City issued the IS/MND for the 30-day public review period. On July 21, 2022 the 30-day review period was closed.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

The purpose of an initial study is to identify whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. The mitigated negative declaration identifies specific mitigation measures that will reduce potential impacts to a level of insignificance. With assistance from the City's consultant, SWCA Environmental Consultants, it was determined that the bridge replacement project will not have a significant effect on the environment with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the IS/MND. The IS/MND was prepared and made available for public comment and published on the State Clearinghouse's website on June 21, 2022. No public comments were received during the 30-day review period. The IS/MND is provided as Exhibit A of the draft Resolution (Attachment 1).

The California Environmental Quality Act requires that an IS/MND evaluate potential project related impacts to twenty (20) environmental issue areas. The IS/MND identified potential impacts to twelve (12) issue areas requiring measures to mitigate potential impacts: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, land use and planning, public services, utilities and service systems, wildfire, hazards and hazardous resources, tribal cultural resources, hydrology and water quality, and noise. The IS/MND

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includes analyses of each environmental area, potential impacts, and necessary mitigation measures.

There have been several technical studies and agency concurrences prepared in support of the MND and concurrent National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for which Caltrans is the lead agency and is currently processing a Categorical Exemption. Once the environmental clearance is complete, the City may proceed with final plans, specifications and estimates.

ALTERNATIVES:

The following alternatives are provided for the Commission's consideration:

1. Recommend that City Council adopt the IS/MND for the proposed Traffic Way Bridge Replacement project; or
2. Modify staff's recommendation and recommend the City Council adopt the IS/MND; or
3. Do not recommend that City Council adopt the IS/MND and request further information from staff; or
4. Provide other direction to staff.

ADVANTAGES:

Recommending adoption of the MND will allow staff to finalize the analysis of potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures prior to the final design of the project.

DISADVANTAGES:

None identified.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared by SWCA Consultants and reviewed by City Staff. The purpose is to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Project. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code §21000 et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR) §15000 et seq.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2. No public comments have been received prior to the publication of the staff report.

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution