

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

TO: CHAIR WEIGL AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

FROM: AMY NICHOLSON, SENIOR PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GRANT BAILEY, SUPERVISING ENGINEER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

SUBJECT: HIGHWAY 101 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN OVERCROSSING

AGENDA ACTION: PROVIDE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO STAFF

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Design Review Board 1) confirm a cable-stayed bridge with single tower configuration is the bridge type that will be designed and constructed for the Highway 101 Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing, 2) provide comments on the proposed overcrossing landings and 3) provide input to staff regarding future art installation designs.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The project proposes to construct a bicycle and pedestrian overcrossing (BPOC) over Highway 101 south of Steele Lane and north of College Avenue. The bridge will have a 14.5-foot-wide traveled way between railings, be ADA compliant, and have mode-separation. The structure type will be a cable-stayed bridge with either two towers or a single tower on the east side. The facility would cross from Edwards Avenue on the west side of the highway to Elliott Avenue on the east side. The west approach to the bridge would touch down on Edwards Avenue adjacent to Dick's Sporting Goods and then connect to bicycle and pedestrian routes serving Coddington Mall, SMART, and other destinations to the west. The east approach would touch down adjacent to Elliott Avenue and connect via Elliott Avenue to the Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) campus, Mendocino Avenue, and destinations to the east.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-10.050 (G), this project is not subject to City planning entitlements.

A bicycle/pedestrian crossing over Highway 101 has been included in local and regional planning documents for over 15 years. Since 2007, a Feasibility Study, Project Initiation Document, Project Report, and Environmental Document were produced that developed, considered, and evaluated several alignments over Highway 101 for the BPOC between the Steele Lane interchange and the College Avenue interchange. The Project Report and the Environmental Document for the project concluded that the Edwards Avenue-Elliott Avenue bridge alignment was the preferred alignment.

Three (3) bridge types, which included truss, cable-stayed, and arch bridges, were considered. At the conclusion of the environmental document approval process, which took into consideration comments provided by the Design Review Board (DRB) during an April 2019 meeting, it was determined that the cable-stayed bridge was the preferred bridge type. Based on the environmental document, the project team has been evaluating two (2) different types of cable-stayed bridges, a two-tower V-shaped bridge and an asymmetrically placed single-tower bridge.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

North: Public Highway

South: Public Highway

East: Santa Rosa Junior College and Residential

West: Commercial and Residential

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The bridge will be within existing public right of way. The bridge will span over Highway 101 between the Steele Lane and College Avenue interchanges, over Cleveland Avenue at Edwards Avenue and over Armory Drive at Elliott Avenue and touchdown on Edwards Avenue in the west and Elliott Avenue in the east.

The touchdown and approach on the west side fronts a commercial site and is across the street from an office building and multi-family residences. The touchdown and approach on the east side fronts the SRJC campus and is across the street from the SRJC Police station, and single-family residences.

4. Project History

The Santa Rosa Highway 101 BPOC project has been included in local and regional planning documents and has been actively pursued by the City since the initiation of a Feasibility Study in 2007.

The Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study, prepared by Steven Grover & Associates (SGA) and accepted by the City in November 2010, defined the Project's purpose and need used to score and compare alternatives.

In September 2012, the City adopted the North Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan. The Plan included a proposed bicycle and pedestrian path on the Coffey Lane extension south of Guerneville Road and bicycle lanes on Range Avenue and Elliott Avenue.

In September 2016, a Caltrans Project Initiation Document (PID) was completed by SGA and received approval from Caltrans.

On March 29, 2018, a public meeting was held to obtain input on project goals, the crossing's location, and design priorities to guide the design team in the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis phase.

On April 18, 2019, the project was presented to the DRB for comment. Two (2) alignment alternatives, a crossing at Edwards and Elliott Avenues and a crossing at Bear Cub Way, and three (3) types of bridge structures, truss, cable-stayed, and arch, were presented. The DRB was in favor of the Edwards and Elliott Avenues alignment and the cable-stayed structure type but directed the design team to study the feasibility of a single tower cable-stayed bridge.

On April 20, 2020, a public scoping meeting was held to inform the community of the upcoming circulation of the environmental document for the project. Comments were received at the meeting for consideration in the evaluation of the project.

On June 30, 2020, a public meeting was held to provide information on the project environmental document that was in circulation and encourage submitting comments.

On July 21, 2020, a study session with City Council was held to discuss the project draft environmental document. A majority of the Council expressed support for the Edwards Ave – Elliot Ave alignment and some type of future public art installation.

In March 2021, the environmental document for the project was approved. Additionally, a Caltrans Project Report was completed by BKF Engineers (BKF)

and received approval from Caltrans. Both documents concluded that the Edwards Avenue-Elliott Avenue bridge alignment was the preferred alignment that would carry forward into the design development phase.

In March 2021, through the highly competitive California Active Transportation Program, the project was recommended to receive \$12 million in grant funding for construction by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. This award was approved by the California Transportation Commission in June 2021.

On April 27, 2021, City Council approved a professional services agreement with BKF Engineers to provide professional design and right of way services for the Highway 101 Bike and Pedestrian Project.

A Neighborhood Meeting was conducted on July 21, 2021, via a virtual Zoom meeting to obtain input on the design of the touchdowns at Edwards Avenue and Elliott Avenue.

On September 17, 2021, the project was presented to the City of Santa Rosa's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (BPAB). The design options for the touchdowns and approaches at Edwards Avenue and Elliott Avenue were discussed and feedback was requested. The BPAB was supportive of the design presented.

5. Public Comments

Comments from the community were received in response to the circulation of the draft environmental document and issuance of the final environmental document, as well as through public meetings. Comments received during the circulation period of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) begin on page 125 of the IS/MND included as Attachment 4. Public Comments and responses received during circulation of the IS/MND are also included as Attachment 5. General Public Correspondence is available as Attachment 10 to this Report.

The community strongly supported the project design as proposed. Design concerns expressed by the community related to ensuring safety, maintaining parking, and retaining visual access to and from commercial buildings. Through formal outreach meetings and informal correspondence with community members, staff has received numerous comments that an art installation should be considered during the design phase or shortly after construction completion.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study was performed for this project which resulted in the drafting and adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration by the lead environmental agency, Caltrans, in March 2021. A Categorical Exclusion under NEPA was also certified for this project by Caltrans in March 2021.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ISSUES

At this phase of the project, there are no unresolved issues remaining with the project.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Disclosure Form

Attachment 2 – Location Map

Attachment 3 – April 14, 2019 - DRB Meeting Minutes and Slides

Attachment 4 – January 2021 - Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS MND)

https://cityofsantarosa-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/gbailey_srcity_org/EXQaHkcncYtCikDreyVj2GcBBhynCqwUHFsqjZ-NckbDcQ?e=UcxcHR

Attachment 5 – IS MND Comments and Responses

Attachment 6 – Preliminary Plans from Caltrans Project Report

Attachment 7 – Overcrossing Bridge Renderings & Plans

Attachment 8 – Overcrossing Landings Renderings & Plans

Attachment 9 - July 21, 2021 – Neighborhood Meeting Summary and Slides

Attachment 10 – Public Correspondence

Attachment 11– SMART Ideas Community Charette and Urban Design Competition

Attachment 12 - 101 BPOC Rendered Animation Compilation Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0Bh9qduPHI>

Attachment 13 – View Comparison of Cable-Stayed V Truss Style Bridge

CONTACT

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