



ITEM NUMBER:  
DATE:

C-1  
03/08/16

# ***Atascadero City Council***

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## ***Staff Report – Public Works Department***

### **Design Update and Council Approval Downtown Pedestrian Bridge**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Council:

1. Authorize City Manager to execute a Contract for professional engineering services with North Coast Engineering, in an amount not to exceed \$136,962; and,
2. Approve the updated schematic design of the Downtown Pedestrian Bridge and Centennial Plaza Project and direct Public Works staff to proceed with the completion of Construction Bid Documents.

#### **REPORT IN BRIEF:**

The Downtown Pedestrian Bridge and Centennial Plaza Project was previously brought to a 60% design level in December 2011. At that time, the project was shelved due to the loss of funding resulting from the dissolution of the Atascadero Community Redevelopment Agency. However, proceeds from the 2010 City Lease Revenue Bonds exceeded the amount needed to complete the City Hall Rehabilitation Project and remaining funds in the amount of \$3,025,070 have been allotted, in the current budget, to complete the Centennial Bridge and Plaza Project.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

##### Background:

The 2005 Downtown Revitalization Plan envisioned an Atascadero Creek pedestrian bridge and Creekside trail that would connect Downtown to Colony Square (following page). When the Galaxy Theatre at Colony Square was completed in 2011, the pedestrian bridge became the top priority of the Redevelopment Agency. From May through December of 2011, environmental studies were completed, permits were



obtained, the City acquired a 2,500 square foot lot fronting East Mall for the construction of the Centennial Plaza, and project design documents were brought to a 60% completion level.

Due to state legislation, all Redevelopment Agencies were dissolved February 2012 and the Downtown Pedestrian Bridge Project was shelved. Prior to dissolution, the Redevelopment Agency was in the process of expending proceeds from the 2010 Lease Revenue Bonds. Bond covenants required that the funds be spent on the Historic City Hall Rehabilitation Project with remaining funds to be spent on other eligible redevelopment projects. When the bonds were issued in 2010, the Pedestrian Bridge, trail, plaza and parking lot were all identified as priority projects for any remaining bond funds.

The Historic City Hall Rehabilitation Project was completed under budget and funds have been received from all granting agencies. The close out of the City Hall Project freed up the remaining 2010 Bond proceeds for projects originally identified as part of the 2010 bond issuance process. In August 2014, the City and the Successor Agency entered into a Master Agreement, transferring all remaining bond proceeds to the City to be spent on projects for which the bonds were originally sold. The Centennial Bridge and Plaza Project is one of the remaining priority projects and has been budgeted to utilize the remaining bond funds.

City staff created a Conceptual Plan for the north side of Atascadero Creek (see below) which included the addition of Centennial Plaza, a pathway connection from El Camino Real to Lewis Avenue, and reconstruction of the parking lot at the southwest corner of East Mall and Lewis Avenue. In September 2011, the Council awarded a design contract for the bridge portion of the Project to North Coast Engineering. Because of the City Hall Rehabilitation Project in progress at the time, the trail, plaza and parking lot portions of the project were delayed and were not included as part of the original design contract.

When project funding became available again in 2015, City staff revisited the project and determined that doing the entire project (bridge, plaza, trail, and parking lot) at one time would be the most cost effective method of delivering the Project. Based upon project cost estimates from 2011, it was concluded that current funding will allow for the inclusion of most of the design elements shown on the Centennial Plaza Concept plan, with the addition of improvements at the southern bridge landing area adjacent to the old City Hall building. These improvements are consistent with the Downtown Revitalization Plan, and will provide the following features and public benefits:

- Pedestrian connection from Downtown to Colony Square.
- Improved Downtown Parking facilities and increased parking spaces.
- Creekside pedestrian trail from El Camino Real to Lewis Avenue.

- Creek restoration and improved public access with interpretive signage.
- ADA parking spaces for City Hall and the Historical Society Colony House.
- Improved access and visibility to the Historical Society Colony House.
- Enhanced location for Tent City/Colony Days.
- Addition of enhanced public spaces.
- Removal of existing vacant and unused structures.

The completed project will bring a beautiful and meandering walkway to the downtown area where visitors will enjoy a lovely and close-up view of the creek habitat, including the wide variety of native flora and fauna. Interpretive and educational signage will be included along the pathway to describe what viewers may see. Park benches will offer a place to relax and enjoy the view. The new, well-lit pathway will provide pedestrian connectivity between El Camino Real and Lewis Avenue. Safety considerations have been included in the design of the walking bridge, enabling a clear line of sight, from Colony Square all the way through to the landing at Centennial Plaza on the other side.

The design for Centennial Plaza, which will serve the community as a new public gathering plaza, includes beautiful landscaping and planters, stamped and colored concrete, a beautiful concrete compass in the center of the plaza, and a brick walkway which will provide an opportunity for dedicated bricks such as those located in front of City Hall.

This project also calls for the removal of the vacant portable buildings currently situated next to the Historical Society's Colony House, along with a newly designed parking lot, nearly doubling the amount of available parking and providing improved traffic flow. The parking lot will be a green project, similar to the new parking lot at the Charles Paddock Zoo. The green design includes the use of pervious pavements and native vegetation to mimic the processes and functions of natural systems, allowing stormwater to slow, spread and sink in. Through the green design features, rainwater can infiltrate the soil and provide groundwater recharge for the Atascadero Sub-Basin Aquifer and summer base flow to Atascadero Creek. Additionally, pollutants that may be present from vehicles or other sources will be filtered out of the water as it passes through the vegetation and soil.

The original Centennial Plaza Concept drawings also included a public restroom facility adjacent to Lewis Avenue. Preliminary cost estimates, however, indicate that the current budget will not allow for the inclusion of restroom facilities. Additionally, issues have been raised regarding the construction of a public restroom facility at this location, including public safety and operational concerns. With the reopening of City Hall, public restrooms are now available in the area. Should a restroom be desired in the future and if funding becomes available, a landscaped space has been included in the conceptual parking lot design for this potential future purpose.

The Historical Society, adjacent property owners, and Tent City volunteers have been involved throughout the original project design and the current update process. Their

input has been incorporated, and all parties concerned have expressed their support of the project.



Analysis:

A Request for Proposals was issued in 2011 for the design services and preparation of project bid documents. At that time, North Coast Engineering was selected and was issued a contract for \$95,983. When the project was suspended in December 2011, approximately \$45,000 remained of the original contracted amount. Since the project team had previously been selected through the RFP process, and going back out to RFP would add delay, cost, and staff coordination time, Public Works requested a new proposal from North Coast Engineering for the following items of work:

- Bring the 60% design documents from 2011 for Centennial Plaza and Pedestrian Bridge to final bid documents.

- Supplementary topographic survey.
- Prepare easement documents for the new south bridge landing plaza area. (In preparation for the sale of the old City Hall building)
- Engineering and sub-consultant work (landscaping, electrical, geotechnical, bridge structural engineering) required to prepare final bid documents for the reconstruction of the East Mall parking area and surrounding sidewalk, continuation of the project pedestrian connection through to Lewis Avenue and design of the new plaza at the southern bridge landing.
- Storm water reports and design required by the NPDES General Permit (updated since the previous design in 2011).

Staff has negotiated the price and services needed to complete final design and bid documents with North Coast Engineering. The fee for the design services, to be provided by North Coast Engineering and their sub-consultants, is an additional \$136,962. As part of the approval of this design fee, the remaining \$45,000 from the original contract will be officially terminated.

Conclusion:

The pedestrian bridge, plaza, and creek path will act as a catalyst to promote redevelopment of important downtown properties. With a new owner now considering development of a portion of Colony Square, and restaurants beginning to take shape around the downtown area, the timing is perfect to complete this important link. Completion of the bridge will supplement the parking for Colony Square while also highlighting City Hall, the Creekside building, and the creek itself. This link will help to create the sense of place that our downtown is currently missing, thereby potentially stimulating new restaurant and retail development, while implementing the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the additional scope of work and authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with North Coast Engineering in the amount of \$136,962 for the design of the Downtown Pedestrian Bridge and Centennial Plaza Project.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

<b>PROPOSED EXPENDITURES</b>	
Design:	
Engineering Design, Soils, Topo, Reports	136,962
Staff time	25,000
Design Contingency @ 20%	27,400
Construction:	
Construction Contract	2,100,000
Testing, Inspection, Environmental and staff time @ 15%	315,000
Construction Contingency @ 20%	420,000
Total Estimated Expenditure:	\$3,024,362

<b>BUDGET</b>	
2010 Bond Proceeds Master Agreement Fund	3,025,070
Total Funding Sources	\$3,025,070

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Council may direct staff to remove additional scope of work from the project and proceed with the original design from 2011.
2. Council may request changes to the conceptual design of the additional scope of work and require staff to bring the project back again for approval.
3. Council may reject staff's recommendation and direct staff to reconsider the design firm choice. Staff does not recommend this action as staff does not believe a better price could be achieved by going back out to for a separate RFP and valuable project history would be lost by switching to another firm.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. "Centennial Plaza" Concept Plan