



PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

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Item #4

TO: ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

**FROM: ELIZABETH AMES
PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING**

DATE: August 7, 2014

**SUBJECT: HIGHWAY 101 PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE OVERCROSSING PROJECT
DRAFT DESIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Staff is seeking input from the Architectural Review Board (ARB) on the bridge design guiding principles rather than a project mission statement that will accompany the design guidelines for use by designers during the design competition.

BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto is currently in the preliminary design and environmental assessment phase for the Highway 101 Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing at Adobe Creek with a total project budget up to \$10M. This project is a high priority in the 2012 Palo Alto Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and has received \$8M in grant funding for construction.

Bridge Alignment 1, will be the focus for concept development during the design competition based on community, board, commission and local agency input. See attachment A for the July 3rd ARB staff report.

See Attachment B for comments received from the July 3, 2014 ARB study session on the project goal statement, design guidelines and competition process.

It is anticipated the design competition's guiding principles and guidelines will be finalized with input from AIACC and the City Council. Attachment C represents an updated flowchart of steps to complete the design competition by year end pending City Council direction on August 11, 2014.

DISCUSSION

Design Competition Guiding Principles

Staff will return to Council in August with the details of the competition with the intent to attract international, national and local design firms managed through the American Institute of Architects California Council (AIACC).

As part of this process, staff is seeking ARB feedback on the design competition guiding principles below:



CityOfPaloAlto.org

Originality – inspire and engage the community with a design incorporating creativity, innovation and education

Versatility – balance between engineering and art, efficiency and beauty

Sustainability – respect the Baylands environment; recognize the integration with nature, connection to the bay trails, and importance to walkers/bikers/commuters

These three guiding principles will orient design competitors in their work to create concepts for evaluation by the jury and the community.

Next Steps

Should a bridge design be selected through a design competition or through a site and design review process, the environmental assessment may require preparation of either an amendment or an addendum to include the winning design.

Preliminary Design: Spring/Summer 2014

Design Competition Summer 2014 – early 2015

Environmental Review: Complete Winter 2015

Final Design/Bid Documents – Winter 2016

Construction: Early 2017 – (1½ years construction time frame)

ATTACHMENT A

TO: ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

**FROM: ELIZABETH AMES
PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING**

DATE: July 3, 2014

**SUBJECT: HIGHWAY 101 PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE OVERCROSSING PROJECT DRAFT DESIGN
GUIDELINES**

Staff is seeking input from the Architectural Review Board on the bridge design guidelines which include excerpts of the design goals, objectives and unique design features for designers to consider during the design competition, Attachment A. Bridge Alignment 1 will be the focus for concept development during the design competition based on community, board, commission and local agency input.

BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto is currently in the preliminary design and environmental assessment phase for the Highway 101 Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing at Adobe Creek with a total project budget up to \$10M. This project is a high priority project from the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and has received \$8M in grant funding for construction.

Community, board and commission input on the environmental assessment will be initiated next summer. This process has been significantly delayed to prepare additional studies as required by the local, state and federal agencies to analyze impacts within the Baylands adjacent to Adobe Creek and the San Francisco Bay Trail. See memo from Alta Planning and Design, Attachment B.

Three conceptual alignments are being carried forward into the environmental assessment. See Alignment Alternatives, Attachment C.

Alignment 1

The bridge alignment starts at the current entrance to the seasonal Lefkowitz Tunnel near West Bayshore Road and Adobe Creek. Alignment 1 (formerly A) includes a 90-degree turn before crossing over the highway from West Bayshore Road and links to the bay trail system next to Adobe Creek with an optional Baylands overlook area. This will be the focus for the design competition given the positive feedback received from the community, boards and commissions.

Alignments 2 and 3

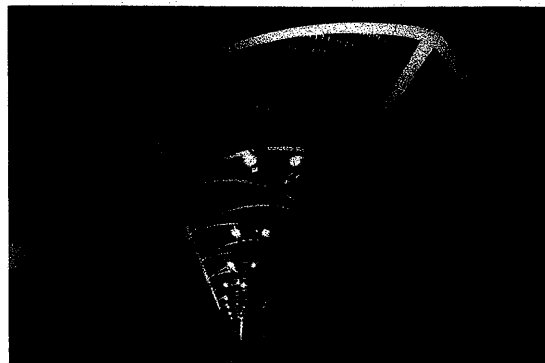
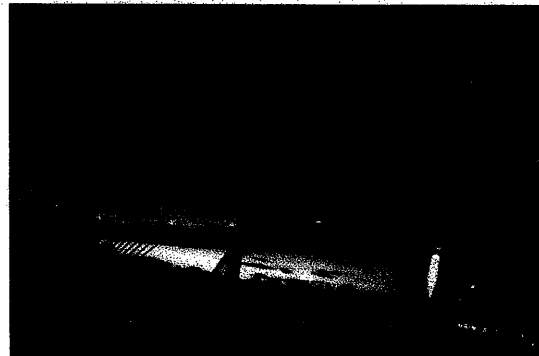
Alignment 2 is not as linear but similar to Alignment 1 circling before crossing West Bayshore Road. This bridge span curves over the freeway to a landing site along the Bay Trail. The final Alignment 3 being considered is a "low impact" alternative developed in part to explore alternatives that do not enter the Baylands (as required by NEPA). Although similar to Alignment 2 on the West Bayshore Road side of the highway, Alignment 3 includes a sharper loop turn that more closely aligns with Barron Creek to avoid private property right-of-way.

Other Alignments

Staff and the consultant team explored alignments spanning Barron and Adobe Creeks. These alternative bridge alignments conflict with needs to maintain access around and within the adjacent creek channels. The Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) discourages bridge structures spanning over Barron and Adobe Creeks that obstruct access to the maintenance road and creek channels. The SCVWD maintenance crews often use trucks and large equipment to access levees and roads adjacent to creeks for debris clearing and other activities.

Bridge Concepts

Sample bridge concepts were discussed with the ARB last February and include the 3 styles below. A cable stayed bridge (2nd graphic) is not desired in this area due to the potential impacts to birds flying within and near the Baylands nature preserve.



In 2013, the Council asked staff to potentially proceed with a design competition for the bridge and the process is briefly described in the discussion section of this report.

DISCUSSION

Staff would like input on the goals, objectives and unique design features that could be described for each architectural concept using Alignment 1. These features may include: viewing platforms, integrated slopes, spires or other vertical elements, solar panels, modern arch or cable systems, sculptural columns, etc. Educational, innovative and sustainability goals may also be added to these guidelines if the ARB desires.

A sample of the common features and design parameters that are likely to be consistent across all options are: vertical clearance, ramp slope, trail surface and width, railings, lighting, signage and striping, wayfinding and interpretive signage, columns, and landscaping and civil improvements. These common features and standards are being reviewed by Caltrans and local agencies.

Competition process

Competition details will return to Council in August to initiate the competition with the intent to attract international, national and local design firms. See Attachments D and E for an outline and tentative schedule to manage a competition through the American Institute of Architects California Council (AIACC). As part of this process, staff is seeking ARB feedback. It is anticipated that the design guidelines will eventually be finalized with input from AIACC and the City Council.

Environmental Review

The project is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Through discussions with Caltrans' and City staff, a combined NEPA/CEQA outline was developed as a means to combine both analyses into one document for this project. A draft Visual Impact Analysis (VIA) will be updated to include a winning concept, once a winning design is selected through a design competition and public process.

This environmental review process will determine the environmentally preferred alignment and concept.

Next Steps

A draft EIR/EA is planned to be in circulation Spring 2015 and final EIR is anticipated to be certified in 2015. This is significantly delayed due to the additional studies and agency review time to analyze impacts within the Baylands.

Should a bridge design be selected through a design competition or through a Site and Design Review process, the environmental assessment may require preparation of either an amendment or an addendum to include the winning design.

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ATTACHMENT B

Staff notes from July 3, 2014 ARB Study Session

Potential competition changes suggested by ARB

1. Allowing the public to comment during the competition/interview of the firms is best rather than before the competition/interview
2. Advertising of the competition through all the AIA local chapters – San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and those on the east bay.
3. Removing the qualification of “two bridges designed and constructed over 10 years” provision so we can expand the 20-design A/E firms to attract more local firms.
4. Extending the time to develop concepts to at least one month

Other considerations

Palo Alto's innovative spirit may attract ideas that could be implemented by a qualified design team - this is like an idea competition – how/is it possible to structure the competition to do this with the caveat that a qualified team builds the vision/idea?

Other comments

A few members would like to see more locally based designs rather than a focus on national and international firms..

Don't be over prescriptive with the design guidelines.

Draft Project Goal Statement:

“A landmark bridge and gateway into Silicon Valley and the Palo Alto Baylands serving transportation and recreation needs for the enjoyment of the community.”

The goal statement for project should consider the importance of the regional connection of the bay trail, emphasizing the history and preservation of the Baylands' open space

Emphasize more about the Baylands and Palo Alto as a leader of Silicon Valley in our goal statement.

Allow competition be more open to ideas.

ATTACHMENT C



CITY OF PALO ALTO

AIA CALIFORNIA COUNCIL

- DEVELOP COMPETITION WORK PLAN
- DEVELOP MARKETING AND PROMOTION MATERIALS
- ISSUE INVITATIONS TO A MINIMUM OF 20 A/E FIRMS

JURY

TOP THREE PROPOSALS ARE SELECTED

- **THREE CONCEPTS ARE DEVELOPED**
- **CONCEPTS SENT TO WEB/MEDIA**

TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (TAP)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

TAP ISSUES COMMENTARY FOR EACH OF THE CONCEPTS

JOINT JURY/BOARD & COMMISSION MEETING

- PUBLIC ORAL COMMENTS
- REVIEW TAP'S MEMO
- DESIGN FIRM PRESENTATIONS

JURY DECISION

- DELIBERATION
- RANKING DESIGN FIRMS
- ANNOUNCE DESIGN WINNER

ARB MEETING

- LISTEN TO PUBLIC ORAL COMMENTS
- ARB RANKING THE THREE DESIGN FIRMS

STAFF PRESENT TO CITY COUNCIL