



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0738, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Permit Sonoma and Transportation and Public Works

Staff Name and Phone Number: Tennis Wick, 565-1900, Johannes J. Hoevertsz, 565-2231

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Fifth

Title:

Bohemian Highway Bridge Replacement Project Final Environmental Impact Report

Recommended Action:

The Board is requested to act on the following items with regard to the proposed Bohemian Highway Bridge replacement project (Project):

- A) Receive the proposed Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Project;
- B) Receive this staff report, public comment, and any other input regarding the Final EIR
- C) Direct staff to return for a final vote to certify the Final EIR and approve the Project.

Executive Summary:

On April 4, 2022, the Department of Transportation and Public Works (TPW) opened a forty-five-day public review and comment period of a Draft Environmental Impact Report associated with removal and replacement of the existing seismically and functionally obsolete bridge on the Bohemian Highway over the Russian River. In addition, on May 17, 2022, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing to receive comment on the same report. Based on comments received during the forty-five day public comment period as well as the May 17 Board meeting, staff have prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) which incorporates County's responses to all public comments received as to the project.

TPW is providing the FEIR to the Board in order for public and Board comments, if any, to be received. Staff plans to then return this matter to your Board with all materials necessary to certify the Final EIR and approve the Project.

Discussion:

The existing Bohemian Highway Bridge over the Russian River in Monte Rio is a steel and concrete structure built in 1934. The current structure is considered seismically and structurally obsolete by Caltrans and would require extensive retrofitting in order to meet current state and federal standards. A feasibility study prepared by Drake Haglan & Associates in 2013 concluded that Caltrans and the Federal Highway and Bridge Program would only consider funding a replacement bridge due to the high cost of seismic retrofit and the short life-span of a rehabilitation. In December 2015, County staff facilitated a community meeting to discuss the feasibility study, and a petition requesting the County fast-track the project was signed by approximately 150 local residents. Design and engineering for a new, replacement bridge started in October 2017.

The proposed bridge is being designed to meet the current American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) bridge design standards and the seismic design would in accordance with the Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria and Seismic Design for Steel Bridges. The bridge would vary in width, from approximately 52 feet at the approaches to approximately 60 feet at the main span. The bridge would be supported on concrete piers with deep, large diameter cast-in-drilled-hole piles, embedded up to approximately 120 feet below the riverbed. Rock slope protection (RSP) would be installed at both abutments for scour protection.

The proposed roadway would be designed to provide a multimodal route for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians and would connect to Main Street in Monte Rio west of the existing bridge and east of Moscow Road, and terminate at Bohemian Highway at the south end of the triangle and south of SR 116. The proposed roadway design would accommodate two 12-foot vehicular lanes (one lane in each direction), concrete barriers, the steel arch members, and 5-foot shoulders/Class II bike lanes and 6-foot pedestrian sidewalks/Class I bike lanes on both sides of the bridge.

The Project construction is estimated to be completed over three consecutive years. Traffic will continue to use the existing bridge in years one and two. For the third year, traffic would be switched to the new bridge as the old structure is deconstructed. Construction would occur year- round, generally on weekdays, with in channel and over water work occurring in the low flow summer months. Construction related Best Management Practices will avoid or minimize environmental impacts associated with the Project to the extent feasible.

Due to the historical significance of the existing bridge, its removal and replacement would cause a significant environmental impact to a cultural resource. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for this Project. The County is the Lead Agency for the Project under CEQA because it has regulatory authority over the Project, which is a County asset.

A Draft EIR was publicly noticed in April 2022 with the required 45-day comment period ending on May 18, 2022. A public hearing to take comments on the Draft EIR was held on May 17, 2022. Comments were received from a variety of stakeholders and interested persons.

All comments received were evaluated and addressed by providing additional explanation in the Response to Comments, revising the narrative in the Draft EIR, and clarifying or amplifying the proposed mitigation measures. Comments and questions received were determined to not raise any significant new information requiring major substantive revisions or new analyses in the Draft EIR, thus recirculation was not required.

A Final EIR has been prepared with a complete set of Responses to Comments and otherwise in accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the implementing provisions under the Sonoma County Code. The Final EIR concludes that, with one exception, all the Project's impacts on the environment are either less than significant or can be mitigated to less than significant levels. The one impact that is significant and which cannot be mitigated is the impact to a cultural resource due to the loss (demolition) of the existing bridge, which is a designated historic landmark and recognized cultural resource.

Materials required to approve the Project, including formal findings and a draft Statement of Overriding

Considerations, are being prepared. In addition, legally-required tribal consultation related to the Project remains underway and, while close to being complete, must conclude prior to the Board taking final action on the Project.

An item is scheduled for August 30, 2022, for all final Project materials to be approved by your Board.

Failure to progress the Final EIR toward certification on August 30, 2022, would delay the Project and jeopardize project funding. The Project is financed in part by the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and is subject to funding deadlines which already have had to be extended in the past. The County has committed with Caltrans to reaching certain project delivery milestones to avoid further delay, and certification of the Final EIR is prerequisite to those achieving those milestones.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Resilient Infrastructure

Goal: Goal 3: Continue to invest in critical road, bridge, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Objective: Objective 4: Identify and retrofit bridges in County that are at high risk for damage during earthquakes.

Prior Board Actions:

May 17, 2022- Board conducted public hearing on Draft EIR for Bohemian Highway Bridge Replacement Project

December 7, 2021 - Board Action to Take Original Jurisdiction Over the Bohemian Highway Bridge Replacement Project Environmental Impact Report

October 24, 2017- Board action to approve design services contract to Biggs Cardosa

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this Board Item. The project is currently in the preliminary engineering/design phase under a contract approved by this Board on October 24, 2017. Prior to commencement of the construction phase, Transportation and Public Works staff will return to the Board for approval of construction and construction management contracts.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Final Environmental Impact Report, Appendix A, Response to Comments

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:
Board Presentation