



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 21, 2022
TO: Public Safety Committee
FROM: Tony Olmos, P.E., Director of Public Works *TO.*
SUBJECT: Colorado Street Bridge Barrier Enhancements – Project Update

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Public Safety Committee review this report and provide feedback in developing an effective and aesthetically compatible barrier design.

BACKGROUND:

The following is a summary of all significant actions taken to date to mitigate suicide attempts on the Colorado Street Bridge.

Given a significant increase in the number of incidents, in June 2017, a 10-foot tall chain-link fence was installed at each of the alcoves of the Colorado Bridge as a temporary deterrent. On September 2, 2018, after a 13-hour incident where first responders successfully persuaded an individual to come down from the bridge ledge, City Manager issued an emergency purchase order for the installation of a temporary 10-foot chain-link fence spanning the entire length of the bridge.

In August 2017, a project Task Force was formed by the Director of Public Works to evaluate possible mitigation measures and make recommendations to City Council. The Task Force met regularly and held two community meetings to solicit ideas and public feedback in forming their recommended measures. In April 2018, mitigation measure alternatives were presented to Public Safety Committee (PSC) and City Council. City Council approved the Task Force's recommendations, identifying a vertical barrier to be the most effective measure and directing staff to develop a design. Subsequently, this capital improvement project was created and initially funded by City Council in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

DESIGN PROCESS

In 2019, vertical barrier concepts for the Colorado Street Bridge were developed by the City's consultant, Donald MacDonald Architects, and reviewed for general conformance to the Secretary of Interior Standards. These concepts were developed through a public outreach process that included input from Pasadena Heritage and the project's Task Force members over the course of several meetings held between August and November of 2019. On November 19 and 26, 2019, these concepts were presented to the Historic Preservation Commission and Design Commission, respectively, for advisory review and comments.

On February 3, 2020, staff presented vertical barrier design concepts that received the most public support to PSC for review and input. In line with both commissions' feedback, PSC requested that staff construct full-scale mock-ups of the preferred designs for better visualization and evaluation by the public before a specific design concept could be chosen.

On March 3, 2021, pursuant to PSC's request, Public Works completed the fabrication and erected full-scale mock-up panels of three barrier design concepts on the Colorado Street Bridge. Upon installation of the mock-up panels, a virtual open house meeting was held on March 25, 2021 to present them to the community and solicit public opinion via an online survey. The survey was published on the City's project website from March 4, 2021 to May 31, 2021 and recorded 2,268 public responses. Also, in April and May 2021, Public Works staff met with Pasadena Heritage and returned to the City's Historic Preservation and Design commissions for their advisory review and comments.

On August 18, 2021, staff presented to PSC the public survey findings and feedback received from the community and asked for a recommendation on a preferred concept design to present to City Council for their approval. The refined design options presented to PSC were based on the recommendations and comments received from Pasadena Heritage, Historic Preservation and Design commissions, as well as first responders from the City's Police and Fire departments. Alternative design options in addition to those erected on the Bridge were also considered by the project's task force, but were not deemed viable due to various reasons including effectiveness, aesthetics, and required maintenance.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

PSC did not make a formal recommendation to City Council at the August 18th meeting, instructing staff to further explore additional barrier design solutions by engaging the expertise of local professionals and continuing the public outreach process.

On November 8, 2021, City staff met with Pasadena Heritage to begin discussions on potential next steps for the development of new design concepts. As a result of the meeting, Pasadena Heritage engaged with the Southern California chapter of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art (ICAA) to gather input from several local architects and develop possible design solutions.

Beginning in December 2021, Pasadena Heritage hosted three workshops with City staff and members of ICAA. As a result of the workshops, possible design solutions were presented and discussed. Proposed concept designs were further refined and discussed at each of the subsequent meetings. At the most recent meeting on July 21, 2022, four new preliminary concept designs were presented by ICAA members to Pasadena Heritage and City staff.

At the meeting, it was agreed that as next steps, the City should return to the public to solicit ideas and hire a consultant to host design charrette(s) with the public and evaluate various preliminary concepts developed by ICAA. The design consultant will then further develop and engineer the preferred barrier design option(s).

NEXT STEPS:

Community Outreach & Design Charrettes	November 2022 – May 2023
Award Design Consulting Contract	December 2022/January 2023
Develop Barrier Design Concepts	January – June 2023
Historic Preservation Commission	July 2023
Design Commission	August 2023
Public Safety Committee	September 2023

Given the feedback received from PSC from this meeting, staff will establish a citywide public outreach plan for the development of new design concepts for an effective vertical barrier. Starting this November, Public Works will re-engage with the community via in-person workshops to share ICAA’s preliminary concepts and solicit feedback along with additional design ideas for further exploration. Also, a project website is established with a project-specific email account to continuously share concepts with the community and receive community input through the development process of the concepts.

Staff is also in the process of procuring a new design consulting team to work alongside staff and the community stakeholders to evaluate suggested design ideas and engineer refined barrier design options taking into consideration structural feasibility and aesthetic compatibility of the concepts with the overall bridge structure.

Once new design concepts are completed, staff will informally provide a copy to PSC to seek preliminary feedback. An on-line survey and community meetings will help gather citywide public opinion on the design concepts. Based on the input received from the community, staff will then return to Historic Preservation Commission and the Design Commission for their feedback before returning to PSC to present new and refined barrier design concepts and renderings.

FISCAL IMPACT:


City Council initially appropriated \$1,050,000 to the *Colorado Street Bridge Barrier Enhancements* (73324) CIP project which has been expended for the following:

- Temporary 10-foot tall chain-link fence installation and maintenance
- Mock-up panel design and installation
- Preliminary environmental assessment and conceptual design, including public outreach

In FY 2022, Council appropriated an additional \$2 million of ARPA funds to the project for future phases of the project.

The project is currently not at a stage where estimated fiscal impact can be ascertained, as the project is still in the conceptual design phase. Once a preferred barrier concept is approved by City Council, staff will develop the design and corresponding project cost estimate.

Respectfully submitted:



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