



Agenda Item No. 9g.

Staff Report

Date: January 13, 2022

To: Mayor Robbins and Council Members

From: Richard Simonitch, Public Works Director

Subject: Appropriate \$160,000 for the previously approved Contract Amendment for Quincy Engineering to perform consulting services for the Winship Avenue Bridge Replacement Project

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Town Council appropriate \$160,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Drainage Fund to fund a previously approved contract amendment with Quincy Engineering for additional costs associated with tasks related to the completion of National Environmental Policy Act compliance and Right of Way acquisitions for the Winship Bridge replacement project.

Background and Discussion

The existing Winship Avenue bridge is a two-span earth filled reinforced concrete arch structure constructed approximately 100 years ago. The generally poor structural condition, and primarily the narrow lane width is cause for it to be eligible for replacement using federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP) funding. The difficulty in effectively modifying or repairing/rehabilitating an earth filled arch bridge, the overall condition of this aging structure, and the fact that the double-arch configuration of the bridge contributes significantly to the hydraulic deficiencies of the San Anselmo/Corte Madera Creek in this vicinity necessitated a complete replacement of the existing structure with a more hydraulically efficient and structurally sound single-span bridge.

The Winship Bridge Replacement Project (the Project) will completely replace the existing bridge with a new structure designed to ensure consistency with current roadway and sidewalk design standards and improve conveyance capacity within San Anselmo Creek by eliminating the arches and center bridge pier in the waterway widening the opening by approximately 6 feet and raising the elevation of the bridge deck approximately 4 feet. A single span, cast-in-place or precast concrete slab type bridge is proposed, which would also provide for a travel way width of 20 feet and a 4.5-foot walkway on the north side.

Except for costs associated with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, the entire project, including design and construction, is currently programmed to be 88.53% funded by the HBP, with the remaining 11.47% local match funded by federal toll credits. The CEQA compliance costs were 100% funded by Marin County Flood Control Zone 9 funds through a reimbursement agreement. The total cost of the Project is estimated to be \$4.8 million.

After receiving notification that the project had been approved for several cycles of funding under the HBP, the Town of Ross adopted Resolution 1846 on February 13, 2014 awarding a Professional Design Engineering Contract to Quincy Engineering for engineering services for the Winship Bridge Replacement Project. The Project is currently in the preliminary engineering phase. CEQA was certified in the Fall of 2020 with the adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) certification is approximately 90% completed. Under the HBP guidelines, NEPA must be completed before the project can proceed to right of way (ROW) acquisitions and then final engineering. Assuming funding is available, NEPA certification should be completed by Summer of 2022. The project should then be ready for bid by 2023 and construction completed in 2024.

On October 14, 2021 the Town Council authorized the Town Manager to execute a contract amendment with Quincy Engineering for additional costs associated with tasks related to the completion of NEPA and ROW acquisition tasks for the Project. At that meeting staff informed the Town Council that the HBP would provide the required funding for the additional work that would be performed by Quincy Engineering.

On November 8, 2021 the Town was notified by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that the \$160,000 in promised HBP funding programmed for FY 21/22 would be delayed until FY 23/24, citing "NEPA was not yet clear". Due to the delay in funding, the Town Manager did not execute the previously approved contract amendment with Quincy Engineering.

Over the past month, Town staff has consulted with staff from the County of Marin and Caltrans to identify options for funding the necessary NEPA and ROW that will be performed by Quincy Engineering. There is strong consensus amongst these experienced local and state transportation staff that the Winship Bridge Replacement Project will be more competitive for state and federal infrastructure funding such as the HBP or the recently approved infrastructure funding bill advanced by the Biden administration if the NEPA and ROW are completed in 2022.

Under the HBP program and as restated by the HBP local assistance program administrators, based on a prioritized list of projects, it is very likely that the Town would receive reimbursement for the expenditures when the funding becomes available in FY 23/24. However, until NEPA is completed the Project remains a very-low funding priority and other projects which have completed NEPA will receive priority over the Winship Bridge project. Because NEPA has not been completed, the HBP has obligated the limited funding that was available for FY 21/22 to other higher priority projects.

Because of the need to 1) complete NEPA to increase competitiveness for future HBP and other federal infrastructure funding, and 2) to complete ROW to be allowed to commence with final engineering, staff recommends that the Town Council appropriate \$160,000 in funding from the FY 21/22 Drainage Fund to pay for tasks related to the previously approved Quincy Engineering contract amendment. The \$160,000 will be funded by the drainage fund until the invoices can be reimbursed by the HBP, currently scheduled for FY 23/24. Once NEPA and ROW are completed, staff will commence with HBP funding applications to secure adequate funding for final engineering and construction.

Fiscal, resource and timeline impacts

The amendment to the Quincy Engineering contract is \$122,000 which will increase the total contract from \$734,946 to \$856,946. To date, the Town has been reimbursed \$655,700 from the HBP and bridge toll credits, and \$54,459 from Marin County Flood Zone 9 totaling \$710,159 for Quincy invoices. With the amendment, the remaining amount of the Quincy Engineering contract is \$146,787. It is staff's recommendation for the Town to use funding available in the Town's Drainage Fund to cover the shortfall until the Town can be reimbursed by future cycles of HBP funding. The FY 23/24 HBP currently identifies \$100,000 for the Town's NEPA related costs and \$60,000 for the ROW costs which will cover the Town's \$160,000 advance from its Drainage Fund and provides \$13,213 available if needed for unforeseen changes in project scope.

The current contract amendment will allow for the completion of NEPA and ROW tasks, making the project a higher priority to receive future HBP funding for final engineering and construction. With the current contract amendment, NEPA is expected to be completed by March 2022 and ROW by September 2022.

Alternative actions

The Town Council could direct the Town Manager to delay execution of the previously approved Quincy Engineering contract amendment until the HBP funding is formally obligated by Caltrans. However, it is important to note that such a delay will likely affect the Town's ability to obtain further HBP or other Federal infrastructure funding as it becomes available.

Attachments

None