



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 9/27/2022

File #: 22-1193

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Adoption of Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Review the attached Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (“Final EIR/EA”) for the Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project;
2. Adopt Resolution No. _____ [Attachment 5] A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt which takes the following actions:
 - a. Certifying that the EIR/EA for the Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and setting forth findings of fact and evidence to support this action;
 - b. Certifying that the Final EIR/EA was presented to the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Supervisors has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR/EA before approving the project;
 - c. Certifying that the Final EIR/EA reflects the county’s independent judgment and analysis;
 - d. Adopting the Statement of Overriding Considerations; and
 - e. Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.
3. Direct Public Works to file a Notice of Determination with the Humboldt County Clerk-Recorder’s Office and Office of Planning and Research within five (5) working days of project approval.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Federal Highway Bridge Program; California Transportation Commission (Proposition 1B)

DISCUSSION:

The Humboldt County Public Works Department (“Public Works”) proposes to replace the Honeydew Bridge on Mattole Road over the Mattole River. Humboldt County is the lead agency responsible for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and the California Department

of Transportation (“Caltrans”) is the lead agency responsible for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) on behalf of the Federal Highways Administration.

The Honeydew Bridge is located along Mattole Road, which is a two-lane road extending from Highway 101 near Weott and Avenue of the Giants through the communities of Bull Creek, Honeydew, and Petrolia along the coast. The bridge was built in 1920 and serves as a critically important regional road crossing over the Mattole River for the southwest portion of Humboldt County. The purpose of the project is to provide a bridge that meets modern highway design standards, accommodates local and regional transportation needs, and provides an increased level of public safety for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The existing bridge is considered structurally deficient and is near the end of its service life. The existing bridge consists of only one (1) travel lane, lacks a standard shoulder width, does not provide safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists, and does not comply with modern geometric and seismic standards. In addition, the existing bridge cannot accommodate large loads and emergency response equipment due to its limited lane width, low overhead truss height, and structural limitations for weight loading.

The Honeydew Bridge was built in 1920 and has a camelback truss design, which makes it representative of a rare and unique bridge type. The bridge was determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources. Based on this eligibility for listing, the bridge is considered a historical resource under CEQA and impacts to a historical resource are considered a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) was required for compliance with CEQA.

Public Works and Caltrans prepared a joint environmental document in the form of an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (“EIR/EA”). The Draft EIR/EA was circulated for public review from Oct. 29, 2021, to Dec. 13, 2021. No comments were received during the review period. The Final EIR/EA along with appendices and a list of technical studies are provided in Attachments 1 through 4.

Public Works recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the resolution provided in Attachment 5 to adopt the Final EIR/EA. This resolution adopts the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program which is provided in Attachment 6. Public Works also recommends that the Board direct the filing of the Notice of Determination provided in Attachment 7.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost for the Preliminary Engineering phase, which includes environmental studies and documents, was funded by the Federal Highway Administration’s Highway Bridge Program. Subsequent funding for the remaining phases; Final Engineering, Right-of-way, and Construction, will be provided by the Highway Bridge Program. The 11.5% non-federal match for construction costs will be funded by the California Transportation Commission through the Local Bridge Seismic Retrofit Account (Proposition 1B funding). The project costs are included in the fiscal year 2022-2023 Road Fund Budget. Therefore, the proposed action will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by providing for and maintaining infrastructure .

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Caltrans, Federal Highways Administration, California Transportation Commission, State Historic Preservation Office, and several regulatory and permitting agencies.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Board could defer action. This alternative is not recommended because delay could result in delayed funding for the subsequent phases of the Project.
2. The Board could decide not to approve the Final EIR/EA for the Project. This alternative is not recommended because the existing bridge is near the end of its service life, currently has load limitations, and is considered structurally deficient. Furthermore, all funding received and spent to date would need to be returned.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Final EIR/EA (no appendices)
2. Final EIR/EA Appendix A - Section (4f) Evaluation
3. Final EIR/EA Appendices B-G
4. List of technical studies completed for compliance with CEQA and NEPA
5. Resolution No. _____. A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt Findings that the County of Humboldt has Complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Certifying the EIR, Adopting a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Project No. 594055.
6. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
7. Notice of Determination

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-22 (Resolution 97-56)

Meeting of: May 6, 1997

File No.: N/A