



Memorandum

TO: MAYOR LICCARDO
SUBJECT: BUDGET DOCUMENT

FROM: Councilmember Donald Rocha
DATE: May 25, 2016

Approved Don Rocha PH Date 5-25-16

RECOMMENDATION

That the following recommendation be enacted.

Proposal

Program/Project Title: Blossom Hill Sound Wall

Amount of City Funding Required: \$825,100

Fund Type (i.e. General Fund, C&C funds, etc.): General Fund

This change is:

One-time Ongoing

Proposal Description, including anticipated outcomes (describe how change would affect services for San José residents, businesses, community groups, etc.):

This proposal would replace the existing sound wall that runs along the north side of Blossom Hill Road between Henessy Place and the Driftwood Arms Apartments with a new 8 foot tall sound wall. The existing wall separates Blossom Hill Rd. from the backyards of single family residences and ranges between five and six feet tall. A group of residents whose backyards are bordered by this sound wall have reached out to me over the past year to express their desire for a taller wall. This desire is driven by two concerns: public safety and noise.

Residents are concerned about safety because it is fairly easy to hop over the existing 5 foot wall. Some residents have had the experience of finding a stranger in their backyard who has come over the wall from Blossom Hill. Residents also report that they sometimes find people sitting on top of the wall while waiting at a nearby bus stop. These experiences give rise to concerns about the safety and security of residents' property, and in particular the safety of small children who may play in backyards. An 8 foot would be more difficult to scale, and would thus provide more security.

Residents are also concerned about the noise from Blossom Hill Rd. Blossom Hill is a six lane road that carries a large volume of traffic every day. The existing wall appears to have been built in the early 1970's when the housing tract was established. Residents who have lived in the neighborhood

a long time indicate that both the amount of traffic and the number of lanes on Blossom Hill has increased over the decades, and that the original wall is no longer adequate to attenuate the noise from what is today a very busy street. Increasing the height of the wall to 8 feet will help reduce noise levels for residents, thus advancing the City's goal to "minimize the impact of noise on people through noise reduction and suppression techniques," as stated on page 3-39 of the 2040 General Plan.

While it is not common for the City to pursue this kind of sound wall project, there is precedent for it. The residents have conducted impressive research on this matter, and have turned up an example of a City sound wall project that was completed a number of years ago in their very neighborhood. (It was located on Meridian Ave. just about five minutes away from their section of Blossom Hill.) I've attached the staff memo which described that project and recommended approval of the construction contract. The Council approved the project and the resulting wall is still serving the community today.

I would like to close by emphasizing that this project has been researched, organized and championed by the residents themselves. They have put serious effort into figuring out how they can work with the City to solve the safety and noise problems they currently face. As always, I believe we should honor the hard work of those who wish to make their neighborhood a better place. It is my hope that we can partner with this neighborhood and support this project.

Funding Source

Essential Services Reserve (\$2 million)

Other (Program/Project/Fund): Cultural Facilities Capital Maintenance Reserve

Department or Organization: Department of Transportation/Public Works

Department or Organization Contact (list contact information for the individual that certified cost estimates contained within your recommendation):

Name: Kevin O'Connor

Phone number: 535-3845

E-mail address: Kevin.Oconnor@sanjoseca.gov

Attachment A

SUBJECT: MERIDIAN AVENUE SOUNDWALL PROJECT

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 9

RECOMMENDATION

Report on bids and award of contract for the Meridian Avenue Soundwall Project, a sound barrier from Portobello Drive to Route 85, to the low bidder, and approval of a ten percent contingency. CEQA: Exempt.

BACKGROUND

This project was initiated by the City Council on the basis of residents' requests for a sound barrier to mitigate excessive traffic noise along the east side of Meridian Avenue from Portobello Drive to Route 85.

The City's General Plan Noise Policy sets the basic criteria for the installation of sound barriers. To conform to the criteria set forth in the policy, the City hired an acoustical consultant to conduct a noise impact and mitigation study in the subject neighborhood. This study determined that the current backyard noise level exceeds the City's planning standards and that the existing wood fence should be replaced with an eight-foot high precast concrete soundwall that will provide the required noise attenuation. Also, the Council Policy for the installation of sound barriers requires the soundwall to be constructed on private property and be maintained by the property owner after construction.

This project will construct approximately 1,080 linear feet of eight-foot high, four-inch thick reinforced concrete wall. It will consist of prefabricated concrete columns and panels, which will be designed, manufactured, and installed in accordance with current industry standards. The soundwall surface feature will be lap board design with wood grain texture. This surface feature was recommended by the property owners and approved by the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement.

The existing trees in conflict with the soundwall installation in the City right-of-way will be removed, and new trees and an irrigation system will be installed by the City's Department of Transportation upon completion of the project.

This project was originally bid on March 29, 2001. The City Council rejected all bids and authorized re-advertisement of the project at its Council meeting on May 1, 2001. The sole bid was rejected because it was 58 percent above the Engineer's Estimate and could not be substantiated as a competitive bid. The project specifications have been modified to encourage competition by enabling a wider range of contractors to submit bids.

ANALYSIS

A supplemental memorandum will be forthcoming after bid opening on May 31, 2001.

Council approval is requested for a ten percent contingency to address unforeseen conditions that may arise during construction.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

During the project design development and the right-of-entry certificates acquisition, staff has informed all the effected property owners the scope of work and project schedule.

This project was listed on the City's Internet Bid Line and advertised in the *San José Mercury News* and *San José Post Record*. Bid packages for all public works construction projects are routinely provided to a standard list of various contractor organizations, builder's exchanges and disadvantaged business organizations, including United Minority Business Enterprises and the San José Minority Business Development Center.

COORDINATION

This project has been coordinated with the Offices of the City Attorney, Risk Manager and Equality Assurance, and the Departments of Transportation and Planning, Building and Code Enforcement.

COST IMPLICATIONS

1. COST OF RECOMMENDATION: **Engineer's Estimate: \$170,000**

2. COST OF PROJECT:

Construction	\$170,000
Design & Construction Management	45,000*
Contingency	<u>17,000</u>
TOTAL	\$232,000**

* The Design & Construction Management cost includes the cost to design and coordinate landscape work that will be installed by the Department of Transportation after the soundwall has been constructed.

3. SOURCE OF FUNDING: 001 – General Fund
465 – Construction Excise Tax Fund

4. ESTIMATED START DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: September, 2001

5. ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: December, 2001

BUDGET REFERENCE

Fund: 001
APPN: 4478
R.C.: 106783
Amount: \$193,000
Budget Document: 2000-2001 Appropriation Ordinance 26141, Section 2.26, Item z17.7

Fund: 465
APPN: 4307
R.C.: TBD
Amount: \$375,000
Budget Document: Adopted 2000-01 CIP, Page 724, Item 62

NONDISCRIMINATION

The City of San José Nondiscrimination Requirements are included in this project as required by Chapter 4.08 of the San José Municipal Code.