



**City of Santa Barbara**  
**Historic Landmarks Commission**  
*Staff Report*

**MEETING DATE:** December 2, 2015

**TO:** Historic Landmarks Commission Members

**FROM:** Jessica W. Grant, Project Planner and  
Andrew Grubb, Project Engineer, Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:** Montecito-Yanonali Street Bridge Replacement and Pedestrian  
Improvements Project: Historic Structures/Sites Report

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) review the Historic Structures/Sites Report (Report) for the Montecito-Yanonali Street Bridge Replacement and Pedestrian Improvements Project (Project).

**BACKGROUND:**

The Project's concept was developed over the past 10 years in the City's Capital Improvement Program and was affirmed through an extensive community outreach process, cumulating in the Eastside Neighborhood Transportation Management Plan (Eastside NTMP), adopted by Council in July 2013. The Project was considered one of the top long-term capital infrastructure needed to enhance the walking and biking experience, safety, and lighting of the corridor.

Since approval of the Eastside NTMP, City Public Works staff applied for a new grant source last year under the Active Transportation Program (ATP) for design, environmental review, and construction of the Project. The purpose of the ATP Program is to increase the proportion of trips accomplished by walking, increase the safety of non-motorized users, achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals, enhance public health, and benefit disadvantaged (minority and low-income) communities. On September 27, 2014, the City was awarded \$3,442,000 in ATP funds for the Project. Council also approved \$433,000 towards the realization of this Project.

Effective December 10, 2014, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) gave Caltrans approval to distribute the ATP funds, allowing the City to proceed with reimbursable work on the Project's Approval and Environmental Document phase. As part of the grant requirements, ATP funds must be appropriated within two years from CTC approval, with no more than a one-year extension for each phase. The Project is currently scheduled to begin construction in April 2017.

The City has retained Drake Haglan & Associates for design of the Project. The Project falls outside of the City's designated historic districts, and therefore the design is being reviewed by

the Architectural Board of Review (ABR). The Project was last reviewed at ABR on July 6, 2015 and continued with comments.

Drake Haglan & Associates hired Applied Earthworks as a subconsultant to research and draft a Report for the Project. The Report has been reviewed internally by City Planning Staff and is now being submitted to HLC for review.

Additional public information will be disseminated throughout the Project in a timely manner. Residents in the vicinity of the Project will be notified of the HLC meeting. In addition, information will be available on the Public Works Department, Engineering Division's Major Projects Map: ([santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/pw/engineering/major\\_projects.asp](http://santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/pw/engineering/major_projects.asp)).

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Project is located in the Eastside neighborhood, which is a low-to-moderate income neighborhood. Many families in this neighborhood depend on alternative transportation to get to school and work. The existing Montecito-Yanonali Street Culvert (Culvert) spanning Sycamore Creek is very difficult to navigate for pedestrians, who currently must walk on a sub-standard vehicle travel lane to cross the Culvert. There is a blind corner feeding into the Culvert, and drivers do not have adequate visibility of pedestrians until the drivers reach the Culvert. The Culvert is shaded by large Sycamore trees in the creek, making objects on the Culvert difficult to see when approaching from the sunny west side. The Metropolitan Transit District's (MTD) Line 2 crosses the Culvert every 15 minutes on the side desired for the sidewalk, for a total of 65 times a day.

## **CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Project is located in the Eastside neighborhood, which has one of the highest concentrations of pedestrian activity and bicycle commuters in the City. The Project boundary is along Montecito Street, beginning at Montecito Place and continuing over the Bridge through the Five Points roundabout, and then heading south along Salinas Street, where there will be new sidewalk installed between Mason and Clifton Streets.

The Project's constraints include:

- Sycamore Creek: The proposed Bridge abutments need to accommodate Sycamore Creek's Flood Capacity Master Plan, which has a target flow capacity of 3,000 cubic feet per second.
- Right of Way: The Project must be designed within City right of way. There is a fair amount of unpermitted public encroachments within the City's right of way along Salinas Street that will need to be removed. The proposed Bridge is also located just south of the Five Points roundabout, and just north of the intersection of Montecito and Yanonali Streets. The project will need to address design speed, visibility, and intersection safety.

There are also adjacent residential driveways that the improvements will need to conform to.

- Utilities: The Project must avoid/minimize impacts to high voltage overhead electric transmission lines, a large diameter sewer line, and drainage inlets.
- Large sycamore tree: The Project must protect this 5' 8" diameter tree in place.

The Culvert was constructed in 1923 with ashlar cut sandstone. Based on an archive City as-built drawing of the structure, the culvert was designed by civil engineer Leland Ross Walker during his first year of employment with the City of Santa Barbara. No significant biographical information was located for Walker.

Sometime prior to 1963, the masonry parapets were removed and replaced with an iron pipe railing. The removal diminishes the culvert's ability to convey its original architectural detailing. Further, the architectural detailing of the sandstone culvert is not readily visible to the public. The Culvert is also not currently on the City's Potential Historic Resources List, designated a Structure of Merit or City Landmark.

Although the Report suggests that the Culvert is eligible to be listed as a City Structure of Merit, the Report also finds that the Montecito-Yanonali Street Culvert does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Prior to the selection of the current project design, four alternatives were considered. The alternatives included a no-build option, rehabilitation and widening of the culvert, constructing a separate pedestrian structure, and bridge replacement. A description of each alternative is provided in the Report.

Bridge replacement was the last alternative investigated for this project. This alternative improves safety for all modes of transportation, does not require any property acquisitions, meets FEMA requirements, and improves the aesthetics and safety of the bridge rails. Therefore, this alternative was chosen as the most prudent proposed Project to complete a critical missing link to this Safe Route to School.

The Project incorporated the City's Master Environmental Assessment - Guidelines for Archaeological Resources and Historic Structures and Sites. Measures 1-6 were not feasible for this Project. However, the Project proposes the following measures 7, 10, 11, and 12 to minimize the potential project impacts:

1. Recordation according to the Community Development Department's "Required Documentation Prior to Demolition" standards.

2. Commemoration of the demolished culvert with an enclosed display of text and photographs designed by a city-approved historical consultant on the easterly end of the bridge structure.
3. The salvage of significant materials (sandstone) for conservation to be incorporated into the new bridge structure. Salvage of significant materials shall be accomplished using an approved Physical Conservation Program.

A Physical Conservation Program Report will be written by the Historian performing/or supervising the physical conservation work. The Physical Conservation Program will contain the following steps:

A. Proposals

A proposal for a Physical Conservation Program, including work plan and discussion of techniques for physical conservation, will be submitted for approval. The proposal will be forwarded to the HLC for its review and approval. Fieldwork will not begin until approval is obtained.

B. Physical Conservation

Physical conservation is directed at salvaging significant materials from a historic structure/site prior to its damage or destruction. Large format photographs and measured architectural drawings will be prepared to provide a permanent record of structures/sites subject to project effects (consistent with mitigation measure 1 above).

C. Disposition

Physical materials conserved from a demolished historic structure or site will be adaptively reused in public view on the project site.

To further enhance recognition of the rare masonry bridge type and its historical significance to the public, HLC may want to consider the recommendations of the Historic consultant to nominate the Rattlesnake Canyon Bridge as a City Landmark and for listing on the NRHP, ensuring its preservation into the future, as additional mitigation for the loss of the Montecito-Yanonali Street Culvert. Nominating the Rattlesnake Canyon Bridge will increase public awareness and appreciation of the rarity of the architectural type for future generations and enhance the history of masonry architecture in the city of Santa Barbara.

Attachment:

- Thirteen (13) copies of Historic Structures/Sites Report

cc: Desi Alvarez, P.E., Interim City Engineer  
Browning Allen, Transportation Manager  
John Ewasiuk, Principal Civil Engineer  
Ashleigh Shue, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Nicole Hernandez, Urban Historian  
Steve Greer, Environmental Analyst, Community Development Department

