Summary of Questions and Answers Exchanged During and Since the Workshop of May 29, 2016, for Replacement of Meadow Way Bridge

Q1: Can the existing bridge be rehabilitated instead of replaced?

A1: A preliminary rehabilitation study for bridge's rehabilitation concluded such action would be an expensive exercise in keeping up a bridge that would be fully enclosed by another structural frame and support system, resulting in a structure afterwards that would not look anything like it does today. Additionally, Caltrans would not agree to further rehabilitation studies, let alone funding the construction of such measures. In the meantime, the bridge has started to cost the Town maintenance dollars and it could get worse.

Q2: What is the state of the wood planks on the existing bridge?

A2: The deterioration of the bridge's topside has been noted in Caltrans's most recent inspection (2015) without any action item for it. However, the Town has been keeping an eye on them. The deck's transverse wood planks are not really load bearing. Any deck wood removal may not mean simple repairs and could have a cascading effect. This said, in a very recent visit by the Town and its consulting team, it was decided that the Town would bring a contractor to the site to evaluate interim repairs to the deteriorated deck planks and screws sticking out of the two main wheel runners on the deck.

Q3: What fire truck can the existing bridge handle?

A3: The Fairfax fire engines weigh ranging from 15 tons to 21 tons and they have two axles. The Weight limit sign posted by Caltrans limits the 2-axle truck weight to 16 tons, which works for Fairfax Type 3 Engines (15 tons) and not the Type 1 Engine (21 tons). The fire department needs to be able to use the larger truck. The sign is a regulatory one (mandatory) for all truck traffic and self-policing. Garbage, cement and other heavy trucks have to meet both of the weight and axle requirements to avoid mishap and liability.

Q4: Can the replacement bridge have only a single lane?

A4: Caltrans has agreed to a single-lane bridge as long as its width, curb-to-curb, is a minimum of 18'. This bridge will also need another 3.5 feet for barrier railings, making the bridge a total of 21.5 feet edge-to-edge.

Q5: Can a glulam wood bridge be one of the alternates?

A5: Caltrans has agreed with glulam wood as an alternate bridge construction material.

Q6: What is the width of the Town right-of-way on Meadow Way?

A6: The Right-of-way (ROW) had been researched through review of officially filed notices of surveys, the original subdivision maps, and review of the existing survey monumentation when the site was surveyed by CIC's subconsultant. The width of 40'$\pm$ Town ROW has been verified by CIC's licensed land surveyors. This is an approximate width and varies here and there due to apparent records discrepancies. Mr. Wasserman at #6 Meadow Way handed out a records search statement from his surveyor at the recent workshop, which is being reviewed by CIC's surveyors and will be reported on. The final bridge location and its construction staging will be entirely within the Town ROW. However, temporary construction encroachment from few property owners (Horton, Thompson-Davis and Linscott) will need to be negotiated and agreed upon.

Q7: Can the residents have continued access to the creek bed?

A7: Formal access construction to the creek will not be forthcoming by the project due to ADA compliance requirements and Town liability. However, informal access to the creek, similar to what exists today, would not be hampered by the project. Roaming of wildlife around the site will also remain unhampered by the final form of the project.

Q8: What are the environmental issues and required documents for the project?

A8: Staging, Traffic, Noise, Hazardous Materials, Water Quality, Floodplain and Biological Resources are the environmental issues that studies will be conducted on. As the lead agency for CEQA, the Town would be filing for Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Deceleration. This means conducting and completing all of the various studies noted above, receiving regulatory agency approvals and permits, and providing any mitigation needed; and the project having no negative impact on the environment. Completion of the technical reports and their approvals by the agencies will also allow Caltrans, as the lead agency for NEPA, to file a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act. The project will include measures to protect any Special-Status Species of plant, fish and wildlife. As a design refinement, the riprap would be covered by two feet of earth for fish-friendly passage through the site.

Permits for Clean water Act and Fish & Wildlife Agreement would be needed by the project.

Q9: How long will the environmental process take and when will the project go to construction?

A9: The estimated time to complete the studies and acquire permits would be 18-24 months. This means completing the studies and applying for the agency permits roughly 2 years from now (by mid-2018), followed by design completion, project advertisement and bid for construction. This puts the beginning of construction in July of 2019.

Q10: What types of bridges are being considered?

A10: Bridges with primary members made from three types of materials, wood, concrete and steel, have been considered for the site. Each bridge type would have a concrete deck and crash-tested barriers and all would be single-span bridges. The concrete and wood alternates would be below-deck arch bridges. For steel, the option studies has been a Vierendeel Truss with either painted or CORTEN (rusting steel) look.

Q11: Why is a retaining wall needed?

A11: A retaining wall at the southwest bridge quadrant is needed to protect the bridge and embankment from bank erosion and foundation scour as the fast, high-stage flows negotiate the S-bend in the creek.

Q12: What wall types have been considered?

A12: Two types of walls, a conventional concrete wall and a mechanically stabilized embankment (MSE) wall, each with three different surface finishes, including a living green surface, have been considered. The non-green walls would receive surface architectural treatment for aesthetics. Each of these wall alternates may have a stepping top with 2’-3’ high steps as the wall height diminishes from the bridge toward the wall’s end. Since the time of the latest workshop, and based on some comments, a wall top that follows the finished slope behind it with short steps (8”-10” high) has been developed as well and will be in the survey sent to the residents to mark their favorite wall choices.

Q13: How long and high is this retaining wall?

A13: The wall is about 115’ long. At the last workshop, the wall height was reports to be 25 feet, which is not correct. The 25 feet height is the difference between the elevations of the bridge deck and the deepest part of the creek bed. The creek bed slopes from the middle of the creek toward the two bridge abutments. As such, it will raise the base of the abutments, the long retaining wall and the wingwalls at the other three bridge corners. This results in an approximately 16-foot maximum exposed wall height at the southwest abutment corner, diminishing to near zero at the end of the wall.

Q14: Will there be a fence on top of the wall?

A14: Cable railing has been shown for fall protection. However, this bridge, being in a residential area may require a mesh-type fence to meet the building code for protecting small children from falling through the fence openings. CIC will design a customized fence and mesh system (not a chain link fence) for this project.

Q15: Why is a temporary construction access road needed?

A15: The temporary construction access road will be needed to transport vehicles, equipment, materials and personnel to the creek bed level for construction. These include haul trucks, pile drillers, small loaders, etc. The access road would hug the creek bank slope adjacent to the Davis-Thompson home behind the future retaining wall, making its way down to the creek bed. The access road will be removed after construction and the ground regraded to a natural and stable slope behind the retaining wall.

Q16: How will the bridge construction be staged?

A16: Using the access road, the retaining wall and southern portions of the east and west bridge abutments would be built in Stage 1A. In Stage 1B, the new bridge would then be erected south of the exiting bridge while traffic continues using the latter. Then in stage 2, the traffic is diverted to the new bridge, the exiting bridge is removed and the northerly portions of the two bridge abutments and wingwalls are constructed. Then in Final Stage, the new bridge is either lifted or pushed hydraulically sideways to the middle of the Town ROW. The stages of the bridge and approach roadways construction would remain located in the Town ROW.

Q17: Will there be additional street pavement on Meadow Way?

A17: No additional permanent paved surfaces will be needed since the bridge will be in the middle of the right of way. Initially, for stage construction, the short approaches to the new bridge in the southern half of ROW will be paved for the temporary traffic (Stage 2). However, the temporary pavement will be removed after moving the bridge to the middle in the Final Stage. For this, the pavement beyond the bridge on each side of it will be transitioned to the bridge and properly delineated.

Q18: Can the empty lot over to the dirt portion of Meadow Way be considered for creek crossing up at Cascade Drive to avoid stage construction?

A18: This action will get another group of residents involved in a project that is of no benefit to them. Any other access road away from the current location would also increase the footprint of the project, present new impacts and complicate the environmental and agency permits process.

Q19: What trees will be removed and will they be marked?

A19: The environmental process and construction procedures will dictate marking the trees to be removed at the proper time in the process. The bay tree cluster at the southwest corner of the bridge will need to be removed. There is also a tree down the abutment slope on the northwest corner that will be in the way of the future bridge wingwall near the Wasserman property. (The higher tree near the road level at this location appears to be safe.) The Town ordinance for tree removal would be followed and these are not heritage trees or sensitive species, Blackberry bushes all around the bridge will be impacted. Part of project restoration mitigation would be new restoration landscaping using native and noninvasive trees and plants.

Q20: How long will the project take to build?

A20: The contractor would have approximately 3.5 month to work in the creek in any given year because of steelhead regulations. This pushes construction to two seasons for any of the bridge alternates. The contractor would have 3.5 months to work in the creek and may do few other tasks up at the roadway off-season. Since this is mainly a bridge replacement project, the first construction season will be 5-6 months long, at the most. At the end of the first season, the site will be "winterized" and everything, except sediment control and slope protection measures, would be removed from the site until the next season. There will be no equipment or materials left stored at the site off-season.

Q21: Can the project be done in one season with long workdays, weekend work and incentives to the contractor?

A21: Wood and steel bridge alternates may have an outside chance of being built in one season with overtime work 6-7 days per week, and with additional cash incentives. Caltrans may or may not approve this higher cost strategy. The CIC team will look into this further during the design process if wood or steel alternate is picked, and will report on it at the next outreach meeting.

Q22: How will dust and noise be during construction?

A22: Both are expected. However, for the benefit of all neighbors immediately adjacent to the project, CIC will put mitigation measures in the project's construction specifications for dust abatement, erection of temporary soundwalls, maximum noise decibel and limits of work hours. The construction site and surroundings will be photo- and videographed as part of pre-construction documentation of the site conditions.

Q23: What is the basis of recommendations for bridge and wall types by the consulting team?

A23: A scoring system has been implemented to compare six attributes of each bridge alternate. The six attributes are Initial cost, lifecycle cost, ease of construction, temporary site impacts, longevity and aesthetics. As a result, steel and concrete both scored 56 out of 60 and wood came in at 52. Even with tied scores, steel would provide the advantages of speed of construction and less construction impacts in the creek over concrete.

The retaining wall alternates were also compared using the same six attributes. A conventional wall and a mechanically stabilized embankment (MSE), each with a living green vs. architecturally treated surface, constituting four alternates, were compared. The conventional wall with architecturally enhanced surfaces scored the highest, 58 out of 60.

Q24: How will the residents be involved in the bridge and wall selection process?

A24: A survey (Survey Monkey) will be sent to the residents shortly, containing graphics, descriptions and other information, requesting the residents to pick the bridge type (and finish), wall type (conventional or MSE) and wall surface finish (architectural or green).

Q25: What are the next steps?

A25: New informational materials, the workshop's presentation and comment card contents will be posted on the web site and the Town will be asking for your votes through the Survey Monkey tool. The selected bridge and wall alternates will be taken to the Council for approval, the design and environmental studies will move forward, another outreach meeting will be held and ultimately the Council's approval of the final design will be sought before project advertisement, bid and construction.

Q26: Can Fairfax save money and time using a prefabricated steel superstructure?

A:26: At the community workshop, we discussed the option of a steel bridge. The concept included a prefabricated bridge. CIC worked with Excel Bridge Company, a steel bridge prefabricator, and consulted with them for the Meadow Way project. They gave us a verbal quote of approximately $130 K to deliver the typical shell of a prefabricated steel bridge to the site. The bridge will have to be delivered in 2 or more segments due the difficulty of transporting a 21' wide X 70' long bridge in one piece. It would then have to be put together, painted and erected at the site. CIC used $180 K in its cost estimate for these reasons. The steel bridge alternate in the Bridge Type Selection Report, posted on the project web site, shows this line item among 33 or so overall construction items.

The majority of the costs for the steel bridge is similar to the other options which is the construction of the concrete bulkheads to support the bridge. The overall cost of the three bridge alternates were pretty close, approx. $2,000,000, as various construction items compensate for each other among the three alternates. Please note the entire construction cost for all three options is federally funded. Steel will be faster to build because of prefabrication.

At the meeting, we also indicated we would explore the possibility of constructing the bridge in one season. The construction season in the creek is typically July to Oct. 15th. However, the entire project will not be possible to complete within a 3.5-month season, regardless of the bridge type. That being said, CIC is looking into ways to possibly stretch the construction season from April 15th to Oct. 15th with the concept of completing in one season. A one-season construction project would require the bridge to be made of steel. It appears from the on-line survey that majority of the residents prefer a concrete bridge. To complete a project in one season would most likely require a contractor to work 6 days a week and longer days, which would require the payment of overtime. We also agreed to discuss with Caltrans the concept of receiving funding to cover the additional costs associated with completing the project in one season, if possible.

Q27: Why is the bridge being recommended to be moved from its current location to the middle of the right-of-way (ROW)?

A27: We are recommending the new bridge be located in the middle of the ROW for four (4) primary reasons:

1) The primary reason for locating the bridge in the middle of the ROW (i.e. road) is to avoid having to move the bridge later due to potential discrepancies in ROW. We recognize there are discrepancies in the width of Meadow Way (refer to recorded surveys) at various locations along the road. By placing the new bridge in the middle of the ROW it ensures the bridge is not impacted by any discrepancies since it is wholly within the Town owned ROW under any scenario.
2) Locating the new bridge in the middle of the ROW seems the most fair approach as it would place the bridge equal distances from the adjacent property owners.
3) The new location actually aligns better with the existing roadway. Currently, when you turn off Meadow Way from Cascade you make a slight jog in the road to cross the bridge (see diagram on page 3 of this document)
4) Hydraulically, the location of the bridge in the middle of the road is better for the creek flows. This adjustment provides a better transition to downstream of the bridge once the flows negotiate the S-turn at the upstream approach to, and through, the bridge opening.

Q28: How was the consultant, CIC, selected?

A28: The Council authorized the issuance of a RFP for bridge design services in March 2013. The design services were for five bridges including Meadow Way. The selection process followed Caltrans (i.e., federal) guidelines. Five firms responded to the RFP. The selection panel consisting of three consulting

engineers, one Caltrans engineer, and the Town Manager interviewed the five firms. The panel recommended CIC as the firm best suited for the project. The Council awarded the contract to CIC for Meadow Way Bridge in September 2013.

Q29: What is the status of NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) and CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) processes? Who are the lead agencies and why? Who are the primary contacts?

A29: The NEPA and CEQA environmental studies have been moving in a very preliminary fashion. NEPA is needed because federal dollars are involved and the CEQA is required by state law. Caltrans and the Town conducted the Preliminary Environmental Scoping (PES) process for the bridge in 2014. The PES is a document that indicates what environmental studies/technical memorandums must be prepared for the project. The PES was approval by Caltrans in January 2015 and recently posted on the web site. Please note that little work has been done pursuant to the PES since we could not begin the various environmental studies until the bridge type, its footprint and the larger area of construction were established. However, now with over 61% of the neighbors voting for a concrete arch bridge, and over 67% for a conventional, living retaining wall, we anticipate the project will be submitted to the Town Council in fall 2016 for final concept approval. After this point, CIC and WRA (environmental subconsultant) will determine the Area of Potential Effect (APE) map, get its approval from Caltrans, and begin the environmental studies in earnest.

With regard to regulatory agency leads for NEPA and CEQA, the following applies:

- Regarding NEPA, the contact at Caltrans is Hugo Ahumada (Hugo_Ahumada@dot.ca.gov, 415-622-8790). Mr. Ahumada states the following with regard to the state agency's role in NEPA: "When federal money is used to fund local transportation proposals in California, Caltrans assumes environmental review responsibilities under NEPA pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement executed between Federal Highway Administration and Caltrans. Because the Town of Fairfax has applied for federal funding in support of the Highway Bridge Program (HBP), Caltrans will assume the lead agency role pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act."
- The lead for CEQA is the Town of Fairfax and the Town's environmental team conducts the studies and prepares reports on Town's behalf. The draft and final environmental document (ED) will be reviewed for approval by the Town's Planning Department. The PES for Meadow Way bridge requires an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). These types of projects do not require a scoping meeting. Scoping meetings are fairly common when an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), matching a far more complex project, is required. That being said, we can discuss the PES requirements at the next meeting for the project and we continue to be receptive to input provided on the project. Towards that end, we will inform the neighborhood residents via email when the draft IS/MND is available for public comments. This will be in addition to the statutory notification requirements.

In terms of an in-house environmental contact for the project, questions can be directed by email to the project manager, Nader Tamannaie (ntamannaie@califstructure.com), and, as before, any inquiry can be made through this project web site. The latter method will more easily enable several project lead persons, who would confer on the question, to see it readily. Nader will then respond back after vetting the question with responsible parties.

Q30: Why are retaining walls adjacent to the bridge needed?

A30: This topic has been covered in the Bridge Type Selection report, available online, which has been summarized below. In order to transition the bridge abutments back into the creek banks, they need to connect with site-appropriate walls at the four corners of the bridge. These wingwall/retaining walls,

along with bio-engineering methods, will help to improve creek conditions and habitat. Without these essential walls, there is great potential for more erosion, scour, undermining of the bridge abutments and their eventual failure. The height of each wall depends on how high the bridge sits above the creek bed. The length of each wall depends on how fast it can be transitioned from that height to near zero at the other end, given the site's 3-D geometry, location of the bridge, type of soil and creek flow, to name few factors.

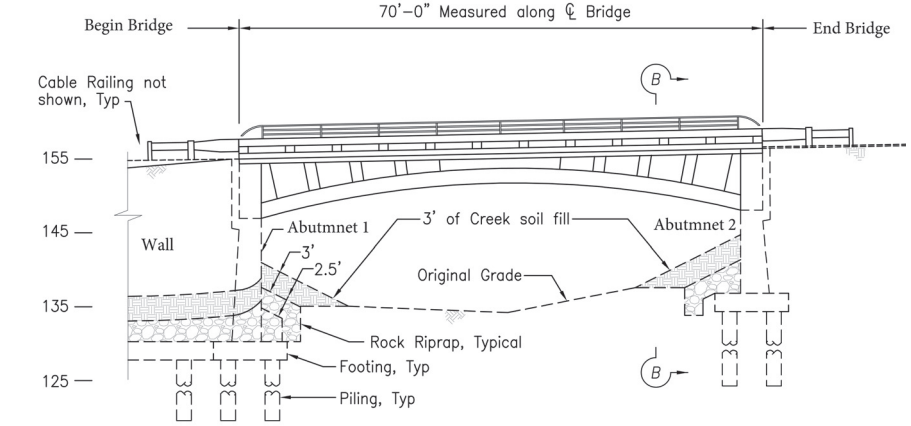
The bridge sits in the middle of an S-curve in the creek's course. Please see the diagram attached, showing plan view of the area and a couple of photos embedded. Erosion problems are already prominent at the site. The peak 100-year design flow volume and velocity for the creek are 1,310 CFS (cubic feet/second) and 4.5 FPS (feet/second), respectively. The combination of very high and very fast flows with the creek geometry creates an enormous erosive force around the bends. On the west creek bank and just upstream of the bridge, at the bottom curve on the S, the head-on flows have caused the creek bank to erode to a nearly vertical face, to the extent that only the ghost of a former timber retaining wall remains there. After colliding with this side, the flows bounce to the east bank of the creek and cause erosion just upstream of the bridge and at the abutment there. Attempts have been made to contain this erosion with a massive unreinforced concrete fortification at the belly of the east bridge abutment slope, which has been nonetheless scoured under precariously.

The longest retaining wall starts at the southwest corner of the bridge and moves upstream to contain the currently battered embankment behind it. The reworked embankment will be graded to the maximum slope possible for the natural soils at this site. The wall goes from roadway height to near zero in 113 feet so that the stabilized bank behind it does not encroach onto the creek. The wall is curved along the S-curve to guide and deflect the flows smoothly. This way, it also protects the bridge abutment by transitioning the high-stage flows that would otherwise impact it sideways and undermine it.

On the other three bridge corners, the walls have similar functions but to a lesser extent, and are shorter in length. The largest of these is a 36-foot long wall at the erosion-prone location on the east upstream bank. Erosion from the top of the bank all the way down to the creek, as well as foundation scour forces from the flows, require this wingwall from the bridge until it blends in the bank upstream of the bridge. Subsequent to its construction, the earth behind it will also be contour-graded for stability. The other two wingwalls are on the downstream side. One connects with an existing retaining wall on the east side and the other blends into the west bank, both a short distance from the bridge.

A key component of erosion and scour control is protecting the abutment and wall foundations with moderately heavy rock riprap. The bridge abutment and retaining wall foundations, sitting atop concrete piles, will be buried low enough underground to be topped with a two-foot thick course of rock riprap first, then with three feet of natural creek soil that will blend into the creek bed contours at the surface. When all are done, the creek's course through the project site will resemble a trough of natural soil, the sides of which reach up on the retaining walls and abutments (and hide portions of them) to provide for natural fish passage. This has been shown in the "Section thru the Bridge" in the graph.

The Town's consulting team has two specialized, Marin-based firms on board to address the specific challenges of this site. The two firms are experts in hydrology, creek hydraulics and geomorphology for complete management of the creek flow, erosion and foundation scour control, and habitat improvement. The creek geomorphologist will present the concept of a woody habitat for fish at the site later during design. This would be similar to what he created a few years ago at Lagunitas Road Bridge in Ross. The exposed portions of the walls will be architecturally treated for better aesthetics and will eventually be covered with plants seeded at the end of construction. In the case of Meadow Way, the walls protected with riprap underground are integral and important elements of the improvements and constitute over a quarter of the overall construction costs.



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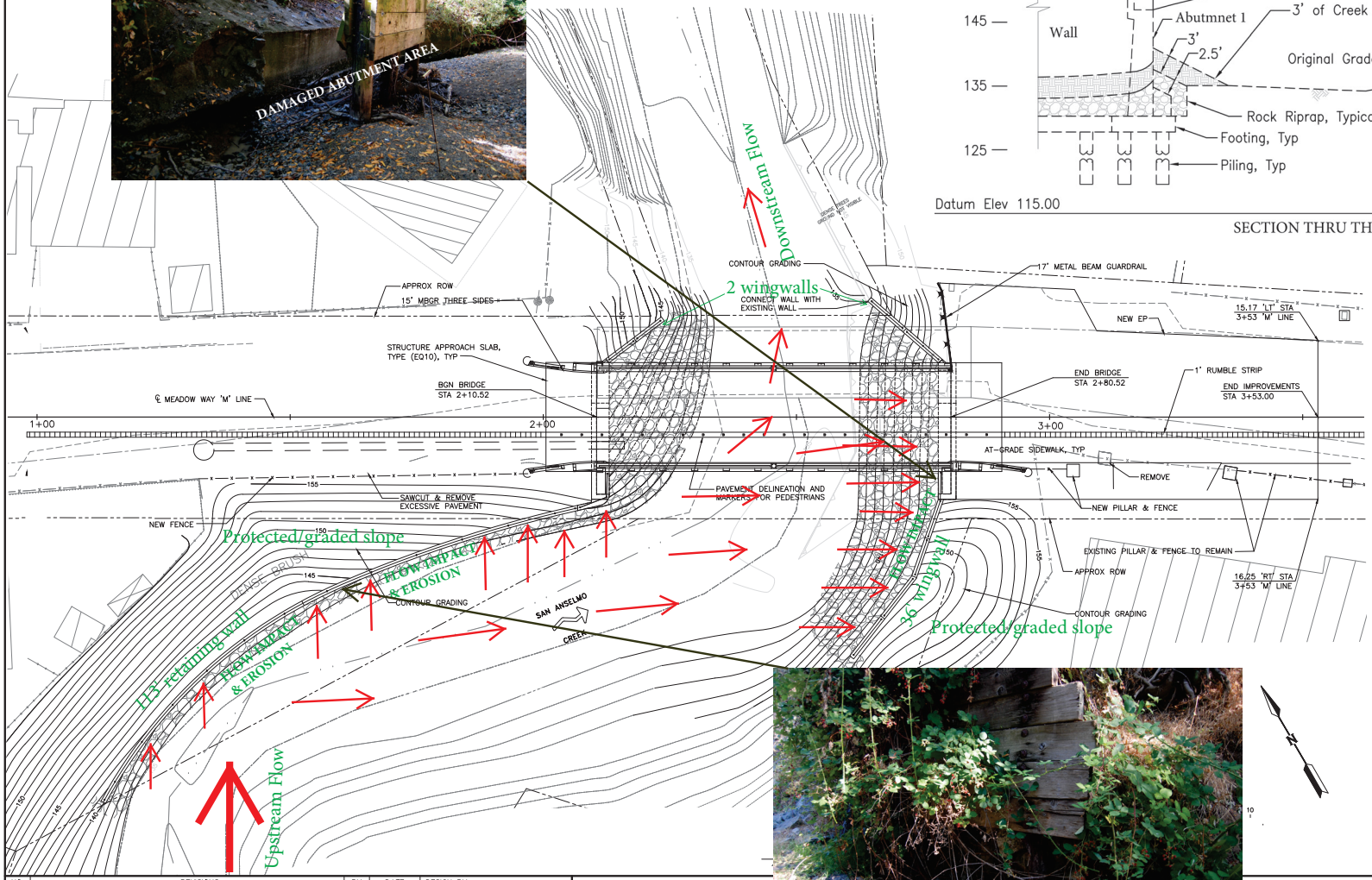

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MEADOW WAY BRIDGE

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS - FINAL STAGE

BRIDGE NO

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Q31; Why is a temporary access road to build parts of the structures in creek needed? Why can't the equipment be simply lowered onto the creek bed to avoid building the access road?

A31: Based on the preliminary project geotechnical report, the abutments and walls need to be founded on piles. The geotechnical engineer has also determined the soil below the roadway surface will be liquefiable to a depth of nearly 50 feet during a major earthquake. Therefore, the piles will need to be long enough, possibly as long as 50 feet, to penetrate the soil layers below the liquefiable zone. The design team will use a series of two-foot diameter, cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) reinforced concrete piles, installed with far less noise relative to driven piles and without the impact vibrations the latter type has.

To install these piles, build bridge falsework, fortify the existing bridge for construction machinery weights, and build portions of the concrete structures in the creek, several vehicles are needed: dump truck, drill rig, crane, concrete truck, concrete pump and a truck to contain the drilling fluids will need access. These relatively large vehicles and equipment will be impossible to operate from the top in the limited available space while vehicular and foot traffic continue on the street and bridge. It is not feasible to lower these very heavy, wheeled machines down to the creek with cranes.

A minimal access road will be needed for construction vehicles and equipment. The temporary road will be benched into the side of the bank as it descends to creek bed level. Temporarily steepened slopes for construction of this narrow road will be held back with soil nails. Ultimately, after the work in the creek is completed, the ground will be either contour graded or terraced for stability.

The design and environmental processes anticipate the need for this road and must address it in advance. That is the reason for showing the concept during the second workshop. The Town has begun to negotiate with the neighbors on whose creek property the temporary access road will be located, and has their understanding of the project. While the footprint of the access road has been investigated and shown to the neighbors for its practicality and constructability, its exact design will not be specified and left up to the contractor. If the contractor proposes a better plan to lessen the temporary footprint of the operations, the Town will be open to it. There is a process and period for contractor submittals after the contract is let, during which time such proposals will be evaluated by the Town.

Q 32: What is the status of NEPA and CEQA Studies for the project?

A 32: The project's concept was approved by the Town Council on January 18, 2017, allowing the environmental studies and preliminary design to support these studies to begin. The environmental studies for this project are similar to a number of similar bridge replacement, retrofit and repair projects currently afoot in Ross Valley Watershed with similar natural settings concerning bridges over creeks.

The environmental studies required are fully known to Caltrans and our team of environmental scientists. They have been communicated to us via the Caltrans letter dated 1/22/15 (erroneously dated 1/22/14 on its first page), with specific instructions to the Town. This letter has been posted on the project's web site previously. The studies are summarized below:

1. Equipment Staging Technical Memorandum
2. Traffic - Traffic Technical Memorandum to include:
   a. Address traffic handling during construction in regards to pedestrian, cyclist, transit, and emergency service access
   b. Briefly describe reason new bridge will remain a one lane bridge
3. Noise - Noise Technical Memorandum (construction related)
4. Air Quality - Receive email from MTC which confirms Task Force PM 2.5 finding
5. Hazardous Materials - Hazardous Materials Technical Memorandum include in specification to test and properly dispose structure creosote-soaked timber

6. Water Quality/Resources – Best Management Practices (BMPs), include in NES/BA
7. Floodplain - Location Hydraulic Study and Summary Floodplain Encroachment
8. Biological Resources - Natural Environment Study (NES) and, if needed, a Biological Assessment. NES to include:
   a. Wetlands (if needed)
   b. Tree removal/trimming information - Describe the number, size, and type of tree removed/trimmed & replaced with if any consistency with your local tree ordinance and in compliance with the "Migratory Bird Treaty Act"
   c. Construction staging and access
   d. Water Quality (BMPs)
      Note: NES/BA report must reach a conclusion about the effects on federal threatened or endangered species/habitat using U.S. Fish Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service consultations language.
9. Visual Resources - Visual Resources Technical Memorandum (tree removal) disclose the change
10. Land Use and Community Impacts Technical Memorandum to include:
    a. Public outreach & outcome/consequence information (removal of existing timber bridge)
    b. Right of way information (explain what is on the parcel, how or where will your right of entry be, how will it affect the existing land use)
11. Cultural Resources – Requirements include preparation of an Area of Potential Affects (APE) Map, Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER), and an Archaeology Survey Report.

Caltrans, as the lead agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), has required the above technical studies to support the project's qualification for a NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) as opposed to a NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) or NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for which the Town is the lead agency, some of the CEQA studies will tier from the NEPA studies, such as Biological Resources. The process requires preparation of an Initial Study, the conclusions of which are anticipated to support the project qualifying for a CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). If it is determined from the Initial Study that any significant environmental impacts cannot be completely mitigated to a level of less than significant, then the Town would be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) instead of a MND. An Initial Study/MND does not require scoping meetings pursuant to CEQA. However, the draft CEQA Initial Study/MND will be circulated to the public and relevant agencies for comment for a minimum period of 30 days and the comments will be fully addressed and made available to the public before the documents are considered final.

The environmental studies take between 18 to 24 months to complete and will be permitted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and US Army Corps of Engineers. Since the project was just approved for environmental analyses, we anticipate circulating the Initial Study/MND in late 2018 to early 2019. The Town will have another project public outreach meeting in the future, as well as web site and Town Council updates on the project between now and then.

Q 33: What state and federal agencies are involved in this project for oversight, permits and in consulting roles?

A 33: The project is funded with Highway Bridge Program (HBP) dollars from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through Caltrans. Since federal dollars are involved and the project goes through both NEPA and CEQA environmental documentation and review, a host of federal, state and local agencies are consulted and dealt with for process review and approval. These entities and their roles include:

Agency	Agency Role(s)			
	Funding	Consulting	Review	Permitting
FHWA	X			
Caltrans	X	X	X	
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		X	X	X
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries		X	X	
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service		X	X	
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)			X	X
CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)		X	X	X
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)		X		
Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)		X		

Q 34: Will the project result in a channelization of the creek?

A 34: The creek is currently channelized with stretches of retaining walls on both sides, starting at the bridge and for a distance downstream. The bridge itself is located on an S-curve, an undesirable location subject to the creek's erosive forces. In simple terms, the new bridge's abutments and walls help to support the bridge superstructure while guiding the flow through this critical S-curve and delivering it downstream, maintaining the existing creek geometry here. These structural elements serve as substitutes for excessive riprap and fill in the creek and keep the creek wide open through the bridge, avoiding an upstream water elevation rise and any tangling with a new FEMA flood map. A second important reason for these specific project features is to combat the erosive creek forces caused by the flows, the creek soil types and the poor bridge location. Without the walls, particularly the ones on the left of flow, the river will want to go through the back of the bridge and the backyard at No. 1 Meadow Way.

The project design specifically protects the creek banks and enhances fish and riparian habitats. California Fish and Game, NOAA Fisheries and the Corps are very sensitive to habitat and riparian land issues. The Fairfax Bridges website for Meadow Way shows the walls and abutments, as well as the concepts currently being considered for enhanced fish and riparian habitat and planting on the banks adjacent to the bridge.

Caltrans engineers agree with our plans that abutments are required for any bridge, including a pre-fabricated steel bridge, and the additional fortifications required to prevent land erosion and scour at the bridge. These improvements are consistent with the condition of the creek up- and downstream of the bridge and aren't introducing structural elements to the creek that are not already there.