

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:

Prepared on: June 9, 2004
Department: Public Works
Budget Unit: 054/02/02
Agenda Date: June 22, 2004
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 60 min
Continued Item: NO

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Phillip M. Demery, Director
Public Works Department

STAFF CONTACT: Scott McGolpin, 568-3064
Deputy Director of Transportation

Dace Morgan, 568-3047
Design Engineer Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of an appeal by the Santa Barbara County Public Works Department of Resolution No. 2004-01 by the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission recognizing the historical significance of the Nojoqui Creek and Jonata Bridges, and recommending their preservation and rehabilitation, imposing conditions, and recommending landmark designation (Third Supervisorial District)

Recommendations:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Grant the appeal of the Public Works Director of the actions of the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) in Resolution 2004-01 recognizing the historical significance of the Nojoqui Bridge No. 51C-0346 (formerly No. 113), and recommending preservation and rehabilitation, imposing conditions, and recommending landmark designation.
- B. Defer any further action of Jonata Bridge No. 51C-225 and Jonata Bridge No. 51C-226 until such time as the HLAC returns to the Board with recommendations based on their resolution.
- C. Reaffirm direction to staff to construct **Alternative 1a: Approved Project**, which was approved by your Board on December 4, 2001.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendations are primarily aligned with Goal No. 1: An Efficient Government Able to Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community and Goal No. 5: To Maintain and Enhance the Quality of Life for all Residents.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

The Public Works Director hereby appeals the decision of the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) in Resolution 2004-01 recognizing the historical significance of the Nojoqui Bridge No. 51C-0346 (formerly No. 113), and recommending preservation and rehabilitation, imposing conditions, and recommending landmark designation.

Nojoqui Bridge is located on Old Coast Highway Road approximately 0.6 miles south of State Highway 101 at Nojoqui Creek between Gaviota and Buellton in the Third Supervisorial District. The existing bridge is 88 years old, which surpasses a bridge's typical life expectancy of 50 years. It has degraded beyond repair, the foundation has been undermined and the structure has been determined to be structurally deficient and seismically vulnerable. The current undermining of the bridge is of great concern as further undermining could cause collapse of this structure. Other deficiencies causing unsafe travel include a non-standard curve radius and poor sight distance. If this structure is not replaced the roadway should be closed to all traffic prior to the upcoming winter storms or a seismic event.

On December 4, 2001 your Board approved the project to replace existing Nojoqui Creek Bridge, approved the Mitigated Negative Declaration (01-ND-04) as adequate environmental review, and authorized Public Works to advertise for construction bids and to proceed with right-of-way negotiations with adjacent property owners. More recently on January 20, 2004, your Board approved the real property purchase contracts in connection with the project, in the amount of \$5,348.00. On April 20, 2004 your Board approved the project plans and specifications and awarded a construction contract in the amount of \$1,654,024.69 (including contingency) to the lowest responsible bidder. The project was also approved by your Board in the FY 2003/2004 Capital Improvement Plan.

The contractor was scheduled to begin construction on June 7, 2004 and to complete construction in the creek by November 1, 2004 in compliance with permit conditions mandated by the California Department of Fish and Game. The new structure, renumbered to be Bridge No. 51C-0346, will be a cast in place concrete box girder and will be twice the length to provide protection from future scouring of the banks. The new structure will provide two 12-foot travel lanes and two 4-foot shoulders. The existing structure provides two 11-foot travel lanes with no shoulders.

As your Board may recall, the Board Letter associated with your April 20, 2004 action indicated that the southerly portion of Old Coast Highway from the southern terminus with Highway 101 to the intersection with Alisal Road will be closed to the public through the issuance of an encroachment permit to the adjacent landowner once construction is complete. This was a result, in part, of right-of-way negotiations and abates a public safety concern raised by the property owner. This action was deemed appropriate due to several concerns. This portion of road consists of sub-standard widths, curves, and site distance, along with steep grades. These deficiencies are impacted when Old Coast Highway, just south of Alisal Road, is used by oversized, slow moving farm equipment which enter and exit the roadway. There are also safety concerns at the southern intersection of Hwy 101 and Old Coast Highway. This portion of roadway is only accessible by

vehicles traveling northbound on Hwy 101 and creates a safety concern when exiting the highway and crossing through a truck pull-out and brake check area.

On June 2, 2004, the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) passed Resolution No. 2004-01 recognizing the historical significance of the Nojoqui Bridge No. 51C-0346 (formerly No. 113), Jonata Bridge No. 51C-225 and Jonata Bridge No. 51C-226, and recommending their preservation and rehabilitation, imposing conditions, and recommending landmark designation. Pursuant to Section 18A-7 of the County Code, the Public Works Department is requesting that your Board set aside the actions of the HLAC as they relate to Nojoqui Creek Bridge. In addition, Public Works is requesting that the Board focus its discussion on June 22, 2004 to the Nojoqui Creek Bridge and defer any further action of the two Jonata bridges until the HLAC returns to the Board with recommendations based on their resolution.

A decision to support the HLAC resolution as it relates to Nojoqui Creek Bridge is contrary to previous actions by your Board and is inconsistent with the Standards for Selection specified in Section 18A-4 of the County Code which read as follows:

Sec. 18A-4. Standards for selection

In designating any place, site, building, structure, work of art or other object as being of historic, aesthetic or other special character or interest and worthy of protection under this chapter, the historic landmarks advisory commission and the board of supervisors shall be subject to the following express standards:

- (a) The landmark designated shall have historic, aesthetic or special character or interest for the general public and not be limited in interest to a special group of persons.
- (b) The designation of such landmark shall not require the expenditure of an unreasonable amount of money to carry out the purposes of this chapter.
- (c) The designation of such landmark shall not infringe upon the right of a private owner thereof to make any and all reasonable uses of such landmark which are not in conflict with the purposes of this chapter. (Ord. No. 4425, § 1)

As discussed in the Analysis of Historical Resources below, previous studies performed by qualified professionals and verified by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Keeper of the National Register determined that Nojoqui Creek Bridge is not historically significant. No additional studies or documentation were prepared by or for HLAC to indicate otherwise or to support their recommendation. Therefore standard “a” is not met.

As discussed in the Alternatives Analysis below, the designation of landmark status and any changes to the project at this late point in time would require the expenditure of an unreasonable amount of money, contrary to standard “b”.

Analysis of Historical Resources:

Funding for the approved project will be reimbursed through the Federal Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement (HBRR) program. This program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), with the assistance of Caltrans. FHWA is responsible for ensuring compliance with all Federal statutes, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act. FHWA, in cooperation with Caltrans and the County Public Works Department has made a reasonable and good-faith effort to consider the effects of this project on historic properties, as required by 36 CFR 800,

the implementing regulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This is evidenced by the hiring of a qualified consultant to complete all required studies and documentation. In making a determination that the Nojoqui Creek Bridge was not historically significant, the consultant and the agencies relied on a 1986 Statewide Historic Bridge Survey conducted by Caltrans and FHWA (Attachment C). This survey included a numerical scoring system and concluded that Nojoqui Creek Bridge is ineligible for National Register listing; this ineligibility determination was concurred to by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. A Statewide Historic Bridge Survey Update, conducted in 2003, reconfirmed this determination. The 2003 survey did consider not only the significance of the bridge itself, but also its association with the original Coast Highway. Environmental documents were completed and signed by all parties, approving the proposed projects, following thorough studies that took potential impacts to historic properties into consideration.

Consultation efforts included formal consultation with the Santa Ynez Indian Reservation and a visit to the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Society Library, searching for historical information about the area. These efforts were determined to be appropriate, considering that the bridge was already listed with the Keeper of the National Register as ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The HLAC was not consulted as the bridge was not identified on any list of Local, State or Nationally recognized historic structures. Public Works has since met with representatives of the HLAC and is working toward developing a process to take projects with potential historic importance (bridges 50 years and older) to their committee for review during the planning stages of projects in the future.

Alternatives Analysis:

Public Works has investigated several alternatives to the current approved project. These alternatives range from proceeding with the approved project to rehabilitation of the existing structure, to realignment of the road to completely avoid the existing structure, and also aesthetic treatments to the new structure on it's approved alignment. Below is a discussion of each alternative and attached is a spreadsheet that details the additional local funding that will be required for each alternative.

Alternative 1a: Approved Project

This alternative consists of proceeding with the bridge replacement project that your Board approved on December 4, 2001. The contractor was scheduled to begin work on June 7, 2004; however, due to the action of the HLAC the start of construction has been delayed until July 5, 2004. It is anticipated that this delay will cost the County approximately \$75,000. If this matter is not resolved by July 5, 2004, the delay costs could escalate to \$250,000 due to the fact that the contractor's schedule would need to be compressed in order to complete the work in the creek prior to November 1, 2004.

Alternative 1b: Approved Project with Betterments

This alternative consists of constructing the approved project with the addition of two betterments in order to preserve the driving experience for the traveling public. The first treatment would be to recreate the barrier rails of the existing structure on the new bridge. Depending upon the level of architectural detail of the railings, this would result in a 10 – 15% increase in the construction cost of the bridge or approximately 4 times the cost of the approved concrete barrier rail. The second treatment would be to replace the approved asphalt concrete roadway surface with a Portland Cement Concrete roadway surface; this would result in an increase of 50% to the construction paving costs. Based on staff's discussions with Caltrans, because this structure is not listed on the historic register, the costs associated with these betterments would be borne solely by the County. In order to avoid any further delay claims from the contractor, Public Works needs to

receive direction from the Board on June 22, 2004 on this alternative and the HLAC needs to secure funding for these betterments prior to September 1, 2004.

Alternative 2: Permanent Road Closure, No Project

As stated previously, this bridge is structurally deficient and is in need of replacement due to the erosion at the northern support. If the approved project does not proceed as planned, Public Works will be closing the Old Coast Highway in the vicinity of the bridge in the fall prior to any significant rainfall. If an earthquake is registered in the vicinity of the bridge prior to the fall closure, Public Works may be forced to close the bridge sooner than the fall. Prior to closure of the roadway, an environmental review would be required. The associated costs with this alternative would include payment to the contractor for terminating their contract with the County, design and environmental review for the closure as well as the construction costs for permanently closing the road. As with Alternative 1b, the costs for this alternative would not be reimbursable through the HBRR program. In addition, the County would likely have to return the federal portion of the HBRR funds that have been spent to date on the design, environmental review, and right-of-way transactions associated with Alternative 1a: Approved Project.

Alternative 3: Rehabilitate Existing Bridge

Rehabilitation of the existing structure would require the installation of retaining structures in the creek to protect the existing bridge foundations from further scour. However, the placement of these retaining structures would further constrict the creek and result in additional scour and the foundations of these retaining structures would need to be monitored and maintained on a regular basis. Because there are endangered species in the creek, the likelihood of obtaining permits from the necessary regulatory agencies for this hard bank protection could be extremely difficult, if not impossible. In addition to the hard bank protection for the foundation of the existing bridge, the load capacity and seismic capacity of the structure would need to be increased to meet current design standards. Unfortunately, the record drawings for this bridge do not detail any of the structural components of the bridge. Therefore, it would require extensive research and some destruction of the existing structure to determine the capacity of the existing structural elements. Also the width of the existing structure is substandard and therefore, the bridge would need to be widened. The widening of the existing structure is complicated by the lack of knowledge of the existing structural components. It is estimated that the cost to rehabilitate the existing structure would be significantly more than the approved project. During the time it would take to complete the design and environmental review, Public Works would close the road in the vicinity of the bridge to protect the traveling public from a collapse of the existing structure in a large storm event as discussed in Alternative 2. The costs associated with this alternative are extremely difficult to assess due to the lack of knowledge regarding the strength of the existing structure. It is likely that the construction costs would be at least 2 to 3 times the cost of Alternative 1a: Approved Project. The design and environmental effort would be significant as well. In addition, as with Alternative 2, the costs associated with this alternative include the cost to terminate the existing contract with the contractor. Again, because the structure is not registered as historic, the HBRR program would not be required to fund any of the costs associated with this alternative. However, they may fund up to the level of the costs associated with Alternative 1a: Approved Project and all additional costs greater than Alternative 1a would be borne by the County.

Alternative 4a: Roadway Realignment (East)

At this point in the project with approved Plans, the cost to realign the roadway to the east to avoid the existing structure would result in a 25% increase to the bridge costs, a 50% increase in the roadway costs and double the cost of the drainage improvements for a total of a 50% increase in overall construction costs over the approved project. In addition, this alternative would require the purchase of approximately half an acre

of right-of-way. Again, the road in the vicinity of the bridge would be closed until such time that the new project could be constructed and the County would be responsible for costs associated with terminating the existing construction contract. The HBRR program would not participate in the costs associated with terminating the contract. However, they may fund costs of this alternative up to the level of costs associated with Alternative 1a: Approved Project.

Alternative 4b: Roadway Realignment (West)

If the roadway were to be realigned to the west, the bridge costs would increase by 25%, the roadway and drainage costs would double for a total of a 65% increase in overall construction costs. In addition to the fiscal impacts of the realignment, the realignment would result in significant impacts to environmental resources as well as impacts to adjacent landowners; approximately half an acre of right-of-way would need to be purchased to complete this alternative. During the time needed to complete the design and environmental review, the road would be closed in the vicinity of the bridge to protect the traveling public from a collapse of the existing structure in a large storm or seismic event. As with Alternative 4a, all costs associated with terminating the existing construction contract would not be reimbursed through the HBRR program, nor would any costs that are greater than those approved for Alternative 1a.

Staff recommends that your Board set aside the Actions of the Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) in Resolution 2004-01 because it is inconsistent with Section 18A-4 Standards for Selection of the County Code since Standards “a” and “b” are not met and to reaffirm direction to staff to construct Alternative 1a: Approved Project. This Board action will mitigate the deficiencies of the existing bridge and roadway, which include sub-standard lane widths, sight distance, drainage facilities, and an undermined foundation. The bridge has been deemed structurally deficient and seismically vulnerable by County and Caltrans Engineers. Staff also recommends this action based on it’s alignment with Goal No. 1: “An efficient government able to respond to the needs of the community,” and enable the Department of Public Works to achieve it’s Mission Statement: “Provide, operate, and maintain essential Public Works facilities and services for the community to make everyday life as safe and convenient as possible.”

Mandates and Service Levels:

If you Board sets aside the actions of the HLAC, there are no changes in service levels. However, if your Board upholds the actions of the HLAC and places a landmark designation on the Nojoqui Bridge, the Public Works Department will be forced to close the road in the vicinity of the bridge in the fall. The closure is necessary to protect the traveling public from the bridge collapsing due to failure of the support system in a storm event. The closure results in a 15 mile detour which adds approximately 20 to 25 minutes travel time to reach the intersection of Old Coast Highway and Alisal Road.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Public Works has spoken with Caltrans who has contacted FHWA regarding the federal funding for this project. Caltrans has informed Public Works that due to the fact that FHWA does not find that the Nojoqui Bridge is historically significant and therefore the environmental document remains unchanged that any modifications to the approved project would not be reimbursable through the HBRR program. In addition, Public Works has been informed that because the actions of the HLAC are in conflict with the findings of FHWA’s environmental review that any costs incurred due to this action by the HLAC are also not reimbursable by the HBRR program. These expenses include staff’s time to meet and respond to the HLAC and the delay costs to the contractor due to this action. If the construction of the approved project is not completed, the County would be required to reimburse the HBRR program for all costs to date. This is

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approximately \$320,000 (Federal Share only). At this time, it is expected that these costs would be reimbursed through Measure D revenues.

Public Works has investigated other sources of revenue for these modifications; however, the majority of these funding sources require the structure to be listed as historically significant with either the State or the Federal Government, which the Nojoqui Bridge is not.

Special Instructions:

Please forward a copy of the minute order approving these actions to the Public Works Department, Transportation Division, attention: Cecelia Barnes.

Concurrence:

County Counsel

Attachments:

Attachment A: Cost Increase Summary Table

Attachment B: Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report dated September 28, 2000

Attachment C: Statewide Historic Bridge Survey Rating Sheets dated 1986 and 2003

ATTACHMENT A

COST INCREASE SUMMARY TABLE

Alternatives	Total Project Cost	County Contribution	Increased County Contribution
1a: Approve Project	\$2,314,025	\$522,805	\$75,000
1b: Approved Project w/ Betterments	\$2,529,025	\$737,805	\$290,000
2: Permanent Road Closure, no project	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
3: Rehabilitate Ex Bridge	\$4,339,025	\$2,547,805*	\$2,100,000
4a: Roadway Realignment (East)	\$3,669,025	\$1,877,805*	\$1,430,000
4b: Roadway Realignment (West)	3,849,025	2,057,805*	\$1,610,000

*The County Contribution shown assumes that HBRR program will reimburse up to the amount approved for Alternative 1a: Approved Project

Originally Approved Project: Total Project \$2,239,025 and County Contribution \$447,805. Cost represents Project Cost and County contribution per Caltrans Authorization for Construction documents (E76).

ATTACHMENT B

**CALTRANS BRIDGE INSPECTION REPORT
DATED SEPTEMBER 28, 2000**

ATTACHMENT C

STATEWIDE HISTORIC BRIDGE SURVEY RATING SHEET