



DATE: March 17, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

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SUBJECT: Resolution Accepting Completion of the Parks Access Improvements Project (C14502318) at McDowell Park, La Tercera Park, and McNear Park by Schaefer Engineering, Inc and Release of Retention

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the attached Resolution accepting completion of the Parks Access Improvements project (C14502318) at McDowell Park, La Tercera Park, and McNear Park by Schaefer Engineering, Inc and release of retention.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, Sonoma County voters approved Measure M – Parks for All, a one-eighth cent sales tax initiative to provide dedicated funding for parks and recreational improvements throughout the county. As part of this initiative, the City of Petaluma engaged in a comprehensive community outreach effort starting in 2019 to establish investment priorities for park improvements. The outreach process included citywide online surveys, public meetings, and a facilitated community workshop.

Through this process, the highest priority category identified was improving the network of “Walking Paths, Bike Trails, Park Connections, and Access,” highlighting the community’s strong desire for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, safer access to parks, and improved park amenities. In response, the Parks Access Improvements project was established as a Capital Improvement Project to address these needs.

Following the completion of improved trails at Prince and Westridge Parks, between 2021-2023 the Parks Access Improvements project’s next round of sites focused on improving three heavily used parks—McDowell, La Tercera, and McNear—by reconstructing deteriorated pathways and

enhancing accessibility features. These upgrades will provide safer and more inclusive access to playgrounds, restrooms, and other park amenities, encouraging active transportation and improving overall park usability.

On January 8, 2024, the City Council approved the award of the construction contract for the Parks Access Improvements project to Schaefer Engineering, Inc. per Resolution No. 2024-003 N.C.S.

DISCUSSION

The Parks Access Improvements project included the reconstruction of pathways at McDowell, La Tercera, and McNear parks to improve access, safety, and connectivity. The new pathways provide safer routes to playgrounds, restrooms, and other park amenities, aligning with community priorities identified during the Measure M public engagement process.

During construction, additional park improvements were incorporated into the project, including drainage improvements, resurfacing of a basketball court, and replacement of several deteriorated park benches.

Separately, the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide project (C16102032) funded sidewalk and curb ramp improvements in the public right-of-way leading up to the access improvements made at McNear Park, which were also completed through this construction contract for efficiency and to leverage the favorable unit rate pricing agreed to under the Park Access Improvements contract. While the two projects still remain distinct, utilizing the existing contract streamlined construction efforts, minimized disruption for the public, as well as saved on staff time and construction costs for the additional work. This collaboration enabled the City to incorporate additional accessibility enhancements, including sidewalk repairs, curb ramp upgrades, and driveway approach improvements at McNear Park, further promoting public safety.

Schafer Engineering was awarded the original contract for \$225,900, with the final contract amount totaling \$359,882 due to \$133,982 in change orders. Of this, \$74,300 was allocated to sidewalk repairs and curb ramp improvements, funded through the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide project. These additions expanded the contract's scope but maintained the separation of project funding and objectives.

The changes made during construction that impacted the contract value are detailed below:

Change Order No. 1 consisted of removing a retaining wall surrounding the playground at McDowell Park in order to facilitate drainage for the new pathway and open access to the playground. This change order was for \$11,500.

Change Order No. 2 consisted of additional demo of the existing deteriorated Asphalt Concrete (AC) to be replaced with future natural landscaping as well as demo and repaving of the basketball court at the La Tercera Park. This change order was for \$31,238.

Change Order No. 3 consisted of accounting for overages in the minor concrete bid item and deductions from bid items not used in their entirety. The overage in the concrete bid item is due to the expansion of the pathway footprint per City's staff direction in order to provide better connectivity throughout the parks and improve access. This change order was for \$14,944.

Change Order No. 4 consisted of repairing sidewalk sections, replacing the driveway approach and constructing a new curb ramp at the McNear Park. This change order was for \$60,800 and will be funded through the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide (C16102032) project, as the scope pertained to and was requested by the public works division.

Change Order No. 5 consisted of additional sidewalk repairs, additional costs for the new curb ramp as it required modifications and additional effort to be constructed at the McNear Park, as well as construction of a concrete pad and assembly and installation of a new park bench at the La Tercera Park. This change order was for \$15,500, where \$2,000 was for the bench and was paid for by the Parks Access Improvements project and \$13,500 was for the sidewalk repairs and curb ramp construction, and will be funded through the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide (C16102032) project, as the scope pertained to and was requested by the public works division.

The contract work was completed satisfactorily, with no disputed claims or incidents. The improvements at each park have made the spaces more accessible, safe, and user-friendly. Attachment 3 – Project Images includes before-and-after images showcasing key project areas and highlighting the impact of these upgrades.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Prior to the start of construction, staff sent mailers to residents within a quarter mile of each park to inform them about the project. Staff also created a project webpage on the City's website to share project information and updates.

Additionally, this agenda item appeared on the City's tentative agenda document on March 3, 2025, which was a publicly noticed meeting.

COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

The Capital Improvement Program serves as a comprehensive catalog of community needs. Each year, the Council adopts a budget for the fiscal year that allocates funds and resources to priority projects. The Parks Access Improvements Project (C14502318) is included in the FY2024-2025 Adopted Budget under CIP-46. The full FY2024-2025 Adopted Operating and Capital Improvement Program Budget can be found here: <https://cityofpetaluma.org/documents/fiscal-year-2025-adopted-budget/>.

CLIMATE ACTION/SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The reconstruction of the deteriorating asphalt concrete (AC) pathways improved access and mobility within critical sections of the three selected park sites and greatly helped promote passive and active recreational activities for the community. In addition, the material selection for the new pathways (reinforced concrete) delivers a low-maintenance and long-lasting solution to pathways that experience continuous pedestrian traffic and are exposed to the elements. Reinforced concrete pathways are robust, less prone to cracking, and have a life expectancy of over 30 years. The old pathways that were made of AC required frequent maintenance, were prone to cracking, and lasted approximately 20 years. The reinforced concrete pathways help support the project's goal of providing long-lasting and inclusive pathways that are safe and conducive to walkers, bikers, strollers, and wheelchairs while promoting safe and intergenerational spaces for our community, which is aligned with the City's Blueprint for Climate Action, specifically Cornerstone Action AT-1: Active transportation and complete streets improvements.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The statute of limitations for a CEQA challenge has lapsed. Accepting the project falls within City Council's previous CEQA determination when it awarded the project. When Council awarded the project Council found that the project was categorically exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15301, Existing Facilities, 15302, Replacement or Reconstruction, and 15304, Minor Alterations, because the project is limited to the replacement of existing infrastructure within three existing city parks. All improvements occurred within or immediately adjacent to the current pathways in areas previously disturbed and improved with park amenities. The project repaired existing surfaces and provided internal pedestrian connectivity within existing public parks. There was negligible or no expansion of use beyond what currently exists, and no cumulative impacts, unusual circumstances, or other factors that would make the exemption inapplicable. Therefore, the project was exempt under Section 15301 (c), repair and maintenance, Section 15302 (c), replacement or reconstruction of an existing public facility, and Section 15304, as the activity was limited to minor alterations to accommodate safe access at existing City parks.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

The Schaefer Engineering construction contract award amount was \$225,900. Due to the change orders mentioned above, the contract value increased by \$133,982 to a total construction contract amount of \$359,882.

Of this, \$74,300 was allocated to sidewalk repairs and curb ramp improvements, funded through the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide project (C16102032). While these additions expanded the contract's scope, they maintained the distinction between project funding sources.

The total project budget for the Parks Access Improvements project (C14502318) is \$326,000, funded by Measure M. The total estimated costs for this project are \$332,900. This is a budget increase of \$6,900. If needed, a budget adjustment will be brought as part of the fiscal year end closing process. This project will be completed upon the completion of this construction contract.

The following table provides a breakdown of the Parks Access Improvements project (C14502318) budget and estimated costs. The additional \$74,300 funded by the Pedestrian Improvements Citywide project is not included in this table.

Parks Access Improvements (C14502318)		
USES	Total Project Budget	Total Project Estimated Actuals
Design/Planning/Environ/Land	\$ 15,000	\$ 18,800
Administration/Legal	\$ -	\$ 3,100
Construction Contracts	\$ 225,900	
Schaefer Engineering		\$ 285,600
Coastside Concrete ¹		\$ 3,500
Construction Management	\$ 35,100	\$ 16,200
Contingency	\$ 45,000	\$ -
CIP Overheads	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,700
TOTAL USES	\$ 326,000	\$ 332,900
SOURCES		
Measure M - Parks	\$ 326,000	\$ 332,900
TOTAL FUNDS	\$ 326,000	\$ 332,900

ALTERNATIVES

The contractor completed the project satisfactorily. Not accepting completion would likely result in a contractual dispute with the contractor.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
2. Location Map
3. Project Images

¹ Coastside Concrete was separately engaged to install a bench at La Tercera Park. Since they were already mobilized for work at another park, utilizing them for this task minimized mobilization costs and allowed the City to efficiently complete park improvements in a coordinated manner.

