

Responses to Council Questions and Comments

6/17/2024

Item: Presentation – Caulfield Bridge Update

- Question: How much boat access do we really need/want that can go under it? How many tall ships have come up the river to the turning basin this last year after dredging? Current economic value? Would we really lose that much business downtown? Would we gain business downtown if we move toward human powered transport systems on that section of the river? How many economy and tax dollars come out of the large boat parties/gatherings? Do we really need a raised bridge at all? Could we make a more modern cabled arch bridge that could be an art form tourist attraction in itself - they exist in other cities. **How tall would the bridge need to be with boat size restricted to smaller vessels? How much reduction in bridge construction could be saved with a nonmoving bridge? Human powered boats in the turning basin only? Could we get by with a small dredger from Caulfield bridge to the Turning basin? see: <https://piranhapump.com/mini-dredges>. and other small industrial dredgers available on that site.**

- Response: **Federal Navigational Designation & Required Clearances:**

- Downstream of the turning basin, the Petaluma River is considered a navigable waterway of the United States and we are therefore required to receive approval from the US Coast Guard prior to construction. The Coast Guard has provided a preliminary determination requiring the following clearances in order to accommodate current and future reasonable needs of navigation on the river:
 - Horizontal: 90'
 - Vertical (above mean high water):
 - Closed: 10'
 - Open: 70'
- Boat types that would be able to pass under the bridge at mean high water without requiring a bridge opening are those that meet the 10' clearance, such as personal watercraft, canoes/kayaks, small fishing boats, etc.
- Based on the clearance requirements outlined above, a fixed bridge along the navigable waterway would need to be approximately as tall as the US-101 bridge. A bridge of this height would not be feasible at the proposed location due to the elevations of existing development and infrastructure on both sides of the river.
- For more information about US Coast Guard bridge permitting requirements, see:
https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/COAST_GUARD_BRIDGE_PERMITTING_Sep_2019_1.pdf

Frequency of D Street Bridge Openings

- From May 30, 2023 to May 30, 2024, there were 198 bridge requests logged with our operations staff for a total of 329 vessels. Many of these requests involve two openings (one in each direction).

Impacts on Dredging

- There would not be any dredging impacts as the bridge will be clear of the federal channel as designed, in compliance with the federal agency permits and

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requirements. As that channel is the only area of the river that the City or the USACE dredges or plans to dredge in the future (to maintain navigability) it would not be affected by the bridge or its abutments.