



DATE: March 6, 2024

TO: Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee

FROM: Bjorn Griepenburg, MCRP, Project Manager

SUBJECT: Review and Provide Feedback on Active Transportation Components of the
Caulfield Bridge and Extension Crosstown Connector Project

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee review and provide feedback on active transportation components of the Caulfield Bridge and Extension Crosstown Connector Project.

BACKGROUND

The City of Petaluma is separated by three physical barriers: the Petaluma River, the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit railroad tracks, and US Highway 101. Currently, there are limited physical crossings of these barriers to facilitate crosstown connections between the east and west sides of the community. The Guiding Principles of General Plan 2025 acknowledged the challenges that these barriers create and the importance of integrating and connecting the east and west sides of the City.

In an effort to improve and create crosstown connections, the General Plan called for improvements to existing connections and the addition of two new crosstown connectors including the Rainier Avenue Extension and the Caulfield Bridge/Southern Crossing. The General Plan and its Environmental Impact Report that were adopted by City Council in 2008 include a projected buildout of the City that assumes construction of the two new crosstown connectors to mitigate increased traffic anticipated from population and job growth. The General Plan also recognizes each connector's importance in facilitating mobility for transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as for emergency response. Both are identified as transportation facilities in the nexus study upon which the City's Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) was based and are eligible for TIF funds.

The Caulfield Bridge is a proposed moveable bridge over the Petaluma River between the Crystal Lane/Petaluma Boulevard South roundabout and the recently constructed section of Caulfield Lane at the Riverfront Subdivision. An early study evaluating river crossing alternatives and establishing the current proposed alignment was completed in 2006, with the Caulfield alignment chosen based on its anticipated 1) cost-effectiveness and 2) compatibility with established City right-of-way and avoidance of impacts on private property.

On October 10, 2022, City Council held a Crosstown Connector Workshop and received updates from staff on the status of all existing and proposed connectors, including the Caulfield Bridge/Southern Crossing. On May 15, 2023, City Council approved a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Mark Thomas to complete all work needed to bring the bridge to shovel-ready status, including design, environmental review, and permitting. These pre-construction phases are expected to be complete in late 2025.

DISCUSSION

While the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan calls for Class II (striped) on-street bike lanes and sidewalks over the bridge, community feedback thus far has favored widened multi-use pathways on both sides of the bridge in order to provide a more comfortable walking and bicycling experience with physical separation from vehicle traffic.

The project team will present and seek feedback on this and other proposed active transportation components of the project, including:

- Overall bicycle and pedestrian circulation and connectivity to and from the bridge from both sides
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities on and near the bridge
- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between the bridge and existing and proposed sections of River Trail

A presentation containing maps, diagrams, and more information will be provided prior to the meeting.

CITYWIDE GOALS & PRIORITIES

The Caulfield Bridge and Extension Crosstown Connector Project aligns with the following Workplan Items:

- #14: Identify funding options to complete Petaluma's planned crosstown connectors.
- #15: Identify funds and develop a plan to improve Petaluma's streets and roads.
- #18: Establish and improve paths, as useful transportation options, and make walking and biking easy, fun, and safe.

- #20: Better integrate multi-modal transportation with street designs.
- #26: Update the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and realize opportunities for crosstown connections for all modes of transportation.
- #85: Implement City Vision Zero plan with a focus on pedestrian and cyclist safety with improvements to uncontrolled crosswalks, curb ramps, sidewalks, and bicycle infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS