

**TO:** James L. App, City Manager  
**FROM:** Joseph M. Deakin, Public Works Director  
**SUBJECT:** 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge  
**DATE:** December 17, 2002

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**NEEDS:** For the City Council to consider approving and adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Widening and Roadway Improvements.

**FACTS:**

1. This matter was continued from the November 19, 2002 City Council meeting.
2. The 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Widening and Roadway Improvements Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The attached Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared and circulated to various agencies. The required public review comment period began on October 18<sup>th</sup> and concluded on November 19, 2002.
3. The City Council adopted an update to the City's General Plan Circulation Element on October 12, 2000. The adopted Circulation Element includes policy providing a Level of Service (LOS) of "C" as the minimum service level, providing for stable traffic flow.
4. In 1998, the citizens of Paso Robles passed Measure 'D', a \$38 million dollar bond measure to fund several much-needed public facilities.
5. One of these projects, widening of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge was included in the approved 1991 Circulation Element.
6. In early 1999, the City Council authorized staff to engage the services of URS Greiner, a transportation-engineering firm, to begin design of the bridge widening and adjacent streets.
7. On July 18, 2001, the City Council held a public hearing to evaluate and publicly discuss the final design concept. The design concepts the Council focused on met a three-fold standard: congestion relief, public safety and fiscal responsibility. The Council heard comments, approved URS' conceptual design, and directed staff to prepare construction documents (plans, specifications and estimates) for the project.
8. The approved design calls for widening the bridge to accommodate four travel lanes (two each way), two turn lanes, two bike lanes, and sidewalks on both sides. Beyond the bridge limits, adjacent streets (North and South River Roads, Creston Road, and Union Road) will also be widened to maximize flow at the intersection, and relieve traffic congestion.
9. The design includes ornamental barriers and lights along the bridge, consistent with downtown design elements and those installed along the Veterans Memorial Bridge.

**ANALYSIS  
AND**

**CONCLUSION:** The City Council must review environmental impacts associated with a project before giving final approval for a project. Staff foresees the need to make project level decisions within the coming months. The following background provides a brief overview of the project (13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Enhancements) and the Mitigated Negative Declaration of environmental impacts is provided for City Council and public review.

## Background

The engineering designs for the Project were weighed against the City's "purpose statement" and goals, which are identified in the City's General Plan (August 1991) and include traffic congestion relief, public safety, and fiscal responsibility. The City Council unanimously voted to approve the recommended best design option based on compliance with the City's goals.

The 13th Street corridor experiences high traffic demands, which leads to traffic congestion. Two-way pedestrian/bicycle accommodations need improvement to enhance and provide for all transportation modes. The Salinas River, State Route 101, and the Union Pacific Railroad run essentially parallel to each other in a northerly direction through the City limits. These three features create a physical obstacle. The downtown area of Paso Robles is located to the west of Route 101. The City and County are experiencing continued growth to the east of Route 101 and the Salinas River. Currently, the City's population is approximately 26,000. The City's current General Plan anticipates a population of 35,000. Continued growth to 35,000 will place additional traffic challenges on the bridge. The EIR produced in December 1990 for the City's 1991 General Plan Update identified the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Expansion, as well as the widening of Creston and Union Roads, as mitigation measures to address traffic impacts expected to accompany development.

Daily traffic volumes, or average daily traffic (ADT), within the Project Area of Potential Effect (APE) has been recorded between 14,830 (Creston Road as it approaches South River Road) and 15,820 (13<sup>th</sup> Street as it approaches South River Road). Due to the fact the roads within the Project APE are presently 2-lane collector roadways, this high range of ADT puts the roadways into the category LOS D, which is inconsistent with the City's traffic goals (Circulation Element Update). The improvements included in the project will return this intersection to the established service standard.

A Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared and circulated for public review. Written comments and one verbal comment were received at the public hearing on November 19, 2002. These comments were evaluated and along with the responses, have been incorporated into the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration. On the basis of this evaluation, the proposed project could have significant effects on the environment, however all of those effects will be mitigated to an insignificant level. No significant unmitigated impacts are anticipated.

### **POLICY**

**REFERENCE:** 2001 Circulation Update to the General Plan; Adopted Measure 'D' Project List

### **FISCAL**

**IMPACT:** The project is funded within Measure 'D' budget appropriation.

### **OPTIONS:**

- a(1). After considering all public testimony, the City Council adopts Resolution No. 02-xx approving and adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed 13<sup>th</sup> St. Bridge Widening and Roadway Improvements, making certain findings and incorporating the recommended mitigation measures as part of the proposed Project; and
- (2). Adopt Resolution No. 02-xx approving the 13<sup>th</sup> St. Bridge Widening and Roadway Improvements as a project to be implemented, authorizing the use of the Measure D funds to pay for such project, and directing the City Clerk to cause a Notice of Determination approving the Project to be filed and posted by the Clerk of San Luis Obispo County.
- b. Amend, modify or reject the above option.

Attachments: (1) Resolution & (2) Final Mitigated Negative Declaration

RESOLUTION NO. 02-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES  
ADOPTING A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE PROPOSED  
13<sup>TH</sup> STREET BRIDGE WIDENING AND ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

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WHEREAS, the Circulation Element of the 1991 General Plan states that the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, Creston, Union and River Roads should be widened to mitigate the City's traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, in 1998 a Bond Measure was passed which provided a funding mechanism for the project; and

WHEREAS, several design concepts were investigated; and

WHEREAS, various alternatives were analyzed based on whether the design met congestion relief, public safety and fiscal responsibility; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2001, the City Council adopted the final design concept; and

WHEREAS, the City Council directed staff to prepare final construction documents (plans and specifications, environmental clearance and permits) for the proposed 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge widening project; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, the City prepared an Initial Study and a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed Project, which concludes that the project will have no significant effect on the environment because any such effects will be mitigated. And no significant unmitigated impacts are anticipated; and

WHEREAS, public notice of the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was given as required by Section 21092 of the Public Resources Code; and pursuant to said public notice, the public was given the opportunity to review the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, to submit written comments and to testify before the City Council at public meeting conducted on November 19, 2002 to make oral comments on the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The City Council of the City of Paso Robles does hereby find that, based upon the information contained in the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the proposed Project, and after consideration of all comments and testimony on such Mitigated Negative Declaration, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed Project will have a significant effect on the environment. This finding reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby approves and adopts the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed Project. This approval and adoption is specifically contingent upon the implementation of all of the mitigation measures identified in the Mitigated Negative Declaration. A copy of the documents and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings upon which this approval is based are located at Paso Robles City Hall, 1000 Spring Street, and Paso Robles, c/o the Director of Public Works.

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SECTION 3. The City Council of the City of Paso Robles hereby concludes that the above recitals and documents referenced therein are true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Paso Robles this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December 2002 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

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Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Shadily M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk