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Title: A Presentation on the Pedestrian Bridge-Vermijo Avenue to America the Beautiful Park and Vermijo Avenue Streetscape Projects

Presenter:
Ryan Phipps, Senior Engineer within the City Engineering Division
Kathleen Krager, Division Manager of the Traffic Engineering Division

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A Presentation on the Pedestrian Bridge-Vermijo Avenue to America the Beautiful Park and Vermijo Avenue Streetscape Projects

Presenter:

Ryan Phipps, Senior Engineer within the City Engineering Division
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Summary:

This is an informational presentation of the pedestrian bridge which will connect the new Olympic Museum Plaza to America the Beautiful Park over the railroad yard, and the Vermijo Avenue Streetscape Projects.

Previous Council Action:

A presentation on the Pedestrian Bridge-Vermijo Avenue to America the Beautiful Park was given to City Council on June 13, 2016 and November 7, 2016. A presentation of the Vermijo Avenue Streetscape Plan was given to City Council on September 25, 2017.

Background:

The pedestrian bridge has been planned in this location since at least 1992 when it was mentioned in the Downtown Action Plan. It has been included in every significant planning effort since.

The City has pursued two funding sources to help fund the bridge; PPRTA II Capital list, and the Regional Tourism Act. Additional funds are expected from the Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Authority.

The Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Master Developer has paid for a conceptual design of the bridge. The City used PPRTA funds to pay for engineering plans, which have recently been completed. The goal is to have the bridge constructed in time for the opening of the museum in 2020. The project has been out to bid and the City is anticipating an \$11.3M contract with Kiewit soon.

The construction of this bridge is an investment in infrastructure which provides an important non-vehicular connection from downtown to America the Beautiful Park. It will also build community by providing a new focal point for the downtown area.

The Vermijo Avenue Streetscape Project is proposed to provide a mixed modal area that can be easily converted to a pedestrian-only area for parades and festivals. The street section will be rebuilt from Tejon Street to Sierra Madre Street. The new cross-section will accommodate two lanes of vehicular travel, parallel parking, and a large pedestrian area. Engineering of the underground utility relocations is at a 60% level of completion and will be bid for construction soon. Engineering plans for the above ground improvements are also 60% complete.

Funding for this project will use the same sources as the Pedestrian Bridge funding. PPRTA is expected to contribute \$2.8M in maintenance funds and \$1.6M in Traffic Program funds.

Financial Implications:

PPRTA funds in the amount of \$3.5M for the Pedestrian Bridge and \$4.4M for the streetscape.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

N/A

Stakeholder Process:

The bridge has been included as part of downtown planning since 1992. Major public involvement includes: The Greenway Master Plan, 1994; an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Study, 2012; and Downtown Imagine Update, 2016. The plans for the streetscape improvements have followed a stakeholder process as well. That process has included meetings with El Paso County staff and elected officials.

Alternatives:

N/A

Proposed Motion:

N/A

N/A