



**Item No. 9
Town of Atherton**

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – CONSENT AGENDA

TO: **HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

FROM: **ROBERT OVADIA, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR**

DATE: **DECEMBER 21, 2022**

SUBJECT: **AFFIRM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
(CEQA) FINDING OF CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION, APPROVE
PROJECT PLANS, AND AUTHORIZE BID SOLICITATION FOR
THE PROJECT FOR THE ATHERTON STATION REMODEL
PROJECT, PROJECT NUMBER 56085**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council affirm the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) finding of Categorical Exemption for the Atherton Station Remodel project; Approve the project plans; And authorize bid solicitation for the Atherton Station Remodel Project, Project Number 56085

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the MOU with Caltrain, the Town received a grant in the amount of \$400,000 towards the improvement of the Atherton Station area. The Town entered into an agreement with Garavaglia Architecture, Inc. for professional design services to remodel the station building to accommodate a potential mini rail history museum and to address deferred maintenance issues in the building.

Staff and the consultant team have coordinated with the Atherton Station Council Subcommittee during the development of the project design. As project design neared completion, staff solicited feedback from the City Council at their November 2, 2022, Study Session regarding the project layout and design elements.

The Environmental Impact Report for the Town Center project included an evaluation of the Town Center site, including the Atherton Station building.

ANALYSIS

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The project consists of remodeling and repurposing the existing Atherton Rail Station Building into a public building showcasing the history of rail and the station in the Town of Atherton. The desire is to integrate the station building and area into the new Atherton Town Center. Specific improvements include reorientation of the main entry to the building by adding a new pair of doors facing the Town Center and enclosing the rear (along with another pair of doors for accessibility), weatherization of the building, interior/exterior improvements, electronic and fixed displays, interior and exterior lighting, data and security connections (may be wireless), building maintenance (dry-rot and roof, painting, etc.), accessibility improvements, kiosk and signage improvements, seating and site furnishings.

As noted above, the Environmental Impact Report for the Atherton Town Center included a review of the Town Center site, including an evaluation of the station building. The building/property is not listed on any local or state historic registers. The Town has preemptively decided that it will make all improvements in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and implements Mitigation Measure CULT-1 of the Civic Center Master Plan EIR.

The Town Planner has reviewed the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined the project to be Categorically Exempt. The City Council is requested to affirm the CEQA determination.

The project plans have been completed and submitted to the Building Department for review and approval for permit issuance. As the station building and property belongs to the Joint Powers Board (JPB or Caltrain), the project plans have also been submitted to Caltrain for review. Staff and the design team do not anticipate any substantial comments from either the building permit process or Caltrain that would affect the intent of the project. As per the Town's Maintenance and Use Agreement with the JPB regarding the station property, the Contractor will need to indemnify the JPB with regards to their work activity, name the JPB as an additional insured and potentially secure an additional Railroad Liability insurance policy.

The project has received \$400,000 funding through a Measure A grant pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding with Caltrain. Though the current construction estimate is slightly higher than the available budget, as presented at the Council Study Session, final costs will be determined once construction bids are received.

Staff is seeking Council authorization to release the project for construction bids.

FISCAL IMPACT

Limited at this time to costs associated with advertisement and bidding. The project has been allocated \$400,000 in the Capital Improvement Program.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal Area A – Maintain Fiscal Responsibility
- Goal Area B – Preserve Small Town Character and Quality of Life

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- Goal Area F – Be Forward-Thinking, Well-Managed, and Well-Planned

POLICY FOCUS

The Council policy focus should be on the integration of the station building into the Town Center.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders –to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item has not been before a Town Committee or Commission

ATTACHMENTS

1. CEQA Determination
2. Atherton Station Remodel Project Plans