TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Charles W. Ebeling, Director of Public Works

CONTACT: Gerald Comati, Interim Deputy Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Status Report on the Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Project and the Hollister Avenue Bridge Project

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the City's Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Project (9002) and the Hollister Avenue Bridge Project (9033).

BACKGROUND:

The City's Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Project (Ekwill-Fowler Project) and Hollister Avenue Bridge Project are two projects located in Goleta Old Town that have been in development for a number of years and are considered two of the highest priority transportation projects in the City. While the two projects have a very different genesis and history, they are closely intertwined by virtue of the fact that they overlap each other along Hollister Avenue near the Hollister Avenue intersection with the southbound ramps of State Route 217. This overlap prompted the decision to construct the two projects under a single construction contract and thereby minimize disruption and lane closures along Hollister Avenue during construction.

The following report provides a summarized history of the two projects, their current status and the path forward towards their ultimate delivery.

Existing Conditions

Goleta Old Town is flanked on the east by San Jose Creek Channel and State Route 217, on the west by Fairview Avenue and San Pedro Creek (which is adjacent to the Santa Barbara Airport), on the south by the Goleta Slough and the Pacific Ocean, and on the north by Hollister Avenue and Route 101. Hollister Avenue is the only major arterial running parallel with Highway 101 through the City of Goleta and connecting with the unincorporated County to the east. The south east portion of Goleta Old Town lies within the City of Santa Barbara Airport jurisdiction.

The Ekwill-Fowler project area, located within southern Old Town, can be described generally as mixed-use as it includes residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses. Portions of this area are within the coastal zone.

Historically, a large portion of Old Town has been located within the Flood Plains of the two creeks that flank the area (San Pedro Creek on the west and San Jose Creek channel on the east). As of 2016, the City has completed a significant portion of capacity improvements to the San Jose Creek Channel and thereby making great progress towards the elimination of much of Old Town from the Flood Plain. The remaining capacity improvements along San Jose Creek Channel are to be completed with the Hollister Avenue Bridge Project.

Old San Jose Creek is the historical alignment of San Jose Creek (prior to construction of San Jose Creek Channel) and runs north south through Old Town. Old San Jose Creek is considered degraded and no longer links up with the San Jose Creek watershed and therefore only receives adjacent runoff. Riparian vegetation occupies the creek and the creek banks.

Development in Old Town has occurred during the last 15 years, including a new hotel on Hollister Avenue, office commercial development in southern Old Town and most recently a significant housing development along Kellogg Avenue.

EKWILL-FOWLER PROJECT

Purpose and Need:

The purpose of the Ekwill-Fowler Project is to improve access to, and circulation within, Old Town, improve access to Santa Barbara Airport, enhance pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety, and allow the expansion of transit opportunities within Old Town.

The Stakeholders

The Ekwill-Fowler Project involves a complex array of stakeholders that can/have affected the project evolution and ultimate delivery. The stakeholders include:

1. The City of Santa Barbara Airport is located on the west side of Old Town with the jurisdictional line abutting the western side of Old San Jose Creek. The Airport Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) encroaches into the City of Goleta's jurisdiction within Old Town.
2. State Route 217 is owned and maintained by Caltrans. The Ekwill-Fowler Project encroaches within the Right of way of State 217 and therefore the Project is considered a Caltrans Capital Project requiring the adherence to special Caltrans requirements and oversight throughout all phases of Project delivery.
3. SBCAG governs the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding that been programmed for the City's Ekwill-Fowler Project.
4. A large portion of the Ekwill-Fowler Project lies within the California Coastal Commission jurisdiction. Since the City of Goleta does not a have an approved

Coastal Development Plan, the Ekwill-Fowler Project required a coastal permit directly from the Coastal Commission, which issued the permit in early 2018.

Early History and Scope Refinement.

The history of the Ekwill-Fowler Project is long, complex and convoluted. The Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Projects were originally identified in the 1994 County of Santa Barbara's Goleta Community Plan as two separate projects. The two projects were later identified in the County's 1998 Goleta Old Town Revitalization plan.

The original scope of the Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions consisted of two new roads, located south of Hollister Avenue, running east west across Goleta Old Town, connecting State Route 217 on the east to Fairview Avenue on the west.

Implementation of the Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions began in earnest in 1999 after the County had secured State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding. The County began preliminary design and environmental studies but these efforts were severely stalled when the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) objected to the relinquishment of State Route 217 to the County and to the installation of signals at the proposed new intersections of Route 217 with Ekwill Street and Route 217 with Fowler Road.

Many years of attempted compromise with UCSB followed. Compromise efforts included the development of numerous alternatives, the implementation of stakeholder workshops and the hosting of many public meetings. After the City was formed, a project scope acceptable to all stakeholders was formulated and was ultimately approved by the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

Approved Scope

The approved revised scope of the combined projects eliminated the relinquishment of State Route 217 and along with it, the possibility of any signalized intersections on State Route 217. In addition, the scope also added operational improvements at the Hollister Avenue/State Route 217 interchange. The key elements of the Ekwill-Fowler Project originally consisted of:

1. Fowler Road Extension. Extend existing South Street from Kellogg Avenue through to Fairview Avenue, with a roundabout (located within Airport jurisdiction) at the Fowler Road/Fairview Avenue Intersection.
2. Ekwill Street. From Kellogg Avenue through to Fairview Avenue, with a roundabout at the Ekwill Street and Pine Avenue intersection.
3. Hollister Avenue. Operational improvements at the interchange of Hollister Avenue and State Route 217 with the installation of a roundabout at the Hollister Avenue/Southbound State Route 217 intersection and a roundabout at the Hollister Avenue/Northbound State Route 217 intersection.
4. Kellogg Avenue. Widening of Kellogg Avenue to allow additional right turn storage capacity from northbound Kellogg Avenue to eastbound Hollister Avenue.

5. Multi-Use Trail. The Project also installs a 1,000-foot-long segment of the Old San Jose Creek Multi-Use Trail. This improvement is identified in the City of Goleta's General Plan and is planned to extend south and west from the Goleta Valley Community Center along Old San Jose Creek. The trail segment that would be built as part of the project is located between Pine Avenue and Kellogg Way, on the north side of Ekwill Street.

Preliminary Engineering and Environmental

In 2005, the City of Goleta began the preliminary engineering and environmental review of the now combined Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Project.

The completion of the environmental review took longer than usual. This was largely due to the involvement of Caltrans and its insistence on a single joint California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental document. Caltrans, operating as the agent of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), requires NEPA approval because the mix of STIP funding usually includes Federal dollars. By requiring a combined CEQA/NEPA document, the document had to adhere to stricter guidelines and content requirements and multiple reviews by Caltrans. Eventually the City and Caltrans agreed to split the environmental document into a separate City responsible CEQA document and a State responsible NEPA document. At the end of 2011, the City of Goleta certified an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under CEQA and Caltrans certified a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA for the Project.

Following completion of environmental review, the City launched the Final Design, Right-of-Way and Permitting phases of the Project. A contract for final design, permitting, and right of way was awarded to Drake Haglan & Associates after a full Request for Proposals (RFP) selection process.

Final Design

In 2013 final design work began and has progressed steadily to the 95% design level. Currently the 95% design is under review by Caltrans.

In 2017 the scope of the project was reduced such that the Fowler Road extends only from existing South Street at Kellogg Avenue to Technology Drive. The western portion of proposed Fowler Road was eliminated. This decision was made to avoid encroachment into the City of Santa Barbara Airport Runway Protection Zone. This reduction in scope allow the objectives of the Project to remain intact, eliminate any permitting needs from the City of Santa Barbara, and reduce the riparian impacts of the project. This later benefit was instrumental in securing the Coastal Commission permit for the project (see permitting discussion below).

Permitting

The permitting required for the Ekwill-Fowler Project is complex. However, as of March 2018, all permits have been secured.

The City of Goleta does not a have an approved Coastal Development Plan and as a result, all City of Goleta projects within the Coastal Zone must secure a permit directly from the Coastal Commission. The Coastal Commission permit for the Ekwill-Fowler Project entailed a very long drawn out interaction. The City received six "incomplete notices" from the Coastal Commission. In between each "incomplete notification" the City Project team refined the design of the project and/or provided the additional information being requested.

A summary of all permitting secured for the project is listed below:

Required Permits, Notices, and Approvals

Agency/Authority	**Permit/Approval to be Issued**	**Status of Permit/ Approval Application**
City of Goleta	Development Plan, GC 65402 finding, and Land Use Permit	Pending approval of Final EIR
Coastal Commission	Coastal Development Permit	Approved 03/2018
California Department of Fish and Game	Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement	Approved 01/2017
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 water quality certification	Approved 01/2017
US Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit	Approved 05/2017
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	Roadway Encroachment Permit	Scheduled for 03/2020
Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District	Permit or exemption for construction emissions and fugitive dust releases	Pending construction start
California Office of Historic Preservation	Section 106 Consultation	Complete
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Incidental take permit via Section 7 ESA Consultation	Complete
State Water Resources Control Board	Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009 DWQ	Prior to construction

Biological Mitigation Plan

A requirement of the CEQA EIR approved in November of 2011 by the City was the development of a Bio-Mitigation Plan to address the riparian impacts resulting from the construction of the Ekwill-Fowler Project.

The total area of riparian impact due to the Project is 1.49 acres (1.17 acre of permanent impact and 0.32 acre of temporary) To mitigate these riparian impacts the Project has designed mitigation plantings on City owner land that will be implemented as part of the Biological Mitigation Plan. The total mitigation for these impacts is the installation of 4.16 acres native riparian habitat. The mitigation planting area is based on at a ratio of 3:1 (i.e., for every one acre of impact, three acres are planted as mitigation) for the permanent impacts and a ratio of 2:1 (i.e., for every one acre of impact, two acres are planted as mitigation) for the temporary impacts.

This Biological Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (Rincon 2019) is an update to the 2016 Biological Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (AECOM 2016). At that time, the Biological Mitigation and Monitoring Plan included two mitigation sites, Devereux Creek on Ellwood Mesa and a tributary to Devereux Creek adjacent to Santa Barbara Shores Drive. Since January 2017, the City has determined that the mitigation site located at Santa Barbara Shores Drive was no longer viable due to impacts to mature eucalyptus trees. Consequently, this area was eliminated entirely from the plan and in its place two other sites located adjacent to the Project were added. One site is in the Fowler Road Drainage Ditch into Old San Jose Creek, and the second is along Old San Jose Creek at the east end of Ekwill Street. The revised mitigation plan results in no impacts to eucalyptus trees. The plan was finalized in January 2019. The revised plan has been presented to a committee made of up citizens and stakeholders concerned with the welfare of the monarch butterflies and removal of eucalyptus trees. The committee appeared satisfied with the reduced mitigation site on Ellwood Mesa, and the addition of mitigation sites adjacent to the Project. The Bio-Mitigation Plan will be presented to the Planning Commission in April or May of 2019 as an attachment to an EIR Addendum, which is discussed in more detail below.

EIR Addendum

Since approval of the Ekwill-Fowler Project EIR at the end of 2011, the scope of the project has been reduced and the Bio-Mitigation Plan has been completed. The scope reduction, as discussed previously, eliminates the western end of Fowler Road and was made to avoid encroachment into the City of Santa Barbara Airport Runway Protection Zone (RPZ). In addition, updated comprehensive biological surveys were completed in 2016 to confirm that there are no changes to the biological impacts of the Project. Given the age of the original EIR, the project scope change, the completion of updated biological surveys and the Bio-Mitigation Plan, it was considered prudent to prepare an EIR Addendum. The Addendum is scheduled to be presented to the Planning Commission in April or May of 2019 for consideration and approval.

Right-of-Way

The Ekwill-Fowler Project requires considerable property acquisitions to allow construction along the proposed Fowler Road and Ekwill Street corridors. Property acquisition is also required along Hollister Avenue in order to provide space for the two proposed roundabouts.

Since 2015, the City has been engaged in the right of way process consisting of the development of appraisal maps (right-of-way need mapping), appraisals, and settlement negotiations. In some instances, right-of-way has been successfully acquired and in other instances property owners have been resistant to settlement. Consequently, some property acquisitions are still in process.

A summary of the completed and pending acquisitions is shown in the table below:

Acquisition Status	**Count**	**Cost**
Completed Property Acquisitions (APN's)	12	$2,200 K
Pending Property Acquisitions	4	$800 K
Total	**16**	**$3,000 K**

In addition to the acquisitions summarized above, three property dedications for Ekwill Street have been successfully recorded.

Funding

The Ekwill-Fowler Project was originally funded by the County of Santa Barbara through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Funding for all phases of the Project was secured in 1998. This State and Federal STIP funding was transferred to the City of Goleta when the City was incorporated in 2002.

STIP funding for Preliminary Engineering/Environmental as well as for Final Design/Permitting and for the Right-of-Way acquisition phase has been expended. Construction phase STIP funding still remains in the amount of $11.4M.

To supplement the STIP funding the City has been utilizing GTIP (Development Impact Fee) funding. A summary of the funding for the Project is shown below.

Project Phase	**STIP Funding**	**City Funding**	**Total**
Prelim Engineering + Environmental + Design + Permitting + RW Engineering	$3,100 K	$890 K	$4,000 K
Right of Way	$2,200 K	$800 K	$3,000 K
Construction	$11,400 K	$5,600 K	$17,000 K
Total	**$16,700 K**	**$7,290 K**	**$24,000 K**

HOLLISTER AVENUE BRIDGE PROJECT

Purpose and Need:

The existing Hollister Avenue Bridge (HAB) over the San Jose Creek Channel contains reactive aggregate which is causing the structure to deteriorate. In addition, the bridge represents an obstruction to the 100-year storm capacity of the downstream channel. The bridge has been classified by Caltrans as both Structurally Deficient and Functionally Obsolete, and bridge replacement funds have been programmed under the Federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP). The HAB Project will replace the existing structure as well as complete the capacity improvements to San Jose Creek Channel.

Preliminary Engineering and Environmental

In 2013, the City awarded a contract for environmental, design, permitting, and right-of-way to Drake Haglan & Associates after a full RFP selection process. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) under CEQA was approved by the City and Caltrans approved a Categorical Exemption under NEPA.

Final Design

Following environmental approval, in 2016 final design work began and has progressed to the 95% design level.

Permitting

The permitting required for the HAB Project is similar to that required for Ekwill-Fowler Project except that the project is not in the Coastal Zone. Currently, all but one permit has been secured.

A summary of all permitting secured for the project is listed below:

Required Permits, Notices, and Approvals

Agency/Authority	**Permit/Approval to be Issued**	**Status of Permit/ Approval Application**
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement	Pending – anticipated in 2019.
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 water quality certification	Approved 12/2017
US Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit	Approved 05/2017
Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District	Permit or exemption for construction emissions and fugitive dust releases	Pending construction start
California Office of Historic Preservation	Section 106 Consultation	Complete

Agency/Authority	Permit/Approval to be Issued	Status of Permit/ Approval Application
State Water Resources Control Board	Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009 DWQ	Prior to construction

Habitat Restoration Plan

A requirement of the CEQA MND for the HAB project is the development of a Habitat Restoration Plan to address the riparian impacts resulting from the construction of the HAB Project.

The total area of riparian impact due to the HAB project is 0.22 acre (0.19 acre of permanent impact and 0.03 acre of temporary impact). To mitigate these riparian impacts the Project has designed mitigation plantings that will be implemented as part of the Habitat Restoration Plan. The mitigation for these impacts is the installation of 0.41 acres of native riparian habitat. The mitigation planting area is based on at a ratio of 3:1 (i.e., for every one acre of impact, three acres are planted as mitigation) for the permanent impacts and a ratio of 2:1 (i.e., for every one acre of impact, three acres are planted as mitigation) for the temporary impacts.

The Habitat Restoration Plan was completed in draft form in 2017. The site of the proposed restoration area is located along the east side of San Jose Creek immediately north of Hollister Avenue. The location is preferable given its proximity to the project as well as being located along the natural San Jose Creek.

The Habitat Restoration Plan has not been finalized because right-of-way approvals are required from property owners.

Right-of-Way

The HAB Project requires considerable property acquisitions to accommodate the wider bridge and the completion of the channel capacity improvements along the upper reaches of the San Jose Creek Channel.

Since 2016, the City has been engaged in the right-of-way process consisting of the development of appraisal maps (right of way need mapping), appraisals, and settlement negotiations. There are a total of five separate property acquisitions required which include permanent takes and temporary construction easements (TCE). Unfortunately, for all the properties required, negotiations to acquire them have not been successful. Nevertheless, City staff will continues negotiate with the property owners and will be reporting back to the Council on a course of action.

Funding

The HAB Project is funded through the Highway Bridge Program (HBP). This program is a Federal program whereby 88.53% of the cost of all phases of the project are reimbursed by Federal funds and the remaining 11.47% is funded by the City.

A summary of the funding for the Project is shown below.

Project Phase	**HBP Federal**	**City Funding**	**Total**
Prelim Engineering + Environmental + Design + Permitting + RW Engineering	$1,875 K	$243 K	$2,118 K
Right of Way	$1,257 K	$163 K	$1,420 K
Construction	$12,359 K	$1,601 K	$13,960 K
Total	**$15,491 K**	**$2,007 K**	**$17,498 K**

PATH FORWARD – Ekwill-Fowler Project + Hollister Avenue Bridge Project

As described at the beginning of this report, the Ekwill-Fowler Project and the Hollister Avenue Bridge Project overlap each other along Hollister Avenue near the Hollister Avenue intersection with the southbound ramps of State Route 217. This overlap has prompted the decision to construct the two projects under a single construction contract and thereby benefit from economy of scale and minimize the duration of disruption and lane closures along Hollister Avenue during construction.

Both projects are at the 95% design stage, have secured all but one of the required permits, and are both in the midst of the right-of-way acquisition process. The path forward towards construction of the combined Ekwill-Fowler + HAB Project is described below.

Milestones	**Date**
Finalize Design Package for a single Construction Bid Package	August 2019
Secure Remaining Right of Way	August 2019
Secure Obligation for HAB HBP Federal Construction Funding	September 2019
Secure Obligation for STIP Construction Funding	July 2020
Advertise for Construction	September 2020
Start Construction	December 2020
Complete Construction	End of 2023

Staff will continue to keep Council abreast of any substantive changes to the Project schedule.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with the status report update on the City's Ekwill Street and Fowler Road Extensions Project (9002) and the Hollister Avenue Bridge Project (9033) at this time.

Legal Review By:

Michael Jenkins
City Attorney

Approved By:

Michelle Greene
City Manager