



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 22-868

MEETING DATE: 11/1/2022

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Al Zelinka, City Manager

VIA: Ursula Luna-Reynosa, Director of Community Development

PREPARED BY: Ursula Luna-Reynosa, Director of Community Development

Subject:

Receive and File the Main Street Streetscape Schematic Design and Direct Staff to Proceed to Design Development Drawings

Statement of Issue:

As part of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the City Council authorized a temporary closure of the second block of Main Street to vehicular traffic and allowed businesses to expand into the right-of-way. This closure has been in effect for over two years and has received favorable community response. On November 16, 2021 the City Council directed staff to move forward with construction documents for Main Street reconfiguration and to check in with the City Council at the next critical milestone.

Financial Impact:

The cost of the contract to prepare the schematic design is \$98,500, which amount has already been appropriated. The cost to move forward to Design Development Drawings is an additional, estimated, \$300,000. Should the City Council direct staff to commence with Design Development Drawings, a proposal will be solicited to determine an exact, not-to-exceed amount. A total of \$1,750,000 in HB Recovery Funds is included in the FY2022/23 CIP Budget in Fund 314 for this effort.

Recommended Action:

Receive and file the Main Street Streetscape Schematic Design and direct staff to proceed to Design Development Drawings

Alternative Action(s):

Do not move forward with the recommended action and provide alternative direction to staff.

Analysis:

Background

On July 6, 2020 the City Council approved a temporary closure of the second block of Main Street to vehicular traffic to accommodate outdoor dining and retail in the public right of way as a pandemic response. On September 8, 2020, the City Council authorized the City Manager to continue the temporary closure of the second block. Studio One Eleven was retained in March of 2021 to further refine some connectivity ideas developed by RSM Design which focused on connectivity strategies between Main Street and the resorts to the southeast. Studio One Eleven was also tasked with studying Main Street, as part of the COVID-19 response to the second block closure, and recommending permanent options for consideration.

On November 16, 2021 Studio One Eleven presented to the City Council two reconfigurations of Main Street; option one, a Plaza Scheme, and option two, a One-Way Flex Scheme. The City Council selected the Plaza Scheme and directed staff to move forward with preparing Construction Drawings. The City Council further directed that the temporary closure of the second block of Main Street be continued until either 1) the City Council decides not to proceed with a reconfiguration of Main Street or 2) commencement of Main Street reconfiguration improvements. See attached staff report (Attachment 1) for additional details.

Due to the length of time associated with the design and bid process, commencement of construction is likely not to start until Fall/Winter of 2023. Staff acknowledges that discussions related to cleanliness, maintenance, and rent with the second block businesses must ensue to determine a better system during the temporary/ transition period. Development of temporary design guidelines are also needed. Staff anticipates commencing such discussions immediately should the City Council direct staff to proceed to Design Development Documents.

Finalizing the contract with Studio One Eleven for the Schematic Design Phase took some time because, initially, ARPA funds were going to be used for this effort which required a Federal procurement process. As part of the FY 22-23 approved budget, HB Recovery dollars were made available for this effort instead and a contract was executed in July of 2022. Around the start of the new fiscal year, City Manager Al Zelinka commenced employment with the City and shared his vast experience with placemaking and community engagement. Mr. Zelinka's insights and leadership spearheaded a robust community engagement process dubbed *Downtown Dreamin'*.

Community Engagement

Downtown Dreamin' commenced with storytelling sessions where community members were able to share their personal experiences and observations related to Huntington Beach's history, culture, heritage, and environment. Participants were asked to identify canvases in downtown (e.g. walls, sidewalks, trash cans, landscaping, etc.) and think about how their stories can be incorporated through those canvases to create an authentic downtown environment that is truly reflective of Huntington Beach. Additional input was solicited through a pop-up booth at Surf City Nights. The community was also invited to participate and provide feedback through facilitated walk about sessions. An overview of this outreach follows:

“Share Your Downtown Story” Sessions

Main Street Library

- August 29th
- September 12, 1:30pm - 3:30 pm

- September 19, 5:00pm - 7:00 pm
- September 26th from 5:00pm - 7:00pm

50 residents and business owners participated

Pop-Up Booth at Surf City Nights

September 13, 5:00pm - 9:00 pm

Many people stopped by the booth and 90 participants voted on their favorite “look” for Main Street

Main Street Walkabout

- September 14, 10:00am - 12:00pm
- September 14, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

38 residents and business owners participated

Downtown Dreamin’ Input Recap

Main Street Library & Zoom

October 3, 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Approximately 25 residents and business owners participated

Key story themes, among others, included surfing, Golden Bear, 4th of July, and Bolsa Chica. A myriad of suggested improvements from surfboard and bike storage to clean restrooms were suggested. A complete list of themes and suggested improvements are included in the attached presentation. Other important considerations include:

- Maintenance and Cleanliness
- Address Safety & Homelessness through Design
- Flexibility in design
- Accessibility
- Inclusiveness-Downtown for All
- Family friendly
- Dog areas
- Shade trees
- Outdoor Dining
- Connectivity-Between Elsewhere in the City and Downtown, and Downtown to Hotels, etc.

A matrix summarizing all of the outreach that has been conducted is attached (Attachment 2).

Schematic Design

The input received highlighted certain opportunities that have influenced design decisions. The Schematic Design is more focused on the layout of the street (i.e. drainage, hardscape, landscape, etc.) and how the street will function (i.e. transitions from storefronts to sidewalks, private dining areas, flex space/ plaza area, parking, etc.). Opportunities and rough concepts will be presented as part of the schematic design but it is during the design development phase that a much more detailed set of drawings and a specification book will be prepared. There will be additional opportunities to refine the rough concepts into plans and incorporate input from the *Downtown Dreamin’* sessions as it relates to street furniture, colors, hardscape, landscape, lighting, signage etc.

The attached presentation (Attachment 3) includes renderings to illustrate the Schematic Design. Generally, the Schematic Design includes streetscape improvements for both the north and south sides of the first three blocks of Main Street. The Schematic Design proposes unifying elements via hardscape, landscape, and lighting to create a cohesiveness between the three blocks.

Private, outdoor dining opportunities on public right-of-way (i.e. sidewalks) have been moved to be adjacent to the storefronts in alignment with Section 3.2.24.2 of the Downtown Specific Plan. Such placement will allow restaurant owners to better service their outdoor dining without having to compete with pedestrians to utilize sidewalks. It is typical, in many cities, that such encroachment is limited to no more than five feet from building face. The Schematic Design is allowing for a ten foot encroachment. It will be up to the private businesses to determine if they desire to have outdoor dining and it will be up to each business to improve the space per outdoor dining guidelines that are yet to be drafted. Also, each business will go through a permit process to allow outdoor dining and encroachment into the public right-of-way. There are a handful of businesses that have Conditional Use Permits (CUP's) for their existing outdoor dining. Staff will have individual conversations with each of those business owners to discuss their willingness to amend their entitlements. At a later date, staff will bring outdoor dining guidelines with a proposed rental rate to City Council for consideration.

Efforts to afford outdoor dining opportunities for all three blocks have been incorporated at the expense of on-street parking. The Schematic Design proposes to lose 21-45 on-street parking spaces, depending on programming considerations. However, a survey of new on-street parking opportunities has resulted in optimism that a one-for-one replacement can be accommodated within a 410 foot radius of the lost spaces. Additional refinement of these new opportunities will be pursued.

The second block has been designed as a plaza/ flex space with a zero curb (i.e. the sidewalk and street are at the same grade so there is no curb). Once the areas designated for private outdoor dining, sidewalk, and landscaping are taken into account, 24 feet remain for the plaza/flex space. In addition to a distinct and contrasting pavement scheme, this flex area will be further delineated by landscaping, bollards, truncated domes and other such mechanisms. This block can be shut off to vehicular traffic by bollards. In such instances the area can be "furnished" with modular furniture to allow for communal dining and recreational spaces. When the street is closed to vehicular traffic, it can be cleared for events such as a downtown concert or farmers market. Alternatively, the retractable bollards can be dropped so that the street can accommodate vehicles. This flexibility allows for special events such as the 4th of July parade or a classic car cruiser show. It also enables the street to be opened to vehicular traffic and parking during certain times of year, such as off-peak season, if the closure isn't appropriate year round.

Next Steps

Should the City Council direct staff to proceed to Design Development Documents staff will solicit a proposal for a not to exceed cost and amend the contract with Studio One Eleven to incorporate the new scope and associated price. Additional community engagement opportunities will be incorporated into this phase. Simultaneously, staff will work on: 1) refining the replacement parking options that have been identified, 2) reviewing the Downtown Specific Plan to identify any necessary amendments which will require a Local Coastal Program Amendment, 3) establishing temporary outdoor dining design guidelines, 4) engaging in discussions with business owners that are currently

operating outdoor dining areas under the Temporary Emergency Use Permits regarding implementing the temporary guidelines and establishing cleaning and maintenance protocols during the transition, 5) creating permanent outdoor dining guidelines, and associated permit and encroachment process (including the establishment of rent), and 6) engaging in discussions with business owners that have CUP's for outdoor dining about amending their CUP's to accommodate the proposed schematic design.

During Design Development, staff will meet with the Ad Hoc Committee periodically with status updates. At the conclusion of this phase, staff will present the Design Development Documents and Specifications to the entire City Council with an updated Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost estimate and will request direction to move forward to the final phase of design which includes a complete set of drawings and specifications (i.e. construction documents). If the City Council approves the construction documents, staff will seek direction from the City Council to solicit bids to construct the improvements.

Environmental Status:

Pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, CEQA does not apply to this action because it will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and it is not a "project" pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines. A future project contemplating the reconfiguration of a portion of Main Street may be considered in the future. Environmental analysis will be conducted prior to awarding a construction contract to construct such improvements.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Infrastructure & Parks

Attachment(s):

1. November 16, 2021 Staff Report (Plaza Scheme Selection)
2. Outreach Matrix
3. November 1, 2022 Main Street Streetscape Schematic Design Presentation