



## **Amador County Four Bridges Replacement Project**

### **Fiddletown Road Bridge Meeting**

Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

6:30 – 7:45pm

Fiddletown Lending Library

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## **Property Owner Meeting Summary**

### **Meeting Purpose and Objective:**

The Amador County Department of Transportation and Public Works is currently undertaking the environmental clearance and engineering design for the replacement of four bridges within the County including: Fiddletown Road Bridge over North Fork Dry Creek, Bunker Hill Road Bridge at Rancheria Creek, Old Amador Road Bridge at Rancheria Creek, and Bell Road Bridge at Big Indian Creek.

The County and the project team hosted a meeting with property owners adjacent to the Fiddletown Road Bridge to share information about the project and address potential issues and concerns.

### **Attendees:**

- Russell and Jeanine Peterson
- Anne Soule
- Denver and Margie Strauss
- Brandi White
- Nancy Germolis
- Steven and Carol Wilson
- Elida Malick

### **Project team members:**

- Barbara Belvoir, Amador County
- Dennis Haglan, Drake Haglan & Associates
- Matt Lampa, Drake Haglan & Associates
- Jenny Hildebrandt, Drake Haglan & Associates
- Gladys Cornell, AIM Consulting
- Chris Aguirre, AIM Consulting

### **Project Overview:**

Dennis Haglan, Drake Haglan & Associates Project Manager, provided an overview of the project. Amador County is in the process of replacing four bridges that are considered structurally deficient and/or functionally obsolete (too narrow). The current project phase includes environmental clearance and engineering design.



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### Fiddletown Road Bridge

Due to anticipated community impacts during construction, the County and the project team hosted a meeting with property owners adjacent to the Fiddletown Road Bridge to share information about the project and address potential issues and concerns.

The current width of the Fiddletown Road Bridge is 16' wide with two traffic lanes and by Caltrans and AASHTO (national) design standards is determined to be too narrow to adequately serve the major collector road (Fiddletown Road). The project team is proposing a new bridge with a width of approximately 38'; it would include two 12' lanes and two 6' shoulders and barrier rails. County and AASHTO standards may allow for a narrower bridge; however pedestrian safety and ADA are issues that need to be considered. As the design progresses, the project team will be exploring options to making traffic lanes and shoulders more narrow. Dennis provided attendees the details below regarding the construction of the bridge:

### Bridge Construction:

Dennis Haglan provided an overview of the proposed bridge construction process and timeline. Dennis explained that the preferred 2-way uncontrolled detour would grade a section adjacent to the bridge to create two lanes. A one lane controlled detour to lessen the amount of impact was mentioned as well. Another option would be a one lane traffic control over the bridge to do a staged construction, but would take longer to construct. The project will take around five months to construct if either of the detour options is implemented and nine months if the staged option is used. Dennis presented a number of options/pictures for the railing in order to make the bridge more aesthetically pleasing and fit into the natural landscape of the area.

### *Following the discussion, questions and comments included:*

- Attendees expressed concern that a higher weight limit on the bridge may result in more commercial traffic or logging trucks.
- The current detour route would possibly affect one resident's property, which would travel over a septic tank, horse corral, and existing portion of a stacked rock wall. In addition, questions were raised about private property being restored back to original condition following construction.
  - o The project team will be completing additional analysis to evaluate potential impacts to adjacent property owners. Any property that is impacted by construction will be restored to match its original condition as closely as possible, e.g. trees removed could be replaced by mature trees; the stacked rock wall could be removed and then reconstructed in its original location.
- Questions were raised regarding the possibility of designing a one lane bridge.



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- The project team noted that Caltrans will not approve a one lane bridge in this location based upon AASHTO standards for a two lane major collector roadway and also because it currently is a 2 lane bridge.

### Community Considerations:

The project team explained community considerations that will be taken into account during design and construction:

#### *Traffic Safety*

- Property owners expressed the current problem of motorists who excessively speed within the area. Concerns were raised that a wider bridge may cause even faster speeds.
- Concerns were expressed that it would be difficult to force CHP to enforce the speed limit and the attendees felt the County needed to include measures in the design to reduce speeding.
  - Barbara Belvoir provided some background on the need for a speed survey, which the Amador County Board of Supervisors is in the process of approving.
- Residents mentioned putting in a stop sign near the entrance into town and/or over the bridge.
  - The project team explained the difficulty of getting stop signs installed due to traffic counts likely being too low to warrant a stop sign.
- Residents inquired about building a covered bridge as a speed calming approach – a covered bridge with a 25 MPH flashing sign was put forward as an option, which creates a perceived lack of space.
  - Drake Haglan will further explore the covered bridge option, and consider the size and height of the bridge since it may not be that aesthetically pleasing if too tall. In addition, Dennis reiterated the covered bridge option would be a significant increase in the project cost, and would require Caltrans and County approval due to the project funding requirements.

#### *Traffic calming*

Dennis Haglan presented a number of options that may help to minimize speeding, which included rumble strips and/ or pavement markers, traverse lane markings, pavement markings, posted speed signs, and advanced warning signs.

#### *Following the discussion, questions and comments included:*

- Residents mentioned the need to place the 'speed zone ahead' signs before the curve.
- Participants felt that rumble strips (bumpies) would be effective, but noise needs to be considered.
- Residents felt that flashing speed signs and advance speed zone signs would be effective.
- Participant brought up the 25 MPH speed bumps and the effectiveness of them.



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- Speed bumps through town were brought up as an effective option to slow traffic.
  - o The project team explained that speed bumps would pose a safety hazard to motorists on a facility such as Fiddletown Road. Motorists unfamiliar with the roadway could hit the speed bumps at excessive speed, causing them to leave the roadway. In addition, speed bumps through town were outside the scope of the bridge project and needs to be brought up at the county level

### *Access and staging*

#### *Following the discussion, questions and comments included:*

- Access to residents' property was brought up as a concern; residents need access at all times near the construction site in order to care for horses and receive propane.
- Concern about workers parking in and around stables was brought up by a resident; several residents were willing to offer up areas on their property to designate for parking construction staging as long as they're compensated for such.

### *Construction impacts*

Dennis discussed the construction process and potential impacts:

- Workers would be present during normal working hours and would comply with noise and dust standards.
- There will be no pile driving.
- The project team will further investigate the limits of a potential mine shaft on the Peterson property.
- Removing existing bridge should be done fairly quickly, but will be rather noisy.
- Construction below the high water mark can only occur between July and October; the project team is proposing a pre-cast bridge that will expedite the construction phase.
- Environmental review is underway with a proposed construction start date of Spring of 2015.

#### *Following the discussion, questions and comments included:*

- Residents brought up concerns about dust within the home and dust/dirt in one resident's pool.
  - o Dennis explained that specifications will be stated in order to assure tools are properly stored, generator noise is minimized, creek water is minimally affected, prevent workers from leaving trash, being noisy, controlling dust, etc. Construction Best Management Practices will be implemented and monitored by the Construction Manager hired by the County.
- Participant brought up the need to reset the existing fiber optic lines after construction.
  - o Barbara Belvoir explained that pull boxes on each side of the bridge have been placed in order to reset the lines upon the completion of the new bridge.



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**Action items and next steps**

- The project team will research the effectiveness of the traffic calming approaches and report back to the group.
- The project team may invite Caltrans to the next meeting in order to hear directly from affected community/property owners.
- The project team will explore the feasibility of a covered bridge and report back on the results, such as aesthetics, necessary height, and how it would fit into the surrounding landscape.

**Comment cards**

In addition to the discussion during the meeting comment cards were passed out for participants to fill out and mail back or hand in at the meeting. Below are the comments from the cards received (capitalization and underlined were present on the comment cards):

- Let's try a covered bridge – and or speed bumps. Our concern is keeping the SPEED DOWN!
- Major concern of SPEED of traffic. The current bridge actually slows vehicles down. With wider bridge I know the traffic will speed up even more. Please consider a covered bridge: the average driver will slow down for a covered bridge for 2 reasons: aesthetic and perception of the closed area

For more information and to provide input

Visit [www.co.amador.ca.us](http://www.co.amador.ca.us), scroll over the Departments tab and select 'Transportation and Public Works' or send general inquiries and comments via e-mail to [publicworks@amadorgov.org](mailto:publicworks@amadorgov.org).