

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: April 9, 2026

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Grand Avenue Pathway – Conceptual Design and Cost Estimate

Recommended Action: Receive the conceptual design and cost estimate for the Grand Avenue Pathway and provide direction on next steps.

Background: On October 23, 2025, the City Council reviewed findings completed by Pacific Crest Engineering regarding bluff erosion along Grand Avenue and discussed options for maintaining a safe pedestrian route. The report confirmed that bluff retreat is ongoing and will continue to impact the pathway over time. A relocated alignment set further inland may provide a temporary solution, estimated by Pacific Crest Engineering to be between one and ten years (Attachment 3); however, long-term stability cannot be assured.

Following that discussion, Council authorized the preparation of a conceptual design to evaluate feasibility, constraints, and cost. SSA Landscape Architects has completed a conceptual site plan and updated cost estimate for a pathway between Oakland Avenue and Central Avenue.

Discussion: The conceptual design proposes a relocated pathway shifted inland from the bluff edge to the extent feasible, generally maintaining a setback consistent with geotechnical recommendations. The pathway would be reconstructed with asphalt paving and limited concrete improvements, including curb, gutter, and drainage features. Soil/cement stabilization is included in select areas to improve subgrade conditions. Construction near the bluff would be performed by hand to minimize disturbance and reduce the risk of slope instability. Existing utilities would remain in place, and selective removal of vegetation and site features would be required to accommodate the alignment.

The geotechnical evaluation identified variability in bluff conditions along the corridor. For purposes of this project, the pathway can be generally described in two segments: Oakland Avenue to Saxon Avenue (western segment) and Saxon Avenue to Central Avenue (eastern segment). The western segment is subject to more active erosion and reduced setback from the bluff edge, while the eastern segment is comparatively more stable with greater separation from the bluff in some areas. The conceptual design applies a consistent approach along the full length of the pathway; however, the level of risk and expected service life of improvements may vary by segment.

Consistent with prior geotechnical findings, the proposed improvements represent an interim solution with a limited expected service life due to ongoing erosion.

SSA has provided a conceptual-level construction cost estimate for the proposed improvements, summarized below:

Category	Estimated Cost
Temporary Facilities, SWPPP, and Field Engineering	\$29,600
Selective Demolition	\$26,525
Site Clearing	\$7,749
Asphalt Paving	\$38,040
Concrete Improvements (curb, gutter, stabilization)	\$60,846
Direct Construction Subtotal	\$162,760

General Conditions (10%)	\$16,276
Contractor Overhead & Profit (15%)	\$24,414
Construction Contingency (10%)	\$16,276
Bonds & Insurance (2%)	\$3,255
Total Estimated Construction Cost	\$222,981

Selective demolition includes the removal of existing paving, vegetation, fencing, and site features, as well as an allowance for unforeseen conditions. This also reflects the removal of improvements and encroachments within the public right-of-way that have accumulated over time. Costs are influenced by restricted access, the need for hand work near the bluff, and coordination with existing site constraints.

The construction estimate does not include full project delivery costs. Based on SSA's proposal, additional costs include preparation of construction documents, construction administration, and related expenses, which are approximately \$32,000. Additional costs not yet quantified include environmental review (CEQA), Coastal permitting, and City staff time. The conceptual design has been prepared based on existing geotechnical analysis and topographic survey completed as part of Phase 1. Depending on final design and Coastal permitting requirements, supplemental geotechnical input or survey refinement may be required; however, those needs would be determined in subsequent phases.

A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) will be required for either the reconstruction of the pathway or formal closure. Coastal review will consider bluff stability, public access, and environmental impacts. The ongoing rate of erosion, as discussed at the October 2025 Council meeting, will be a key factor in permitting and feasibility.

External funding opportunities for this type of coastal bluff-top pathway project are limited. The project does not clearly align with typical state or federal grant programs, particularly given the interim nature of the improvements. Implementation would likely rely on local funding sources.

Fiscal Impact: There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with receiving this report.

Implementation of the project would require a total capital investment of approximately \$250,000 to \$275,000 for construction,

design, permitting, environmental review, and project delivery. The project is not well-suited to external grant funding and would likely require local funding sources.

Attachments:

1. Conceptual Site Plan
2. Preliminary Cost Estimate
3. Pacific Crest Geological Investigation (October 2025)

Alignment with 2025-2029 Strategic Plan Priority: Healthy Families, Community, and Environment; Sustainable Infrastructure

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