

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: December 11, 2025

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Phase 1 Conceptual Design – Grand Avenue Pathway

Recommended Action: Authorize the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with SSA Landscape Architects, Inc. for Phase 1 Conceptual Design of the Grand Avenue Pathway in an amount not to exceed \$13,000, with funding from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund. *(Continued from November 13, 2025, City Council meeting)*

Background: On October 23, 2025, the City Council reviewed the findings of the Pacific Crest Engineering report and discussed options for restoring a safe pedestrian route along Grand Avenue. The report confirmed that ongoing bluff retreat and drainage issues continue to threaten the existing pathway but indicated a relocated and narrower alignment, set as far inland as possible, could provide an interim public access solution with an expected usable life of several years.

Following that discussion, staff obtained a proposal from SSA Landscape Architects, Inc., a firm with experience in coastal access and pathway design. The proposal outlines a phased approach, with Phase 1 consisting of conceptual alignment work, basic grading considerations, and a preliminary cost estimate. Council first considered the contract on November 13, 2025, but continued the item to December 11 to allow for updated information on available funding, sales tax performance, and a legal evaluation of potential liability.

On November 13, staff prepared this item for Council consideration. The City Council voted to continue this item and requested that staff return with an updated assessment of sales tax.

Discussion:

Consultant Scope

To advance this effort, staff obtained a proposal from SSA Landscape Architects, Inc., a firm experienced in public access projects, including pathway design that integrates grading and drainage coordination. SSA's proposal (Attachment 1) includes a phased scope for design, permitting, and construction support.

Phase 1 – Conceptual Design will include the following:

- Kick-off meeting with staff to review goals and site conditions
- Topographic survey and preparation of a base map
- Development of initial pathway alignment, configuration, and materials
- Consideration of existing safety fencing and drainage improvements
- Final Conceptual Site Plan and Construction Cost Estimate

The consultant's fee for Phase 1 is \$13,000, inclusive of reimbursable expenses. Work under this phase is anticipated to take approximately 8–10 weeks from the date of authorization.

Future phases (construction documents, permitting support, and construction administration) are identified in SSA's proposal for reference but would return to Council future consideration once the conceptual design is complete.

Fiscal Impact: Council requested that staff return with an updated assessment of sales tax performance before committing additional capital funds. Current-year sales tax revenues are tracking close to budget expectations with no significant overages or shortfalls identified. Based on present information, staff does

not anticipate reductions to the existing CIP. Any new capital commitments, including this project, should continue to rely on reallocations within the CIP rather than additional General Fund contributions.

Authorizing Phase 1 requires \$13,000, which can be funded through reallocations within the Capital Improvement Program Fund, using reallocations from several existing projects identified as Council priorities during the FY 2025–26 budget development. If Council chooses to proceed with the full design effort, up to \$47,000 will be needed and can similarly be supported through CIP reallocations. No General Fund impact is expected.

Staff is proposing the existing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) project at the west end of Stockton Bridge will remain unchanged, as it is a capital purchase. The Park Avenue project funds have been expended to cover a \$98,069.25 change order for bicycle safety striping under the annual Pavement Management Project and an upcoming purchase of a speed feedback sign for approximately \$25,000.

The original reallocations proposed as summarized below:

Funding Source	Current Budget	Proposed Amendment	Net Difference
RRFB	\$10,000	No Change	---
Esplanade Park	\$50,000	\$39,200	(-) \$10,800
Park Avenue	\$60,000	No Change	---
Monterey Park Playground	\$10,000	\$7,800	(-) \$2,200
Economic Development	\$20,000	No Change	---
Grand Avenue Pathway (NEW)	\$0	\$13,000	(+) \$13,000
Total	\$150,000		

Additional possible non-CIP funding sources:

Funding Source	Available Funding
City Councilmember Training Budget	\$15,000
Employee Down Payment Assistance	\$18,500 – original allocation was \$100k. \$81,500 loan issued
Contingency Reserve	Currently below funding target
Emergency Reserve	Currently below funding target
Facilities Reserve	Currently below funding target
General Fund Balance	Currently below target balance

Attachments:

1. SSA Landscape Architects Proposal – Grand Avenue Pathway Renovation (November 3, 2025)

Report Prepared By: Jessica Kahn, Public Works Director

Reviewed By: Julia Gautho, City Clerk; Jim Malberg, Administrative Services Director; Marc Tran, City Attorney

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager