Capitola City Council

Agenda Report

Meeting: September 10, 2026

From: Public Works Department

Subject: Stockton Avenue Bridge and Soquel Creek Implementation Update

Recommended Action: 1) Receive an update regarding implementation of the City Council's August 27, 2026, direction, including the bridge preservation and project-development solicitation, continued community outreach, and the annual Soquel Creek inspection and coordination; and 2) provide direction regarding whether staff should continue developing the Caltrans-recommended polyester concrete overlay and return with a revised funding request, or pursue a methacrylate deck treatment as a lower-cost interim maintenance measure.

Background: On August 27, 2026, the City Council directed staff to: 1) immediately proceed with obtaining bids for the Caltrans-recommended polyester concrete overlay and related preventative maintenance, with a construction amount not to exceed $150,000 and a goal of completion before winter; 2) develop a plan to rebuild and preserve the existing bridge, including debris mitigation; 3) issue a solicitation emphasizing bridge rehabilitation, historic preservation, retrofitting, Caltrans project development, and funding expertise; 4) continue community outreach and provide monthly updates; and 5) inspect the Soquel Creek corridor, coordinate with appropriate agencies and property owners, and provide a written follow-up report. The complete motion is included in the August 27, 2026, City Council meeting minutes, scheduled for approval on September 10, 2026.

Discussion: Staff is proceeding with components two through five of the motion and has obtained preliminary scope and cost information regarding component one. Because the near-term maintenance work and longer-term bridge planning effort require different technical scopes and procurement schedules, staff is advancing them separately.

At the August 27 meeting, Council discussed completing the near-term maintenance project under an emergency authorization. Given the nature of the directed work and the existing bridge inspections and findings, using an emergency declaration for project bidding may be subject to challenge.

Caltrans-recommended Preventative Maintenance: Before the City can solicit construction bids, a qualified bridge engineer must evaluate the proposed maintenance work and prepare bid-ready plans, specifications, and an estimate. Caltrans' inspection recommendation identifies the general maintenance treatment, but it is not a construction design or complete bid package. City staff can administer the procurement and construction contract, but staff does not have the specialized bridge-engineering expertise necessary to establish the detailed repair limits and technical requirements.

At a minimum, the construction documents must address the limits and depth of deck repairs; removal and surface-preparation requirements; treatment of deteriorated concrete and reinforcing steel encountered during the work; material and installation requirements; traffic control and construction sequencing; access and environmental constraints; quality-control testing; and construction inspection and acceptance criteria. These details are necessary to protect public safety, obtain comparable bids, and give the City an enforceable basis for administering the construction contract and evaluating changed conditions.

Retaining a design professional to develop this limited maintenance project is consistent with the City's standard approach to specialized public works construction. For example, the City retained a consultant to develop the 41st Avenue project design and construction documents for work involving Caltrans right-of-way even after the general improvement concept had been established. The same project-

development step is appropriate here because the work will be performed on a bridge and the construction bid package must be prepared correctly.

Staff is seeking an expedited proposal from qualified bridge engineers. As of preparation of this report, staff has received one engineering proposal presenting two potential maintenance approaches and continues to solicit additional proposals. Updated information may be provided at the meeting. Both maintenance approaches include a site review, verification of repair quantities, and preparation of bid-ready plans, specifications, and an engineer's estimate.

- Polyester concrete overlay: This is the treatment recommended in the most recent Caltrans bridge inspection report. It would place a new protective surface over the existing deck, providing greater protection but not fully restoring or replacing the deck. The work would require an updated load rating to evaluate the added weight of the overlay, replacement of the existing joint assemblies, modifications to utility openings in the deck, and approach work to transition to the raised deck surface. The proposal estimates approximately $126,000 for engineering services, including design, bid support, and engineering support during construction. The preliminary construction estimate is approximately $284,000 and does not include traffic control or approach-roadway work. Construction inspection and materials testing are also excluded and would need to be provided separately. Given the additional structural analysis, design coordination, bidding, and construction required, completion before winter appears unlikely.

- Methacrylate deck treatment: The engineer identified this as a lower-cost interim alternative if the City intends to pursue a more comprehensive rehabilitation project that may ultimately include replacement of the existing deck in the future. The treatment would seal the deck surface to help slow further deterioration until that larger project can be completed, but it would not restore the deck. The anticipated work generally includes deck treatment, joint-seal work, localized approach repairs, traffic control, and pavement delineation. The proposal estimates approximately $72,000 for engineering services, including design, bid support, and engineering support during construction. The preliminary construction estimate is approximately $100,000 and does not include traffic control or approach-roadway work. Construction inspection and materials testing are also excluded and would need to be provided separately. Because this option requires less extensive design and construction, completion before winter may be possible, although the schedule cannot yet be confirmed.

The Council's August 27 motion authorized a construction amount not to exceed $150,000. The preliminary project cost estimate for the polyester concrete overlay is approximately $410,000 and excludes traffic control and approach-roadway work.

The preliminary cost estimate for the methacrylate treatment is approximately $172,000, also excluding traffic control and approach-roadway work.

Final construction costs cannot be confirmed until the scope is finalized and competitive bids are received for either project.

The methacrylate treatment would be an interim preservation measure and differs from the Caltrans-recommended polyester concrete overlay specifically identified in the Council's direction. Staff is therefore requesting Council direction regarding whether to continue developing the polyester overlay and return with a revised funding request, or instead proceed with development of the methacrylate treatment as a lower-cost interim measure. Updated proposal information may be presented at the meeting.

Bridge Preservation, Project Development, Outreach, and Reporting: Staff will issue a competitive request for proposals/qualifications (RFP/Q) for a qualified bridge-consulting team to address components two through four of the Council's August 27th direction. The solicitation will emphasize demonstrated experience in bridge rehabilitation, historic bridge preservation and retrofitting, the Caltrans local-assistance process, and identification and pursuit of state and federal funding.

Per Council direction, the consultant scope will include development of a plan to retrofit and preserve the existing Stockton Avenue Bridge; evaluation of appropriate debris-mitigation measures; a project-development and funding strategy; support for meaningful community outreach; and technical information to support the City's monthly updates to the Council. The work will be structured so that future engineering, environmental, funding, and Council decision points are clearly identified.

Staff intends to release the RFP/Q in early September. Following proposal review, consultant interviews (if needed), and scope and fee negotiations, staff anticipates returning to the City Council with a recommended contract in late October or early November 2026.

Soquel Creek Inspection and Pre-Winter Coordination: Public Works staff conducts inspection and maintenance coordination along the Soquel Creek corridor each year in advance of the winter rainy season. Staff will complete this year's inspection during September and coordinate, as appropriate, with other agencies and property owners regarding trees, brush, vegetation, or other debris that could obstruct creek flow or create a potential hazard.

Any work will be limited to actions that are legally permissible, environmentally appropriate, and within the authority of the City or the responsible property owner or agency. Staff will prepare a written follow-up report for the City Council identifying the inspection findings, recommended actions, work completed, and any remaining work or coordination required.

Fiscal Impact: The August 27th motion authorized up to $150,000 for the bridge maintenance construction work, with funding from available remaining Reposa Paving Project funds and, if necessary, from the Emergency Reserve Fund.

The preliminary project cost estimate for the polyester concrete overlay is approximately $410,000 and excludes traffic control and approach-roadway work.

The preliminary cost estimate for the methacrylate treatment is approximately $172,000, also excluding traffic control and approach-roadway work.

If Council directs staff to continue developing either project, staff will return with the necessary funding request as cost estimates are refined.

The cost of the broader bridge consulting contract will be presented separately following the RFP/Q process. Routine creek inspection activities are included within the adopted Public Works operating budget; any substantial work identified would be separately evaluated for responsibility, permitting, and funding.

Alignment with 2025-2029 Strategic Plan Priority: Community Safety; Sustainable Infrastructure

Report Prepared By: Jessica Kahn, P.E., Public Works Director

Reviewed By: Julia Gautho, City Clerk; Marc Tran, City Attorney

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager