




MEMO TO: Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee

FROM: Paul D'Andrea, P.E. Capital Projects Engineer

THROUGH: Shawn O'Leary, P.E., CFM, Director of Public Works 

DATE: January 27, 2022

SUBJECT: James Garner Avenue Project, Phase 2 Project Aesthetics (Public Art)

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to present three options for public art in the form of aesthetic elements to be added to the new James Garner Avenue bridge over Robinson Street.

Background

The James Garner Avenue Project will create a new entry into downtown and will help alleviate traffic on both Flood Avenue and Porter Avenue. The project is part of the Norman Forward sales tax approved by voters in 2015. The approved project scope consisted of an extension of James Garner Avenue, providing continuous travel from Acres Street north to Flood Avenue.

To support the construction of the New Central Library, the project was broken into two phases. Phase 1 included intersection improvements at Acres Street and was completed in conjunction with the Library in 2019. These improvements extended across the entire Library frontage to the west and north, to the new skate park to the south, and east across the railroad tracks to Jones Avenue. Phase 1 improvements included new wider paving on Acres Street and James Garner, the addition of left turn lanes, railroad crossing and quiet zone improvements, and new sidewalks to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use.

Phase 2 of the James Garner Avenue project completes the extension of James Garner Avenue from the northern limits of Phase 1, across Robinson Street with a new boulevard and bridge, and connects to Flood Avenue north of Robinson Street with a new modern roundabout. In addition to these street improvements, the Legacy Trail is extended and reconfigured to provide improved pedestrian and bicycle access.

The project is currently under design by our consultant, Garver, and Phase 2 is at the 95% design stage. Right of way acquisition is nearing completion and will be secured in early February 2022. Utility relocations and the ODOT environmental investigations are underway. Once those are complete the project will be submitted to ODOT immediately for bidding. It is anticipated that the project will bid in late Spring 2022 with construction beginning Summer 2022.

The James Garner Avenue Project is funded through a combination of the Norman Forward sales tax, Capital funds set aside for railroad quiet zone improvements, and Norman Utilities Authority funds. In addition to these funds, Phase 2 of the project was awarded federal funding for fiscal year 2022. Funding and costs for the project are summarized in the following table:

CON Funding:	\$6,543,617.90
Federal Funds:	\$4,825,733.00
Total Project funding:	\$11,369,350.90
Phase 1 total cost:	\$1,871,000.00
Phase 2 Projected cost:	\$6,639,763.52
Total Project Costs:	\$8,510,763.52
Total Project Surplus:	\$2,858,587.38 (estimated)

The original project scope for the James Garner Avenue project did not include a public art element. Likewise no funding was provided for that purpose. Stakeholder groups, such as the Norman Arts Council, various members of the City Council, and members of the public have expressed interest in designing the new roadway to accommodate future public art as

funding is available. Garver, therefore, has designed the roadway to allow for spaces that can accommodate public art in the future, such as in the center of the new roundabout, and along the relocated Legacy Trail.

The new James Garner Avenue bridge over Robinson Street presents one such opportunity to incorporate aesthetics into the bridge design. However, these aesthetic elements would be more difficult to add later. These elements must be integrated into the design of the bridge prior to construction, which will ensure that the bridge has adequate structural capacity to accommodate the additions and that the enhancements fit seamlessly within the bridge design.

City staff and the Norman Arts Council originally approached Steven Weitzman, to consult regarding adding public art to the project. Unfortunately, the timeline of the project no longer allows the time necessary to issue an RFP to potential artists, analyze and select designs, approve a design contract, and complete the art prior to the anticipated construction for the bridge element of the project.

With this in mind, staff approached the roadway and bridge design team from Garver, and asked if they could submit a concept, that they could be easily incorporate into the roadway plans, which would add aesthetics to the new bridge.

The Norman Arts Council, through the leadership of Ms. Erinn Gavaghan, is interested in managing a public art RFP process for a feature to be located at the center of the proposed modern roundabout.

Discussion

Garver, the design consultant for the James Garner Phase 2 project, has prepared an aesthetic concept which can be added to the bridge design. This concept highlights James Garner's accomplishments. The design can be scaled somewhat to meet budget constraints if necessary. Garver has provided cost estimates for each of three options.

The "Baseline" (good) option provides for basic aesthetic elements such as, standard steel or aluminum picket bridge rails, Street and trail names on the bridge beams, and the City name on the center pylon.

The "Enhanced" (better) option adds LED lighting on the pier caps, and backlit film strip and signature on the bridge abutments and a metal screen on the bridge beams with the street names.

The "Ultimate"(best) option further adds backlighting to street names, emblems and metal screen, backlighting of bridge beam screen, custom metal fencing on the west side of the bridge deck, and center pylon lighting.

The estimated costs for each option is as follows:

Conceptual Bridge Aesthetics cost by option level

Baseline Cost: \$131,400

Enhanced Cost: \$284,100

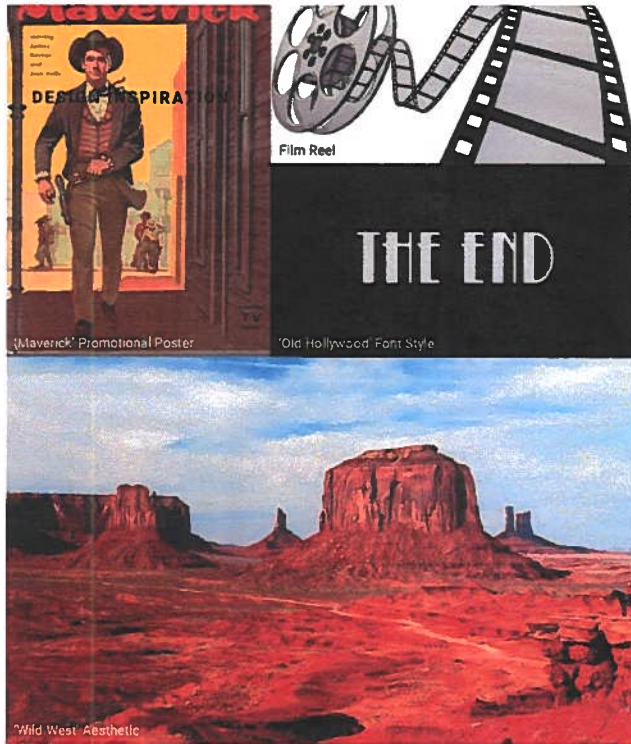
Ultimate Cost: \$368,100

The funds to cover the cost of these bridge aesthetics are available within the project budget but will reduce the projected budget surplus in Norman Forward funds by the amount associated with the chosen option level. The Ultimate option, for instance will reduce the projected surplus from approximately \$2.8 million to approximately \$2.5 million.

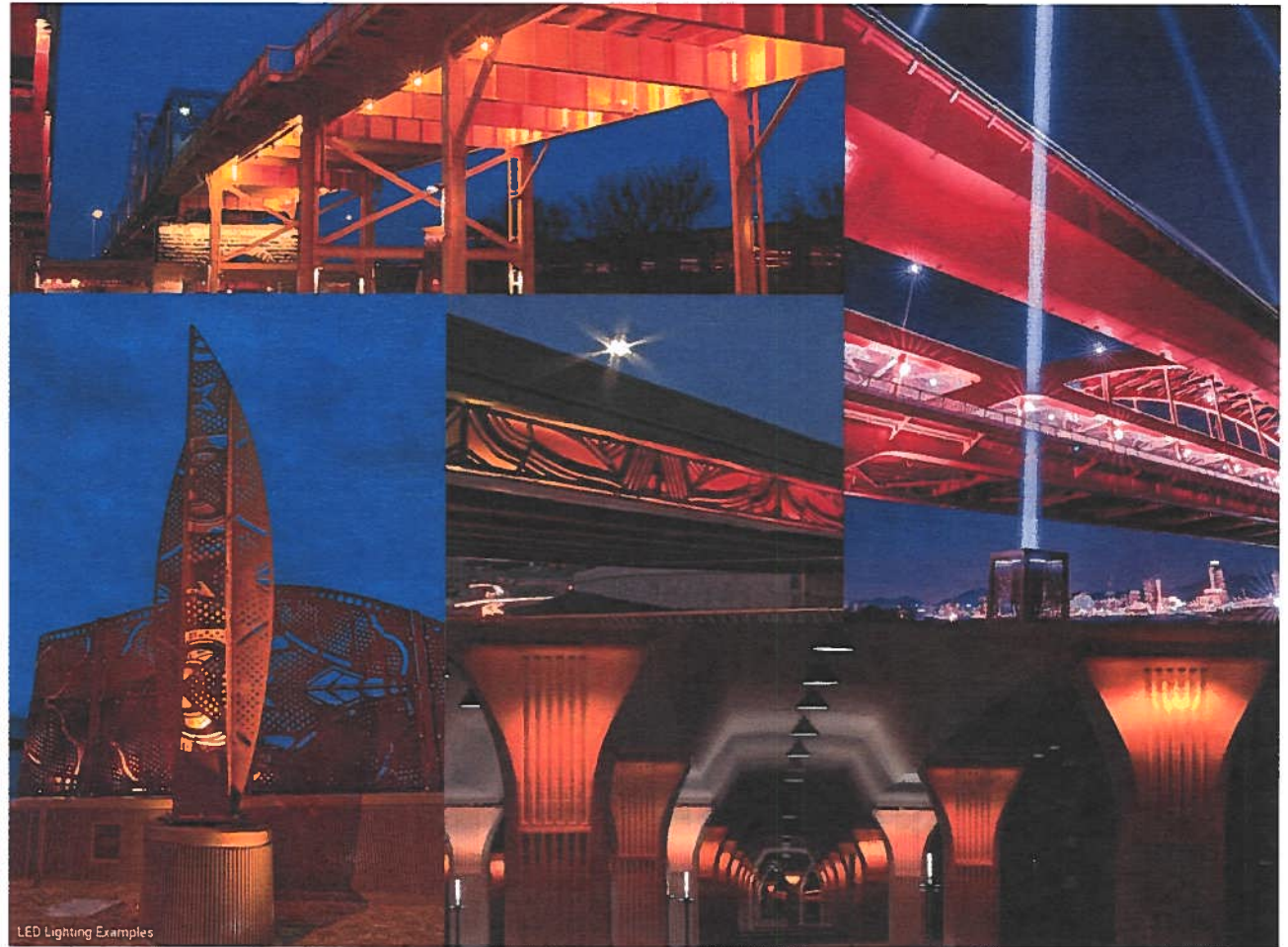
Norman Arts Council has recommended an additional public art budget for the modern roundabout of \$200,000.

Attached:

Conceptual Design Presentation



The Design is intended as a subtle nod to James Garner's legacy, specifically his acting in Western films. For example, the **rusty color** of the metal accents chosen are reminiscent of the western landscapes that are featured in many of his films. **Warmer lighting tones** mimic this as well while simultaneously offering an inviting entrance to the city. Other connections to the City of Norman include metal fencing that will utilize graphic elements from **City logo mark**.



James Garner Avenue- Bridge Aesthetics

