Nicasio Valley Road Bridge Replacement Project

June 28, 2017 Community Meeting Summary

The County of Marin in cooperation with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Mark Thomas, Circlepoint, Garcia & Associates, Crawford & Associates, and WRECO

I. Background

The County of Marin received funding to replace local bridges that were identified as structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. Nicasio Valley Road Bridge over Nicasio Creek was one of the bridges identified for replacement and a project was initiated to conduct environmental studies and begin design work.

Nicasio Valley Road Bridge is located just south of the intersection of Lucas Valley Road and Nicasio Valley Road in Nicasio. The bridge is a two-lane roadway that provides connectivity between West Marin and San Rafael. It was originally built in 1928 and is a three-span, reinforced concrete T-beam structure.

The bridge needs to be replaced for the following reasons:

- The structure has exceeded its design life and is showing signs of long-term deterioration.
- The existing narrow bridge deck does not meet current safety standards for two lanes of traffic.
- Bridge railings have sustained multiple traffic impacts and do not meet current safety standards.

Project improvements are anticipated to extend approximately 600 feet along Nicasio Valley Road from either side of Nicasio Creek and east along Lucas Valley Road; the existing intersection will be reconstructed. Improvements will be constructed in stages to maintain at least one lane of traffic along Nicasio Valley Road. Access to residential and agricultural properties will be maintained at all times.

The project is 100% federally funded through the Highway Bridge Program and Toll Credits. The federal funds are being administered through the Caltrans Local Assistance Program.

II. Public Outreach Activities Report

A. Fact Sheet & Survey

In the fall of 2016, a project fact sheet and survey were mailed to local residents around the Nicasio Valley Road Bridge area and posted on the project webpage. The purpose of the fact sheet was to provide an overview of the project, and the survey was designed to gather initial input from the community on various aspects, especially the community's priorities for the bridge replacement. There were a total of 17 survey responses. Respondents were asked to prioritize their preference for the elements of bridge construction. Below are results for what is considered "very important":

- Minimize construction duration – 50% of respondents
- Minimize impacts to the creek and the environment – 63% of respondents

- Minimize one-lane only traffic duration – 38% of respondents
- Minimize construction cost – 25% of respondents

These results were shared at the June 28 public meeting.

B. Public Meeting Outreach & Noticing

The team conducted the following outreach and noticing activities to promote the June 28 community meeting:

- Public meeting notice sent to stakeholder list on June 13, 2017, which included over 125 local residents in the broader Nicasio community, survey respondents, local stakeholder groups, media, and elected officials
- Email blast meeting invitations and reminders sent to stakeholder list on June 13 and June 26, 2017
- Posting on NextDoor to the Nicasio neighborhood on June 14, 2017 which reached approximately 1,647 residents.
- Press release sent to all of the local media resources and the opt-in GovDelivery list on June 14, 2017.
- Posting on the project website at http://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/engineering/nicasio-valley-rd-bridge-repl-project

C. Public Meeting

On Wednesday, June 28, 2017, a public meeting was held at Nicasio Elementary School to provide the public with an opportunity to learn more about the proposed bridge replacement project, ask questions, and provide input. The meeting offered an opportunity for the public to visually see the proposed design elements of the bridge through a presentation and display boards.

The meeting was held from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. and a total of 10 people attended, in addition to Marin County Supervisor Dennis Rodoni and his aide, Rhonda Kutter. Rochelle Germano from the project team provided opening remarks to begin the meeting. R.J. Suokko, Senior Civil Engineer at Marin County and Julie Passalacqua from the project team provided an overview including reviewing project elements, community survey results, and the proposed schedule. Following the presentation, the team discussed informational exhibits of the proposed elements and answered questions from attendees.

An updated fact sheet was handed out during the meeting to provide the community with an overview of the project. Additionally, comment cards were provided to allow members to jot down questions or concerns.

The meeting materials can be viewed on the project webpage (http://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/engineering/nicasio-valley-rd-bridge-repl-project). Questions and comments raised at the meeting are summarized below.

III. Summary of Comments

Meeting attendees were invited to provide comments and ask questions at the conclusion of the presentation. The following is a summary of the issues raised at the meeting.

A. Overall Comment Summary

Bridge Design

- Implement design aesthetics that complement the rural beauty of Nicasio.
- Maintain or re-create (where necessary) a grassy area between the roadway and property fence posts.
- Most community members preferred the Type 80 Concrete Barrier for the bridge rail option with aesthetic treatment mimicking wood.
- Request that the project team follow up with the rail design examples for further input.
- Overall consensus from the attendees for the County to investigate how narrow the bridge can be designed while still considering bicycle safety.
- Suggested that the vegetation be preserved if possible to maintain the community feel.

Safety

- Multiple concerns over increased speed and decreased safety on Lucas Valley Road and Nicasio Valley Road as a result of a widened bridge and roadway.

Property

- Concerned about impacts to property as a result of bridge construction.

B. Q & A Summary

Q: Are there utilities under the current bridge and will they will be relocated?

A: *Utility mapping through the project site has not yet been completed. There are several overhead and underground utilities running through the project site that will be impacted by the bridge replacement. Utilities in conflict with the project will be relocated prior to the start of construction or as part of construction.*

Q: Will the approaches be the same width?

A: *The existing roadway is 20 to 24 feet wide. The project will require widening the bridge width to provide standard lane and shoulder widths. The approach roadways will be reconstructed to tie into the new bridge and then taper back down to the existing roadway width roughly 400 feet back from each end of the bridge.*

Q: Where will construction staging be for the project?

A: *The bridge will be stage constructed in order to maintain traffic through the project site during construction. During Stage 1, a staging area is anticipated just east of the existing bridge. During Stage 2, the Contractor will be able to utilize the existing roadway on either side of the bridge for equipment and material staging.*

Q: Will property access be maintained during bridge construction?

A: *Property access will be maintained at all times during construction. The County will be coordinating directly with property owners to discuss property impacts and access needs. This coordination will happen as the design progresses.*

Q: Will the bridge area remain accessible to wildlife during construction?

A: *A water diversion system will be installed within the creek bed prior to the beginning of construction. There are a variety of diversion systems the Contractor may choose to use, but a typical system would consist of a gravel bag cofferdam on the upstream side with pipes in which the flows are conveyed to the downstream side of the construction area. Other work in the creek will include removal of the existing bridge and reconstruction of the creek banks. Throughout construction wildlife will be free to move through the project area, although they may be scared away due to the noise and disruption within the creek.*

Q: What is the possibility of having bike lanes, separated from traffic with a barrier, on the bridge?

A: *Utilizing barriers to separate bicyclists from vehicles would require the bridge to be wider than currently proposed. The County and project team do not see a need for a barrier separate bicycle lane at this time.*

Q: Will there be a maintained buffer between the public and horses on private property during construction?

A: *Yes. One of the first items of work will be the erection of fencing around the construction area to provide a barrier between horses/livestock and the construction activities. Advance notice of construction activities can be provided to property owners so that animals can be relocated to a different area of the property if needed.*

IV. Next Steps

The project team will consider community input as it moves forward with bridge design. In the summer of 2018, the draft Environmental Design document will undergo a 30 day review period. The County will continue to keep the community updated on the progress of the project. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2020.