



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: January 15, 2008
Staff Report # 08-006

Agenda Item: # D2

CONSENT: Authorization of the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement in the Amount of \$58,900 with DKS Associates to Develop a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal Elementary School.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement in the amount of \$58,900 with DKS Associates to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal Elementary School.

BACKGROUND

During the Fiscal Year 2007-08 project priority-setting process, the City Council approved a project to develop a Safe Routes to School plan for Encinal Elementary School (Encinal School) with a budget of \$80,000, including staff time but not including any construction.

Encinal School currently is a Grades 3–5 elementary school located in the Town of Atherton, near the intersection of Middlefield Road and Encinal Avenue. Encinal School is part of the Menlo Park City School District and serves students from Atherton, San Mateo County, and Menlo Park. Currently, there are approximately 350 students enrolled at Encinal School. The enrollment could, however, grow to approximately 700 students when the school district reconfigures Encinal School to a Grades K–5 elementary school within the next few years.

The Encinal School area has been identified as a location needing improvements to facilitate safe pedestrian and bicycle movements. At the City's Joint Transportation and Bicycle Commissions meeting on November 16, 2005, the City received specific concerns from parents of students enrolled at Encinal School about the lack of safe routes to Encinal School, particularly on parts of Laurel Street and Middlefield Road. The City also received specific complaints that bicycle lanes were being blocked by parked cars on Laurel Street and that drivers were speeding on Encinal Avenue. Currently, a majority of the crosswalks within the project area are not easily accessible for pedestrians and not very apparent to drivers. Some sections of these streets have no or limited sidewalks and bikeways.

The Safe Routes to Encinal School project will be multi-jurisdictional in that it may include roadways in Atherton, San Mateo County, and Menlo Park.

ANALYSIS

Summary of Selection Process

On October 25, 2007, City staff sent a Request for Proposals to seven transportation consultants to seek transportation engineering assistance in developing a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal School. The City received proposals from three consultants – Kimley-Horn and Associates, TJKM Transportation Consultants, and DKS Associates.

On the basis of the proposals received, staff invited the three consultants for oral interviews. On December 14, 2007, a selection committee comprising a representative each from the Transportation and the Bicycle Commissions and City staff interviewed the consultants. In evaluating the proposals, the following criteria were used: project manager experience, demonstrated ability to perform the specific tasks outlined in the Request for Proposal, methods or techniques to be employed, reasonableness of the schedule to complete each task, and project team's experience with similar projects.

On the basis of the written proposals and consultant interviews, the selection committee concluded that DKS Associates was best able to meet the City's needs within the allocated budget for this project. DKS Associates is familiar with neighborhood traffic issues in the city, having worked with the City in preparing traffic impact studies for new developments in Menlo Park and preparing the traffic operations analysis for Middlefield Road between Marsh Road and Ringwood Avenue.

Scope of Services

The following tasks are included in the scope of services to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal School.

- Task 1: Data Collection and Review
- Task 2: Potential Improvement Alternatives
- Task 3: Draft Plan
- Task 4: Presentation to Menlo Park City Council
- Task 5: Preliminary Design Plans

Each task is described in more detail in the scope of work included as Attachment A.

Project Implementation

There will be a steering committee comprising representatives of stakeholders such as the City of Menlo Park, Town of Atherton, San Mateo County, Menlo Park City School District, Encinal School, Encinal School Parents-Teachers Organizations, and law-

enforcement agencies that will be formed to provide guidance to the project consultant to ensure that the goals and objectives of the stakeholders for this project will be met. Staff will also coordinate with the Town of Atherton, San Mateo County, and school district officials with the process.

The following meetings are scheduled:

- Three steering committee meetings.
- Three neighborhood meetings to seek input from residents while the plan is being developed.
- Meetings with the Bicycle Commission and the Transportation Commission to provide a forum for discussing the plan.
- A presentation of the final draft of the Safe Routes to School Plan to the City Council for its review and consideration.

Staff may schedule additional meetings as deemed necessary and as requested by the project stakeholders to make presentations to their respective governing bodies such as the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and the Town of Atherton City Council.

Staff estimates that, in consideration of the number of meetings scheduled with the project stakeholders, neighborhoods, commissions, and councils and the associated lead times, the development of a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal School will take five months, with an additional two months for review and approval.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The cost to develop a Safe Routes School Plan for Encinal School is estimated to be \$80,000, including staff time. The consultant contract is for \$58,900; \$54,900 for the services in the scope of work and \$4,000 for contingencies. This project has been included in the FY 2007-08 Budget, and the source of funds is the City's Measure A Fund.

POLICY ISSUES

This project is consistent with several policies in the 1994 General Plan Circulation and Transportation Element. These policies seek to enhance the safety of school children who walk and bicycle to school.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The development of a Safe Routes to School Plan for Encinal School is not a project under the current California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines.

Rene C. Baile
Transportation Engineer

Charles Taylor
Transportation Manager

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENT: A. Safe Routes to Encinal Elementary School Project Scope of Work

ATTACHMENT A

Safe Routes to Encinal Elementary School Project Scope of Work

Scope of Work

The following is the project outline on a task-by-task basis that is intended to set the general framework for the study.

Task 1 – Data Collection and Review

The CONSULTANT will hold a kick-off meeting with a steering committee comprising of the representatives of the stakeholders. The stakeholders can potentially include the City of Menlo Park, Town of Atherton, County of San Mateo, Menlo Park City School District, Encinal School, Encinal School Parents Teachers Organization, Menlo Park and Atherton Police Departments, San Mateo County Sheriff's Department, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and the neighborhoods in the study area. The goal of this steering committee is to provide guidance to the CONSULTANT to ensure that the goals and objectives of the stakeholders for this project are met.

The CONSULTANT will identify the primary routes currently used by school children while walking or bicycling to and from school. This information will be used to identify corridors with potential safety problems and where greatest improvements should be concentrated and the basis for the safe routes to Encinal School.

The CONSULTANT will collect supplemental data by observing vehicular, bicyclist, and pedestrian behavior in the study area.

The CONSULTANT will collect other relevant roadway data such as lane configurations, street widths, sight distances, and traffic controls.

The CONSULTANT will review collision data (for the past three years) provided by the City of the Menlo Park and Town of Atherton. Locations with elevated accident rates will be further examined to determine if specific design deficiencies contribute to the accidents.

The CONSULTANT will review and analyze speed surveys and traffic counts and compare them with reported traffic and safety issues in the study area. The CONSULTANT will identify any locations where additional traffic counts and speed surveys need to be collected and conduct these additional counts and surveys. It is expected that the City of Menlo Park and Town of Atherton will provide traffic counts and surveys of the roadways in the study area, if available.

As part of this task, the CONSULTANT will conduct the first neighborhood meeting with the residents in the study area to identify traffic and safety issues that the residents might have in the area and provide input on potential improvement alternatives.

- Deliverable – A discussion paper will be prepared to summarize the traffic data and existing conditions and concerns raised by the stakeholders and residents in the study area.

Task 2 – Potential Improvement Alternatives

With the type and extent of the existing issues and concerns determined in Task 1, the CONSULTANT will prepare a list of potential improvement alternatives on the safe routes to Encinal School. The nature and effect of potential improvements such as re-routed traffic to other streets, increased pedestrian and bicycle safety, reduced speeds, reduced number of accidents, and emergency vehicle response time delays will be identified. The cost of each improvement should also be identified.

The CONSULTANT will meet with the steering committee to discuss the possible advantages and disadvantages of each alternative improvement or set of alternatives during the course of the discussions.

As part of this task, the CONSULTANT will conduct a second neighborhood meeting with the study area residents to present potential alternative improvements for review and comment by the residents. After the neighborhood meeting, the CONSULTANT will conduct separate presentations to the Menlo Park Bicycle and Transportation Commissions of these potential alternative improvements as well as the comments received from residents on the potential alternative improvements.

- Deliverables - Discussion paper identifying the potential alternative improvements on the safe routes to Encinal School, the costs of these alternatives, and the community's and commissions' comments of the alternatives. Conceptual design drawings of the potential alternative improvements will accompany this paper. The discussion paper should include an executive summary suitable for distribution. The information should be made available in both a hard copy and electronic format suitable for reproduction.

Task 3 – Draft Plan

Based on the comments received from the community and the Menlo Park Bicycle and Transportation Commissions on the potential alternative improvements, the CONSULTANT will prepare a draft plan of the safe routes to Encinal School.

The CONSULTANT will meet and work with the steering committee to reach a consensus on the draft plan. Suggested solutions on the plan need not be limited to physical roadway improvements and may include education materials.

As part of this task, the CONSULTANT will conduct a third neighborhood meeting with the study area residents to present the draft plan for review and comment by the residents. After the neighborhood meeting, the CONSULTANT will conduct separate presentations to the Menlo Park Bicycle and Transportation Commissions of the draft plan as well as the comments received from residents on the draft plan.

- Deliverables - Discussion paper presenting the draft plan of the safe routes to Encinal School, which includes the proposed improvements and the cost of the improvements and the comments received from the community and the Menlo Park commissions. Conceptual design drawing of the draft plan will accompany this paper. Potential grants and funding sources will be discussed in the report. The discussion paper should include an executive summary suitable for distribution. The information should be made available in both a hard copy and electronic format suitable for reproduction.

In addition to the required meetings as identified in the above tasks of the Scope of Work, the Consultant should plan for two additional meetings for potential target areas that might require further attention.

Task 4 – Presentation to Menlo Park City Council

The CONSULTANT will present to the City Council the final draft of the safe routes to Encinal School plan. The City Council may direct the Consultant to revise the plan.

Note: The Town of Atherton and County of San Mateo may require the CONSULTANT to make similar presentations to their elected public officials.

- Deliverables – Final Report presenting the final safe routes to Encinal School plan as approved by the Menlo Park City Council and endorsed by the Town of Atherton and County of San Mateo. The Final Report should include an executive summary suitable for distribution. The information should be made available in both electronic format or a hard copy

Task 5 – Preliminary Design Plans

After approval of the final safe routes to Encinal school plan by the City Council, the CONSULTANT will also prepare preliminary design plans of the approved safe routes to school plan. The design plans will show the locations and general design of improvements as approved by the City Council. The Consultant shall submit the plans to the City in AutoCAD format. The City will use the design plans to prepare final plans, specifications, and cost estimates for bidding purposes. The City may also use the design plans in its application for Safe Routes to School grants.

- Deliverables – Design plans will be submitted to the City in printed and electronic format.