

**SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge
Stakeholder Working Group Workshops
March 13, 2014**

Background

The Grand Avenue Bridge project team has moved into a more detailed design phase on the proposed Grand Avenue Bridge; new pedestrian bridge; and supporting changes to Grand Avenue, 7th Street, 8th Street, and the area on the north side of I-70. To date, the Environmental Assessment process for the Grand Avenue Bridge Project has focused on developing the footprint and major elements of the Build Alternative. As the project moved into more detailed design, the project team developed a process to obtain input on the architectural/urban design elements and landscaping elements. It includes SWG workshops, a Design Elements Issue Task Force (ITF) with specific stakeholder representation and design expertise, City Council Work Sessions, and our ongoing public involvement activities. This process is consistent with the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) approach to provide opportunities for public and agency involvement during planning, design, and construction phases of a project.

The two SWG workshops held on March 14, 2014, were the first of two rounds of meetings. The same information was presented at both meetings. Participants worked with design team members to improve and refine initial options based on previous stakeholder input, project critical success factors, and project criteria. At the next workshop on April 10, the design team will present the refined option or options for each of the elements for further discussion or endorsement. These will form the basis for the SWG recommendations for the project design. Input obtained from the SWG and the Design Elements ITF will be presented to the City Council.

A summary of each workshop includes the main points of the presentation on each design element and the comments and feedback of the participants. Also attached are the boards the project team presented.

Next Steps

The project team will use the information provided by the SWG, the Design Elements ITF, other public input, and the City Council to further develop and refine the design elements for the project. The design team will review the input and incorporate the ideas as possible, developing options that more closely align with the suggestions.

The project team will bring the revised options back to the SWG on April 10 and present how the input from the SWG, the ITF, and City Council was used to develop new or revised options. The project team will also present information on the relative costs of some of the options and information needed to develop recommendations on prioritizing elements and treatment trade-offs.

Recommendations from the SWG, ITF, and City Council will be presented to the Project Working Group to help develop the best design that meets the community's interests in a cost-effective package of design elements.

Presentation and Summary of Feedback

Stakeholder Working Group Meeting – 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

There were six participants at the workshop. After a brief overview of the project's progress to date, the project team presented the current options and asked for input on each of the design topics below.

Pedestrian Bridge

Presentation

The presentation provided an update of the design effort to accommodate the features identified in earlier meetings with the public and City Council. Elements presented included:

- Overlook locations and number
- Variable depth vs. constant depth girders
- Piers square on diagonal as unifying treatment with vehicle bridge
- Pier material and finish
- Railing
- Lighting

Feedback

- Concerned about the view up to the pedestrian bridge
- Rounded piers not desirable
- Shadow lines can create icing on Pedestrian Bridge – creates more maintenance
 - Same for roof structures – can dump snow, water
- Has a hot water system been considered?
- Chemical ice-melter created pedestrian bridge surface problems on existing bridge
- Light towers don't seem to fit – a stopping point for eyes
- How about an arch across towers to justify towers? Looks like a dock.
- Prefer square towers rather than diamond
- Concern about grade on bridge – sitting in the widened overlook areas

Stairs and Elevators

Presentation

Discussion of the stairs and elevators reflected input from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) design charrette held March 5 to discuss improvements to the proposed 7th Street promenade. The presentation included findings from the charrette and initial design considerations for integrating the stairs and elevators in that location.

- Layout of elevators (north-south entry/exit; east-west entry/exit)
- Piers and roof treatment on elevator tower
- Overlooks, clocks, graphics, signage
- Staircase with bike channel
- Use of area under the staircase
- Restroom location options (under staircase, under Grand Avenue Bridge, in new County parking facility)

Feedback

- Other options for under stairs (piers vs. solid brick)?
- Not sure posts should go through roof of the tower
- Like the pitch of the Depot roof
- Climate control in elevators?
- Columns on roof could trap snow creating longer-term melt
- Prefer north-south elevator option
- Consider structure stairs with less fill-in to reduce mass

Grand Avenue Bridge

Presentation

A number of design features of the Grand Avenue Bridge have been discussed and developed as part of the ongoing Environmental Assessment process (e.g., alignment and pier locations). The focus of this presentation was on more detailed and aesthetic considerations, including:

- Overview of two types of bridge structures and construction method
- Piers square on diagonal as unifying treatment with pedestrian bridge
- Railing over the river
- Railing in downtown section - transparent barrier
- Treatments for downtown section - artwork, railing, lighting, poles, abutment

Feedback

- Protection of plaza area from bridge important
- Also consider higher concrete barrier
- Form liner okay for side of bridge
- Consider programmable LED lighting
- Concern about Plexiglas wall
- Gateway idea is good
- Is it possible to focus light on surface, rather than higher?
- Town likes the "night sky"
- Anything we can do for traffic calming is good

Pedestrian Space Between 7th Street and 8th Streets

Presentation

The presentation focused on options for the layout and materials used in the area under the new Grand Avenue Bridge and the connections to the pedestrian bridge on the north side of 7th Street. These included:

- Area use/layout
- Landscape, pavers
- Lighting
- Visual connections to 7th Street and to elevator towers
- Abutment wall treatment (Todd Wadsworth, contractor team, artwork)
- Use of closed wing street space
- Two concepts: Continuation of 7th Street Improvements; Connecting the Plaza Across 7th Street

Feedback

- Need source of power
- Seat walls an invitation to transients
- Need to do whatever we can to make this area inviting – may not be used as desired
- Would be a cool area in the summer to hang out
- Seat walls good idea
- Look at lowering all of the grade under bridge
- Maybe bring in foliage for events only
- Form liners on Vail Pass are a good example
- Likes art option on south abutment
- Consider art for north abutment on pedestrian bridge and on walls at Hot Springs parking lot
- Option B blocks access between two alleys – Prefer to keep open
- Prefer Option A - has more flexibility
- Like ceiling under bridge
- Brick pavers more difficult for snow removal
- Would like to be consistent with DDA standards

Landscaping — North Side

Presentation

This presentation focused on landscaping in the entrance to Glenwood Springs in the area of off-ramp, Laurel Street and 6th Street. Key points included:

- Character of Glenwood Springs
- Three landscape treatment options: Traditional, Xeric, Organic
- Considerations: appearance, level of maintenance

Feedback

- Area between SH 82 and roundabout consider rock structure – very visible
- Consider wall option (short) in center circle of roundabout
- Make easy to keep clean
- River rock would be high maintenance
- Xeri looks like Arizona, not here
- Something like bronze elk (at Antlers) in roundabout
- What does water quality pond look like?
- Like Option 3 landscaping

Pedestrian and Bicycle Underpass

Presentation

Design options for the new pedestrian and bicycle underpass connecting the Colorado River Trail to the 6th Street area were presented:

- Opportunity for a gateway treatment
- Three design options: Historic Influence, Continuity with Grand Avenue Bridge, Enhanced Concrete Entryway

Feedback

- Inside underpass not a priority
- Focus here on being well lit
- Think about acoustics
- Consider coffers on top of underpass
- Good to have nice entrance
- Consider cameras in tunnel
- Existing problem with mud swallows in tunnels at right-angle corners

Walls

Presentation

This project will include a number of retaining walls, ranging in height from about 2 feet to about 10 feet. Options for design treatments, color and materials were presented:

- 21 walls in the project
- Options for wall enhancements (lower to higher cost)
- Identification of more prominent, visible walls to consider higher-end treatments
- Artwork

Feedback

- Retaining walls? Where?
- Higher walls more important
- First priority Grand Avenue (7th to 8th) - those you can touch (anything below 3 feet)
- Secondary priority where drivers come into town
- Walls by underpass need lighting

Stakeholder Working Group Meeting – 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

There were five participants at the workshop. After a brief overview of the project's progress to date, the project team presented the current options and asked for input on each of the design topics below.

Pedestrian Bridge

Presentation

The presentation provided an update of the design effort to accommodate the features identified in earlier meetings with the public and City Council. Elements presented included:

- Overlook locations and number
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- Pier material and finish
- Railing
- Lighting

Feedback

- Can we add color flexibility in bridge rail (painted?)
- Consider color treatment with lighting
- Consider weathering steel to blend in with historic elements
- This concept really watered down from what we had before. (linear-linear-linear)
- Should piers be under girders?
- Not sure towers above bridge deck – too bulky
- Great improvement from pavilions (previous version)
- Likes current look
- Too red – whole town is red
- Break up columns with some detail – banding?

Stairs and Elevators

Presentation

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- Layout of elevators (north-south entry/exit; east-west entry/exit)
- Piers and roof treatment on elevator tower
- Overlooks, clocks, graphics, signage
- Staircase with bike channel
- Use of area under the staircase
- Restroom location options (under staircase, under Grand Avenue Bridge, in new County parking facility)

Feedback

- Seems too close to vehicle bridge
- Don't like area under stairs being closed up

- Consider other location for restroom
- Like general shape of elevator
- Projections above roof seem odd
- Encourage people to use stairs. Like Layout Option A
- Layout Option B – landing is big as an overlook
- Layout Option A at street level is safety issue – people walk out and onto 7th Street
- More options with Layout Option A
- Like Layout Option B better because bike conflicts with 7th and better view from bridge

Grand Avenue Bridge

Presentation

A number of design features of the Grand Avenue Bridge were included in Draft EA (e.g., alignment and pier locations). The focus of this presentation was on more detailed and aesthetic considerations, including:

- Overview of two types of bridge structures and construction method
- Piers square on diagonal as unifying treatment with pedestrian bridge
- Railing over the river
- Railing in downtown section – transparent barrier
- Treatments for downtown section – artwork, railing, lighting, poles, abutment

Feedback

- Other options for siding
- Likes LED options under coffers
- Likes ceiling above plaza
- Likes solid wall/rail in downtown section

Pedestrian Space Between 7th Street and 8th Streets

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- Lighting
- Visual connections to 7th Street and to elevator towers
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- Use of closed wing street space
- Two concepts: Continuation of 7th Street Improvements; Connecting the Plaza Across 7th Street

Feedback

- Windy under bridge – ways to alleviate?
- Option 2 takes away open space (negative)

- Will take community time to figure out how to use area – Option 1 provides more flexibility – space and vegetation
- Some plants are ok in winter
- Planters become trash collectors
- If artwork, use something stone colored rather than too fancy
- But artwork better than none
- If left blank, is a good backdrop that could be changed out for different uses
- Good to keep alleyway connection – especially for bikers
- Alley on the west is changing – new restaurant incorporating outside dining
- More people will be on the east side – okay if layout is asymmetrical
- Like Option 2 – more pedestrian flow on east side
- Like Option 2 but could be trash bin
- Brick pavers more difficult for snow removal

Landscaping — North Side

Presentation

This presentation focused on landscaping in the entrance to Glenwood Springs in the area of off-ramp, Laurel Street and 6th Street. Key points included:

- Character of Glenwood Springs
- Three landscape treatment options: Traditional, Xeric, Organic
- Considerations: appearance, level of maintenance

Feedback

- Native (Option 3) approach looks nice near Target (Glenwood Meadows)
- City will be interested in low maintenance
- Xeri is more like Grand Junction, not Glenwood Springs
- Council will have to take on the maintenance issue – also consider DDA for potential maintenance

Pedestrian and Bicycle Underpass

Presentation

Design options for the new pedestrian and bicycle underpass connecting the Colorado River Trail to the 6th Street area were presented:

- Opportunity for a gateway treatment
- Three design options: Historic Influence, Continuity with Grand Avenue Bridge, Enhanced Concrete Entryway

Feedback

- Like Option 1 but pricey
- Lighting important
- Sculptured concrete in tunnel would result in less graffiti
- Consider if south Grand Avenue Bridge abutment tower would conflict with Option 1 or 2
- Consider cameras

Walls

Presentation

This project will include a number of retaining walls, ranging in height from about 2 feet to about 10 feet. Options for design treatments, color and materials were presented:

- 21 walls in the project
- Options for wall enhancements (lower to higher cost)
- Identification of more prominent, visible walls to consider higher-end treatments
- Artwork

Feedback

- Where walls are near pedestrian area and can be touched, use higher quality
- If 20 feet away, lower priority
- Too much horizontal?
- Peach blow – connection color
- Or complementary color

Priorities for Dollars

- Plaza – simple but well lit
 - But where most visitors will be
- Pedestrian bridge and underpass important
- Coffers with lighting under bridge
- Lighting
- Street furniture lower priority as it may need time to figure out. Opportunity for City to participate

Other Suggestions

- “Meeting in a box”
- Phone tree for members to encourage attendance