



STAGE COACH EXPERES

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BRIDGE STREET BRIDGE UPGRADE

The Bridge Street Bridge was built in 1908 and serves as both an important historical feature and critical transportation facility for the community. Unfortunately, the bridge has aged to the point that it will be closed if not upgraded. This recently became possible due to Federal grant funding now available, but a number of challenges exist in developing a plan to proceed.

Thus far, no staff proposals, staff recommendations or City Council decisions have been made. Work thus far has been limited to working with professional engineers to identify alternatives, determine their feasibility, and to seek public input. Public workshops have been held, a stakeholders group has been formed to provide feedback, and public education information has been provided on the City's website.

The overall objectives are to increase the load carrying capacity of the bridge and improve public safety, while maintaining its historical integrity. Alternatives include doing nothing and allowing the bridge to close, upgrading the bridge in its current condition, building a new base structure while maintaining features on the surface of the bridge, building a new bridge to replicate the look of the existing bridge, or to build a new bridge while looking for locations to move the historical bridge. Each option has a number of pros and cons.

Closing the bridge would maintain its historical integrity, but the City would have to assume all future costs of maintenance, which could be substantial. It would also negatively impact traffic circulation and access to local businesses.

Upgrade of the bridge in its current condition may maintain its eligibility for designation on the National Register of Historic Places. However, it may involve adding large and unsightly concrete structures under the bridge to provide the necessary support, and requirements to meet safety standards for width may make this alternative ineligible for the grant funding. One idea identified to address width requirements is to restrict travel on the bridge to one-way, but this would also impact circulation and access to businesses.

The intent of building a new base structure and maintaining the surface features would be to preserve the current look of the bridge, but would likely result in loss of its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Replicating the bridge with a new structure would have similar impacts.

Lastly, options involving building an entirely new structure would be most cost effective, but would result in losing both the existing look and historical integrity of the existing bridge.

The City is compiling the information and public input necessary to make the best long-term decision given historical, transportation, safety, and financial considerations. A decision on the preferred alternative or alternatives to include in the next phase of study will take place in August or September. For more information, contact the Community Development Department at 473-5420.



STREET WORK SCHEDULED

The City is scheduled this summer to continue its efforts to establish an ongoing program where all streets will be upgraded on a minimum seven-year cycle. Since the Local Sales Tax Measure was passed in 2006, significant progress has been made on the City's major streets. The program is now shifting to more of the community's residential neighborhood streets.

Rehabilitation of streets is very cost prohibitive. As a result, the strategy combines work each year to rehabilitate some streets in poor condition with preventative maintenance on other streets in better condition to prevent the future need for reconstruction. The goal is to eventually get all streets on a preventative maintenance schedule, which will result in substantial long-term cost savings to the City.

The City will once again invest over \$1 million this year on street upgrades. Work is expected to begin in July and will involve over 35 streets throughout the community.

The first step is to complete utility upgrades on any streets where needed to avoid future excavation work in the new pavement. This next step will be to grind areas that will be reconstructed or make major repairs to trouble spots on streets that will receive a slurry seal or microsurfacing, referred to as "digouts." This is then followed with the pavement treatment and later reinstallation of the striping.

Drainage improvements on Larchmont Drive are necessary to avoid future damage. Therefore, work on that street will not commence until the fall after that work is completed.

For more information about the work and program, please visit the City's website at www.arroyogrande.org or contact the Public Works Department at 473-5460.

BOND RATING INCREASE

The City recently received notification that its General Obligation bond rating was upgraded by Standard & Poor's from "AA-" to "AA+" while affirming a stable outlook. Standard & Poor's report cited "the City's strong fund balance position and good financial management policies" as primary reasons. The rating increase of two levels serves as a good confirmation of the City's financial accomplishments in how it has addressed the impacts of the recession over the past several years.

WASHING MACHINE REBATES AVAILABLE

Purchasing a new washing machine can be an excellent way to save water and money. Due to the City's rebate program, it can also be very economical so now is a great time. Since they save both water and energy, many models also may qualify for additional rebates from local utility companies.

High-efficiency washers have proven to be more effective in cleaning clothes with less water and more gentle on the fabric when compared to older washers. Most high-efficiency washers use about 15 to 30 gallons of water to wash the same amount of clothes as older washers that use 29 to 45 gallons per load. Replacing an old washer can reduce water use by about 5,250 gallons per year, based on the average of 350 loads per year for a given household. On average, a high-efficiency washer uses 20% less energy and 35% less water than regular washers.

For more information, visit the City's website at www.arroyogrande.org or call the Community Development Department at 473-5447.

SUMMER CARNIVAL

The City of Arroyo Grande Recreation Services Department invites people of all ages to attend a Summer Carnival on Friday, August 9th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Elm Street Park. The cost is \$4.00 for the carnival and bounce house. Game booths with toy and candy prizes, a bounce castle and a BBQ are sure to please children and adults. A hamburger lunch is \$4.00 and a hotdog lunch will be \$3.00. For more information, call the Arroyo Grande Recreation Services office at 473-5474 or 473-5476.

POLICE STATION UPGRADE UNDER WAY

The remodel and minor expansion of the existing Police Station is under way. The construction contract was recently awarded to GLR Construction, Inc.

The Police Department has moved to its temporary location at the Woman's Club and City of Arroyo Grande Community Center at 211 Vernon Street. The project will address the need for ADA compliant locker areas, upgrade of the emergency operations center and communications, and adequate evidence and equipment storage. The roof, emergency generator, electrical and HVAC will be replaced. Minor facade improvements will be made and the entrance will be reconstructed to improve public access. The adjacent property was acquired to create a secured employee parking area, which will also feature a landscaped police memorial at the corner.



Construction is projected to be completed by December. At that time, police operations will move back to the renovated building and the Community Center will resume its normal uses.

CITY CONTRACTS WITH SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FOR POLICE DISPATCH SERVICES

The City's Police Department dispatch services are now being provided under contract by the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department. The City first entered into a temporary agreement with the Sheriff's Department for dispatch services to help accommodate the move during construction of upgrades to the Police Station, which was also used as a pilot program to evaluate the success. The existing three-year contract was soon proposed and approved based on the results.

The agreement is the most recent of the City's efforts to identify ways to change the way it does business in order to decrease costs without reducing service levels. In this case, the contract will not only save the City well over \$100,000 per year, but will also significantly enhance service by increasing staffing levels, providing full emergency medical dispatch services, and improving multi-agency coordination in emergencies.

Fire dispatch is now being provided by the City of Grover Beach under a temporary agreement. The Five Cities Fire Authority is evaluating the best long-term strategy. Meanwhile, those making calls for service should experience no change in emergency response for either police or fire calls.

77TH ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL

The 77th Annual Arroyo Grande Valley Harvest Festival is scheduled on Friday and Saturday, September 26th and 27th. Festival hours are 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. on Friday and 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Events and activities scheduled for Friday include the Rotary Fish Fry, Chili Cook-off, salsa tasting, movie in the park, game and food booths and entertainment. Saturday's events will include the parade, Ag Pavilion, grape stomp, pie eating contest, diaper derby, farmers market, Big Ditch Derby (soapbox derby), whiskerino contest, baking contest, wiener dog races, spelling bee, costume contest, historical exhibits, entertainment and lots of food and game booths.

The theme of the festival is "Harvest of Good Fortune." The Harvest Festival is a cherished community celebration of the area and its history. The City is a co-sponsor of the event, but it is organized and funded entirely by volunteers and community organizations. It is a special time to bring together friends and strengthen our sense of community.

For more information, visit the Festival's website at www.agharvestfestival.com or contact 473-5400.

