



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 15, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Contract For Design Of Cota Parking Lot Improvements And Access Control Project

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the Public Works Director to execute a City Professional Services contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., in the amount of \$34,775 for design services of the Cota Lot Improvements and Access Control Project and approve expenditures of up to \$3,478 for extra services that may result from necessary changes in the scope of work, for a total contract amount of \$38,253.

DISCUSSION:

BACKGROUND

In addition to providing customer parking, the City's Downtown Parking Program provides reliable and affordable off-street parking for downtown employees. The goals of the Commuter Parking Program are to: 1) free up parking for customers in hourly lots and on the streets; 2) discourage employee parking in residential neighborhoods; and 3) decrease neighborhood traffic and air pollution.

The City operates two commuter lots: the Cota Commuter Lot and the Carrillo Commuter Lot. Parking in these lots is by permit only, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The Cota Commuter Lot, which is located at the corner of Cota and Santa Barbara Streets, at 119 East Cota Street, contains 221 parking spaces and has 390 active parking permits, which are sold at the discounted rate of \$65/month. Downtown Parking is able to over-subscribe the lot by 160 percent because many permit holders work atypical hours in retail and service jobs. Downtown employees purchase a monthly permit that is displayed as a hang tag inside the vehicle's windshield. Initially, this method was effective; but with increasing demand, and the Cota Commuter Lot reaching 100 percent occupancy on most days, management of the lot has become significantly more difficult.

In order to manage the Cota Lot effectively, Downtown Parking staff must be able to monitor lot occupancy in real time. Presently, parking surveys are done manually and are time consuming. It takes about 7.5 hours of staff time for a one week survey. Without real time data, it is difficult to understand lot usage and determine how many permits should be available for sale.

In the absence of access control, the Police Department's Parking Enforcement Division enforces permit requirements in the lot by issuing parking citations to illegally parked vehicles. This effort is time consuming, inefficient, and frequently results in citations being issued to paying customers who fail to properly display their permit. Parking Enforcement staff issues up to 20 citations per day to vehicles that fail to properly display the hang tag permit. Citations are frequently disputed, and about ten percent of the Cota Lot citations are later dismissed. Staff spends a great deal of time researching and resolving these disputed citations. Further, because Parking Enforcement staff is not always present in the lot, many unpaid users occupy spaces reserved for paying customers.

The hang tag system also lends itself to abuse. Some patrons misuse hang tags and do not return cancelled permits. Permit holders with unpaid bills continue to use the lot. Currently, there is \$9,034 past due, which represents 38 accounts and 77 permits.

To improve parking lot management and address enforcement and abuse issues, City staff proposes installing gate arms and ticket columns with proximity card readers to the Cota Commuter Lot entrance and exit. Only permit holders will be able to access the lot during business hours (7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.). Cota Lot permits would be issued in the form of proximity cards that can be remotely activated and/or deactivated. While staff does not plan to change the current hours of operation at this time, new gate arms and ticket columns would give the City the flexibility to charge parking fees to other prospective customers wanting to park in the Cota Commuter Lot outside of business hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays. The lot will continue to be closed on Saturday mornings for the Farmer's Market.

As a part of the design review process for the Access Control Project, Downtown Parking staff is also required to ensure the Cota Commuter Lot is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and bring the parking spaces designated for disabled access up to code.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Cota Lot Improvements and Access Control Project (Project), involves:

1. Installing gate arms, ticket columns, and a fiber-optic connection to the Downtown Parking Access Control System located in the Granada Garage;
2. Reconfiguring driveways to have one entrance from Santa Barbara Street and one exit onto Cota Street;
3. Reconstructing the driveways and sidewalks to be in compliance with the ADA;

4. Providing the correct number of disabled parking spaces and paths of travel from the parking spaces to the City right of way, in compliance with the ADA;
5. Installing two electric charging station spaces;
6. Installing bicycle parking; and
7. Repairing any failing asphalt paving and raised/broken curbs; and
8. Installing any required landscaping to complement the new construction, which will be completed after the drought.

The Project will provide improved parking availability, reliability, and affordability for permit holders. There will no longer be unpermitted vehicles in the lot, which means more permits will be available for sale. The Cota Commuter Lot will allow for easy and remote resolution of permit issues. Downtown Parking staff will be able to monitor the lot from the Parking Offices in real time, gathering data on lot occupancy, peak usage, permit movements, and duration of stay. Parking Enforcement will no longer be required to enforce unpermitted vehicles from parking in the lot.

The Project will also bring the lot into compliance with current Americans with Disabilities Act code requirements, providing permit holders with disabilities a safe route from the parking space to the City's right of way. Permit holders and public demand for electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle parking at this lot will also be accommodated.

The Project has been before the Downtown Parking Committee (DPC) on several occasions over the years and the DPC supports the installation of access control equipment at the Cota Commuter Lot.

DESIGN PHASE CONSULTANT ENGINEERING SERVICES

Staff recommends that Council authorize the Public Works Director to execute a contract with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., (Stantec) in the amount of \$34,775 for design services, and \$3,478 for potential extra services, for a total amount of \$38,253.

Penfield and Smith, now Stantec, worked on the conceptual design for this project. Stantec, has worked on many Downtown Parking facility projects and is a capable firm to continue with the Project's final design, as well as provide design assistance during construction.

FUNDING

There are appropriated sufficient funds in the Downtown Parking Capital Fund to cover these costs. A total of \$475,000 is budgeted to complete the improvements to the Cota Commuter Lot. Stantec will provide the City with a cost estimate as part of their scope of work.

Current Cota Lot annual revenues are \$248,300. It is anticipated that with this Project, there will be a Project revenue increase of \$52,000 annually due to improved collections, additional permit sales, conversion of illegal parkers, and unreturned hang tags. The estimated Project payback period is eight years.

PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/JWG/mj

SUBMITTED BY: Rebecca J. Bjork, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office