CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

04/09/2025

SUBJECT:

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS AND AUTHORIZATION TO BID FOR THE SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE LOW WATER CROSSING BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT ARENAS CANYON SOUTH, CITY PROJECT NO. 06-18, FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. BR-NBIL (502)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve the plans, specifications, and estimate and authorize Staff to advertise and solicit bids for the South Palm Canyon Drive Low Water Crossing Bridge Replacement at Arenas Canyon South, City project No. 06-18, Federal Aid Project No. BR-NBIL(502); and
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents.

Attachments

Item 3B

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025 BUSINESS & LEGISLATIVE

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS AND AUTHORIZATION TO BID FOR THE SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE LOW WATER CROSSING BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AT ARENAS CANYON SOUTH, CITY PROJECT NO. 06-18, FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. BR-NBIL(502)

FROM: Scott C. Stiles, City Manager

BY: Engineering Services Department

SUMMARY:

As a condition of the settlement agreement with the Committee to Save Oswit Canyon ("Committee"), the City agreed to put a separate item for public comment on a regular City Council agenda prior to proceeding with the bidding of the South Palm Canyon Drive Low Water Crossing Bridge Replacement at Arenas Canyon South, City Project No. 06-18, Federal Aid Project No. BR-NBIL(502) ("Project"). This item allows the public to provide comments to the City Council.

In addition, Staff is requesting authorization to proceed with construction of the Project. The construction documents (Plans, Specifications and Estimate) are completed and, in accordance with Section 7.04.040 of the Procurement and Contracting Code, the City Council shall approve and adopt the plans, specifications and work details, and authorize the bid request for all public projects in excess of $200,000.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve the plans, specifications, and estimate and authorize Staff to advertise and solicit bids for the South Palm Canyon Drive Low Water Crossing Bridge Replacement at Arenas Canyon South, City project No. 06-18, Federal Aid Project No. BR-NBIL(502); and

2. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents.

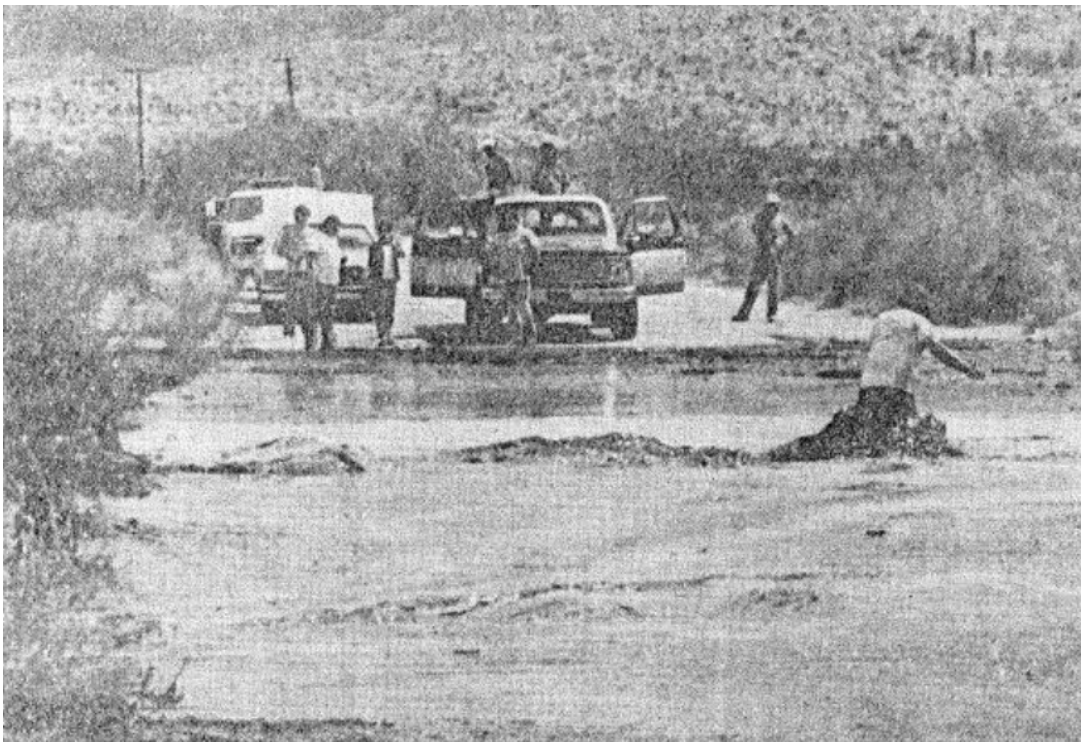
BACKGROUND:

South Palm Canyon Drive is subject to flooding from Oswit Canyon and has been subject to closure at times during past heavy storms. As the only access point into the South Palm Springs area, maintaining access is an important public health and safety issue.

The Oswit Canyon alluvial fan extends over an area of 3.2 square miles west of S. Palm Canyon Drive, and during a 100-year storm can generate runoff of up to 3,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), equivalent to over 1.3 million gallons per minute. Oswit Canyon and the alluvial fan are shown in the following view.

Oswit Canyon and Alluvial Fan

Some photos showing the flooding that has occurred in the past are provided in this staff report (not all road closures are demonstrated by these photos).



August 1982

January 2005

February 2019

In 2005, the City applied for $4,055,000 in funding through the State's Highway Bridge Program (HBP) for the construction of an elevated roadway and new storm drain culvert system on South Palm Canyon Drive, just north of Bogert Trail. This structure is intended to accept and convey the stormwater runoff from Oswit Canyon under the roadway of South Palm Canyon Drive and into the adjacent golf course, where the flow naturally runs into the Palm Canyon Wash further east.

The HBP provides federal funding for 88.53% of the total project cost with the City providing the remaining 11.47% as a local match. The City is using Gas Tax, Local Measure A (transportation funds), or Special Development Funds that were collected in that area specifically for drainage improvements.

On October 4, 2006, Caltrans gave the City authorization to proceed with the Project. This included the geological studies, hydrological studies, floodplain studies, studies for archaeological cultural resources, protected species studies, and the acquiring of rights-of-way for the Project.

On January 18, 2012, the City Council adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Project.

Subsequently, in 2015, the final design commenced and efforts to acquire various parcels for temporary and permanent rights-of-way for the Project were initiated.

On November 2, 2016, the City Council approved an agreement with the owners of the 114 acres of vacant property located west of S. Palm Canyon Drive (the Oswit Canyon Property) to acquire approximately 3.5 acres of it as a permanent easement necessary for the Project. The property is shown in **Figure 1** below.

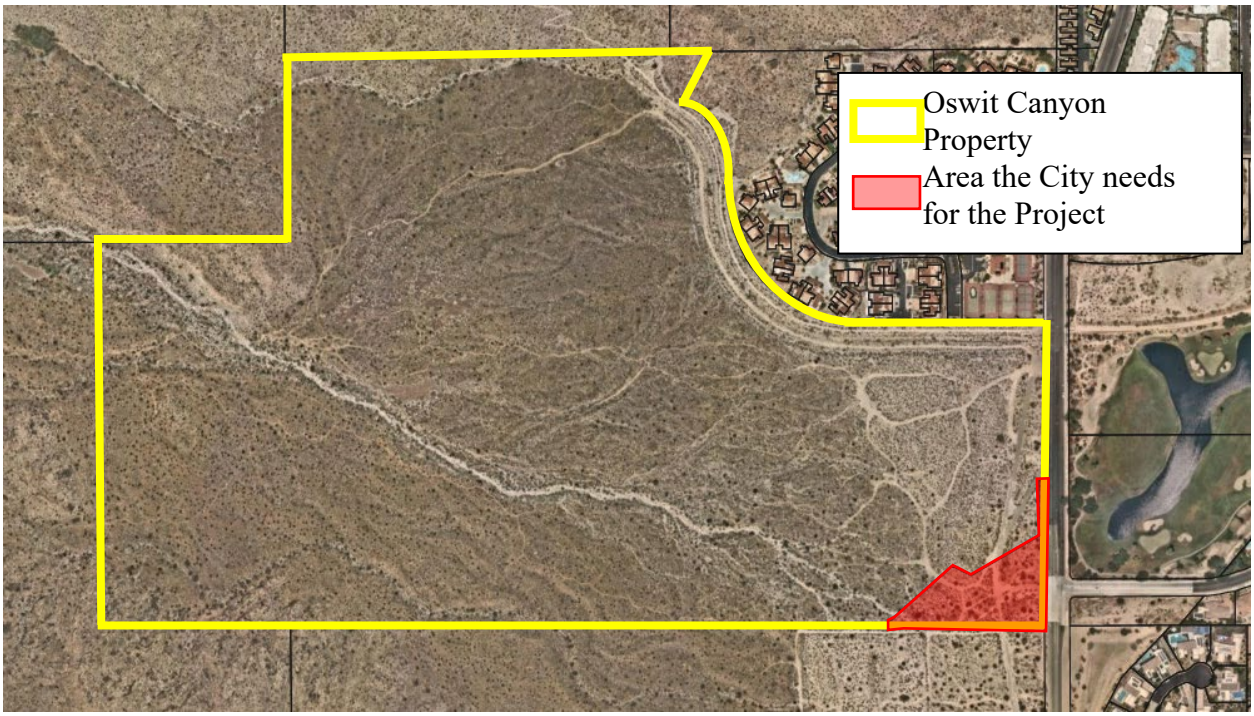


Figure 1. Oswit Canyon Property and Area the City needs for the Project

In January 2017, an initiative process was filed with the City by the Committee to Save Oswit Canyon to amend the City's Zoning Code, Canyon South Specific Plan, and General Plan, to identify the Oswit Canyon area as an Environmentally Sensitive Area, and subject to development standards reducing density to 1 unit for 40 acres (the "Oswit Canyon Initiative").

As a result of the Oswit Canyon Initiative, in February 2017, the owners of the affected property filed litigation to prevent it from being adopted, or that, if adopted, the land use changes to the property diminished its value and represented a taking of the property.

On March 1, 2017, the City Council was presented with the Oswit Canyon Initiative which qualified at that time for a special election. In lieu of calling a special election, the City Council adopted it. However, due to the litigation, implementation of the Oswit Canyon Initiative was prevented as the litigation continued.

As a result of the litigation, the Oswit Canyon Property owners rescinded their approval to convey to the City the easements required to build the Project which was approved by the City Council on November 2, 2016.

In May 2019, the Committee, the Oswit Canyon Property owners, and the City participated in efforts to resolve the litigation. It was agreed to allow the Committee to raise the funds to purchase the Oswit Canyon Property from the owners with the express intent of preserving it for conservation.

In March 2020, the efforts to resolve the litigation reached a conclusion with the parties entering into a Settlement Agreement leading to the Committee's acquisition of the Oswit Canyon Property on October 30, 2020.

The Settlement Agreement provided for the City to acquire the portion of the Oswit Canyon Property needed for the Project, rather than a permanent easement. It also allowed for the Committee or its consultants to comment on the design of the Project, and for the City to put the Project as a separate agenda item for public comments at a regular City Council meeting prior to proceeding with bidding.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

On December 17, 2019, the Committee to Save Oswit Canyon's consultant, Haimann Engineering (Haimann), submitted four options for the City to consider, which the consultant expected to be feasible following a more in-depth hydrology study and engineering analysis to size the features, assess impacts, and develop cost estimates.

In May of 2020, the City Council approved an amendment in the amount of $112,500 to Dokken Engineering to review the comments, provide engineering alternates, and prepare renderings of what the site could potentially look like. The findings of each option were not feasible and are summarized in **Attachment A**.

There are design changes that Dokken was able to incorporate into the Project (see **Attachment B** and images on the following page). The height and extents of the proposed flood control berms were reduced to transition better with the natural topography of the site. The footprint was reduced as much as possible, while still providing drainage for severe storm events. Rock treatments and as much of the concrete structures have been removed as feasible to make the channel portion blend with the surroundings. The following two images show how the channel might look after natural vegetation takes hold.

On February 28, 2024, City Staff along with Dokken Engineering Staff met with Ms. Jane Garrison of the Oswit Group to discuss the results of the findings of the four options and to present the redesign of the Project. Ms. Garrison requested a follow-up meeting along with hydrologic design data to review. Staff presented the information requested and met with Ms. Garrison on April 8, 2024, to discuss the Project again and to inform Ms. Garrison that Staff intended to bring the Project for public comment and to request authorization to bid.

Staff is bringing this item forward to receive the public comments as required by the Settlement Agreement, request approval of the final design documents, and receive authorization to go out to bid.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**:**

On January 18, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution No. 23076, adopting and ordering the filing of an MND for the Project. Subsequently, Staff filed the Notice of Determination with the Riverside County Clerk and State Clearing House.

The Project is funded in part by federal funds, requiring local oversight by Caltrans. As a federally funded project, it is subject to review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). On February 6, 2012, Caltrans as the lead agency, made an environmental determination that the Project does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b), and that it qualifies for a Categorical Exemption in accordance with 23 CFR 771.117(d).

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLANNING:

This item aligns with City Council Priority “Community Infrastructure”, specifically 2B, 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan, and identifying high priority facilities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This Project began in 2006, and as the years have passed, the cost of construction has continuously increased. Staff at every opportunity has submitted requests for additional funding from Caltrans to cover the increased cost of construction. In 2021, the engineer’s estimate was $4.5 million. As the Project was on pause during litigation, Staff has only recently revisited the cost estimate. The current estimate of construction costs for the Project is $8.3 million. During the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget cycle, Staff allocated $7.69 million in anticipation of the escalating costs. However, the budgeted amount falls short of the estimated construction costs.

Staff will bid the Project and, depending on the bid results, may request an additional appropriation of Measure A funds. Staff will be submitting another request to Caltrans to increase the funding for the Project. The appropriation may be as high as $2.6 million depending on the funds provided by Caltrans. The Project funding and estimated costs are shown in the table below.

Table of Project Costs	Amount
Capital Funds	$6,493,606
Local Measure “A” Funds	$868,260
Special Gas Tax (SB1)	$325,253
Construction Contract	($8,256,000)
Construction Management/Inspection	($825,600)
Project Administration	($412,800)
Contingency (10%)	($825,600)
Appropriation Amount	**($2,632,881)**

REVIEWED BY:

City Engineer:	Joel Montalvo
Deputy City Manager:	Flinn Fagg
City Manager:	Scott Stiles

ATTACHMENT:

A. Options and Findings - Haimann Engineering (Oswit)
B. Proposed Project Design – Dokken Engineering (City of Palm Springs)

Attachment A

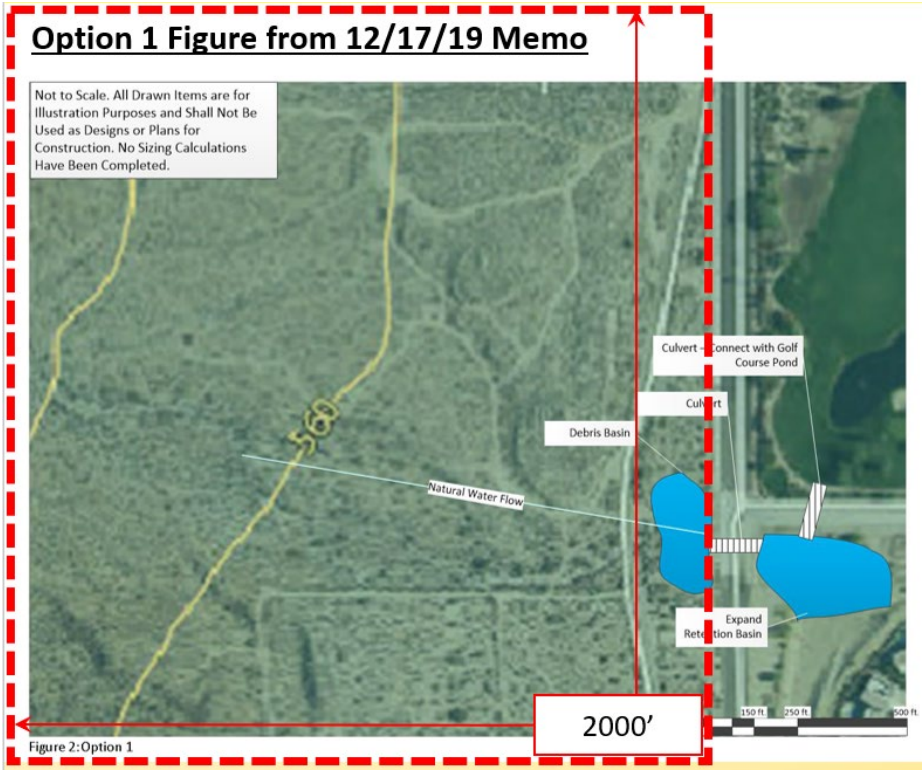
Findings of Options Suggested by the Committee to Save Oswit Canyon

On December 17, 2019, the Committee to Save Oswit Canyon's consultant, Haimann Engineering (Haimann), submitted four options for the City to consider, which the consultant expected to be feasible following a more in depth hydrology study, and engineering analysis to size the features, assess impacts, and develop cost estimates. The City was open to the Haimann's suggested options and investigated each of the options.

Suggested Option 1: Construct a debris basin west of South Palm Canyon Drive in the path of natural drainage and connect to an expanded retention basin East of South Palm Canyon Drive. The retention basin would then connect to the pond in the Golf Course with water being balanced between those facilities.

Findings: The City determined that the retention basin on the east side of South Palm Canyon Drive is for a different watershed and cannot be used to mitigate flooding from Oswit Canyon. The tributary area for the Oswit watershed is 2,080 acres, that creates a volume of 1,000 ac-ft that needs to be designed for a 100-year storm event for a 24 hour period.

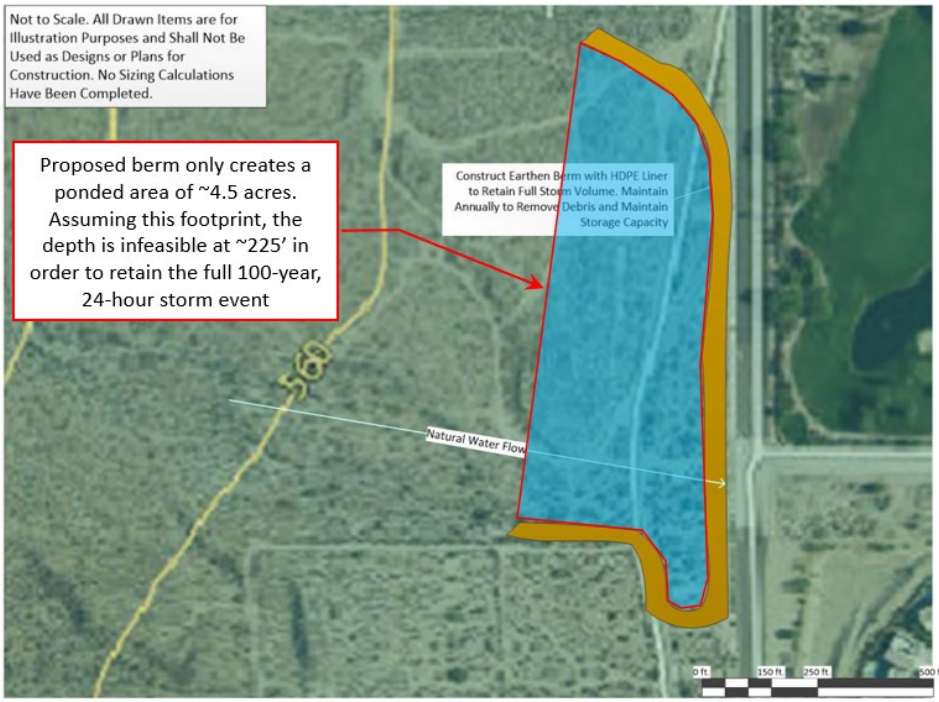
To handle that volume, a 2,000 ft x 2,000 ft basin, 12 feet deep, is required. The red dashed line shows how large that debris basin would need to be as compared to the debris basin Haimann envisioned in blue to accommodate the 1,000 ac-ft. **This option is not feasible and will have a significant impact to the environment.**



Suggested Option 2:
Construct a retention basin with berm west of South Palm Canyon Drive, lined with HDPE liner for geotechnical stability, where water will be held and "allowed to infiltrate and evaportranspirate". "This berm would be sized to prevent discharge of the capital storm event. A spillway feature would be installed to allow water to overflow under extreme conditions beyond the capital storm event."

Findings: The proposed berm as diagrammed below would need to be about 46 feet deep, by 2,500 feet long by 50 feet wide, to accommodate the 1,000 ac-ft of water design requirement. **This option is not feasible.**

Option 2 Figure from 12/17/19 Memo



Suggested Option 3:
Construct a debris basin to keep all the water on the west side of South Palm Canyon Drive. “A smaller berm would be constructed than in Option 2. Dry wells would be installed to infiltrate accumulated water more rapidly. The debris basin would be designed to minimize silting of the dry wells. The dry wells would be maintained …to maintain infiltration rates…to prevent overflow of the capital storm.”

Findings: The proposed berm creates an efficient use of space, but this option offers less than Option 2 at ~1.2 acres. Based on 11 dry-wells shown with this footprint, the depths (calc’d to 835’) are infeasible in order to retain the full 100-year, 24-hour storm volume. (Not accounting for the reduction in available volume runoff due to sediment volumes)

Option 3 Figure from 12/17/19 Memo

Suggested Option 4:
Construct a debris basin to keep all water on the west side of South Palm Canyon Drive. “A vegetated infiltration trench with a downstream curb would be installed to hold and infiltrate the capital storm. The debris basin would be designed to minimize silting of the vegetated infiltration trench. The vegetated infiltration trench would be maintained as necessary to maintain infiltration rates necessary to prevent overflow of the capital storm.” (see figure on next slides with comments)

Findings: The sediment basin would provide for additional storage capacity but would still be infeasible. After accounting for the added infiltration trench capacity, the debris basin would need to be approx. 435' deep in order to retain the full 100-year, 24-hour storm volume. (Not accounting for the reduction in available volume runoff due to sediment volumes)

Option 4 Figure from 12/17/19 Memo

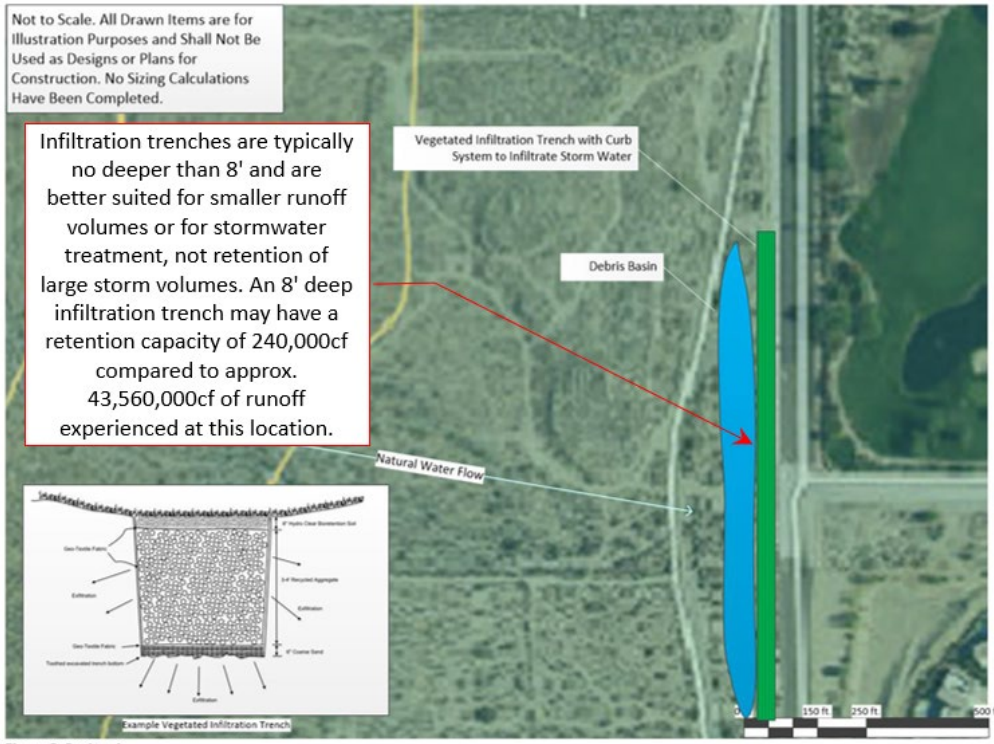
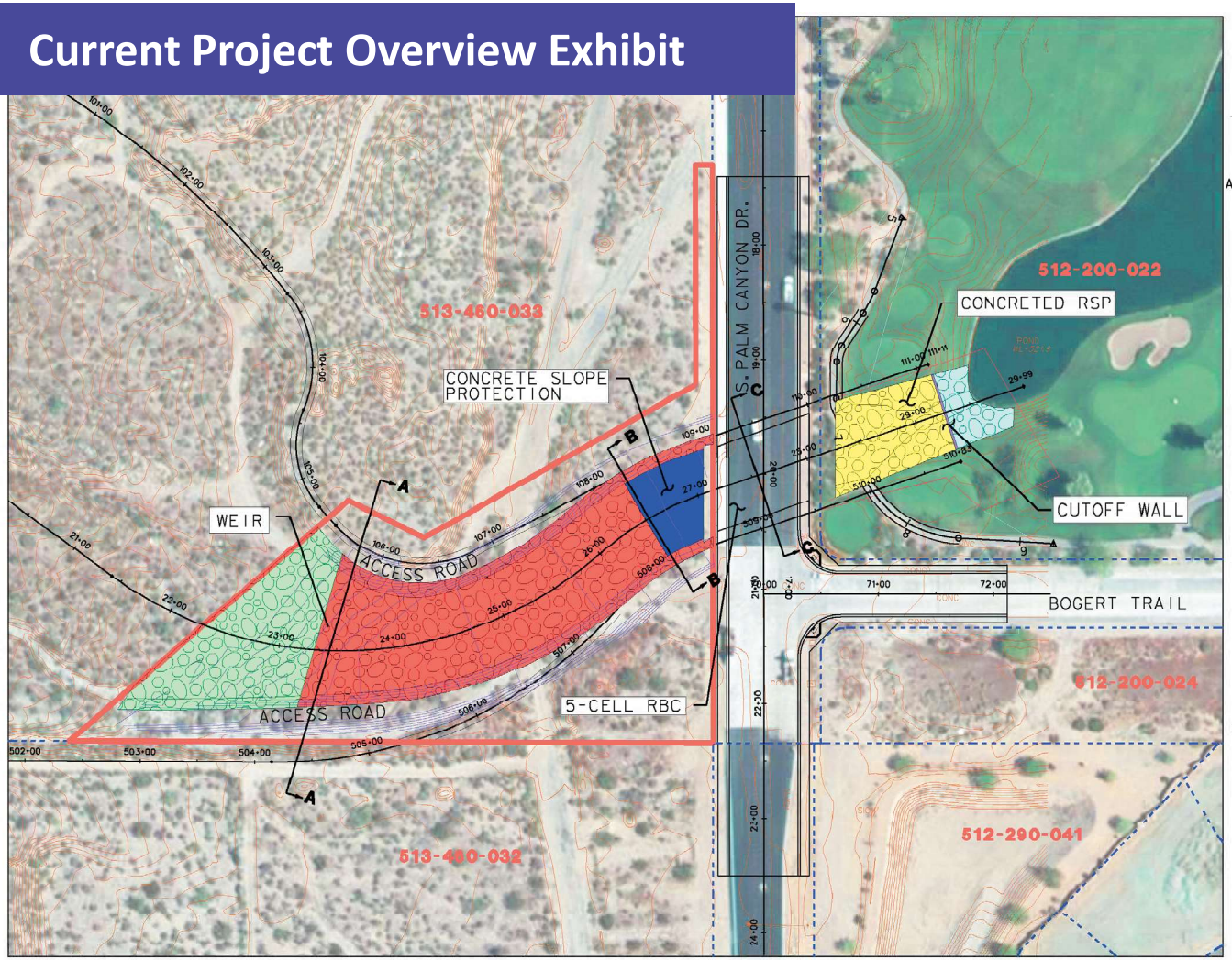


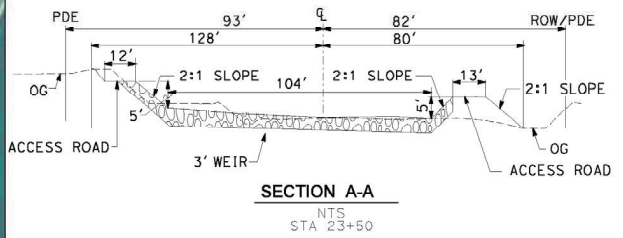
Figure 5:Option 4

Attachment B

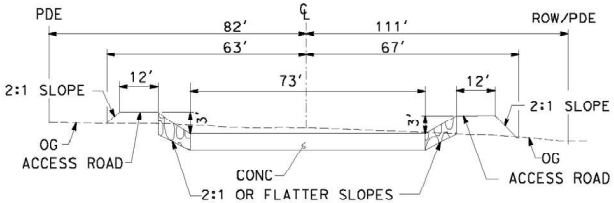
South Palm Canyon Drive Low Water Crossing Project History

Current Project Overview Exhibit

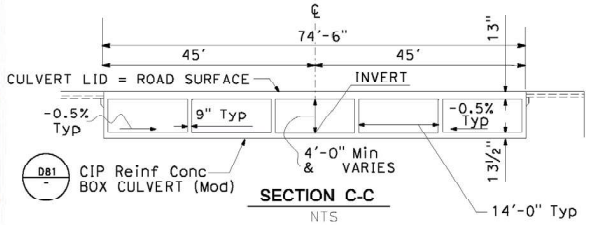




SECTION A-A
NTS
STA 23+50



SECTION B-B
NTS
STA 26+53



SECTION C-C
NTS
STA 27+54

LEGEND:

- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY/PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
- EXISTING CONDITIONS
- PROPOSED CONDITIONS
- PERMANENT DRAINAGE EASEMENT PDE
- TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT
- CLASS III METHOD B RSP WITH CLASS 8 FABRIC
- CLASS IV METHOD B RSP WITH CLASS 8 FABRIC
- CONCRETE SLOPE PROTECTION
- CONCRETED CLASS VII METHOD B OVER CLASS II METHOD RSP WITH CLASS 8 FABRIC
- CUTOFF WALL
- CLASS V METHOD B RSP OVER CLASS III METHOD B RSP WITH CLASS 10 FABRIC

SHEET 1 OF 1
SCALE: 1"=50'

DOKKEN ENGINEERING
110 Blue Ravine Road, Suite 200
Folsom, California 95630
(916) 858-0642

PROJECT
SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE

PROJECT OVERVIEW EXHIBIT
9/28/20

South Palm Canyon Drive Low Water Crossing Project History

Proposed Easterly View from Inside Channel