



City Council Agenda Item Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

DATE: July 25, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Alex D. McIntyre, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Matthew Lee, P.E., Public Works Director
Ana Morales, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: Consider Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Newspaper Rack and Enclosure Models and Locations and Determining the Project is Exempt Under the California Environmental Quality Act

BACKGROUND:

The 2009 *General Plan*¹ envisions and promotes the San Mateo Avenue downtown area as “*the symbolic heart of the city.*” Specific design and implementation policies were set in place to “*provide the residents with a pleasant and economically vital commercial and entertaining destination.*” Such policies include improving the visibility of the downtown, expanding the streetscape amenities and upgrading and enhancing the downtown appearance. Further, building upon the implementation policies of the General Plan, the 2013 *Transit Corridors Plan*² (TCP) focuses on articulating the community's vision for a revitalized commercial corridors in proximity to the San Bruno Avenue Caltrain Station. The vision includes fostering dynamic architecture and welcoming gateways, convenient transportation connections, pedestrian-oriented “green” streets, and additional housing, jobs, retail, and restaurants, while maintaining a sense of the City's history. The TCP identifies San Mateo Avenue, the Central Business District/Downtown, as one of the five character areas for public realm improvements. The TCP also identifies San Mateo Avenue streetscape improvements as a short-term implementation project to enhance the Central Business District.

In recognition of these guiding policies, the *San Mateo Avenue Conceptual Streetscape Plan* (Plan) was adopted by the City of San Bruno (City) City Council in October 2019³. The objective of this Plan is to provide design guidance for the public right-of-way to support the City's goals of beautifying the public realm, supporting local businesses, spurring investment within the downtown core, enhancing the downtown's character, and increasing the attractiveness of the downtown as a destination. Some of the Plan's specific street design recommendations includes more attractive and functional sidewalks; well-marked and decorative crosswalks; widened sidewalks and corners at some locations; improved directional and wayfinding signage to public parking lots; integrated and attractive modern-style street furniture; and roadways that accommodate multiple modes of transportation such as bicycles, pedestrians and automobiles. The Plan also includes a condition assessment of the current San Mateo Avenue streetscape,

¹ <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/629/General-Plan>

² <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/634/Transit-Corridors-Plan>

³ <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1688/San-Mateo-Avenue-Conceptual-Streetscape-Plan-PDF>

which was categorized by the community as “*run down*” with “...*precast-concrete trash receptacles that are unsightly and do not provide for recycling, as well as several mismatched trash receptacles, newspaper racks that are in disrepair...*”.

In direct response to this assessment, staff prepared a proposal for a near-term project within the Plan that could be completed prior to the overall streetscape implementation; namely, replacing the trash receptacles and installing enclosures around the newspaper racks on San Mateo Avenue within the downtown corridor. The proposal detailed the design criteria for the new trash receptacles which was informed by the Plan, staff, and the City’s solid waste hauler: Recology San Bruno. Additionally, the proposal included staff’s recommendation for the newspaper rack enclosure design and material, which was not included as part of the Plan, but was compatible and in alignment with the Plan’s preferred design characteristics of “*simple*”, “*elegant*”, and “*unique*” and preferred furnishing material of “*stainless-steel or silver-colored metal (e.g., aluminum or powder coated steel)*”. Staff presented a variety of design recommendations to the Architectural Review Committee on January 14, 2021, who expressed that all design options were acceptable. The design recommendations were then presented to City Council on March 9, 2021, for feedback and direction. Councilmembers provided their feedback on both the trash receptacle and the newspaper rack enclosure design options. Specific to the newspaper rack enclosures, several Councilmembers expressed a preference for a custom heart pattern design if it were a cost-effective option.

In March 2021, this project was added as a Fiscal Year 2020-21 City Council Strategic Initiative as a short-term downtown improvement project⁴.

Due to impending steel price increases at the end of May 2021, an expedited decision was necessary for the trash receptacle portion of this project prior to May 31, 2021. Therefore, on May 11, 2021, staff presented to City Council a resolution authorizing the City Manager to purchase the new trash receptacles for San Mateo Avenue and a request for an allocation of \$130,000 from the Solid Waste/Recycling Fund (AB939) towards their replacement. The presentation included further details on receptacle design options based on feedback received at the March 9, 2021, meeting, and recommendations on installation locations which included strategically placing six Big Belly trash and recycling receptacles along high trash use locations and thirty-three dual trash and recycling units at the remaining locations along San Mateo Avenue. The City Council approved this agenda item with the direction that the newspaper rack enclosure portion of this project would be brought forward to City Council for consideration at a future meeting.

This project was added as a capital improvement project in the City’s *Adopted Fiscal Year 2021-22 Operating and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budgets*⁵. By Spring 2022, staff completed the purchase and installation of the various trash receptacles along San Mateo Avenue’s downtown corridor.

As staff continued working on the newspaper rack enclosure portion of the project, three abandoned newspaper racks on San Mateo Avenue were identified as needing to be removed. In Summer 2022, Public Works and Code Enforcement worked jointly to remove the three abandoned newspaper racks and in June 2023, one additional abandoned newspaper rack was identified and removed, leaving the downtown corridor with five newspaper racks that still needed either partial (2) or full (3) enclosures at the following locations (Attachment 2).

⁴ <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2426/FY-20-21-Strategic-Initiatives-Update-3-12-21?bidId=>

⁵ <https://www.sanbruno.ca.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/52>

- 1) 424 San Mateo Avenue – 2-bin rack
- 2) 466 San Mateo Avenue – 2-bin rack
- 3) 487 San Mateo Avenue – 4-bin rack
- 4) 500 San Mateo Avenue – 1-bin rack
- 5) 501 San Mateo Avenue – 1-bin rack

In total, these five locations provide for ten distinct bins, which are utilized by permit from the City. Based on current City records these permitted vendors are: Bay Classifieds, San Francisco Chronicle, San Mateo Daily Journal, and San Francisco Examiner. The City also provides additional bins for potential future vendors.

DISCUSSION:

Since the May 11, 2021, City Council meeting, staff continued their assessment of the remaining five newspaper racks in need of enclosures and worked with a professional design firm to create six custom heart design options for said enclosures, to present to City Council at a future meeting. Staff initiated a community engagement process to obtain feedback on these designs. Staff also recommends that the five existing newspaper racks be replaced due to poor condition and lack of modern security features such as locking bins. The proposed newspaper rack replacements would be in alignment with the design recommendations in San Bruno Municipal Code Section 8.32.040⁶.

Community Engagement

To promote accessibility and equitability in the community voting process, the six newspaper rack enclosure designs were printed on a large voting board placed at City Hall's main public lobby during regular business hours from June 16, 2023, to June 23, 2023. To encourage community engagement, staff promoted the voting process via social media and also displayed the voting board alongside staff in downtown San Mateo Avenue on the afternoon of June 22, 2023. The results of the community voting process are shown in Attachment 3. The community's preferred enclosure design choice is Option 5, shown in closeup in Attachment 4.

Final Design Recommendations

For the newspaper rack enclosures, staff reviewed the six custom design options in addition to analyzing costs and design compatibility with the aesthetics in the Downtown. Staff recommends Option 5 in alignment with the community's preference.

For the newspaper racks, staff recommends Sho-Rack 49H⁷ (see Attachment 5 for an example of the proposed 4-bin rack), which is in alignment with the design recommendations in San Bruno Municipal Code Section 8.32.040⁵. Should this rack not be available or have the design features required by the City, staff will procure an equivalent per the Municipal Code.

The replacement newspaper racks will provide for fourteen distinct bins as follows (Attachment 6):

- 1) 424 San Mateo Avenue – 2-bin rack
- 2) 466 San Mateo Avenue – 2-bin rack
- 3) 487 San Mateo Avenue – 4-bin rack
- 4) 500 San Mateo Avenue – 2-bin rack
- 5) 501 San Mateo Avenue – 4-bin rack

⁶ https://library.qcode.us/lib/san_bruno_ca/pub/municipal_code/item/title_8-chapter_8_32?view=all#title_8-chapter_8_32-8_32_040

⁷ <https://www.mernewsrack.com/model-49-newspaper-rack/>

This will allow for the existing permitted newspaper vendors to continue utilizing the City's newspaper racks, while still providing additional bins for potential future vendors. This plan is based on current demand. Should a need arise for additional bins, the City would install additional newspaper racks as needed.

Maintenance

To encourage the use of the newspaper rack bins solely for publications and prevent misuse, all bins will be lockable. To complement the aesthetics of the downtown corridor of San Mateo Avenue, in addition to minimizing the appearance of wear and tear, both the newspaper racks and their enclosures will be black.

The newspaper racks will be maintained in compliance with San Bruno Municipal Code Section 8.32.080⁸. The newspaper rack enclosures will be similarly maintained as part of the San Mateo Avenue daily cleaning schedule, which will include debris removal around, under, and inside the enclosures. Graffiti on either of the newspaper bins and/or racks will be removed by the City's power washing contractor, Zero Turn Power Washing, at no additional cost. If City staff need to address a vandalized bin or rack, each instance of graffiti is estimated to cost approximately \$70.00, which includes the cost of labor and materials. Depending on the extent of the vandalization, the enclosures could also be replaced as needed, however, due to their custom design, production lead time for a replacement panel or other parts would require a minimum of 3-5 weeks from order to delivery.

Timeline

The lead time for the newspaper racks is approximately 6-8 weeks from purchase and the lead time for the custom designed newspaper rack enclosures is approximately 12 weeks. Therefore, if City Council accepts staff's recommendation to proceed with this project as described above, the replacement of the 5 newspaper racks and the addition of the 5 newspaper rack enclosures is estimated to be completed by Winter 2023.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The cost (design, material, tax, shipping, and installation) to replace the 5 newspaper racks with the addition of the 5 newspaper rack enclosures is within the total budget of \$106,433 that is currently available based on the adopted CIP Project #60027: *Downtown Trash Receptacles & Newspaper Racks & Enclosures* as part of the City's *Adopted Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operating and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budgets*⁶. No additional costs are anticipated in order to purchase and install the newspaper rack and enclosures. All contracts for the purchase and installation of the newspaper racks and enclosures are within the approval authority of the City Manager and the Public Works Director.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), existing facilities which exempts minor alterations of existing streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities. This project will not cause an expansion of an existing use of the streets.

⁸ https://library.qcode.us/lib/san_bruno_ca/pub/municipal_code/item/title_8-chapter_8_32?view=all#title_8-chapter_8_32-8_32_080

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider adopting a resolution approving the newspaper rack and enclosure models and locations and determining the project is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Direct staff to terminate the proposed purchase of newspaper racks and newspaper rack enclosures and investigate alternative designs and options.
- 2) Do not proceed with this project.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Resolution
- 2) Photographs of Existing Newspaper Racks
- 3) New Newspaper Racks and Enclosure Screens Voting Board
- 4) Option 5 Design
- 5) Recommended Sho-Rack 49H 4-Bin Rack
- 6) Location Map

THIS RESOLUTION HAS
BEEN SUPERCEDED

SEE ATTACHMENT 1
FOR CURRENT
RESOLUTION



424 SAN MATEO AVENUE



466 SAN MATEO AVENUE



487 SAN MATEO AVENUE



500 SAN MATEO AVENUE



501 SAN MATEO AVENUE

NEW NEWSPAPER RACKS AND ENCLOSURE SCREENS



The San Bruno City Council approved a strategic initiative to install new newspaper racks and enclosure screens in the Downtown. To help us pick the best option, please vote for your preference

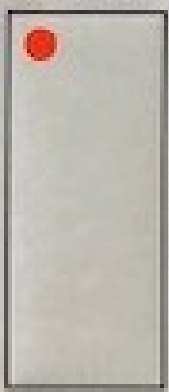
OPTION 1

VOTE



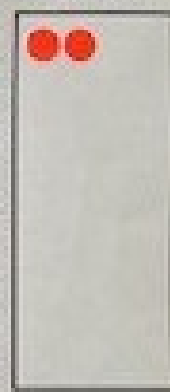
OPTION 2

VOTE



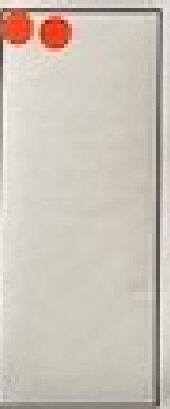
OPTION 3

VOTE



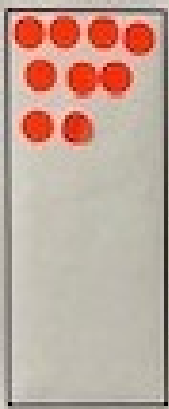
OPTION 4

VOTE



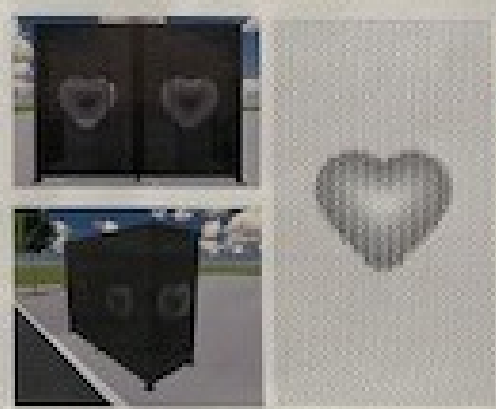
OPTION 5

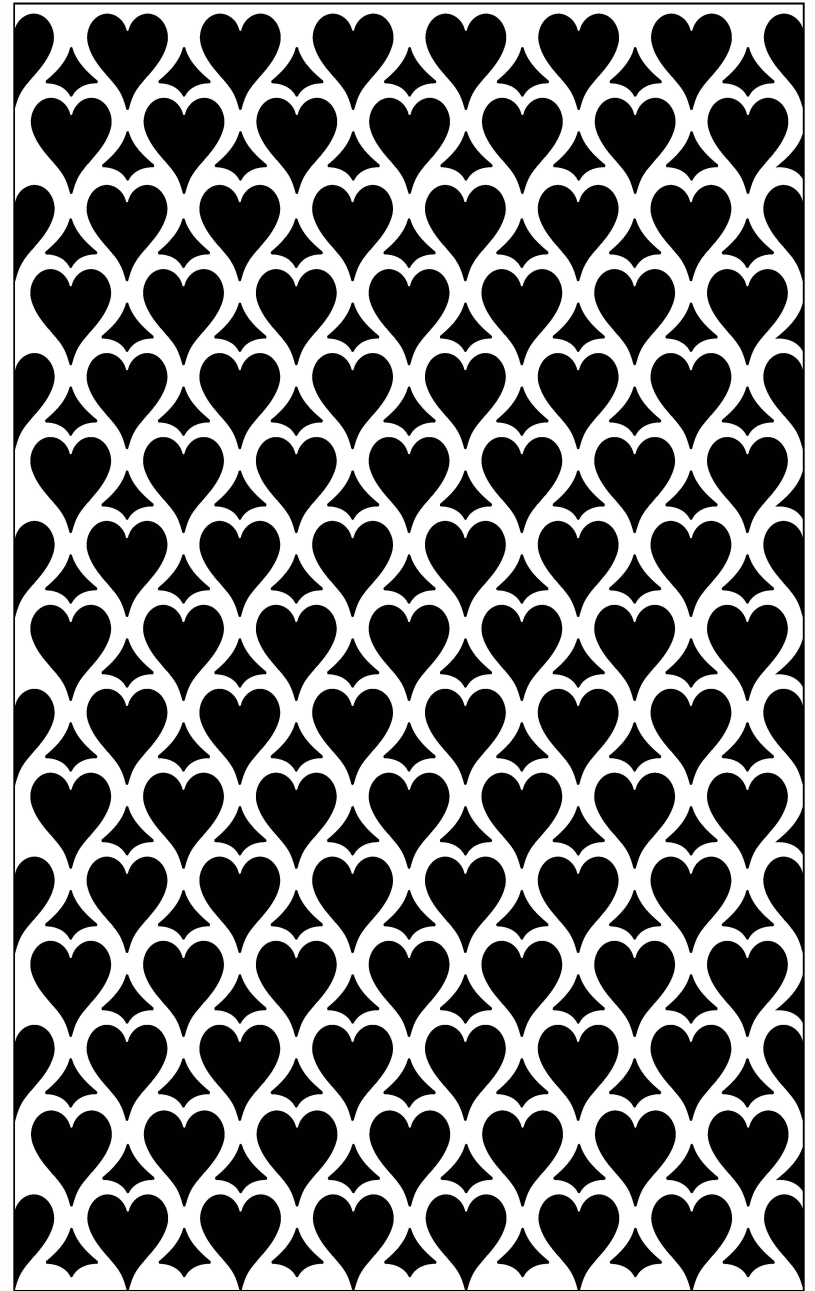
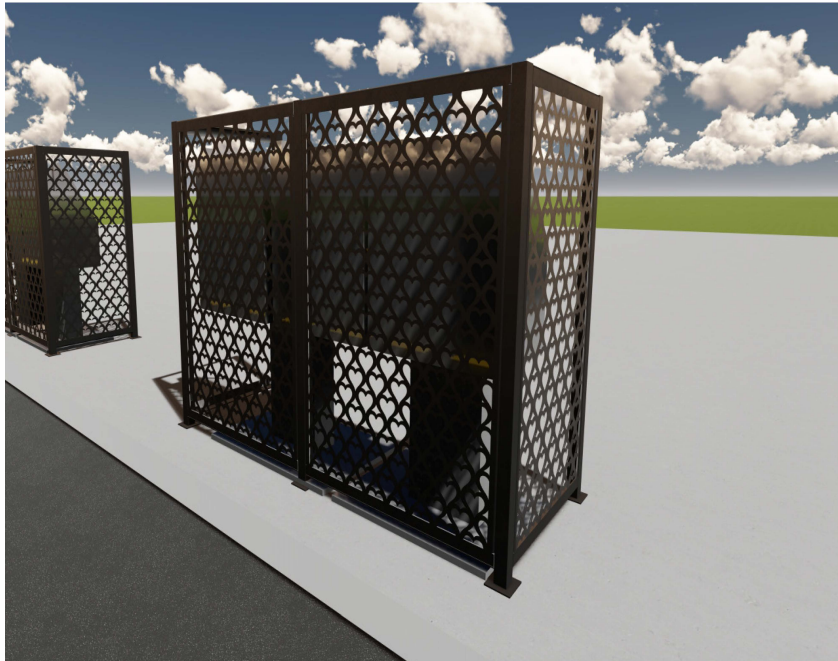
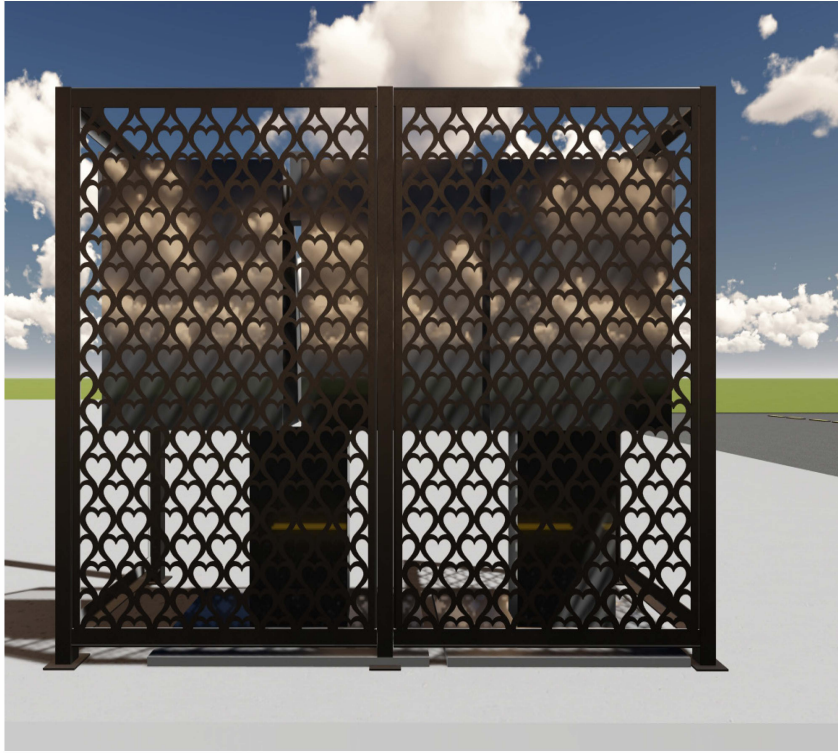
VOTE



OPTION 6

VOTE







Note: Newspaper rack color will be black to match enclosures.

