

## Council Recap - December 5, 2023

A bridge over the La Quinta Evacuation Channel on Avenue 50, where heavy rains cause flooding that can close the road for several days, is in the works with construction to begin as early as 2026.

To help expedite construction, the City plans to close Avenue 50 between Washington Street and Park Avenue to build the bridge in one stage rather than two.

With full closure construction would take 12 to 14 months rather than 20 to 22 months. It would also shave up to \$600,000 off the project cost, which is currently estimated at \$16.4 million.

The road would remain open for pedestrian and bicycle access throughout construction with a temporary path built on the south side.

This is the final bridge needed within the City of La Quinta to avoid road closures caused by flooding. The Dune Palms Road bridge is currently under construction and is the last north/south all-weather span needed over the Whitewater wash.

A robust outreach program would be initiated by City staff before construction starts, so residents and others who use Avenue 50 will know of the road closure and detour options during construction.

Staff has talked with Desert Sands Unified School District which prefers full closure to get the project done quicker and will work with the City in preparing parents and staff of Harry Truman Elementary and La Quinta Middle schools. City staff is also working with the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA.

Tuesday's study session with the Council was to determine whether the bridge will be a single- or two-phased construction project.

Council members were presented with two staging options Tuesday night that also included keeping the road open during construction, maintaining one lane of traffic in each direction. Construction would occur one lane at a time, starting with the north lane. A temporary retaining wall to separate new construction from the existing roadway would also be needed, at an estimated cost of \$450,000.

The additional eight to 10 months it would take to complete the project if the road remained open would cost about \$200,000 in project overhead costs.

Council members supported the option to close the road, but because this was a study session item they did not vote.

Funding for the bridge includes just under \$3.9 million from the Coachella Valley Association of Governments and an estimated \$1.3 million from the City. The City is anticipating approximately \$11.2 million in Highway Bridge Program funds.

Contract negotiations are underway with an engineering firm that is designing the bridge and expected to be presented to the City Council on December 19.

Tuesday's meeting was short, allowing Council members and staff to attend the annual Open House Meet & Greet at City Hall.

The La Quinta City Council meets twice monthly on the first and third Tuesday at 4 p.m. at City Hall. The next scheduled meeting is December 19. We invite the public to attend to stay in the know of all things LQ.

If you can't make it to a meeting or missed a meeting, you can livestream or watch the video online at <https://laquinta.12milesout.com>.

Agenda packets with staff reports can be viewed on the City's website, [www.laquintaca.gov](http://www.laquintaca.gov), or received via email or text by signing up for Quail Mail.