



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

Agenda Number: 2

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TO: City Council

FROM: Drew Corbett, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Public Works Department

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2023

SUBJECT:
Downtown – Public Restroom

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider options for the opening of a public restroom in Downtown.

BACKGROUND:

City Council's annual goal-setting process includes the adoption of a prioritized list of initiatives for staff. In fiscal year (FY) 2022-23, City Council included the opening of a public restroom in Downtown as a priority for staff to develop. As part of the workplan, Public Works identified the Transit Center and Main Street Garage as feasible options for a public restroom.

Transit Center Station

The Transit Center Station is located at 385 1st Ave, was built in 1999, has above ground parking, two separate structures that are connected by a continuous roof structure, and an underground garage. The facility serves Caltrain patrons and has spaces for restaurant and office tenants. The structure includes two single-occupancy restrooms that are located at the train station platform level and were previously open to the public. The facilities were closed about seven years ago due to on-going vandalism, increased maintenance needs, and security concerns. Currently, these restrooms are not in use nor maintained, and always remain locked.

The restrooms do not meet current building code requirements and would require upgrades to facilitate public use. The intent of the California building code is to provide fully accessible facilities when alterations are planned. To meet code compliance requirements, both restrooms would need improvements to meet clearances for accessibility (i.e., plumbing, fixtures, signage, doors, lighting, locking mechanisms, etc.). The cost to upgrade both restrooms to meet compliance standards is estimated at approximately \$90,000. This cost is not a full renovation and only includes the minimum improvements needed to meet code requirements.

Main Street Garage

The Main Street Garage is a five-story concrete parking structure that was built in 2001 and contains approximately 380 parking spaces located on 360 Main St. The structure includes two single-occupancy restrooms located on the street level that have never been open to the public but are currently used by nearby building tenants and City employees.

While the restroom facilities meet current building code requirements, the path of travel does not. The paths from the accessible parking stalls along Main St., 1st Avenue, and along the Caltrain right-of-way do not meet current slope requirements for accessibility. To open these restrooms to the public, improvements including repaving/re-sloping the path of travel along Main Street and the sidewalk along 1st Avenue would be required. Additional modifications to the doors would be needed, as well as improvements to the lighting and signage. The cost for the improvements is estimated at approximately \$100,000.

Discussion and Feedback

Public restrooms provide important public health benefits. To address security concerns, the Police Department recommends a location that has regular foot traffic, is visible and well lit, is properly cleaned and maintained, and has security cameras. For adequate maintenance, an operating budget of \$1,500 per month (\$36,000/year) would be required for daily cleaning, callouts to address needed repairs, and graffiti abatement.

Council direction is needed on the following:

- Confirm direction to open a public restroom downtown;
- Preferred location;
- Hours of operation (i.e., 24/7 or limited hours); currently parks restrooms are generally open from 7am – 8pm and operated by Park Rangers; and
- Funding source.

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is currently no funding allocated for this work. A funding source will need to be identified and reallocated to fund this work.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

This discussion is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

None

STAFF CONTACT

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