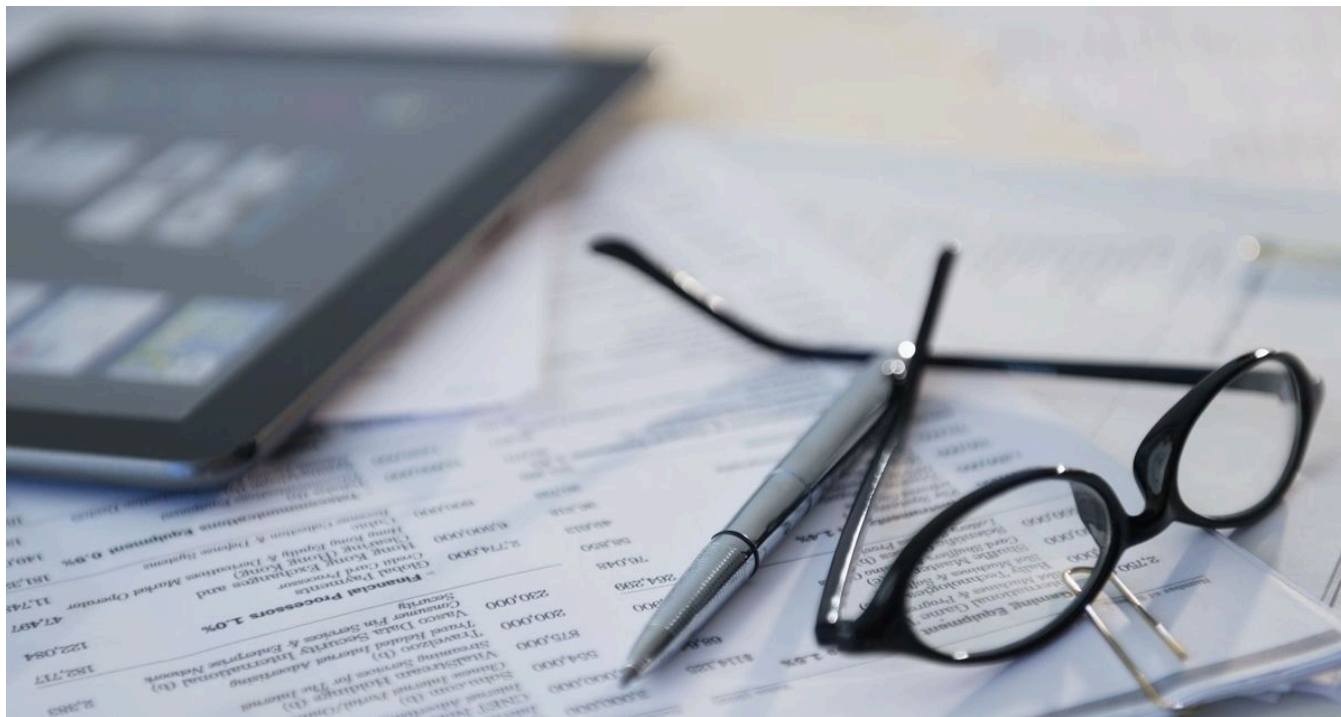


August 21, 2019



The delay for the \$3.8-million preliminary engineering portion of the project stemmed from California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) requirements that the city receive more than the lone proposal that had been submitted.

“Unfortunately, due to nature of that response, CalTrans has requested that we reject all proposals and go out for qualifications again,” Public Works Director Jon Olson told the City Council. “Go through RFQ process and hopefully get more than one proposal next time around.”

Meanwhile, said Olsen, time is not on the city’s side. Disaster relief funds from the Federal Highway Administration come with a use-by date.

“We have to be out for construction by October/November,” said City Manager Eric Wier. “Two months, basically. So we’re not going to make that.

“That’s the hard part with these relief funds,” he said, “they only do that two years from the disaster to when you have to be under construction. That’s environmental, that’s design, that’s everything.

“They’ve limited the number of time extensions that are approved. Out of 50 time extensions last year, they granted one or two.”

One pathway CalTrans gave the city was through what it called a geotechnical investigation. Wier said the city went that route, but that was delayed significantly because of the city’s inability to get FAA approval to fly a drone above the site.

“This is a very complicated project that requires lots of consultants of different types and a lot of specialty studies,” Olsen said. “The only study finished to date was the geotechnical study, a brief one, a preliminary study with the Del Norte Local Coastal Commission. We’re going to need a more robust consultant and robust report.”

Olsen said the city plans to apply for a time extension before the end of August, but won’t know if the extension is granted until some point in November. “If we were to spend a bunch of money (and) then don’t get the extension, those monies would not be reimbursed,” he said.

So the plan now is to go through the request-for-qualifications process one more time, award a contract, then delay any work until city officials know an extension has been granted.

Further complicating the process is the question of whether the federal funds will still be available. “Since money for this particular federal project was not spent, monies were reallocated. It’s really at the congressional level.

“Even if we get the extension, we don’t know if there will be money available for the project,” Olsen said.

So the City Council voted unanimously to reject the one bid and return to the request-for-qualifications process.