



December 12, 2019

Golden Gate Bridge Suicide Deterrent Net Project Update

Overview:

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District is in the process of constructing a Suicide Deterrent Net System (SDNS) to deter suicides at the Bridge by placing a physical barrier between a person and the water below. The SDNS consists of marine grade stainless steel netting attached to structural steel net supports placed 20 feet below the sidewalks and extending out 20 feet over the water.

The components of the SDNS are being manufactured at facilities across the United States at a steady pace. Construction of the SDNS on the Bridge is also progressing, but at a slower rate than planned. .

The contractors building this vital project are AECOM (legacy Shimmick Construction) in joint venture with Danny's Construction Company. AECOM is a Fortune 200 global infrastructure company. Danny's Construction Company specializes in steel erection.

Manufacturing Progress:

The elements of the project are being fabricated in Oregon, Illinois, Missouri, Alabama, and Connecticut. As of November 29, 2019, approximately 80% of the steel components have been completed, including:

- 309 of 369 net supports
- All of the wind retrofit elements (new bridge railing and wind fairings needed for the SDNS installation)
- 105,000 square feet of approximately 385,000 square feet of steel netting

Construction Progress:

The contractor is constructing the project from temporary work access platforms installed under and on the sides of the bridge. The contractor is working double shifts (day and night) five days a week. In order to minimize impacts to traffic, the contractor closes lanes and brings in necessary heavy equipment and materials only during the night shifts. During these lane closures, one lane in one direction of traffic and two lanes in the opposite direction are open to traffic. Additionally, the District has started special

event ferry service between the Larkspur Ferry Terminal and the new Chase Center in San Francisco to provide an alternate mode of travel during construction.

As of November 29, 2019, the following construction has been completed:

- 102 of 369 net supports have been installed
- 1488 of 4100 linear feet of sidewalk railing have been removed
- 1325 of 4100 linear feet of new sidewalk railing have been installed

Project Timeline:

While the contractor has not provided a firm final date for project delivery, the Bridge District estimates the project is likely about two years behind schedule. Completion was originally scheduled for January 2021, but now it appears the SDNS will not be finished until 2023.

There are multiple reasons for the project delay. The low-bid contract was awarded, in accordance with state and federal regulations, to Shimmick Construction in joint venture with Danny's Construction Company. During the first year of the contract, AECOM purchased Shimmick Construction, the lead partner of the joint venture. This corporate distraction delayed the start of the project, and impacted other Shimmick's, now AECOM, projects as well. AECOM Chairman and CEO Michael Burke has publicly commented that "execution challenges" in its construction unit were "avoidable and unacceptable." Other reasons for the delay are a slow mobilization of work platforms needed to access work locations on the Bridge and the contractor's underestimation of the rate at which various work activities can progress. The contractor is bringing additional resources to the job and their work is moving faster as they gain knowledge on the job.

"We are frustrated by the delay in completing the Suicide Deterrent System," says General Manager Denis Mulligan." The Bridge District continues to work with the contractor to advance the project as quickly as possible. In the meantime, our Bridge Patrol Officers continue to monitor the sidewalks and intervene when someone attempts to harm themselves."

Background:

The Golden Gate Bridge Suicide Deterrent Net System draws inspiration from similar smaller-scale nets, erected to deter suicides in multiple locations around the world. The community-selected design was chosen for its proven effectiveness and its minimalist aesthetic. The project cost is \$211 million and is funded through federal and state grants, Bridge tolls, Prop 63 monies, and individual and foundation donations.

The [1978 Seiden study](#) at the Golden Gate Bridge showed that 90 percent of those stopped from jumping did not later die by suicide or other violent means. A Harvard School of Public Health article reviewing numerous studies showed more broadly that “Nine out of ten people who attempt suicide and survive will not go on to die by suicide at a later date.”

More information can be found at www.goldengatebridgenet.org

Suicide Statistics and Reporting Guidelines:

<https://afsp.org/about-suicide/for-journalists/>

###

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District Media Contacts:

Priya Clemens / Director of Public Affairs (Mornings)

pclemens@goldengate.org / 415-317-2222 (text is best)

Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz / Public Affairs Manager (Evenings)

pcosulich@goldengate.org / 415-629-9999