



NOTICE of PREPARATION
of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report on the
Transbay Transit Center Program
San Francisco, California

AGENCIES: Transbay Joint Powers Authority; Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation; and Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and NOP of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Notice of public meeting to be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2013.

SUMMARY: The Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), are preparing a joint Supplemental EIS/EIR for the Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project (Transbay Transit Center Program or Program). The TJPA will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). FTA will be the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and FRA will be a NEPA cooperating agency.

The purpose of this notice is to alert public agencies and interested parties that the TJPA, FTA, and FRA will prepare an SEIS/EIR, to provide information about the proposed action/proposed project, to invite participation in the SEIS/EIR process and request comments on the scope of the SEIS/EIR, and to announce that a public meeting will be conducted.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the SEIS/EIR, including the impacts to be evaluated and the methodologies to be used in the evaluations, should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 13, 2013.

A public meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a brief presentation beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the following location:

Transbay Joint Powers Authority
201 Mission Street, Suite 2100
San Francisco, CA 94105

The meeting location will be accessible to persons with disabilities. If translation or signing services or other special accommodations are needed, please contact Scott Boule, (415) 597-4620 or SEIS.EIR@transbaycenter.org at least 48 hours before the public meeting. Agency representatives and members of the public with an interest in the proposed action/proposed project are encouraged to attend. Representatives of all federal, state, regional, and local public agencies that may have an interest in any aspect of the proposed action/proposed project will be invited to be participating agencies, as appropriate.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the scope of the SEIS/EIR should be sent to Scott Boule, TJPA Legislative Affairs & Community Outreach Manager, 201 Mission Street, Suite 2100, San Francisco, CA 94105. Comments also may be submitted in writing, may be made orally at the public meeting, or may be provided by email to SEIS.EIR@transbaycenter.org. Comments provided by e-mail should include the name and address of the sender and “Transbay Transit Center Program SEIS/EIR” in the subject line.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Either of the individuals identified below may be contacted for further information.

- Eric Eidlin, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration, San Francisco Region IX Office, (415) 744-2502, 201 Mission Street, Suite 1650, San Francisco, CA 94105.
- Scott Boule, TJPA Legislative Affairs & Community Outreach Manager, Transbay Joint Powers Authority, (415) 597-4620, 201 Mission Street, Suite 2100, San Francisco, CA 94105, SEIS.EIR@transbaycenter.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SEIS/EIR will supplement the Program’s 2004 Final EIS/EIR and subsequent Addenda. The SEIS/EIR will address proposed changes to Phase 2 of the Program including the Downtown Rail Extension track curvature entering the train box, extension of below-grade rail levels of the Transbay Transit Center to accommodate high-speed train requirements, and other refinements to the approved Program, as described in more detail below.

The SEIS/EIR will be prepared in accordance with (1) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500 and 23 CFR Part 771) as well as provisions of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), which took effect on October 1, 2012, and supersedes the prior federal transportation authorization requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU, 2005); and (2) CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, § 15000 et seq.).

Phase 1 of the Program, consisting of the Transit Center, is under construction; Phase 2 consists of the 1.3-mile extension of Caltrain commuter rail service from the existing terminus to the new Transit Center, including facilities to accommodate future high-speed train service. The SEIS/EIR will evaluate the potential for new environmental impacts and/or any changes to the intensity of previously identified environmental impacts resulting from the proposed changes to Phase 2 of the Program. In addition, a New Starts Alternatives Analysis will be included as part of the SEIS/EIR.

Copies of materials to be provided at the public meeting may be found on the TJPA’s website, <http://transbaycenter.org/tjpa/documents/environmental-documents>, or obtained from 201 Mission Street, Suite 2100, San Francisco, California. Project materials will also be available at the public meeting.

The Proposed Action/Proposed Project: The Program includes construction of a new Transbay Transit Center to replace the former, seismically substandard Transbay Terminal; construction of the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) extending Caltrain service from its existing terminus to the new Transit Center about 1.3 miles to the northeast and accommodating future high-speed trains; and redevelopment and revitalization of the neighborhood around the Transit Center. Phase 1 of the Program is underway and involves the demolition of the Transbay Terminal and its replacement with a new Transit Center that includes a train box to accommodate Caltrain service and future high-speed trains. Phase 2 of the Program involves the DTX.

The Program was environmentally cleared under NEPA and CEQA. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the Program was signed in 2005 by the FTA. In 2010, the FRA completed its Transbay EIS Reevaluation and signed a ROD adopting Phase 1 of the Program, specifically for purposes of FRA's funding of the train box.

The SEIS/EIR will address the following refinements to Phase 2 of the Program:

- A widened throat structure entering the west side of the Transit Center train box
- Extension of the underground levels of the Transit Center (the train box) eastward into Main Street to accommodate 400-meter, fully tangent platforms for high-speed train service
- Demolition of the podium structure at 201 Mission Street and relocation, as required by Phase 2 construction of the train box extension into Main Street, of existing above- and below-grade facilities at 201 Mission Street
- Potential future uses above the train box extension between Beale and Main streets and portions of future adjacent structures, including an intercity bus facility to house regional and airport bus and shuttle services
- Five emergency ventilation/smoke evacuation structures at 701 Third Street, Second and Harrison streets, Second and Howard streets, Main Street between Mission and Howard streets, and Fourth and Townsend streets
- Emergency tunnel exits co-located with ventilation structures
- Bicycle/controlled vehicle ramp and below-grade bicycle facilities
- Taxi staging area
- Temporary or permanent relocation of utilities in Main, Mission, Howard, or Spear streets
- An alternative alignment for a BART/Muni pedestrian connector under Beale Street
- Minor traffic circulation and lane changes in the vicinity of the Transit Center

- Off-hour and event parking at the AC (Alameda Contra-Costa) Transit bus storage facility located between Second, Third, Perry and Stillman streets below the I-80 west approach to the Bay Bridge

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action: The primary purposes of the Program, evaluated in the 2004 FEIS/EIR, are to:

- Improve public access to bus and rail services;
- Modernize and improve bus and rail service by construction of a new Transbay Transit Center;
- Reduce non-transit vehicle usage; and
- Alleviate blight and revitalize the area of the former Transbay Terminal.

These basic objectives of the Program still apply. More specific purposes for refinements to Phase 2 features include:

- Enhance pedestrian connections, bicycle storage, intercity bus facilities, and taxi staging areas to further reinforce the Program's emphasis on transit and alternative means of local and regional travel.
- Construct a widened throat structure at the west entry to the train box and extension of the train box eastward to Main Street to respond to design specifications issued by the California High-Speed Rail Authority to better accommodate future high-speed train service.
- Construct five ventilation/emergency tunnel exits to comply with safety standards for underground facilities and meet emergency response needs of system operations.
- Offer optional off-hour and event parking at the AC bus storage area to increase parking options within convenient walking distance of restaurants and entertainment, performance, and sports venues.

The Program is needed because the previous Transbay Terminal, which was built in 1939, did not meet current seismic safety or space utilization standards. The new Transit Center provides an opportunity to revitalize the surrounding area and to extend Caltrain service from its current terminus outside the downtown area into the San Francisco employment core. The DTX component will enable Caltrain service and local and regional transit services to better interconnect at the new multimodal Transit Center, provide a transit alternative for commuters who currently do not have a direct Caltrain link to the core employment and financial area of San Francisco, and reduce air and greenhouse gas emissions by enhancing transit options and promoting pedestrian and bicycle improvements around the Transit Center.

The refinements to Phase 2 project elements (principally the DTX component), which are the focus of this notice, are needed to accommodate updated design specifications that were released by the California High-Speed Rail Authority in 2010 regarding track curvature and platform design. The other refinements concerning localized transportation and transit improvements and ventilation shaft locations reflect further design by the TJPA and modifications to planning and development conditions that did not exist at the time of the 2004 FEIS/EIR.

Alternatives: The No Action/No Project Alternative and the Proposed Action/Proposed Project, referred to as the Refined Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), will be analyzed in the SEIS/EIR. The No Action/No Project Alternative is defined as Phase 1 of the LPA project, which is under construction, as described above, and the approved Phase 2 of the LPA. This alternative represents existing conditions, services, and facilities as well as the reasonably foreseeable, approved DTX based on current plans.

The Refined LPA would be substantially similar to the LPA that was selected by the FTA, FRA, and TJPA and analyzed in the 2004 FEIS/EIR except for the proposed refinements. The Refined LPA would be the previously approved DTX Build alternative as modified to include the proposed Phase 2 refinements; namely, the addition of the widened throat structure, the extended train box to accommodate the revised track layout and required platform lengths, and the other project refinements described above under the Proposed Action/Proposed Project.


SEIS/EIR Process and Role of Participating Agencies and the Public: The purpose of the SEIS/EIR process is to evaluate the potentially significant effects of implementing the Proposed Action/Proposed Project and alternatives on the physical, human, and natural environment, and to allow public agencies and the public to comment. All of the relevant environmental topics will be addressed in the SEIS/EIR, including but not limited to land use, development potential, land acquisition and displacements, cultural resources, visual and aesthetic qualities, air quality/climate change, noise and vibration, energy use, and ecosystems. Measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any significant adverse impacts will be developed and identified.

Regulations implementing NEPA, the provisions of MAP-21, and CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines require public involvement in the SEIS/EIR process and require the FTA and TJPA to do the following: (1) extend an invitation to other federal and non-federal agencies that may have an interest in the proposed project to become "participating agencies," (2) provide an opportunity for involvement by participating agencies and the public to assist in defining the range of alternatives for consideration for a proposed project, and (3) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in and comment on the environmental review process. In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.4 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the TJPA will provide information to each responsible and trustee agency and every federal agency involved in approving or funding the project about the scope and content of the environmental information related to the agency's area of statutory responsibility. An invitation to become a participating agency will be extended to other federal and non-federal agencies that may have an interest in the proposed project. Any interested agency that does not receive an invitation should notify the TJPA at the address identified above under ADDRESSES, at the earliest opportunity, but no later than 30 days following this notice.

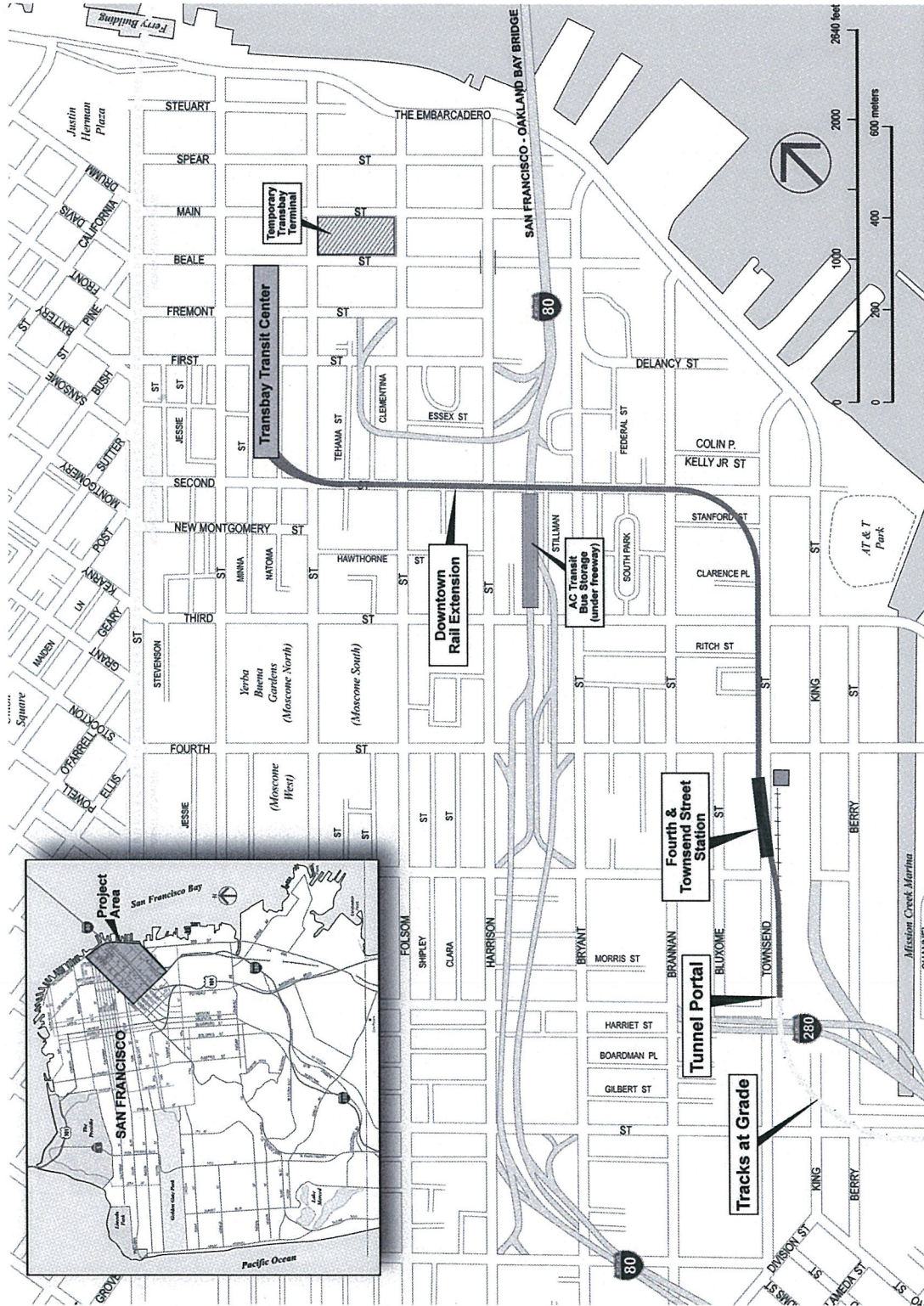
This notice and the public meeting identified above serve to initiate the public review process, which shall consist of a joint CEQA/NEPA public meeting, a public review/comment period and public hearing on the Draft SEIS/EIR, and posting of information on the Program website.

We invite the public and participating agencies to consider the proposed project, as well as the alternatives proposed for consideration. Comments on potential significant environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed project are also welcomed. All comments and suggestions will be given serious consideration. In accordance with 23 CFR 771.105(a) and 771.133, FTA will comply with all federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders applicable to the proposed project during the environmental review process to the maximum extent practicable. These requirements include, but are not limited to, the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 and 23 CFR Part 771); the project-level air quality conformity regulation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (40 CFR Part 93), Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of EPA (40 CFR Part 230); Executive Orders 11988, 11990 and 12898 regarding floodplains, wetlands, and environmental justice, respectively; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800); Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR Part 402); and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (23 CFR 771.135). The TJPA will coordinate with responsible and trustee agencies in compliance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

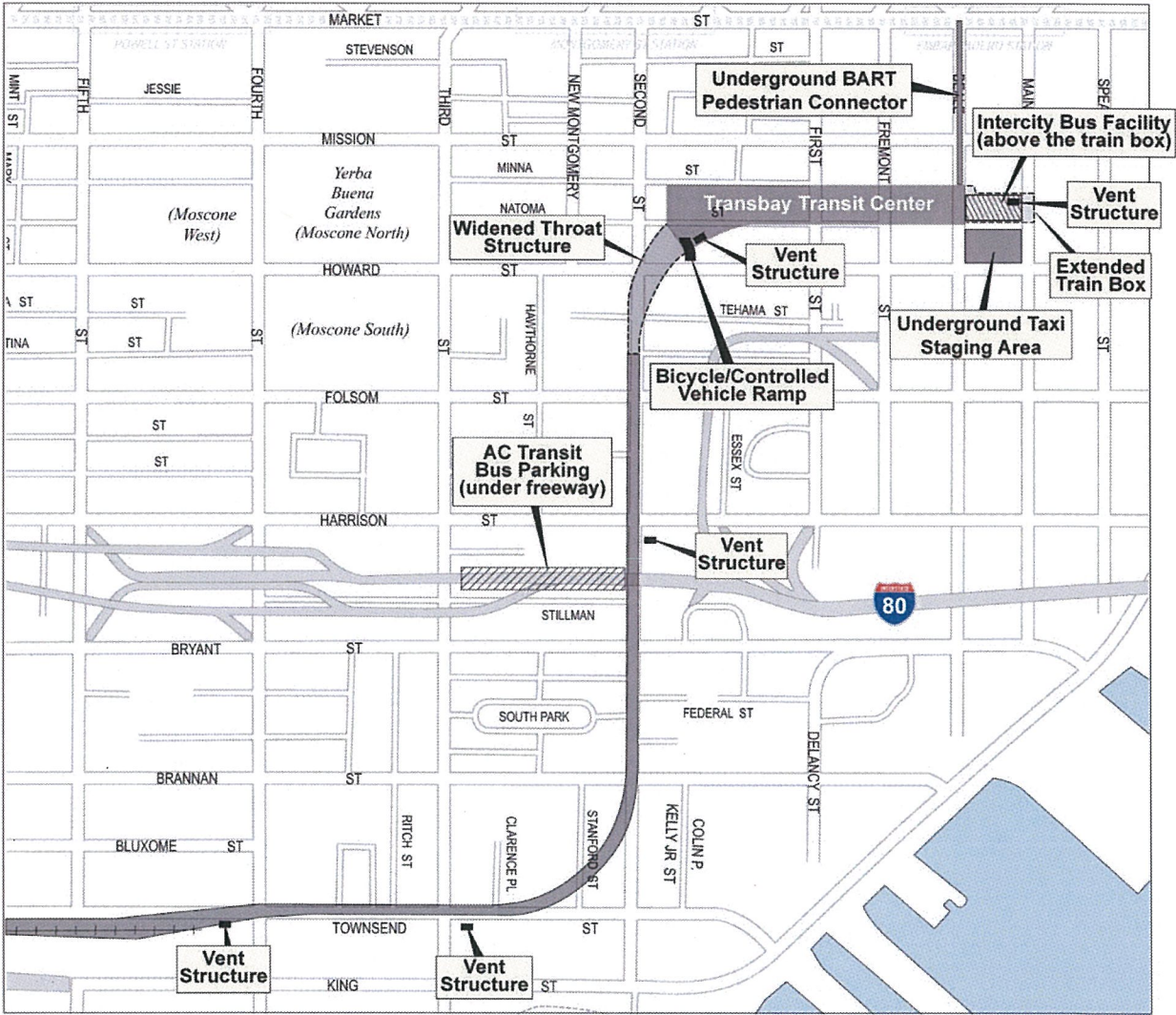
Issued on: April 29, 2013.



Maria Ayerdi-Kaplan, Executive Director
Transbay Joint Powers Authority



Project Vicinity



Transbay Transit Center Program Phase 2 Proposed Refinements