

ISSUE 4 FEBRUARY 1996

On The Right Track

CALTRAIN SAN FRANCISCO DOWNTOWN EXTENSION PROJECT

THE NEXT STEP

Get Involved in the Project

Members of the community are encouraged to attend one of three workshops hosted by the JPB this March. The meetings will focus on the remaining design options for the proposed CalTrain extension—the analysis of which will be presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Report (DEIS/DEIR), which the JPB plans to release in October.

Continued inside

Attend a Workshop!

(Same content for each meeting)

San Francisco Monday, March 4th

The PG&E Energy Center
Conference Center
851 Howard Street
7:00-9:00 pm

San Jose Tuesday, March 12th

Leininger Community Center
at Kelley Park
1300 Senter Road
6:30-8:30 pm

San Carlos Wednesday, March 13th

SamTrans Headquarters, 2nd Floor
1250 San Carlos Avenue
6:30-8:30 pm

JPB Selects Transbay Terminal Site, Narrows Design Options

Faced with three alternatives and an array of design options, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) met in January to refine its proposal to extend CalTrain into downtown San Francisco. In a major move, the JPB dropped the Market/Beale Station alternative from further consideration, citing technical problems, community impacts, and higher costs. The JPB also selected a series of design options to detail the lone remaining “build” alternative—the Transbay Terminal Site Station. Having resolved a number of key issues, the JPB can now proceed with preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Report (DEIS/DEIR) for the proposed project.

Several factors led to the decision to drop the Market/Beale site:

- First, the JPB found that extending the line north of Mission Street would be very costly, due to the many structures in this part of the Beale Street right-of-way. As a result, one of the strongest appeals of this site—its close proximity to Market Street—would only be possible with higher costs.

- Second, the JPB could not find a viable north-south alignment for CalTrain to access the Market/Beale site. Neither the cut-and-cover or mined tunnel alignments were seen as feasible options (*see inside, Decision 2*).
- And third, the JPB determined that future expansion of the terminal to six tracks would cost more at the Market/Beale location than at the Transbay Terminal site.

In dropping the Market/Beale site, the JPB selected the Transbay Terminal Site Station as the preferred “build” alternative for the proposed project. This selection will require demolition of the existing Transbay Terminal and a review of ways to replace this facility. The JPB also chose specific design options for this alternative (*see inside*). These options covered areas such as preferred alignments, construction techniques, station configuration, and propulsion type. Having completed this detailing process, the JPB can now begin preparing the DEIS/DEIR.

In selecting these options, the JPB relied upon technical information presented

Continued back page

JPB Completes Key Round of Decisions

As the Decision Checklist shows, the JPB recently made eight key decisions on the proposed CalTrain extension into downtown San Francisco. The JPB based these decisions on a variety of sources, including technical information presented in the DOS Report and input from the City of San Francisco, various advisory groups, and members of the public. Each decision is summarized to the right.

Decision Checklist

The following checklist outlines the JPB's recent decisions on the proposed CalTrain extension. Refer to the accompanying text for full descriptions of these decisions.

- New design options that were proposed are shown in blue.
- Design options that will be included in the DEIS/DEIR are accompanied by a check.
- Design options that were eliminated from consideration are faded out.

1 East-West Alignment and Portal Location

- ☒ TOWNSEND, 4TH/TOWNSEND
- ☒ S. OF TOWNSEND, 4TH/TOWNSEND
- ☒ TOWNSEND, 7TH/BERRY
- ☐ KING, 6TH/KING
- ☐ KING, 7TH/BERRY

2 North-South Alignment & Construction Technique to Market/Beale Station

- ☐ CUT & COVER
- ☐ MINED TUNNEL

3 North-South Alignment & Construction Technique to Transbay Terminal Site Station

- ☒ SHORT MINED TUNNEL
- ☒ LONG MINED TUNNEL
- ☒ MEDIUM MINED TUNNEL

4 Terminal Configuration for Market/Beale Station

- ☐ 3-LEVEL
- ☐ STAGGERED 2-LEVEL
- ☐ 2-LEVEL TO MISSION

5 Terminal Configuration for Transbay Terminal Site Station

- ☐ AERIAL
- ☒ UNDERGROUND - 6 TRACK

6 Station Preference

- ☐ MARKET/BEALE
- ☒ TRANSBAY TERMINAL SITE

7 Locomotive Propulsion

- ☐ CLEAN DIESEL
- ☐ LIQUIFIED NATURAL GAS
- ☒ FULL ELECTRIFICATION
- ☒ DUAL MODE
- ☒ ELECTRIC POWER TRAILERS

8 Train Storage Yard Location

- ☒ 16TH & I-280
- ☐ BRISBANE

Decision

1

Should the first portion of the extension follow Townsend Street or King Street? And where should the portal be located?

The JPB selected Townsend Street for the east-west alignment, which would represent the first portion of the extension.

Instead of choosing one specific portal location (where CalTrain would transition between surface and underground), the JPB asked its staff to evaluate three alignment/portal options in the DEIS/DEIR. This evaluation will focus on whether CalTrain should travel down the median of a widened Townsend Street or along the right-of-way directly to the south of Townsend, and whether there will be a CalTrain station in the Mission Bay Area (*see maps to the right*). The three options are:

- **Option A** Down the middle of a widened Townsend Street, with Fourth/Townsend portal.
- **Option B** To the south of Townsend Street (within the Catellus right-of-way), with Fourth/Townsend portal.
- **Option C** Along the south side of Townsend Street, with Berry/7th Street portal.

Options A and B would allow construction of an at-grade Mission Bay station to serve the area and the

proposed Giants ballpark. Option C would not allow construction of this station.

JPB staff and consultants will continue working with city departments and Catellus, the Mission Bay developer that owns the land to the south of Townsend Street, to refine alignment and portal locations and to minimize impacts in the area (e.g., traffic, property acquisitions, property access, construction).

Decision

2

What alignment and construction technique should be used to extend CalTrain to the Market/Beale Station?

The JPB's decision to drop the Market/Beale Station alternative was due in part to the lack of a suitable north-south alignment to that site. Neither alignment option under consideration was deemed viable.

The cut-and-cover alignment, which would travel along Townsend Street, The Embarcadero, and Beale Street, would have significant environmental impacts on the South Beach neighborhood. Members of the community have voiced major opposition to this alignment.

The mined tunnel alignment, meanwhile, would require passing through extremely poor rock for tunneling. As a result, this alignment would be difficult to construct safely and efficiently.

Decision

3

What alignment and construction technique should be used to extend CalTrain to the Transbay Terminal Site Station?

For this alignment, the JPB directed staff to study a new option in the DEIS/DEIR, in addition to the short and long mined tunnel options. This new option, known as the medium mined tunnel, is actually a hybrid of the other two (*see map*). It would incorporate mined tunneling as much as possible. Located to the west of Colin P. Kelly Street, this route would have fewer impacts on nearby development and would travel under fewer historic buildings.

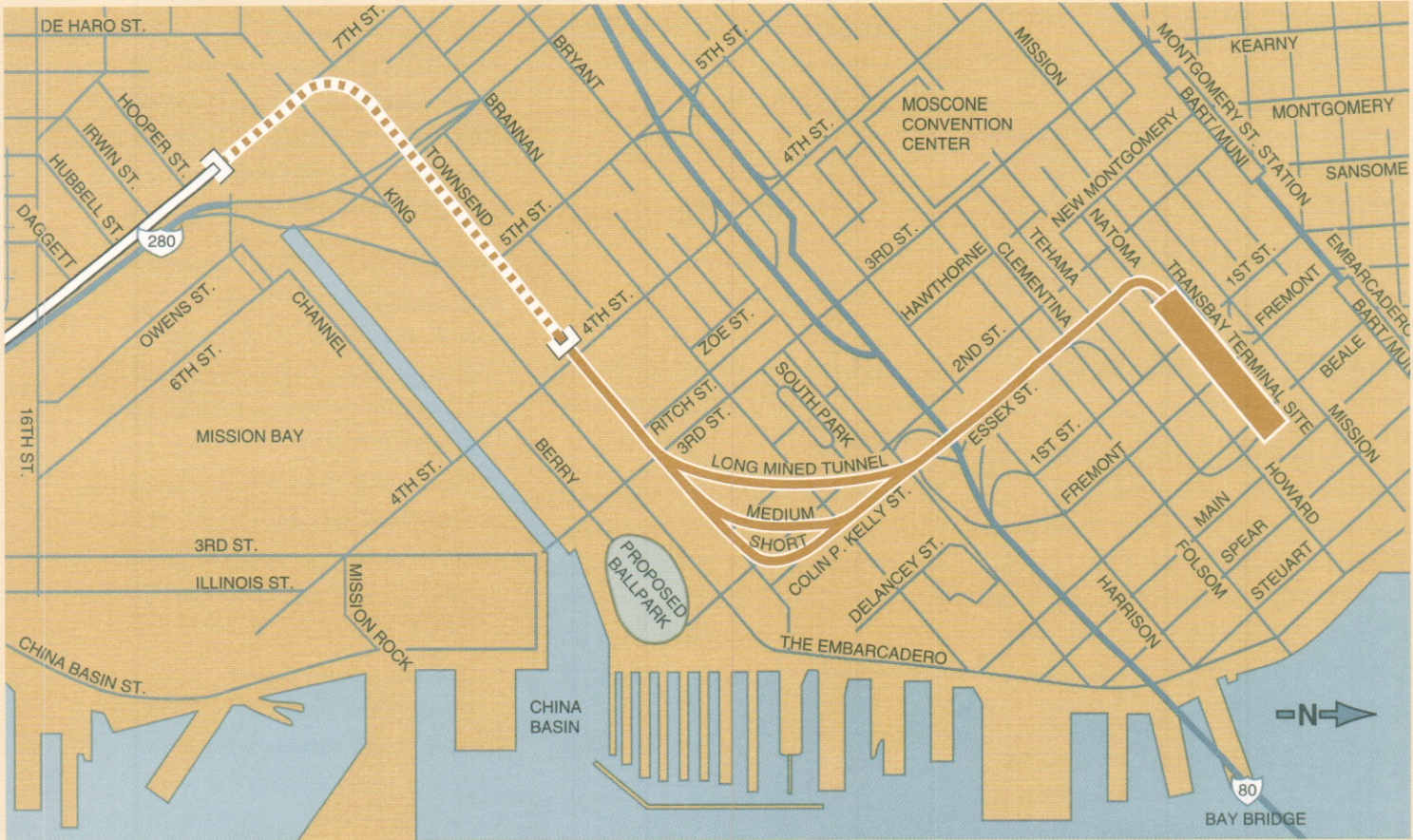
JPB staff will develop this alignment option in close cooperation with neighborhoods and businesses that would be impacted. The DEIS/DEIR will fully evaluate the three tunnel options and address all of the issues raised in the comments by South Beach residents and business owners.

Decision

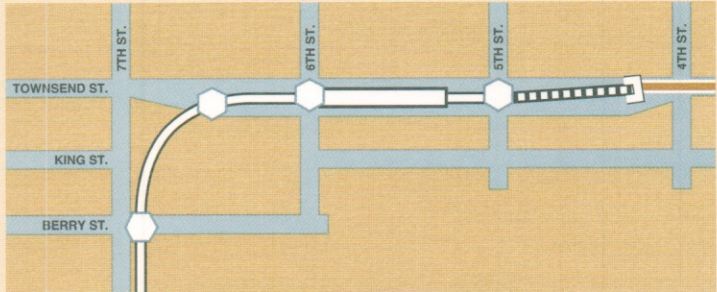
4

Which terminal configuration is preferred for the Market/Beale Station?

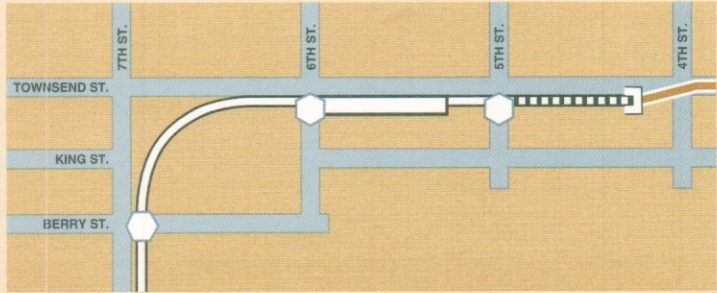
As noted earlier, the Market/Beale Station alternative was dropped from further consideration, so no decision on this issue was necessary.



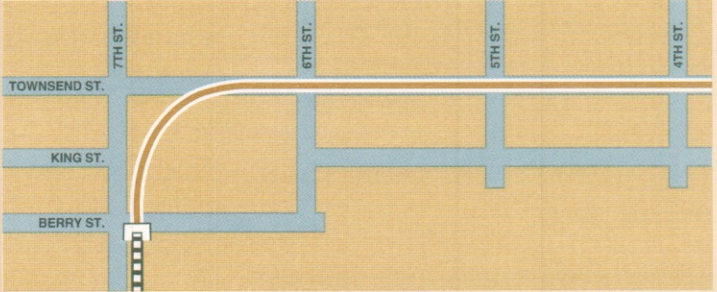
Transbay Terminal Site Alternative



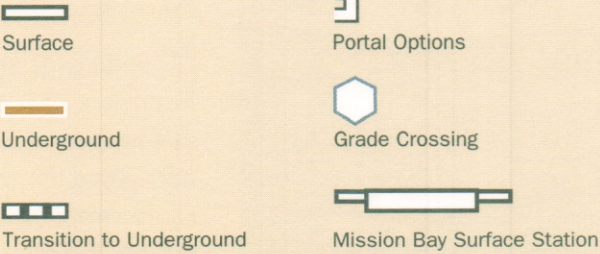
Option A CalTrain in Townsend Median—4th Street Portal



Option B Townsend Street Southern Alignment—4th Street Portal



Option C Townsend Street Underground Alignment—7th Street Portal



Decision

5

Which terminal configuration is preferred for the Transbay Terminal Site Station?

The JPB decided to pursue an underground station at the Transbay Terminal Site. This configuration would hold several advantages over an aerial structure.

First, an underground CalTrain station would improve the feasibility of underground construction through Rincon Hill. This construction would be deeper than that used for the aerial option and would not interfere with Caltrans' seismic replacement of the Bay Bridge approach and ramps.

Second, unlike the aerial station, the underground alignment would not require the closure of Clementina and Tehama streets.

Third, the underground station would better accommodate a six-track CalTrain terminal. Under the aerial station option, such a structure would extend 12 to 20 feet over Natoma Street.

THE NEXT STEP *Continued*

At the workshops, participants will be able to discuss the scope of the environmental analysis, which will include:

- the JPB's recent decisions;
- Peninsula station access and possible parking lot expansion requirements;
- construction impacts, including demolition and replacement of the existing Transbay Terminal; and
- proposed mitigation measures.

Finally, civic groups and property owners have expressed concern about the visual barriers and noise that new aerial train ramps could create in their neighborhood.

Decision

6

Based on the outcome of Decisions 2 through 5, which "build" alternative is preferred?

As noted earlier, the JPB selected the Transbay Terminal site as the preferred location for a downtown San Francisco CalTrain terminal—and dropped the Market/Beale Station alternative from further consideration.

Decision

7

What form of locomotive propulsion should be selected?

For locomotive propulsion, the JPB chose full-system electrification for evaluation in the DEIS/DEIR, and dropped two options from consideration: clean diesel and liquefied natural gas (LNG). Dual mode will continue to be studied as a less expensive option to electrification.

Clean diesel technology is currently unproven. Also, using this type of fuel would require ventilation chimneys along the entire tunnel and could create noxious odors in the station. Neighborhood residents oppose this option for health and environmental reasons.

As for LNG, the JPB worked closely with the San Francisco Fire Department to study the possibility of using this form of propulsion. After careful consideration, however, the SFFD denied the JPB's proposal to use LNG in an underground tunnel, citing fire and life-safety reasons.

Full-system electrification would cost approximately \$230 million. As a result, the JPB asked that ways of reducing this cost be developed. Two cost-saving options are being evaluated at this time:

- Dual mode. New locomotives would use electrical power in the underground portion of the alignment and conventional diesel for the rest of the route.
- Electric power trailers. An electrical power unit would be connected to each diesel locomotive, powering the locomotives from overhead electric lines as they travel through the tunnel alignment. While out in the open, the trains would operate on diesel fuel.

Decision

8

Where should the train storage yard be located?

The JPB decided to locate the train storage yard at 16th Street at Interstate 280. This site would minimize the number of deadhead (non-revenue) miles for moving trains in and out of the terminal, thereby minimizing operating costs. JPB staff will work closely with Muni to mitigate any impacts on its proposed Metro East light-rail vehicle storage yard, located south of 16th Street.

Transbay Terminal Site Selected

Continued from front page

in the Design Options Screening (DOS) Report, which was released last October.

In addition to this technical information, the JPB used community input as a guide for making its decisions. Last fall, members of the public had the opportunity to review the DOS Report and to share their thoughts at a series of workshops hosted by the JPB. As a direct result of participants' suggestions, the JPB will study two new design options in the DEIS/DEIR: a six-track terminal (as compared to the previous four-track design) and a reduced platform length (850 feet).

None of the JPB's recent decisions will affect where the City of San Francisco decides to locate a new Transbay Bus Terminal, which has been the subject of a separate City study. The CalTrain station, being underground, would not prohibit construction of the above-ground terminal at either of the City's proposed sites: the Transbay Terminal site or the Main/Beale site. The City plans to select a preferred site for the new bus terminal replacement in late February.

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Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

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