

Preface

In 1997, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement / Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIS/EIR) was circulated for the Caltrain San Francisco Downtown Extension Project, a public hearing was held, and public comments were received. The present Draft EIS/EIR describes a different –albeit somewhat similar – project to that evaluated in the 1997 document. Various changes have occurred in project development and project-related conditions since the earlier environmental document was circulated. This Preface summarizes how this document responds to these changes.

The project described and evaluated in this new document is consistent with the Transbay Terminal Study that has been undertaken by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission / Bay Area Toll Authority in concert with the State of California, the City and County of San Francisco, AC Transit and other local transit service providers and other interested parties.

The description of the project alternatives responds to current design criteria to accommodate high-speed steel-wheel-on-rail technologies currently in use in Europe and under consideration by the California High-Speed Rail Authority for implementation in California, including a station in downtown San Francisco.

Many specific subjects have been updated, not only to address changes in area conditions that have occurred since the 1997 Draft EIS/EIR was issued, but also to reflect the three components of the present project. Background information and analysis for many subjects are entirely new, including: ridership, land use, engineering, capital costs, noise and vibration effects, cultural resources, traffic, transit, parking, and the project financial plan.

Given the extent of differences between the previous project and the present project, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, the City and County of San Francisco, and the Federal Transit Administration will not be responding to the public comments received on the 1997 Draft EIS/EIR. Only those comments received on the present document will be addressed.