South End's period of historical significance, 1867 to 1935, comprises the era during which the waterfront became a vital part of the city's and nation's maritime commerce. The buildings of the South End Historic District represent a rich and varied cross-section of the prominent local architects and builders of the period. Four buildings remain from the nineteenth century; another four were constructed in the six-year interval preceding the 1906 earthquake. The majority of the buildings were erected between 1906 and 1929, a period during which trade along the waterfront increased dramatically.

The proposed historic district is an important visual landmark for the city as a whole. The large number of intact masonry warehouses which remain to this day are reminders of the maritime and rail activities which helped to make San Francisco a great turn-of-the-century port city. The warehouse district, because of its distinct building forms, is identifiable from many parts of San Francisco and the greater Bay Area.[16]

4.17 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The proposed project would involve construction within an urbanized area, where hazardous materials/hazardous wastes would be a concern due to past land uses and undocumented releases to the subsurface environment. Potential hazardous materials/waste sources or sites within the project alignment are discussed, along with a summary of data sources consulted.

4.17.1 INTRODUCTION AND DATA SOURCES

Potential areas of contamination that could affect the Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project were identified by reviewing previous environmental documents prepared for the Caltrain portion of the project (mainly the 1997 Draft EIS/EIR); reviewing information from regulatory agency databases; walking the alignment to confirm listings in the data base report and making observations at several properties where subsurface work or excavation is currently being conducted; and reviewing results of past investigations in the area.

Review of regulatory agency databases focused on the following: (a) known or potential hazardous waste sites or releases; (b) sites currently under investigation for environmental violations; (c) sites that involve the manufacture, generation, use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials or hazardous waste (owner and tenants); (d) sites with underground storage tanks (USTs), and (e) sites with recorded violations of regulations concerning USTs and hazardous materials/ hazardous wastes. A total of 37 federal, state and local regulatory agency lists were searched to identify listed facilities within the project alignment, including lists maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), the California

[16] Added by Ord. 104-90, App. 3/23/90. See, San Francisco City Planning Code, Article 10, http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/planning/. Additional historical information may be found in the South End Historic District Case Report No. 89.065L.

Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA), the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

During the previous 1997 study, Ms. Pamela Hollis, CIH, with the San Francisco Department of Public Health, was consulted to obtain information regarding known Article 20 (known as the Maher Ordinance) investigation sites within the project area. Article 20 was amended in 1999 and is now Article 22A of the San Francisco Public Works Code. Article 20, *which* was originally adopted in 1986, requires historical research and *possibly* subsurface investigation including soil/groundwater sampling at sites bayward of the City's historic (1851) high tide lines if more than 50 cubic yards of material will be excavated or disturbed. This is a requirement for the issuance of a building or construction permit from the City and County of San Francisco.

Existing environmental investigations reports within the project area were also reviewed. Other Relevant environmental investigation reports were identified and reviewed as part of this study.

4.17.2 RECORDED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES

There are three main sources of potentially hazardous materials within the study area. By far the main source of potentially hazardous material or waste is the fill used to reclaim areas of the Bay along the historic shoreline. Additionally, past industrial land uses and the presence of USTs containing fuel hydrocarbons and other substances are also significant sources of soil and groundwater contamination along the proposed alignment. The proposed project alignment includes a large area of reclaimed bay and tidal areas that lay either along or bayward of the historic shoreline of San Francisco. (See Figure 4.17-1 for the location of fill areas and the historic shoreline.) Materials used to fill the shoreline/tidal areas included general debris (soil, ash, slag, etc.) and sources such as dune sand as well as a large amount of debris from the 1906 earthquake and resulting fire. Fill material from these sources are known to contain elevated concentrations of lead and other heavy metals, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and fuel hydrocarbons. In many areas testing of this material often reveals concentrations of constituents of concern that exceed State or Federal hazardous waste criteria.

Past industrial land uses near the historic shoreline contributed to potential contamination of soil and groundwater along the proposed alignment. These areas were typically chosen for their accessibility from the water and waste disposal practices at that time often included direct discharge to the ground surface or the Bay.

Coal gasification plants (also known as Manufactured Gas Plants (MGPs)) were historically located near Second and Townsend Streets and First and Natoma Streets and are known to have disposed of residual or waste material known as coal tar, directly to the waters of San Francisco Bay prior to some of these areas being reclaimed by filling. The old Yerba Buena Cove was commonly referred to as the "Tar Flats" which described the condition of the cove at low tide from the disposal of coal tar directly to the shallow waters of the cove. During reclamation of the land, fill material was deposited directly on top of the discharged coal tar. As such, this

material is often encountered during excavations in areas near the former MGPs. Additionally, the South of Market area in general contains a high density of USTs, many of which were abandoned, but not removed, which in turn leads to a high occurrence of soil and groundwater contamination by fuel hydrocarbons.

Record reviews identified 39 sites that have the potential to impact subsurface contaminants for the Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project. Table 4.17-1 provides a summary of the sites, and site locations are shown in Figure 4.17-1. The main constituents of concern identified in the study area are coal tar residues, lead and other heavy metals, and petroleum hydrocarbons associated with USTs and are discussed briefly below.

4.17.2.1 Coal Tar Residues

Contamination was encountered at several Article 20 investigation sites within the project area, as shown on Figure 4.17-1.

The Oriental Warehouse site located at Delancey and Brannan Streets (Site 12) and a property located at Second and Townsend Streets (Site 13) each have coal tar residues. Historical records indicate one MGP existed near Townsend and Second Streets and another near King and Second Streets. Coal tar was discharged directly into Mission Bay and, in some areas, may have been transported there during filling of the Bay. The areas of the Bay that received the discharges were later filled as reclaimed land. The coal tar deposits from these two plants overlap and together range in thickness from approximately one to five feet and in depth from five to 10 feet below the ground surface. The deposits thin over short distances along Second Street north of Townsend Street but extend laterally to The Embarcadero, Mission Creek (China Basin), and Third Street.

The area in the vicinity of First and Natoma Streets is also the historical location of a MGP where coal tar was discharged to Yerba Buena Cove. Coal tar and coal tar residues have been encountered during investigation and construction of the two high-rise buildings along the southern side of the intersection of Howard and Beale Streets and beneath the foundation of the building on Fremont Street between Howard and Folsom Streets. Coal tar residues have also been detected during investigations conducted as far east as Main Street. Coal tar is known to exist on top of Bay Mud deposits along Beale Street from approximately Mission to Folsom Streets. It has been found as far east as The Embarcadero and is believed to extend as far west as Fremont Street. The thickness of the coal tar deposit ranges from near zero along the fringes of the deposit up to seven to 10 feet in the area of Beale and Howard Streets. The approximate depth to the top of the deposit is 10 to 12 feet at Beale Street, shallowing to the west and deepening to the east, although shallow deposits have been encountered near The Embarcadero at Howard Street. Coal tar residues are believed to be present in soil throughout the entire area of the former Yerba Buena Cove from First Street to The Embarcadero.

Table 4.17-1
Known Hazardous Materials Sites Identified within the Study Area (2)

Site No. (1)	Site Name and Location	Agency Database	Nature of Release	Resources Affected	Status	Remedial Actions	EDR Map ID (3)
1	Federal Reserve Bank, 100 Mission/ Main St	LUST	Gasoline	Not Indicated	Leak being confirmed	No Action Taken	12
2	Talco, Inc., 621 First St	LUST, CORTESE	Diesel	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate & dispose of contaminated soil	35
3	San Francisco Gas Light Co., 401 Howard St.	Coal Gas Sites	Coal Gas	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	51
4	Caltrans (Transbay Terminal), 150 First St.	LUST, CORTESE	Diesel	Not Indicated	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	29
5	San Francisco Gas Light Co., 166 Fremont St., 498 Howard St.	Coal Gas Sites	Coal Gas	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	42
6	US Marine Corps –Supply Depot, 160 Harrison St.	LUST	Diesel	Soil Only	Case closed	Not Indicated	68
7	524 Howard St.	LUST, CORTESE	Heater Fluid	Soil Only	Case closed	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	72
8	Department of Transportation, 434 Main St	LUST	Diesel	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Not Indicated	79
9	Caltrans, 120 Richards St	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Leak being confirmed	Not Indicated	79
10	Dahl Beck Electric Co., 580 Howard St	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	No Action Taken	86
11	141 New Montgomery, 171 New Montgomery St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate & dispose of contaminated soil	91
12	Oriental Warehouse, Delancey and Brannan Streets	Not listed	PAHs/ LUST	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Hollis, 1995
13	Unspecified Site, Second and Townsend Streets	Not listed	PAHs/ LUST	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Hollis, 1995
14	Pacific Bell, 611 Folsom St.	LUST, CORTESE, RCRIS	Diesel	Soil Only	Not Indicated	No Action Taken	108
15	600 Harrison St.	LUST	Gasoline	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	115

Table 4.17-1
Known Hazardous Materials Sites Identified within the Study Area (2)

Site No. (1)	Site Name and Location	Agency Database	Nature of Release	Resources Affected	Status	Remedial Actions	EDR Map ID (3)
16	Photosynthesis LTD Chromeworks, 425 Bryant St.	LUST, CORTESE	Diesel	Soil Only	Not Indicated	No Action Taken	134
17	George Lithograph CO, 650 Second St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Not Indicated	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Not Indicated	143
18	San Francisco Fire Dept., 698 Second St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Soil Only	Leak being confirmed	No Action Taken	150
19	Commercial Building, 35 Stanford St.	LUST	Gasoline	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	158
20	Commercial, 101 Townsend St.	LUST	Diesel	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Remove free product	163
21	San Francisco Gas & Electric Co., 120 King St.	Coal Gas Sites	Coal Gas	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	174
22	Pacific Gas Improvement Co., 169 Townsend St.	Coal Gas Sites	Coal Gas	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	177
23	McDonalds Corp., 701Third St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	186
24	Sun Chemical Corp.#1, 252 Townsend St	Cal-Sites (Cal-EPA)	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	No Further Action	Not Indicated	191
25	Unspecified Site	Not listed	Metals	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Dames & Moore, 1990a
26	San Francisco Iron Foundry, 260 Townsend St.	Cal-Sites (Cal-EPA)	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Referred to another agency	Not Indicated	193
27	Heublin, Inc., 601 Fourth St.	LUST, CORTESE	Diesel	Ground-water	Leak being confirmed	Not Indicated	189
28	Sun Pacific Imports, 530 Brannan St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	194
29	Commercial Building, 542 Brannan St	LUST	Gasoline	Undefined	No leak action taken after initial report	Excavate and dispose of contaminated soil	196
30	Southern Pacific Trans., 329 Townsend St.	LUST, CORTESE	Diesel	Ground-water	Assessment underway	Excavate & dispose of contaminated soil	203
31	SF Newspaper Agency, 590 Brannan St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Cleanup in progress	Remove free product	201

Table 4.17-1
Known Hazardous Materials Sites Identified within the Study Area (2)

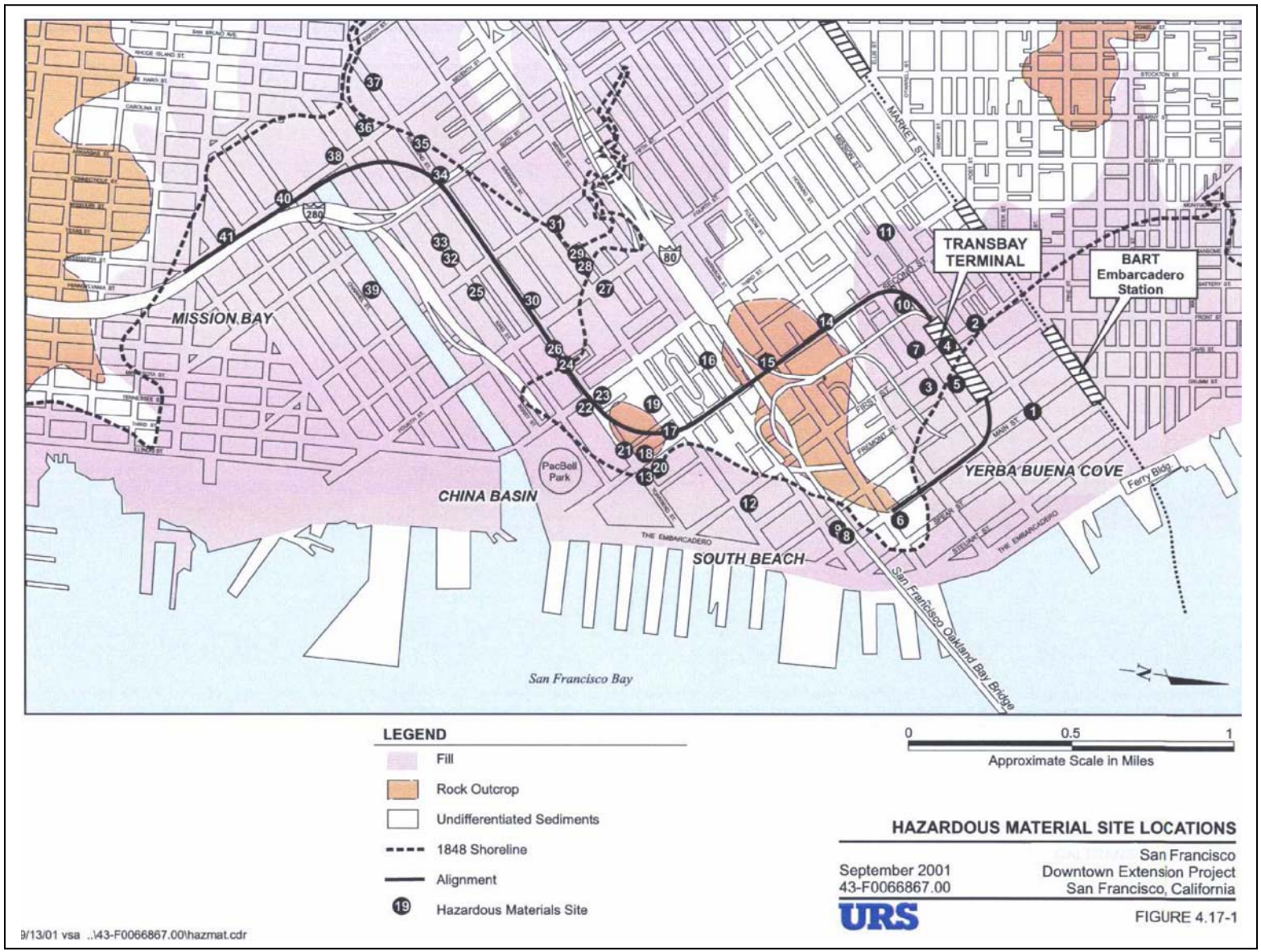
Site No. (1)	Site Name and Location	Agency Database	Nature of Release	Resources Affected	Status	Remedial Actions	EDR Map ID (3)
32	Unspecified Site	Not listed	Metals, Petroleum	Soil Only	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	Dames & Moore, 1990a; Mullinix, 1995
33	California Poultry Co., 777 Brannan St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Ground-water	Leak being confirmed	No Action Taken	222
34	Flair Electro Sales, 516 Townsend St	LUST, Notify 65	Diesel	Ground-water	Leak being confirmed	No Action Taken	224
35	Independent Electric Supply, 550 Townsend St.	LUST	Gasoline	Ground-water	Pollution Characterization	No Action Taken	228
36	Baker/Hamilton Bldg. 638 King St.	LUST, CORTESE	Gasoline	Soil Only	Remediation completed or deemed unnecessary	No Action Taken	235
37	Baker/Hamilton Properties, LLC, 650 King St.	LUST	Fuel Oils	Soil Only	Remediation underway	Excavate & dispose of contaminated soil	237
38	Golden Gate Disposal Co., 900 7th St.	LUST, FINDS	Motor Oil	Undefined	Leak being confirmed	Excavate & dispose of contaminated soil & remove free product	238
39	Former Southern Pacific Co., 415 Channel St.	LUST	Gasoline	Soil Only	Leak was confirmed	No Action Taken	240
40	Greyhound Bus Depot, 150 Hopper St.	CA FID	None	Not Indicated	Not Indicated	No Action Taken	242
41	The Glidden Co.	LUST	Misc. Fuels & Solvents	Ground-water	Remediation is planned	No Action Taken	Dames & Moore, 2001

Notes:
(1) Site numbers correspond to site location numbers shown on Figure 4.17-1.
(2) Information presented in this table is from Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR, 2001); agency correspondence; and Dames & Moore (URS) project files.
(3) EDR Map ID is the ID number as designated in the EDR reports.

Source: URS, 2001

4.17.2.2 Lead

The historic industrial land uses in the project area and the nature of the fill material placed during land reclamation have resulted in areas where lead concentrations and other heavy metals in soil exceed state and/or federal criteria for hazardous waste determination. For example, soil with lead was encountered during The Embarcadero Roadway and Muni Turnaround projects as well as at recent commercial and residential developments in the South of Market Area. Lead is also associated with old UST sites where leaded gasoline stored in USTs leaked and impacted soil/groundwater.


TRANSBAY TERMINAL
BART Embarcadero Station
MISSION BAY
CHINA BASIN
SOUTH BEACH
YERBA BUENA COVE
PacBell Park
Ferry Bldg
San Francisco Bay
San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge
MARKET ST
THE EMBARCADERO
LEGEND
Fill
Rock Outcrop
Undifferentiated Sediments
1848 Shoreline
Alignment
Hazardous Materials Site
0
0.5
1
Approximate Scale in Miles
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SITE LOCATIONS
September 2001
43-F0066867.00
San Francisco
Downtown Extension Project
San Francisco, California
URS
FIGURE 4.17-1
9/13/01 vsa ..\43-F0066867.00\hazmat.cdr

4.17.2.3 Underground Storage Tanks

Review of the regulatory agency databases included 29 UST (fuel tanks) release sites within close proximity of the proposed project as shown in Figure 4.17-1 and listed in Table 4.17-1. It is possible that other unidentified USTs may exist in close proximity to the proposed Project. Fuel hydrocarbons (gasoline, diesel, and motor oil), aromatic hydrocarbons (benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes), and lead are the contaminant types most frequently associated with leaking USTs.

4.18 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC SETTING

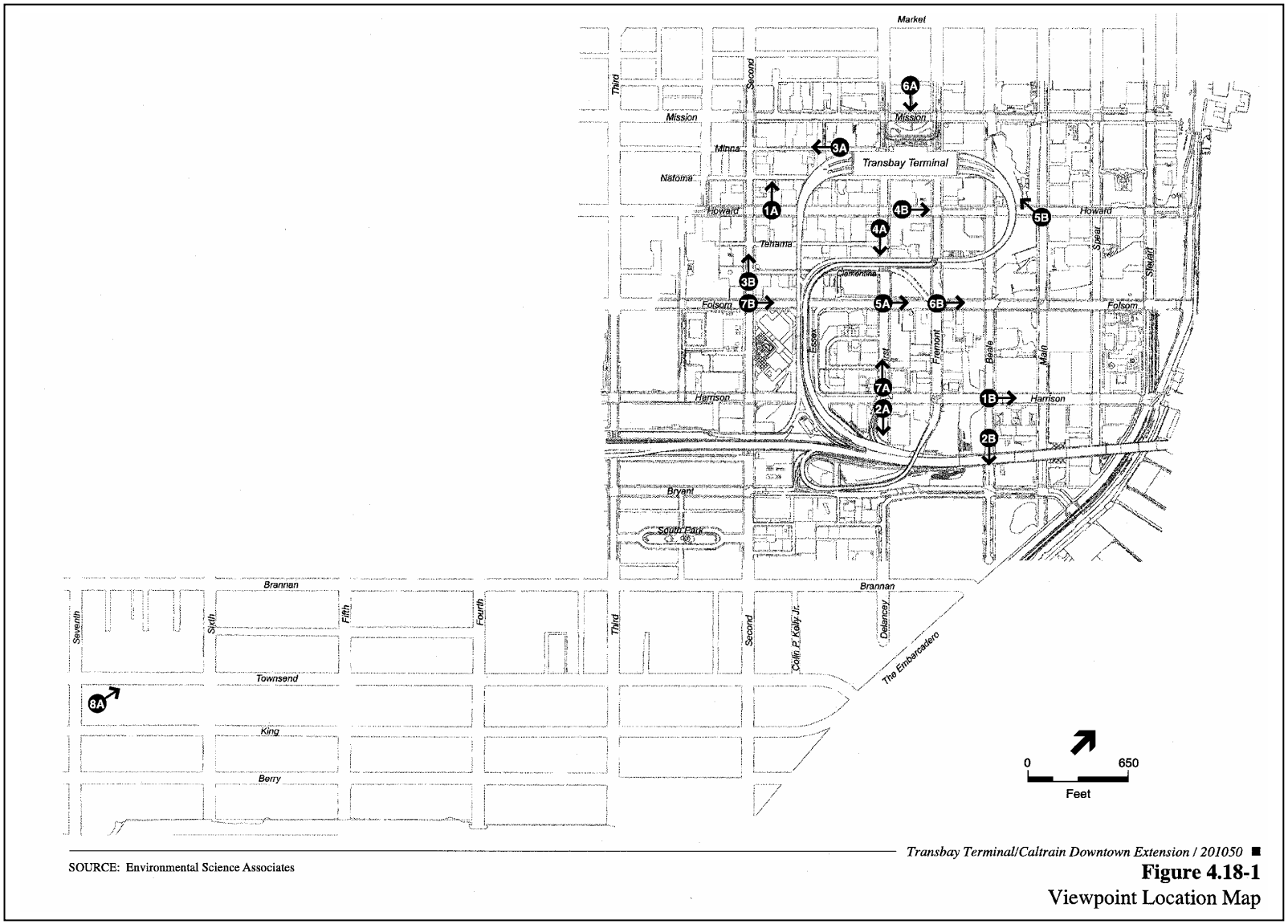
The visual and aesthetic environment in the study area is described below to establish the baseline against which to compare changes resulting from construction of project facilities and the demolition or alteration of existing structures or streetscape elements. This discussion focuses on the vicinity of the existing Transbay Terminal, the proposed Caltrain Downtown Extension and proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area, and associated properties where the project has the potential to change above-ground structures, affecting the visual appearance of the study area and views enjoyed by area users. The existing visual quality of the proposed study area is determined by a number of factors. Important factors include the:

- General "image" of the area that results from its location, its overall form, and the degree of spatial definition provided by its boundaries;
- Visual variety of landscape and architectural resources within the area, in terms of type and quality;
- Availability of public views, including of regional landmarks, within the area; and
- Position of the area in dynamic view sequences, such as entry to San Francisco by water or freeway, in which the area may be an important component of the larger cityscape.

The locations of viewpoints discussed in the following section are shown on Figure 4.18-1.

4.18.1 VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The visual character of the study area is varied, reflecting changing development patterns and uses over the past 95 years. Its physical character is a combination of low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings, ranging from early 20th century historic structures and districts, to new, single and clustered office towers. A large amount of the Transbay Area is underdeveloped, much of it occupied by surface parking lots. Blocks and streets are punctuated by vehicular overpasses from the highway, the Bay Bridge, related off-ramps, and bus ramps. Low-scale neighborhoods exist in several disparate areas.



Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension / 201050 ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Figure 4.18-1
Viewpoint Location Map

The overall Transbay Redevelopment Area does not currently have a high degree of visual definition or coherence. Certain elements provide a formal order, giving the area its general character. The street grid is rectilinear and regular and generally consists of larger blocks typical of South of Market. First Street acts as a seam between two development patterns south of Market Street. This is manifested in block orientation and building type, where the 550-foot by 825-foot blocks generally west of First Street are nearly twice as large as the blocks to the east and nearly four times as large as those north of Market Street. Coupled with the generally low-rise nature of development south of Mission Street and west of Beale Street and the lack of vertical relief north of Rincon Hill, the result is a pattern of small-scale buildings on large-scale blocks.

The northern boundary of the study area is visually defined by Market Street's abrupt transition from the diagonal street grid of the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area to the alignment of streets to the north,[17] and also by the high-rise structures in the downtown urban core. These structures in aggregate produce a large-scale visual edge that is somewhat relieved by building qualities and exterior architectural treatments on the high-rise buildings (Figure 4.18-2A). The eastern boundary of the study area is also marked by the strong visual contrasts that typically occur at the water's edge: the clarity of the edge itself; vivid changes in forms, texture and color; and a moving open water surface juxtaposed with visual walls (Figure 4.18-2B). The western edge of the study area is less distinct, although the strong identity of Yerba Buena Gardens clearly comes into prominence west of Third Street.

The elevated Bay Bridge approach dominates views in a southerly direction along Rincon Hill, creating a visual boundary in the southern portion of the study area (Figure 4.18-3A). In places, the Bay Bridge Anchorage lacks ornament and formal variation and tends to be absorbed by surrounding structures, except where Rincon Hill falls away and the Beale Street anchorage and bridge steel work take on sculptural qualities (Figure 4.18-3B). South of Bryant Street, mid-rise residential structures and a collection of large-lot, mid-rise warehouses in the South End Historic District and vast expanses of open water of the San Francisco Bay characterize views of the study area's southern edge.

The relative flatness of the proposed Redevelopment Area adjacent to the Rincon Hill Area accentuates those features that do reach above the surrounding landscape. Such features include the Moderne form of the Pacific Telephone Building on New Montgomery Street (Figure 4.18-4A), the most striking element on the western edge of the study area; the Second Street corridor, with new development and contemporary design coexisting with the historic urban fabric (Figure 4.18-4B); and the heavily excavated yet important form of Rincon Hill on the south, with the newly remodeled spire of the Bank of America clock tower accentuating its height (Figure 4.18-5A).

[17] The South of Market street grid is oriented off of true north by approximately 45 degrees. Thus, Mission Street and streets parallel to it run in a southwest-northeast direction and perpendicular streets, such as First Street, run in a northwest-southeast direction. For purposes of this analysis, local convention directions are used. Thus, Mission Street runs in an east-west direction and First Street runs in a north-south direction.

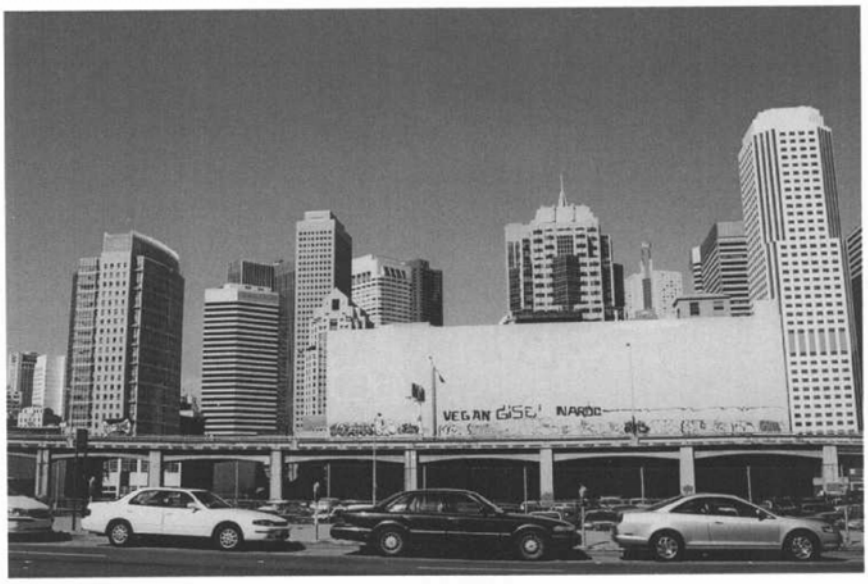


Fig 2A Folsom Street, Near First Street, Looking North to Downtown

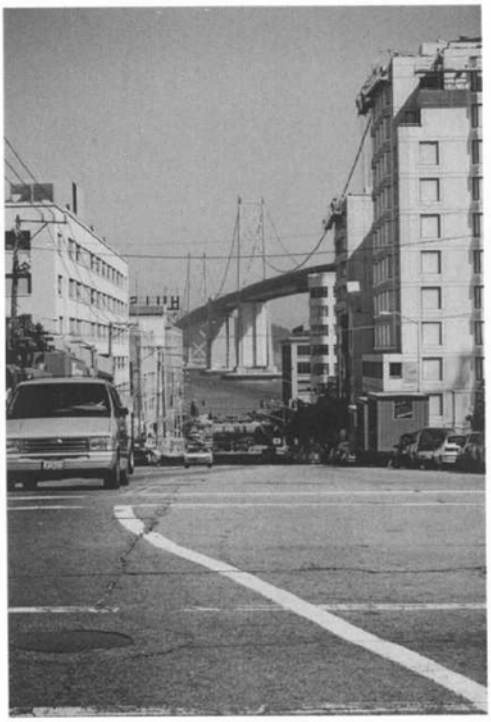


Fig 2B Harrison Street at Beale Street, Looking East to Bay Bridge

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension / Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Figure 4.18-2
Existing Views

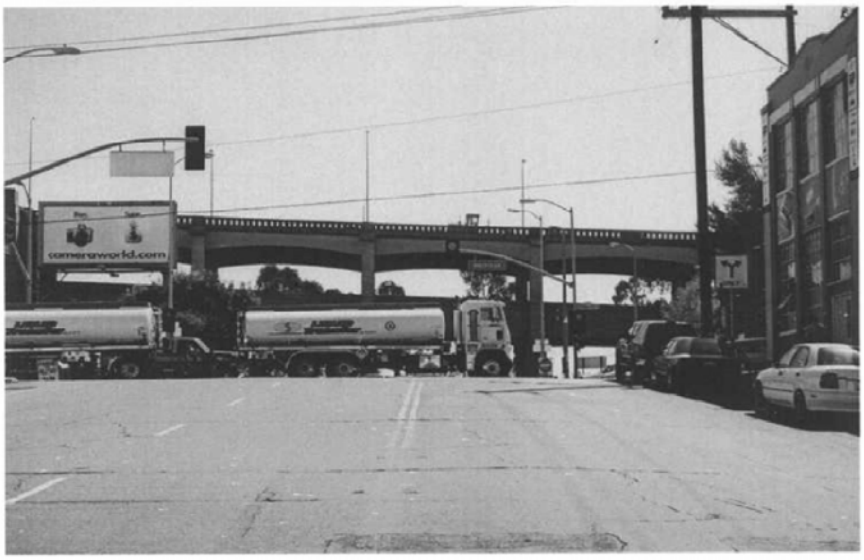


Fig 3A First Street, Near Harrison Street, Looking South to Elevated Bay Bridge Approach

Fig 3B Main Street, Looking South to Bay Bridge Steel Work

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension /Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Figure 4.18-3
Existing Views

Fig 4A Pacific Telephone Building (New Montgomery Street) from Minna Street

Fig 4B Second Street Corridor, Looking North

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension /Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

Figure 4.18-4
Existing Views

Fig 5A First Street, Near Howard Street, Looking South to Bank of America Clock Tower

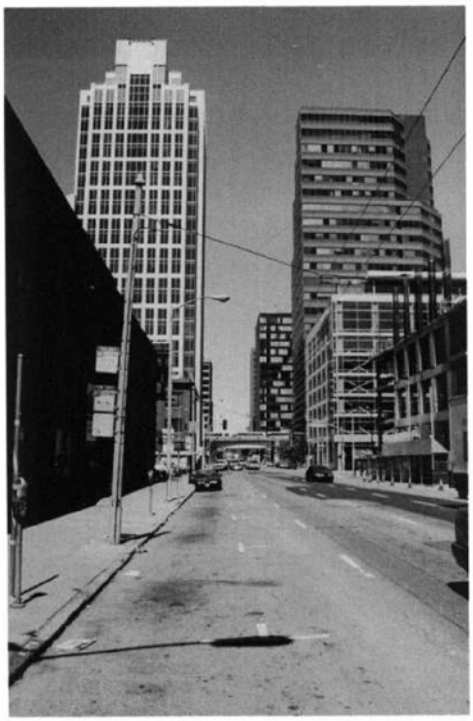


Fig 5B Howard Street, Near First Street, Looking East to New Office Tower (199 Fremont Street)

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension /Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Figure 4.18-5
Existing Views

Large structures visually define the northern and southern edges of the study area. The Bay Bridge stands high over the southeastern corner of the study area and a wall of modern skyscrapers define the northern and northeastern edge of the project area, while the office towers at 199 Fremont Street and 301 Howard Street rise above the Transbay Terminal ramps (Figure 4.18-5B). Building heights range from 550 feet along Mission Street, among the highest in the City, to 40 feet along Second Street between Harrison and Bryant. Building heights decrease toward the southern side of Rincon Hill. Smaller scale development characterizes South Park, where building heights are roughly 40 feet. South of the Bay Bridge anchorage, buildings are a more moderate scale, ranging from 40 to 105 feet. Heights at the eastern edge facing the waterfront step down from the maximum at Mission and Fremont, to between 100 and 250 feet in the Rincon Center and Rincon Hill districts. Building heights at the western end of the study area approaching Yerba Buena Gardens range from 350 feet near Mission off New Montgomery to 40 feet at the southern edge of the area adjacent to the freeway.

Certain subareas are visually distinctive within the study area. The buildings within the Second Street-New Montgomery Corridor to the east convey their historic character in design and materials; their scale, and the visual importance given to architectural elements that face directly onto the streets (e.g., windows, doors), emphasize activity at street level. This historic corridor, between Market and Howard Streets, has a more traditionally "urban" character than most of the project area, emphasizing the activity of workers, shoppers and students moving within a built environment that retains a human scale.

In recent years, new office, hotel, and residential developments have been constructed along Second Street. The 143-foot tall office tower, clad in buff limestone with cool aqua windows, is one of the newer office buildings at 201 Second Street. The C-Net Building at 235 Second Street is 88 feet tall and is clad with a masonry façade joined to a contemporary glass curtain wall. The Marriott Courtyard Hotel with its slender and slightly arched massing reaches a height of 170 feet on the corner of Second and Folsom Streets. The new development on Second Street, contemporary in design, respects the street wall established by older structures, by setting towers back from the street.

Three subareas within the Transbay Terminal Area present relatively coherent overall images of place: the corridor of undeveloped land along Folsom Street; the area to the east of the existing Transbay Terminal that is a visual extension of the downtown office district; and the area within the Terminal loop, with its collection of small-scale commercial buildings.

As shown in Figure 4.18-6A, an expanse of pavement and parking exists along Folsom Street in the former location of the now-demolished Embarcadero Freeway. This visual setting is repeated on parts of the south side of the street, as well, where commercial and Postal Service parking lots and a Golden Gate Transit bus storage lot are interspersed among occasional buildings, including the landmark Klockars blacksmith shop beneath the massive PG&E substation at Folsom and Fremont. The recently restored loft building at Beale Street, the renovated Hills Plaza, and the Gap building just outside the Transbay Terminal Area at Spear Street are exceptions to the general visual character of this area.

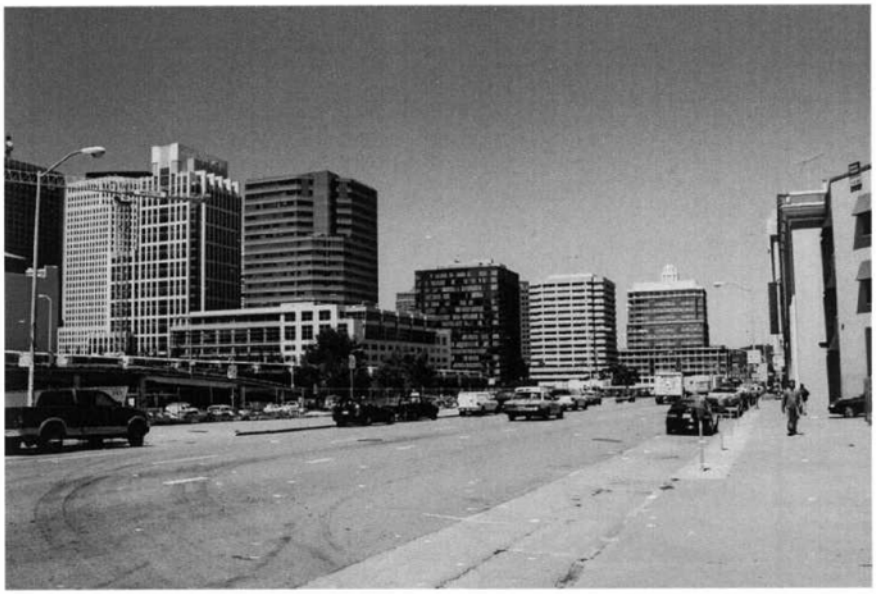


Fig 6A Folsom Street at First Street, Looking East

Fig 6B Main Street at Howard Street, Looking North

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension /Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

Figure 4.18-6
Existing Views

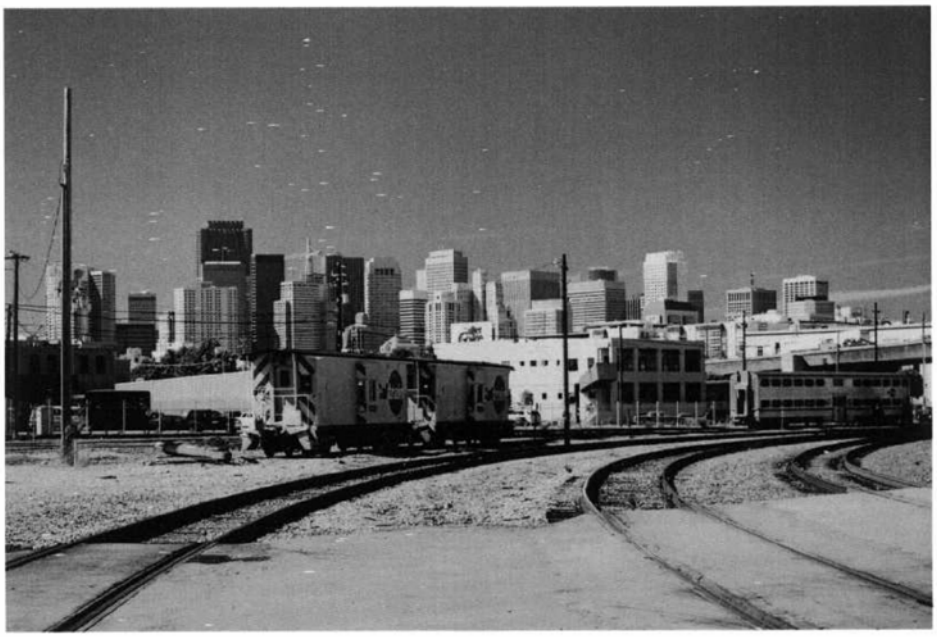
The downtown's large-scale buildings extend south of Mission Street, crossing at the Pacific Gateway Plaza at Beale and Mission Streets, reaching just south of Howard Street, east of Main Street (Figure 4.18-6B). In their relationship to the street, these newer buildings are in keeping with the post-1970 Market Street office towers, sometimes set back from the street and typically with plazas and other open spaces in front and behind. While differing from the uniform street wall typical of the early 20th century downtown, the spaces between and around newer towers set off these taller buildings and moderate the perceived scale of the South of Market blocks.

Within the Transbay Terminal ramp system, where development has been restricted by the presence of the ramp structures, is a relatively intact early 20th century commercial neighborhood. Looking out from within, the elevated ramps provide a sense of enclosure. This is particularly pronounced in the Tehama Street alleyway, where the scale of street and building combines to distance the larger city beyond.

The southern edge of the study area is visually defined by larger-scale industrial and warehouse structures, transportation infrastructure, residential buildings, and recreational facilities. Three to four-story brick structures with large floorplates front on wide (82.5 feet) streets in the vicinity of the existing Caltrain Station at Fourth and Townsend Streets. Many of these former manufacturing structures have been rehabilitated and adaptively reused. Transportation infrastructure visually dominates the area between Seventh to Fourth Streets along Townsend Street. Caltrain tracks traverse the rail yard, and parked trains, utility sheds, light stands, and power lines characterize the rail yard's visual attributes. Figure 4.18-7 shows the Caltrain storage yard in the foreground, the Sixth Street off-ramp from I-280 to the east, buildings fronting on Townsend Street to the north, and the distinctive downtown mound of high rises in the background to the northeast.

Residential development visually differs from the warehouse and light industrial structures in the area. Since the mid-1980s, mid- and large-scale residential buildings (generally four to 14 floors) have been constructed within the southern edge of the study area (predominately in the South Beach neighborhood along The Embarcadero). These taller structures stand out from the industrial buildings surrounding them due to their height and massing. Newer apartment buildings are taller and include landscaped open spaces. Mission Bay North, southeast of the existing Caltrain Terminus, is being developed with dense, large scale (80 to160 feet) residential structures on the blocks adjacent to Third, Fourth, Fifth, King, and Townsend Streets.

Recreational uses are concentrated in the southeastern section of the study area. These uses are characterized by larger-scale public facilities and smaller, more intimate spaces. Pacific Bell Park is located at Third and King Streets. The 45,000-seat baseball park recalls traditional architectural elements in its design, such as its location within the existing urban street grid, the use of building materials (brick and steel), public spaces with shops and restaurants, landscaping features and a unified signage program. The ballpark harmonizes with existing adjacent structures.



View of Caltrain Storage Yard and Downtown San Francisco Looking Northeast

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension /Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

Figure 4.18-7
Existing Views

Just to the south of Pier 40, the South Beach Marina provides a visual break from the built environment along The Embarcadero. Watercraft can be seen docked in the marina. Strong and organized smaller-scale development adjacent to the grassy open space and play area in South Park creates an effective contrast and makes the street space between the two pleasing.

4.18.2 VISUAL RESOURCES

Within the general area near the proposed project (see Figure 4.18-1), several buildings, generally in the New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District and adjacent Rincon Hill area, exhibit architectural styles of historical interest. The area also has a limited number of structures that have been recognized as possessing exceptional value either by themselves or because they represent the work of major architects. A notable example is the existing Transbay Terminal, designed by Timothy Pfleuger in 1939 (Figure 4.18-8A). Others in the Rincon Hill District include: the PG&E and Matson Buildings on Market between Beale and Main Streets; the aforementioned Bank of America (former Union 76) clock tower by Louis Hobart; the Hearst Building at Third and Market Streets; and the Pacific Telephone Building, Rialto Building, Sharon Building, Call Building, Palace Hotel, and Palace Garage, among others, in the New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District. Most of these buildings are north of Mission Street, and nearly all are north of Howard Street.

Aside from the more distinguished examples of the architectural works listed above, the area contains a diversity of building forms, masses, building styles and materials that provide visual interest. Massive buildings visually define the northern boundary of the study area. High-rises, varying in height and bulk, color and façade treatment, punctuate the northern edge of the area and provide a clearly delineated visual edge from the generally low-rise area to the south. Narrow streets such as Minna, Natoma, Tehama, and Clementina Streets provide a diversity of scale and views compared to the larger blocks generally found west of First Street. Narrow streets (typically about 35 feet wide) are generally developed with lower structures with larger footprints and minimal setbacks that create a sense of enclosure at the street level. In contrast, the area also contains larger streets (typically about 86 feet wide) such as Folsom, Harrison and Mission Streets, developed with larger structures, some with setbacks or open space that tend to accentuate the width of the street and the size of the buildings fronting them.

Natural features such as the San Francisco Bay complement the built environment within the proposed Redevelopment Area and provide an edge to the area to the east. The water's edge provides a visual resource and is revealed at the termini of Folsom, Howard, and Mission Streets at the eastern edge of the district. Other than the landform of Rincon Hill, natural features within the study area are generally limited to landscaping associated with residential and commercial developments. Specific landscape designs create small areas of visual interest, such as the grassy oval park in South Park, the open space along the Embarcadero Promenade on the eastern border of the study area, or the grass "benches" in front of the Marathon Plaza on Second Street.

Fig 8A Transbay Terminal Building

Fig 8B Folsom Street, Near Fremont Street, Looking East to the Bay

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension / Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

Figure 4.18-8
Existing Views

Transportation infrastructure provides other unique views within the Transbay Terminal Area. The network of ramps connected to the Terminal visually defines the area. These ramps cross over Howard, Beale, Fremont, First, Folsom, Essex, Clementina, Tehama, and Natoma Streets. Ramps interrupt views across the district and provide a sense of enclosure. From the Transbay Terminal, the ramps lead to the Bay Bridge. These ramps block views to the Bay and to Rincon Hill, create dark and cramped spaces underneath (generally attracting surface parking uses) and act as visual reference points within the Transbay Area. To the south, the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area is visually subsumed and blocked by the greater mass of the Bay Bridge and its western approach.

4.18.3 SCENIC VIEWS AND VISTAS

Due to its location at the eastern edge of the City, its generally flat terrain, and the low-rise character of most of its developed uses, the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area provides a rich variety of views. Unobstructed long-range views of major regional landmarks are available throughout the study area. These include the Bay, Treasure Island, Yerba Buena Island, the East Bay Hills, the Bay Bridge, Twin Peaks, and the downtown skyline. The study area also affords smaller-scale views, such as streetscapes in which visual interest is provided by architectural elements or vegetation in the foreground.

As a result of its generally level topography and the regular street grid, regional landmarks are framed in well-defined visual corridors established by such major streets as Market, Mission, Folsom, Harrison, and Howard Streets. In these axial views, Twin Peaks to the west and the Bay to the east provide the visual endpoints of the corridor and consequently a measure of orientation (Figure 4.18-8B). Where these endpoints are built elements, parallel horizontal lines defined by the roadway, sidewalks, and building elements appear to converge toward those buildings, further enhancing their visual importance (Figure 4.18-9A). Because the visual landmarks generally visible along the east-west corridors are natural features, they also provide strong and, under some lighting and water conditions, dramatic contrast with the built urban environment. In certain cases – for example, the easterly view down Market Street of the Ferry Building – the area's visual corridors may frame buildings with distinctive architecture and historic or civic meaning. Views toward the water are partially framed by buildings of varying height along Mission, Howard, Folsom and Harrison Streets. Views at some points are interrupted by overpasses, and dissipate and are distracted by the numerous surface lots (Figure 4.18-9B).

North-south axial views within the study area (e.g., First and Second Streets, Main, Beale, and New Montgomery Streets) typically focus on structures, although with expanses of sky behind. The structures, too, may be regional landmarks and include the Bay Bridge and downtown office towers. Under certain viewing conditions, the sky is an important component of the north-south axial views: in the evening, skyscrapers may be viewed against banks of fog blowing into the Bay, with the setting sun highlighting the edges of clouds and buildings.

Fig 9A Fremont Street at Harrison Street, Looking North to Downtown

Fig 9B Folsom Street at Second Street, Looking East

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates
Parsons Transportation Group

Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension / Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR ■

Figure 4.18-9
Existing Views

The existing Transbay Terminal and its ramps obstruct important axial views including north-south views along First, Fremont, and Beale Streets that are walled off by the structure of the Terminal that bridges the street. In addition, views southward through the proposed Redevelopment Area are partially obscured by the Terminal ramps and the rising topography of Rincon Hill. Views in the southern section of the study area are of I-280, China Basin Channel, the Bay, Potrero Hill, the downtown high-rises, and intervening development in South of Market neighborhoods.

4.18.4 ELEMENT IN THE CITYSCAPE

The proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area is a component of panoramic views of the City and it is part of the dynamic view sequences experienced while entering the City on I-280 from the south and the Bay Bridge from the east. From northbound I-280, views of downtown are readily available to the north. From this vantage, the dense cluster of high-rises gradually rising in height from SOMA produces a total effect that characterizes San Francisco's dense downtown core. To the west, Sutro Tower is visible atop Twin Peaks and fragments of the Bay Bridge can be seen to the east.

In views from westbound lanes of the Bay Bridge, the Transbay Redevelopment Area occupies the near land edge; in northerly views from the approaches to the Bay Bridge, it establishes an open foreground for panoramic views of the downtown area beyond. In these views, the area's generally level terrain and lack of prominent large-scale structures reduce its visual importance, especially in relation to the distinctive features beyond (e.g., downtown high-rise structures, Twin Peaks). The proposed redevelopment area thus serves now as a generally neutral part of the visual context for major view elements.

Due to variations in San Francisco's topography, the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area is visible from many locations from within the City. Views of the proposed project area are available from Dolores Park in the Dolores Heights neighborhood. The general flatness of the proposed redevelopment area contrasts with the high-rises located north of Market Street. This view is framed by the Bay and East Bay hills in the background. Similar views are available from Twin Peaks; the proposed project area is a part of a sweeping vista that stretches as far as Russian Hill to the north and Portrero Hill to the south. Views of the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area are also available from the upper stories of downtown high-rises, specifically from windows with a southern orientation.