

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

EXTENSION OF HISTORIC STREETCAR F-LINE SERVICE
TO THE FORT MASON CENTER

RECORD OF DECISION

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and
San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park

City and County of San Francisco, California

Introduction

Pursuant to §102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190, as amended), and regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (at 40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of Interior, National Park Service has prepared this Record of Decision regarding the extension of the historic streetcar F-Line to Fort Mason Center so as to better serve Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park (SAFR). Included is a description of project background, a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, a description of the environmentally preferred alternative, the basis for the decision, and an overview of public involvement and agency consultation in the decision-making process. Measures to minimize or avoid environmental harm, and the NPS's determinations of no impairment of park resources and values are described in Attachments A and B, respectively.

The National Park Service (NPS) is the lead agency and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and the Federal Transit Administration are the cooperating agencies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The decision by the NPS documented herein is the culmination of a cooperative effort by GGNRA, SAFR, the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF), the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), and the Presidio Trust. Studies from these agencies showed that these urban national park destinations could benefit from improved regional and local transit connectivity. This improved service connectivity would help accommodate existing and future visitor demand. Based on those studies, conceptual approaches to address alternative transportation needs were identified and evaluated against the purpose and need of the Project, park management objectives, and operability constraints and are described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) released in February 2012¹.

¹ This project has been exempted from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In 1985, the San Francisco Planning Department issued a "Certificate of Determination of Exemption/Exclusion from Environmental Review" for construction and operation of an E-Embarcadero Streetcar Line project between the Ferry Building and the west end of the Fort Mason Tunnel. The certificate was issued pursuant to a Statutory Exemption from CEQA for rail extension projects of under 4 miles in length, as specified in state law. This CEQA exemption was updated and reissued by the Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco on April 28, 2006.

The Project will allow the extension of the F-Market & Wharves Line (F-line) from Fisherman's Wharf through GGNRA and SAFR, in San Francisco, California. The GGNRA and the SF Maritime NHP are two separate National Park Service units in San Francisco's northeastern waterfront; SF Maritime NHP is adjacent to the GGNRA, which includes Fort Mason. The GGNRA was established in 1972, and encompasses over 80,000 acres of land in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo Counties. The 50-acre SF Maritime NHP, established in 1988, includes the Maritime Museum and a Senior Center (both housed in the original Aquatic Park Bathhouse), Aquatic Park, Municipal Pier, Hyde Street Pier, and a collection of National Historic Landmark vessels.

Project Summary Description and Jurisdiction. The EIS analysis divided the Project into four segments. The four segments and their jurisdiction are summarized below in Table 1 (a more detailed explanation of the project segments can be found in the Final EIS). In order to connect the in-street alignment, turnarounds, and transition segments identified above, the following ancillary components would be required: traction power system, overhead contact system, signaling.

Traction Power System. The streetcars would be powered by a traction power system which would feed power to the overhead contact system (OCS), described below. The traction power system would connect to an existing substation² via underground feeders in duct banks and would provide power to the OCS.

Overhead Contact System. The OCS would consist of a single-wire system similar to the existing Muni OCS on the F-line tracks in the Fisherman's Wharf area. The OCS would be configured for trolley pole operation by historic streetcars. The OCS would also be configured to accommodate pantograph operation consistent with the configuration of the existing F-line segments in the Fisherman's Wharf area and along the Embarcadero roadway. This would extend the existing OCS capabilities for pole and pantograph operation that currently exist along the northeast waterfront from Fisherman's Wharf to the Muni Metro terminal near the Caltrain Terminal. The poles would be spaced every 100 feet on tangent track, and closer together where the track curves. The OCS configuration would vary depending upon location, and be determined during the design phase.

Signaling. Within the in-street segments of the Project, streetcar movements would be governed by line-of-sight operations, with movement at intersections controlled by traffic signals. Traffic signals or stop signs will be used at intersections.

Scope of NPS Decision

For the Project elements on lands under NPS jurisdiction, (Transition Segment, Fort Mason Tunnel Segment, and Turnaround Segment-see Table 1), the Federal Action to be decided is whether to authorize the SFMTA to construct, maintain, and operate an extension of the F-Line on NPS property. Although it is within NPS decision-making authority to decide where the F-Line extension will be located and configured on NPS property, the NPS does not presently have legal authority to grant SFMTA the necessary authorizations to implement this Project on NPS land. Upon obtaining legal authority, the NPS would authorize participation of SFMTA in Project components on NPS lands, according to special legislation which will need to be promulgated. The SFMTA would then be permitted to design, construct, and operate the F-Line extension in accordance with the terms of the authorizing legislation. All the remaining elements of the F-Line extension outside NPS jurisdiction are under the decision-making authority of the City and County of San Francisco.

² The closest Muni substation is Marina Station, located at 1575 North Point Street.

TABLE 1: PROJECT DETAILS AND JURISDICTION BY SEGMENT

	In-Street Segment (CCSF Jurisdiction)	Transition Segment (Dual Jurisdiction)	Fort Mason Tunnel Segment (NPS Jurisdiction)	Turnaround Segment (NPS Jurisdiction)
Description	Operates west down Jefferson Street to Leavenworth Street, south to Beach Street, and in both directions along Beach Street between Jones Street and the transition at Van Ness Avenue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • semi-exclusive operations along Jefferson Street • mixed traffic operation along Leavenworth Street • crossing the existing cable car tracks at Hyde Street 	The transition segment takes the alignment from the double-track, in-street segment to the east, shifting the alignment to NPS property to the west of Polk Street. The line would move from double track to single track between the platforms and the tunnel portal.	The streetcar extension would run on a single track through the tunnel. Tunnel improvements would include installation of new track and overhead lines and reconstruction of the tunnel interior. ³	In the North Loop turnaround tracks would loop north out of the Fort Mason Tunnel and enter the Lower Fort Mason parking lot.
Segment-Specific Details	Options to be determined during design phase: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) shared auto/streetcar operation 2) semi-exclusive for the eastbound alignment and shared operation for the westbound alignment 3) hybrid of the two options 	None	Upgrades needed: Installation of new track and overhead lines and reconstruction of the tunnel interior—including a new tunnel lining, ventilation fan, signals, lighting, and utilities and traction power feeders. Additional capacity (e.g., track circuitry and logic controlling the signaling and the interlocking) would also be built into the system. ⁴	
Station Platforms	Total Added: Four Location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dual side platforms on bulbed-out sidewalks east or west of Hyde Street on Beach Street • eastbound side platform west of Jones Street on Beach Street • westbound side platform south of Jefferson Street on Leavenworth Street 	Total Added: Two Location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • east side of the transition segment • west side (located just south of an existing east/west pedestrian path and the historic speaker tower in Aquatic Park) 	Total Added: None	Total Added: Two Location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alongside Building A • on the loop's eastern side near the east retaining wall in the Fort Mason Center parking lot
Specifications Common to all Segments	signals, crossings, wires and poles	signals, crossings, wires and poles	signals	signals, crossings, wires and poles

³ Subject to conditions of the authorizing instrument, NPS will authorize tunnel improvements necessary to construct, maintain, and operate the F-Line extension.

⁴ Subject to the conditions of the authorizing instrument, SFMTA will retain full decision authority on system design.

NPS Decision (Selected Action)

Subject to obtaining legal authority, the NPS intends to authorize SFMTA to construct, maintain, and operate F-Line extension service on NPS lands. As conditioned under the legal authority that is obtained, SFMTA would be directed to implement the actions described in Alternative 2 and Turnaround Option 2A of the Final EIS which are located on lands under NPS jurisdiction (a full description of these actions can be found in the Final EIS). In summary these actions include the following:

Transition Segment. The In-Street segment requires traversing NPS property between approximately Beach and Polk Streets and the tunnel's eastern portal at Van Ness Avenue, in an area known as the "transition." The transition segment takes the alignment from the double-track, in-street segment to the east, shifting the alignment to NPS property to the west of Polk Street. Due to the high level of pedestrian activity in this area, special attention will be paid to pedestrian safety measures during the final design. A station will be located on the transition segment near the base of Van Ness Avenue, and the line will move from double track to single track between the platforms and the tunnel portal. The station will have two mini-high, ADA-compliant platforms; one installed on the east side of the transition segment, and one on the west side (located just south of an existing east/west pedestrian path and the historic speaker tower in Aquatic Park).

Other changes in the transition area will include adding retaining walls, modifying existing historic retaining walls, and possibly modifying or relocating the Aquatic Park Bocce Ball Court. The General Management Plan to be prepared by the San Francisco Maritime NHP will provide direction on future use of the bocce ball court area within the transition area, including retaining the bocce ball court or using the area for a maintenance facility. If the outcome of the General Management Plan or the final design of the transition area is to move the bocce courts, then impacts to this recreational activity will be minimized by relocating the courts before construction of the streetcar line through the transition area. If the bocce court is to be relocated, then the NPS will conduct a separate planning effort to evaluate suitable bocce court sites within and outside the parks.

Fort Mason Tunnel Segment. The Fort Mason Tunnel is a concrete-lined tunnel that was constructed in 1914, and was operated by the State Belt Railroad for active freight service until the late 1970s. The tunnel is currently owned by the NPS. It runs east-west about 60 feet beneath the upper Fort Mason complex. The tunnel is about 1,500 feet long, 16 feet wide, and 22 feet tall at its highest point. Given these limitations, the proposed streetcar extension will run on a single track through the tunnel. The tunnel improvements will include installation of new track and overhead lines and reconstruction of the tunnel interior—including construction of a new tunnel lining. Existing manual gates at the tunnel entrance may be replaced with automatic gates for security purposes.

Turnaround Segment. The North Loop turnaround will consist of tracks that loop north out of the west portal of the Fort Mason Tunnel and enter the Fort Mason Center parking lot. A 155-foot-long by 13-foot-wide, ADA-compliant mini-high station platform will be constructed alongside Building A. A second platform could be placed on the loop's eastern side, near the existing east retaining wall. A storage track will be provided extending west from the loop, adjacent to the NPS gate house. A

detection circuit with a “clear to proceed” signal will be installed at the south end of the platform or adjacent to the Fort Mason Tunnel. The Project will be designed to ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicycles including measures such as incorporating traffic signals where appropriate.

Decisions Still to be Made: This ROD describes the actions that NPS intends to authorize, assuming a legally sufficient authorizing instrument can be identified and executed. However, it is recognized that there are still decisions to be made by SFMTA regarding various elements of the project, such as in-street track alignment, platform location, and shelter design. SFMTA, with additional oversight from San Francisco Planning Department, has committed to conducting a subsequent local public planning and design process to decide the remaining design elements of the projects that are within SFMTA jurisdiction. This process will provide additional opportunity for consideration of operational and design characteristics, with input from public stakeholders and federal agencies. At the outset, all owners and interested parties within 300 feet of the project would be sent notification informing them of the proposed project and planning process. Initial drawings and concepts would be shared at one or more public meetings, and after a period of outreach, a general public hearing would be held by the SFMTA to receive comments on the initial work. The findings would then be reported to the San Francisco Planning Department, which may choose to hold their own public meetings on the issue. Following comments from the Planning Department, design and engineering would be refined and shared with the public stakeholders and federal agencies once again. When the majority of parties are in agreement, the design and engineering work would then proceed to the advanced level. The process would repeat until the SFMTA completed a final design for the project, and that would be the project that is constructed.

Minor Changes Incorporated into the Final EIS

After the release of the Final EIS, NPS internal review found minor errors or omissions in the document. These minor changes are not considered to be substantial. Most changes were in response to public comments and are described more fully in Chapter 7 – Summary of Public Comments and Responses. Specific changes addressed the following: corrections on several platform locations; clarification of public involvement opportunities before project finalization; clarification (better quantification) of potential loss of street artist spaces; clarification (better quantification) of potential loss of parking and truck loading spaces; clarification of potential implications for the Marina neighborhood. Any impacts resulting from these changes have already been analyzed in the Final EIS and do not substantially affect determinations of significance. An Errata was prepared to document these minor text corrections.

Other Alternatives Considered

Alternative 1 - No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the F-line would not be extended beyond Fisherman’s Wharf; the Transition Segment within the Aquatic Park NHLD would remain unchanged from current condition; the Fort Mason Tunnel would remain closed and would not be renovated or made seismically sound; and the turnaround area at lower Fort Mason, within the Fort Mason National Register Historic

District and the San Francisco Port of Embarkation NHL, would remain unchanged from current condition.

Alternative 2B – Proposed Action with South Loop Turnaround

Under Alternative 2B, In-Street, Transition, and Tunnel Segments of the project would be similar to those of the selected alternative. However, the track configuration in Alternative 2B would consist of tracks that loop south after emerging from the west portal of the Fort Mason Tunnel, with a loop situated in Fort Mason's Great Meadow. One 155-foot-long by 13-foot-wide, ADA-compliant mini-high station platform would be located adjacent and parallel to Laguna Street.

Preliminary Options Considered and Dismissed

As discussed in more detail in the Final EIS, in 2004 a number of preliminary options were originally scoped. Then based on a feasibility study process various in-street, transition, and turnaround scenarios were considered and dismissed. Further refinements were made based on additional interagency screening, and public scoping comments were also considered in developing the range of alternatives evaluated in the EIS.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The Council on Environmental Quality defines the environmentally preferred alternative as "*the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in the National Environmental Policy Act's Section 101.*" Under §101(b) of the NEPA, it is the continuing responsibility of federal agencies to:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
2. Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
4. Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice;
5. Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
6. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

Closely mirroring these criteria, particularly criteria #3 and #6, are the project's goals and objectives. Goals and objectives for this project emphasize enhancing visitor experience and reducing automobile-based trips for recreational travel, and inter- and intra-park transportation. Alternative 2 (the Preferred

Alternative) was ultimately found to be more consistent with the criteria listed above than the No-Action alternative.

Moreover, in the process of selecting the preferred alternative, it became apparent that the turnaround option Alternative 2A: North Loop, minimized environmental impact more effectively than its counterpart, Alternative 2B: South Loop. This was based on findings that Alternative 2A involved: (1) no addition of impervious surface; (2) no removal of vegetation; (3) less earth movement; and (4) fewer construction-related emissions. Therefore, Alternative 2 with the Turnaround option Alternative 2A: North Loop was deemed to be the environmentally preferred alternative.

Measures to Minimize Harm

All practical means to avoid, minimize, or eliminate environmental harm from the selected action have been adopted. The attached listing details all actions that will be implemented by the NPS in the course of implementing the project (Attachment A).

Public Involvement in the EIS Process

Public Scoping

The EIS scoping phase was formally initiated with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on March 29, 2006. The NOI announced the intention of the National Park Service to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Historic Streetcar Extension project and to conduct scoping, which provides agencies and the general public with an opportunity to raise issues and concerns to be addressed in the EIS. In addition, postcards notifying the public of the initiation of the planning process were sent to approximately 4,000 people, a list of whom was generated from the GGNRA, SAFR, and SFMTA mailing lists. A press release resulted in articles in two local newspapers. A half-page ad was placed in the *San Francisco Examiner* (May 3, 2006), and a legal notice was posted in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 6, 2006).

The EIS scoping period extended from March 29 through May 29, 2006. On May 9, 2006, NPS hosted one public scoping meeting at the Fort Mason Officer's Club (on the same day, a coordination meeting was also held with local and regulatory agencies). Throughout the 60 days scoping period, including during the public scoping meeting, NPS solicited written and oral comments regarding the proposed Project; over 100 comments from individuals, organizations representing environmental and recreational interests, and governmental agencies were received.

Public Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Public notice of availability and opportunity to comment, along with an invitation to attend a public open house meeting, were provided through mailers, email, public postings, and publication in the Federal Register (the EPA's notice of filing was published March 18, 2011 and the NPS's Notice of Availability was published on March 22, 2011). The 60 days public comment period extended from March 18 through May 16, 2011. A public open house meeting was held at the Fort Mason Center on

April 20, 2011. Over 3,700 newsletters announcing the availability of the Draft EIS and details regarding the open house was distributed. The public was invited to submit comments through the NPS' Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website, as well as via regular mail, email, and park comment posters and forms during the public open house meeting. A total of 97 pieces of correspondence were received during the Draft EIS public comment period; the open house was attended by total of 81 people, during which oral and written comments were collected.

A comment analysis report was prepared and all comments are documented in the Project administrative record. The majority of those that commented on the Draft EIS supported the proposed action. The public's primary concerns about the preferred alternative included mitigating the loss of parking, displacement of street artist sales spaces, increased traffic congestion, noise and congestion near the Marina neighborhood, conflicts with other planned projects, and mitigating impacts to National Historic Landmark resources. Many also suggested various design ideas and other measures to help reduce these impacts.

Public Release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement

During February, 2012 public notice of availability of the Final EIS was provided through direct mail and public postings. In addition, announcement that the park's next regularly scheduled public meeting/open house would include information about the project was sent to the addresses on the park's email list. Pursuant to NEPA, the "no action" minimum 30 days waiting period was initiated with the EPA's notice of filing published in the Federal Register on February 24, 2012 (the NPS's Notice of Availability was published on February 21, 2012). Paper and electronic copies of the Final EIS were provided to more than 100 federal, state and local government agencies, organizations, and individuals. Paper copies of the document were also made available at GGNRA Headquarters, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's Maritime Library, and at six San Francisco public libraries. The park's public meeting/open house event was held on March 21, 2012 and included information about the F-Line extension (NPS staffers were on hand to answer questions from the public).

Regulatory Agency and Other Consultation

National Historic Preservation Act -Section 106 Consultation: In accordance with §106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, beginning in 2007, the NPS, in cooperation with SFMTA and FTA (cooperating agencies), initiated consultation with Ohlone and Coastanoan tribal representatives, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Comments from the Ohlone/Costanoan representatives concerned the protection of Ohlone sites and cultural materials, requests for additional information as it becomes available, offers to monitor future stages of project work if monitoring is required, and suggestions for the development of a treatment plan to address potential encounters with Ohlone cultural resources. Comments from the ACHP and SHPO concerned the Aquatic Park National Historic Landmark (NHL) District and the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, U.S. Army NHL District.

Throughout the alternatives development process, NPS and cooperating agencies sought to minimize project-related impacts to the NHL Districts and related cultural and historic resources and waterfront values. However, in completing its alternatives analysis, NPS determined that the preferred alternative would still have an adverse effect on these NHL Districts and resources, due primarily to the demolition of historic fabric and contributing resources, the introduction of new incompatible features and structures, the alteration of historic viewsheds, and the introduction of new sources of noise, vibration, and light. The NPS has continued to consult these organizations in an effort to minimize and address these impacts and identify appropriate mitigation.

In accordance with §106, the NPS drafted a Memorandum of Agreement (Appendix C of Final EIS) in order to resolve adverse effects of the Undertaking on the subject historic properties associated with the Extension of Historic Streetcar Service Project. The signatories to the Final MOA (dated October 16, 2012) include NPS, SHPO, and SFMTA. The City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, Federal Transit Administration, and the Ohlone/Costanoan representatives are concurring parties. An executed copy of the MOA was sent to the Advisory Council on October 22, 2012. The signed MOA specifies that, if undertaken, the project shall proceed in accordance with certain stipulations, or terms and conditions, to ensure impacts to the NHL Districts and associated resources is avoided and/or minimized. For example, the MOA requires the salvage and reuse of historic materials, formal recordation of the NHL Districts prior to project implementation, installation of information displays, and several measures to ensure protection of historic properties and potential archeological resources during project construction.

Coastal Zone Management Act – Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC): As described in CZMA §307(c)(3)(A) (16U.S.C §1456(c)(3)(A)) and 15 C.F.R part 930, subparts A, B, and D, this Project requires federal authorization for components which would occur on NPS lands. As such, if this action is a listed activity occurring in the coastal zone, SFMTA will need to submit a Consistency Certification to the Bay Conservation and Development Commission as outlined in C.F.R §930.58. The yet to be determined authorizing instrument to be provided to SFMTA to construct, maintain, and operate the F-Line will not be finalized until the consistency process is completed.

Basis for Decision

The preferred alternative presented and analyzed in the Draft and Final EIS was identified after a multi-year alternative development and screening process, during which time alternatives for the project's in-street alignment, transition segment, and turnaround segment were analyzed. These alternatives were evaluated based on a standard set of criteria. As noted above, preliminary alternatives that were found to be unreasonable were eliminated from further analysis. Following this process a preferred in-street alignment and transition segment were selected.

However, two potential configurations for the turnaround segment remained – a North Loop (Alternative 2A) and a South Loop (Alternative 2B). Alternatives 2A and 2B were analyzed during a Value Analysis (VA) workshop conducted during August, 2010. In the VA workshop, the North Loop and South Loop turnaround alternatives were evaluated using a process called Choosing by Advantages (CBA), where decisions are based on the weighted importance of the advantages between

alternatives, with capital and life cycle costs factored in last, to illustrate benefits to cost. In using CBA to determine a preferred alternative, the VA team identified the alternative that offers the highest total importance of advantages at the lowest cost (in both initial and life cycle).

In this workshop, the North Loop was identified as best value due to the following advantages:

- Significantly Better at Limiting Disruption to Natural Resources;
 - No impervious surface is added (can increase pervious surface between rail);
 - Does not remove vegetation;
 - Emits the least amount of emissions during construction (less earth moved).
- Somewhat Better at Improving Visitor Experience;
 - Limited view shed impacts by adding streetcars and infrastructure in the Fort Mason Center (FMC) parking lot;
 - Provides direct interior connection between SF Maritime NHP and Fort Mason Center.
- Slightly Better at Protecting Public Health, Safety and Welfare;
 - All the alternatives create potential conflicts between pedestrians, auto and transit. This alternative limits those conflicts particularly with bicycles. It may include conflict with bicycles in the future, depending on changes that could occur due to the potential Bay Trail redesign (this is an independent project);
 - Allows for the potential redesign of the Bay Trail at lower Fort Mason with less change required (this is an independent project).
- Slightly Better at Supporting Criteria for Fort Mason Center Events;
 - It is best able to manage headway (frequency and storage of streetcars);
 - Creates more room to queue streetcar riders away from Laguna Street.
- Somewhat Better at Accessing Disabled Streetcar;
 - Creates better access to disabled streetcar in the storage area for repair via service truck in this location.
- Slightly Better at Minimizing Noise & Sound Impacts;
 - Minimizes noise impacts on residential neighborhoods since it is the farthest from the residential areas;
 - Minimizes vibration impacts. All the options create vibration but this option is 10 feet farther away from the historic structures at Fort Mason than the other alternatives.
- Somewhat Better at Attracting New Tenants;
 - This alternative gives Fort Mason Center the ability to attract new tenants (consistent with the *Fort Mason Center Long-Term Lease Environmental Assessment*).

Following careful review of all Draft EIS comments which were received, the original factors supporting identification of the preferred alternative were also re-examined, and validated. Thus, the decision to implement Alternative 2 and Turnaround option 2A was based on careful consideration of the alternatives presented, the foreseeable environmental impacts, the project's goals and objectives, and public comments received throughout the conservation planning process. The selected action is most consistent with NPS policies, and the statutory mission of the NPS to provide long-term protection of park resources. Assuming a legally sufficient authorizing instrument is executed, the selected action would best accomplish the stated purpose of the project, and best address the conditions of purpose and need described in the Draft and Final EIS.

Conclusion

As documented in the Final EIS, the following key factors support implementation of all the selected actions encompassed in the extension of historic F-Line streetcar service to Fort Mason Center:

- The environmental impact analyses demonstrate that the selected actions will have short-term impacts due to construction, but will ultimately secure long-term, substantial benefits for the Park's resources as well as for visitors to GGNRA and SF Maritime NHP.
- The selected actions will have a high likelihood of achieving the expressed purpose, need, goals, and objectives.; in particular, will enhance project area access for public transit users, thus reducing auto trips and associated emissions.
- The selected alternative is fully consistent with NPS's mission and policies, GGNRA's, SAFR's, and SFMTA's management plans, and other pertinent laws and regulations.
- The completed transportation planning and environmental impact analysis process is a reasonable and rational effort supported by park partners, researchers, local communities, other government regulatory agencies, and environmental organizations.

In addition, as documented in Attachment B, the GGNRA and SAFR managers have determined that undertaking the selected actions will not result in impairment or unacceptable impacts to park resources and values. The selected alternative specifies all feasible and prudent measures to avoid or minimize environmental harm.

Based upon the above considerations, Alternative 2A (Proposed Action with North Loop turnaround option) is approved for implementation by the National Park Service in cooperation with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and the Federal Transit Administration.

02/04/2013

Dated



Christine S. Lehnertz,
Regional Director, Pacific West Region

ATTACHMENT A

MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

Extension of F-Line Streetcar Service to Fort Mason Center

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park

The following list provides a summary of mitigation measures developed to minimize potential impacts associated with implementation of the selected action. The vast majority of these measures fall within the jurisdictional authority of the NPS or SFMTA. The agency with primary responsibility over the area to which a given measure applies will take the lead on ensuring its implementation. For measures that apply to areas beyond the jurisdiction of the NPS or SFMTA, both will recommend to the appropriate agency implementation of those actions. The measures identified below are summaries of the more detailed mitigation measures identified in the FEIS. This list below is not intended to supplement or replace the measures identified in the FEIS. For a complete listing of these measures, please see the FEIS.

Transportation and Circulation Impacts

TRANS-1: Optimize traffic signal timing. SFMTA would optimize the traffic signal timing for weekend conditions at the intersection of Jefferson Street and Leavenworth Street to reduce overall vehicle delays, while accommodating the F-Line streetcars and pedestrian circulation.

TRANS-2: Install Wayfinding Device. Provision of positive wayfinding devices (e.g., signs and pavement markings) will reduce the potential adverse effects of potential traffic conflicts.

TRANS-3: Reconfigure on-street parking spaces. SFMTA will reconfigure on-street parking spaces in the in-street segment (e.g., change general metered spaces to metered truck loading spaces) to minimize the incidence of double parking caused by removal of truck loading spaces under either the Semi-Exclusive and Shared Lane options.

TRANS-4: Implement Parking Time Restrictions If Needed. Implementation of time limitations on the parking spaces in the marina lot in proximity to the Fort Mason Center would reduce the potential adverse effects of North Bay-based motorists driving across the Golden Gate Bridge to park in the area to use the F-Line to continue on to downtown destinations.

Air Quality

AIR-1: Implement BAAQMD Basic Construction Mitigation Measures. In order to minimize adverse impact to air quality as a result of localized emissions of fugitive dust during construction activity, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) recommends that all projects implement Best Management Practices.

Noise and Vibration

NOISE-1: Implementation Construction Noise Mitigation. Provide enclosures and mufflers for stationary equipment, shroud or shield impact tools, and install barriers around particularly noisy activities at the construction sites so that the line of sight between the construction activities and nearby sensitive receptor locations is blocked. Use construction equipment with lower noise emission ratings whenever possible. Locate stationary equipment, material stockpiles, and vehicle staging areas as far as practicable from sensitive receptor locations. Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines. Require applicable construction-related vehicles and equipment to use designated truck routes to access the project sites. Implement noise attenuation measures to the extent feasible, which may include, but are not limited to, noise barriers or noise blankets.

NOISE-2: Implementation Operational Noise Mitigation. Retrofit streetcars with resilient or damped wheels. Application of shielding and/or absorptive material under the car will be implemented.

VIBR-1: Implementation Construction Vibration Mitigation. Conduct auger drilling activities during daytime hours to reduce potential construction related annoyance vibration impacts to residents and hotel guests sleeping within 50 feet of drilling locations. Require vibration monitoring as a specification in construction contract.

VIBR-2: Implementation operational vibration mitigation. Reduce vehicle speed down Beach Street during nighttime hours. Reducing vehicle speeds by a factor of two would reduce vibration levels by approximately 6 VdB.

Cultural Resources

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA): In accordance with § 106, the NPS drafted a Memorandum of Agreement (Appendix C of Final EIS) in order to resolve adverse effects of the Undertaking on the subject historic properties associated with the Extension of Historic Streetcar Service Project. The signatories to the Final MOA (dated October 16, 2012) include NPS, SHPO, and SFMTA. The City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, Federal Transit Administration, and the Ohlone/Costanoan representatives are concurring parties. An executed copy of the MOA was sent to the Advisory Council on October 22, 2012. The signed MOA specifies that, if undertaken, the project shall proceed in accordance with certain stipulations, or terms and conditions, to ensure impacts to the NHL Districts and associated resources is avoided and/or minimized. For example, the MOA requires the salvage and reuse of historic materials, formal recordation of the NHL Districts prior to project implementation, installation of information displays, and several measures to ensure protection of historic properties and potential archeological resources during project construction.

CUL-1: Measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of the loss of individual resources at Aquatic Park NHL District through documentation and interpretation of the stone retaining wall. Retain/reuse stone wall materials in new construction as appropriate.

CUL-2: Measures to mitigate the adverse impacts due to the introduction of new, incompatible features to the Aquatic Park NHL District. Ensure that all new design elements, such as

overhead contact poles and platforms, are compatible with the Streamline Moderne architecture of Aquatic Park. Rehabilitate disturbed Beach Street and western Aquatic Park landscape. Install appropriate landscaping elements along the Beach Street portion of Victorian Park. Provide public interpretation of Aquatic Park history in the western portion of the park.

CUL-3: Measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of the alteration of individual resources at San Francisco Port of Embarkation U.S. Army NHL District and Fort Mason National Register Historic District. Provide Historic American Building Survey (HABS)/Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) documentation that includes tunnel portals, railroad tracks (FM-406), and retaining wall at west portal. Provide interpretation of the Fort Mason Tunnel's historic use. Stabilize tunnel walls with compatible materials. Retain existing fabric wherever possible. Interpretation of historic rail service at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation. Provide protection for and where possible avoid removal of specimen tree(s).

CUL-4: Measures to mitigate the adverse impacts due to the introduction of new, non-historic features to the San Francisco Port of Embarkation U.S. Army NHL District/Fort Mason National Register Historic District. Conduct HABS/HALS documentation. Ensure that all design elements, such as overhead contact poles and platforms near the Fort Mason Center are compatible with the architectural character of Lower Fort Mason. Provide public interpretation of San Francisco Port of Embarkation/Fort Mason history.

CUL-5: Measures to mitigate potential impacts to archeological resources due to inadvertent discovery during ground-disturbing activities. Provide cultural resources education for workers. Construction monitoring in vicinity of reported site CA-SFr-23. Work shall stop if buried cultural resources are discovered.

Recreation and Visitor Use

REC-1: If necessary, relocate the bocce ball courts to suitable location.

REC-2: Provide temporary detour and post signage to direct Bay Trail users of temporary reroutes.

REC-3: Coordinate the Bay Trail reroutes with Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

Visual and Aesthetic Resources

VIS-1: Install temporary visual screening during construction.

VIS-2: To the extent feasible, construction staging areas shall be located away from public viewsheds and remain clear of all trash, weeds and debris etc.

VIS-3: Signs will be limited to the minimum necessary to meet information, warning, and regulatory needs and to avoid confusion and visual intrusion.

Night Sky Visibility and Light Pollution

NIGHT-1: The project would be required to minimize the use of lighting in areas already well lit and to use full cutoff light fixtures throughout the project.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

GEO-1: Further geotechnical study shall be conducted to evaluate the effect of additional strains caused by dynamic compaction of fill sand, and how these strains would be transferred to the tunnel liner.

GEO-2: Prior to the final design, the geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist shall prepare recommendations applicable to structural design, earthwork, backfill and site preparation prior to or during the project design phase.

GEO-3: The Fort Mason Tunnel shall be rehabilitated according to the recommendations of the geotechnical assessment performed by Kleinfelder, Inc. in 2005.

Biological Resources

BIO-1: Preconstruction Nesting Bird Surveys. Tree removal shall occur outside of the nesting bird season (January 15 through August 15) to the greatest extent possible. If nesting raptors or other nesting birds are detected, then a qualified biologist shall delineate a suitable no-disturbance buffer, and construction activities shall avoid this buffer until the young birds have fledged or active nests have been abandoned.

BIO-2: Preconstruction Roosting Bat Surveys If Necessary. If it is determined that the tunnel or trees provide roosting habitat for special-status bats, then mitigation measures will include seasonal avoidance of a bat roost, and/or including bat-friendly habitat characteristics into the tunnel reconstruction design.

Public Health and Safety

HEA-1: Pre-Construction Hazardous Materials Assessment.

HEA-2: Soil and Groundwater Management Plan. The contractor shall prepare a soil and groundwater management plan that specifies the method for handling and disposal of contaminated soil and groundwater (as determined in HEA-1).

HEA-3: Health and Safety Plan (HSP).

Public Services and Utilities

PUB-1: Maintain Utility Services. A detailed study identifying locations of utilities within the study area shall be conducted during the design phase of the project. For areas with the potential for adverse impacts to utility services, the NPS or its contractors shall implement mitigation measures as listed in Section 4.14 of the Final EIS.

ATTACHMENT B

DETERMINATION OF NON-IMPAIRMENT

Extension of F-Line Streetcar Service to Fort Mason Center

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park

The Prohibition on Impairment of Park Resources and Values

NPS Management Policies 2006, Section 1.4.4, explains the prohibition on impairment of park resources and values:

While Congress has given the Service the management discretion to allow impacts within parks, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement (generally enforceable by the federal courts) that the Park Service must leave park resources and values unimpaired unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. This, the cornerstone of the Organic Act, establishes the primary responsibility of the Nation Park Service. It ensures that park resources and values will continue to exist in a condition that will allow the American people to have present and future opportunities for enjoyment of them.

What is Impairment?

NPS Management Policies 2006, Section 1.4.5, What Constitutes Impairment of Park Resources and Values, and Section 1.4.6, What Constitutes Park Resources and Values, provide an explanation of impairment.

Impairment is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible National Park Service manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values.

Section 1.4.5 of Management Policies 2006: An impact to any park resource or value may, but does not necessarily, constitute impairment. An impact would be more likely to constitute impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is:

- Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park, or;
- Identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents as being of significance.

An impact would be less likely to constitute impairment if it is an unavoidable result of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values and it cannot be further mitigated.

As per Section 1.4.6 of *Management Policies 2006*, park resources and values that may be impaired include:

- the park's scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife, and the processes and condition that sustain them, including, to the extent present in the park: the ecological, biological, and physical processes that created the park and continue to act upon it; scenic features; natural visibility, both

in daytime and at night; natural landscapes; natural soundscapes and smells; water and air resources; soils; geological resources; paleontological resources; archeological resources; cultural landscapes; ethnographic resources; historic and prehistoric sites, structure, and objects; museum collections; and native plants and animals;

- appropriate opportunities to experience enjoyment of the above resources, to the extent that can be done without impairing them;
- the park's role in contributing to the national dignity, the high public value and integrity, and the superlative environmental quality of the national park system, and the benefit and inspiration provided to the American people by the national park system; and
- any additional attributes encompassed by the specific values and purposes for which the park was established.

Impairment may result from NPS activities in managing the park, visitor activities, or activities undertaken by concessionaires, contractors, and others operating in the park. Impairment may also result from sources or activities outside the park, but this would not be a violation of the Organic Act unless the NPS was in some way responsible for the action.

How is an Impairment Determination Made?

Section 1.4.7 of *Management Policies 2006* states:

[i]n making a determination of whether there would be an impairment, an NPS decision maker must use his or her professional judgment. This means that the decision-maker must consider any environmental assessments or environmental impact statements required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); consultations required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); relevant scientific and scholarly studies; advice or insights offered by subject matter experts and others who have relevant knowledge or experience; and the results of civic engagement and public involvement activities relating to the decision.

Non-Impairment Determination for the Selected Alternative

This determination on impairment has been prepared for the selected alternative, as described in the Record of Decision. An impairment determination is not made for all resource impact topics analyzed for the selected alternative. An impairment determination is not made for land use, socioeconomic, transportation and circulation, recreation and visitor use, public health and safety, and public services and utilities because impairment findings relate back to park resources and values, and these impact areas are not generally considered to be park resources or values according to the Organic Act, and cannot be impaired in the same way that an action can impair park resources and values.

Air Quality

Short-term adverse air quality impacts would result from daily maximum construction activities. With implementation of BAAQMD best management practices for the control of construction-generated emissions as well as implementation of one of the three excavation/fill material mitigation measures, short-term air quality impacts would be minor to moderate and adverse.

Long-term air quality impacts would be associated with potential minor decreases in vehicle trip generation into the Parks and associated decreases in intersection traffic volumes. Therefore, the selected alternative results in negligible to minor beneficial operational impacts to both regional and local air quality as well as greenhouse gas emissions. There would be no impairment to the park's resources or values related to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions because there would be no long-term changes to the air quality in the parks as a result of the implementation of this project.

Noise and Vibration

The natural soundscape is viewed as a resource and value to be appreciated by visitors. Many park visitors have an expectation of seeing, hearing and experiencing phenomena associated with a specific natural environment. The Fort Mason Center and SF Maritime NHP are located in an urbanized area of San Francisco where the natural soundscape elements such as sea lion calls and tidal motions of the bay are generally overcome by existing human-generated noise from motor vehicle traffic and human voices in this densely populated and visited area, particularly during daytime hours.

While there would be major adverse noise and vibration impacts related to construction and operation of the proposed action, the only receptor within Park jurisdiction to potentially experience a major adverse impact would be the Maritime Museum. Implementation of mitigation would lessen the adverse operational annoyance impact from vibration; however, the impact would remain adverse for residential uses and hotels where sleeping occurs. There is also potential for beneficial noise reduction impacts that would result from the reduction in motor vehicle trips. There would be no impairment to the National Park Service resources or values because the annoyance impact of noise and vibration would not harm the integrity of the park resources and the long-term impacts would be mitigated.

Cultural Resources

Between the two national parks, there are eight historic properties in the project area including three National Historic Landmarks. The changes proposed in the selected alternative, as a whole, would represent a long-term, moderate, adverse impact to historic resources, including those listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Particularly, the proposed demolition or alteration of individual resources such as the stone retaining wall at Aquatic Park, the removal of portions of the retaining walls at the Fort Mason Tunnel west portal, and the partial removal of railroad tracks at Lower Fort Mason would impact these sensitive, character-defining features of both the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park/Aquatic Park, and the San Francisco Port of Embarkation/Fort Mason NHLs. The selected alternative would also introduce new incompatible uses that would affect the historic viewsheds of the NHLs, including new tracks, platform/stations, overhead contact system, signals, and lights. Because proposed mitigation measures would reduce these adverse impacts and because there would still be ample opportunities for the enjoyment of these resources, this project would not cause impairment to the park's cultural resources and values.

Visual and Aesthetic Resources

The visual character of the study area reflects the built-up features of San Francisco's urban landscape surrounding acres of open space, including parklands and shorelines owned and operated by the National Park Service and the City of San Francisco. Sweeping views of the Bay, Alcatraz, Marin County, and Golden Gate Bridge are ever-present and constitute the spectacular nature of viewsheds cherished by residents and visitors of this part of San Francisco. Historic viewsheds in the project area are present in upper Fort Mason and within the National Historic Landmark Districts.

The selected alternative changes the visual landscape along the alignment of the project, but the pre-project landscape would not be altered beyond recognition and the integrity of the parks resources and values would not be diminished, therefore there would be no impairment of the park's visual or aesthetic resources.

Night Sky Visibility and Light Pollution

Nighttime lighting in this highly urban environment is dominated by the presence of extensive street, parking lot lighting, security lighting, public lighting, vehicular headlights, the illuminated Ghirardelli sign above Ghirardelli Square, and well-lit shops and restaurants of the popular fisherman's wharf tourist area. The parking lot of the Fort Mason Center is well lit during evening hours. Most of these lighting sources are in use from sunset to sunrise. As is characteristic of highly urbanized areas, the glare of artificial outdoor and indoor lighting has nearly completely obscured the stars and other astronomical phenomenon in the night sky.

While the project will require additional lighting, the ability to use light shielding fixtures and the fact that facilities would be placed in an already light environment would not appreciably alter important landscape characteristics, and view intactness would change only slightly, so as to not negatively affect scenic quality, thus the integrity of the park's resources and values related to night sky visibility would not be impaired.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Under the selected alternative, conditions with respect to geologic resources, geologic hazards, and soils in the project area would result in minor effects. The existing condition of the Fort Mason Tunnel would be improved. The installation and operation of a street car, with adherence to modern building codes and the CBC, would not substantially increase risks to the public from seismic or geologic hazards. The streetcar line would be built on low grades and thus risks from landslides or slope stability are generally minor. Because of the low risks resulting from the implementation of selected alternative, there would be no impairment to the resources and values of the geological resources in the parks.

Biological Resources

All of the Project area is contained within existing paved roadways, except for a small portion of undeveloped, landscaped habitat that the streetcar would traverse, in the Aquatic Park east of Van Ness Avenue. The study area is also predominantly developed, but there are undeveloped areas in Upper Fort Mason and Aquatic Park. The Project area is predominantly developed and lacks suitable habitat for federal-status wildlife species and does not have appropriate habitat for any federal-status plant species. After implementation of mitigation measures requiring preconstruction nesting bird surveys and roosting bat surveys, construction and operation impacts would have negligible impacts on biological resources, and the overall vegetation and wildlife habitat in the study area would remain the same. Because of the negligible impacts to biological resources during the construction and operation of the project, there would be no impairment of the parks' biological resources and values.

Conclusion

For the reasons described above, adverse impacts anticipated as a result of implementing the selected alternative on a resource or value whose conservation is: (1) necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park; (2) key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or (3) identified as significant in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents, would not rise to levels that would constitute impairment.