



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION APPLICATION COVER MEMO - PUBLIC PROJECTS ONLY

In accordance with Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, an appeal of an exemption determination can only be filed within 30 days of the project receiving the first approval action.

Please attach this memo along with all necessary materials to the Environmental Evaluation Application.

Project Address and/or Title:	Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project - Light Rail Vehicle Signal System Upgrade
Project Approval Action:	SFMTA Board
Will the approval action be taken at a noticed public hearing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES* <input type="checkbox"/> NO * If YES is checked, please see below.	

IF APPROVAL ACTION IS TAKEN AT A NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING CALENDAR LANGUAGE:

End of Calendar: CEQA Appeal Rights under Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code If the Commission approves an action identified by an exemption or negative declaration as the Approval Action (as defined in S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31, as amended, Board of Supervisors Ordinance Number 161-13), then the CEQA decision prepared in support of that Approval Action is thereafter subject to appeal within the time frame specified in S.F. Administrative Code Section 31.16. Typically, an appeal must be filed within 30 calendar days of the Approval Action. For information on filing an appeal under Chapter 31, contact the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA 94102, or call (415) 554-5184. If the Department’s Environmental Review Officer has deemed a project to be exempt from further environmental review, an exemption determination has been prepared and can be obtained on-line at <http://sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=3447>. Under CEQA, in a later court challenge, a litigant may be limited to raising only those issues previously raised at a hearing on the project or in written correspondence delivered to the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Planning Department or other City board, commission or department at, or prior to, such hearing, or as part of the appeal hearing process on the CEQA decision.

Individual calendar items: This proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS ARE INCLUDED:

- 2 sets of plans (11x17)
- Project description
- Photos of proposed work areas/project site
- Necessary background reports (specified in EEA)
- MTA only: Synchro data for lane reductions and traffic calming projects



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 27, 2015

To: Chris Espiritu, San Francisco Planning Department

From: Erik Jaszewski, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

Subject: **Modification of the Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project - Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) Signal System Upgrade**

Background

The Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project aims to improve transit performance, pedestrian safety, accessibility, and convenience near the Balboa Park BART station. The project area is generally bounded by I-280, Geneva, Ocean, and San Jose Avenues. This project—originally proposed in February 2015 by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)—included sidewalk widening on Geneva Avenue, accessibility improvements on Ocean Avenue, installation of pedestrian scale lighting, installation of pedestrian flashing beacons, wayfinding signs, left-turn lane striping on Geneva Avenue, and painting of red tow-away curbs. These treatments were found to be Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on February 2, 2015 (Case No. 2015-002235ENV).¹ The SFMTA subsequently approved the project on June 16, 2015 as Resolution 15-097. This memorandum outlines modifications to the originally approved Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project.

Proposed Modification to Original Project

The SFMTA proposes a modification to the original Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project that would involve replacement of a legacy LRV signal system with a full interlocking LRV signal system at Ocean Avenue and I-280 northbound on-ramp where the LRV's enter and exit the Green Yard Facility.

The interlocking track signal system would include the installation of a new signal system, conduits, wiring, junction boxes, bootleg boxes, interlocking controller cabinets with foundations, wayside equipment, vehicle detection loops, and insulated joints. The proposal would also include the removal of existing track switch controllers and track insulated joints. The maximum depth of excavation for this project would be approximately two (2) feet.

¹ San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. *Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Categorical Exemption Case No. 2015-002235ENV*. February 2, 2015. A copy of this document is attached.

**STEP 7: MODIFICATION OF A CEQA EXEMPT PROJECT
TO BE COMPLETED BY PROJECT PLANNER**

In accordance with Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, when a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exempt project changes after the Approval Action and requires a subsequent approval, the Environmental Review Officer (or his or her designee) must determine whether the proposed change constitutes a substantial modification of that project. This checklist shall be used to determine whether the proposed changes to the approved project would constitute a "substantial modification" and, therefore, be subject to additional environmental review pursuant to CEQA.


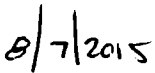
PROPERTY INFORMATION/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Address (If different than front page)		Block/Lot(s) (If different than front page)
Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project - Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) Signal System Upgrade		n/a
Case No.	Previous Building Permit No.	New Building Permit No.
2015-002235ENV	n/a	n/a
Plans Dated	Previous Approval Action	New Approval Action
	SFMTA Board Res. 15-097 6/16/2015	SFMTA Board
<p>Modified Project Description:</p> <p>The SFMTA proposes a modification to the original Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project that would involve replacement of a legacy LRV signal system with a full interlocking LRV signal system at Ocean Avenue and I-280 northbound on-ramp where the LRV's enter and exit the Green Yard Facility.</p> <p>The interlocking track signal system would include the installation of a new signal system, conduits, wiring, junction boxes, bootleg boxes, interlocking controller cabinets with foundations, wayside equipment, vehicle detection loops, and insulated joints. The proposal would also include the removal of existing track switch controllers and track insulated joints. The maximum depth of excavation for this project would be approximately two (2) feet.</p>		

DETERMINATION IF PROJECT CONSTITUTES SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION

Compared to the approved project, would the modified project:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in expansion of the building envelope, as defined in the Planning Code;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in the change of use that would require public notice under Planning Code Sections 311 or 312;
<input type="checkbox"/>	Result in demolition as defined under Planning Code Section 317 or 19005(f)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is any information being presented that was not known and could not have been known at the time of the original determination, that shows the originally approved project may no longer qualify for the exemption?
<p>If at least one of the above boxes is checked, further environmental review is required CATEX FORM</p>	

DETERMINATION OF NO SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposed modification would not result in any of the above changes.
<p>If this box is checked, the proposed modifications are categorically exempt under CEQA, in accordance with prior project approval and no additional environmental review is required. This determination shall be posted on the Planning Department website and office and mailed to the applicant, City approving entities, and anyone requesting written notice.</p>	
Planner Name:	Signature or Stamp:
CHRISTOPHER ESPIRITU	 



Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements

The Balboa Park Station Area and Plaza Improvements Project (the project) would improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and convenience near the Balboa Park BART station. The project area is roughly bounded by Geneva, Ocean and Delano Avenues and I-280. The project would include the following improvements:

1. **Sidewalk Widening on Geneva Avenue** – The project would widen the north sidewalk of Geneva Avenue along the bus loading area between San Jose Avenue and I-280. The project would straighten the curb by eliminating the bus turnout and widen the sidewalk by about six feet for a length of approximately 200 feet. The project would reduce the curb return radius at the northeast corner of the Geneva Avenue and I-280 northbound on-ramp intersection and would provide a colored transit lane. The project would not result in the reduction of the number or width of the existing traffic lanes. The maximum excavation depth for this component of the project would be 18 inches.
2. **Accessibility Improvements on Ocean Avenue** –
 - a. The project would bring the curb ramps on the south side of Ocean Avenue, about 150 feet west of San Jose Avenue, up to standard. The project would correct the cross-slope on the south side of Ocean Avenue on a 30-foot length of the sidewalk east of where the K-line tracks exit onto the street. The project would provide a new curb ramp west of this location for crossing the tracks. The maximum excavation depth for this component of the project would be 24 inches.
 - b. The project would reconstruct the ramps at the entrance/exit for Muni rail at the northwest corner of the Balboa Park transit station to provide an accessible and safe path of travel including the addition of pedestrian signals. The maximum excavation depth for this component of the project would be 42 inches.
3. **Pedestrian-Scale Lighting** - Pedestrian-scale lighting would be implemented on Ocean, San Jose, and Geneva Avenues. The project would install maximum 15-foot-tall light poles at about 50-foot spacing to provide enhanced sidewalk and crosswalk illumination. The project would also provide limited additional standard street lighting of the roadway. The maximum excavation depth for this component of the project would be 48 inches for the poles and 18 inches for the conduits on the sidewalk and 24 inches for the conduits on the street.
4. **Pedestrian Flashing Beacons** - The project would install two pedestrian-actuated flashing beacons with warning signs at the I-280 southbound off-ramp at Ocean Avenue. Maximum excavation depth for this component of the project would be nine feet.
5. **Wayfinding Signs** - The project would install wayfinding signs at about 14 locations on sidewalks on Geneva, Ocean, and San Jose Avenues within three blocks from the BART station entrances. The signs would direct pedestrians and transit passengers to transfer locations and area landmarks. The maximum height for the signs would be 10 feet. The maximum excavation depth for the sign poles would be 18 inches.

6. **Left Turn Lane** - The project would add a left turn only lane on westbound Geneva Avenue between the I-280 on- and off-ramps. The project would not result in the reduction of the number or width of the traffic lanes.
7. **Tow Away-No Stopping Anytime** -
 - a. The project would add signage for the previously cleared transit only lane on the north side of Geneva Avenue between Delano Avenue to San Jose Avenue (TTRP 8x Case No. 2011.0558E. Note, the transit-only lane does extend to I-280 northbound on-ramp as discussed in item #1). The project would not result in the reduction of the number or width of the traffic lanes nor parking spaces
 - b. The project would add signage on the south side of Geneva Avenue between Delano Avenue and San Jose Avenue for 100 feet west of the Geneva Avenue//Delano Avenue intersection. The establishment of 100 feet of Tow Away-No Stopping Anytime would include the space of a recently rescinded bus zone consistent with TTRP 8x Case No. 2011.0558E and remove at most three parking spaces.

Categorically exempt from Environmental Review: CEQA Guidelines 15301 Class 1 (c) 5: All work on sidewalks, curbs and gutters, Class 1 (c) 8: Replacement of light standards and fixtures, Class 1 (c) 9: Changes in traffic and parking regulations, Class 1 (c) 12: Painting of curbs, crosswalks, bus stops, parking spaces and lane markings and Class 1 (c) 13: Installation, modification and replacement of traffic signals.

 February 2, 2015

Gerald Robbins
SFMTA

Date

