

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. It is an informational document developed to inform the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), including its Board of Directors, and the public, about potentially significant environmental effects of the proposed Warm Springs Extension of the BART system.

The environmental analysis incorporated herein identifies the environmental impacts of a BART extension (the Proposed Project) and eleven project alternatives. It also addresses important design options applicable to the Proposed Project, and the alternatives involving a BART extension. BART will use this EIR to adopt a project and to develop an effective mitigation program for site-specific impacts. The EIR will also provide information for interested members of the public and public agencies. Through the formal public review process, the public and various organizations and agencies will have an opportunity to comment on this document.

CEQA requires that the potential environmental effects of a project be compared against the conditions that presently exist in the project area (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125, subsection [c]). In the case of a public transit project, which can take as long as six to eight years to be completed, a true picture of the environmental impacts of the project will be found by not only comparing impacts against conditions as they presently exist, but also by comparing impacts against conditions which will exist when revenue service is projected to begin. This latter comparison is particularly important in the case of the transportation and traffic impacts; such impacts are very likely to change between the present and 1998 when revenue service would begin for the Warm Springs Extension.

In addition to BART, the lead agency for the project, responsible agencies with discretionary authority over aspects of the project, or those in an advisory role, will use the EIR in their planning and decision-making processes. A partial list of these agencies includes: the City of Fremont, Alameda County, the Alameda County Water District, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Caltrans, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

1.1 PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

BART is proposing a new 7.8-mile extension of the existing Fremont line. The potential environmental impacts of eight alternative alignments for a BART line plus three "non-BART" alternatives are analyzed in this Environmental Impact Report. See Figure S-1 in Section S, Summary.

1.1.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed BART Extension would begin at the existing elevated Fremont BART station and extend southeasterly through Fremont Central Park, crossing the eastern arm of Lake Elizabeth on an aerial structure. It would then run adjacent to the Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPTCo) and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks, and continue to the South Warm Springs area, ending near the Alameda/Santa Clara County line. The Proposed Project includes three stations: Irvington Station south of Washington Boulevard in the Irvington District; Warm Springs Station south of Grimmer Road in the Warm Springs District, and South Warm Springs Station north of Kato Road in south Fremont.

There are several design options through Central Park. Design Option 1 calls for placing BART in a subway structure beneath Central Park, following the same alignment as the Proposed Project. Design Option 2A provides for an aerial structures through Central Park but on an alignment slightly to the east of Lake Elizabeth. Design Option 2S calls for placing BART in a subway along the Design Option 2A alignment. Design Option 3 would move the aerial alignment farther to the east than Design Option 2A in Central Park, adjacent to the UPRR right-of-way.

Other design options studied in the report include at-grade or subway crossings at Paseo Padre Parkway, aerial options at Washington Boulevard and Warren Road, and an optional alignment at the southern end of the corridor.

1.1.2 "NON-BART" ALTERNATIVES

Three of the alternatives addressed in this EIR are non-BART alternatives:

Alternative 1 assumes "no action"; it is the *status quo*. The current transit and highway system would be left unchanged.

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Alternative 2 is a "no-build" alternative which would include existing and programmed transit and highway system improvements, but does not include the BART Warm Springs extension.

Alternative 3, the Transportation Systems Management (TSM) alternative, requires certain freeway widenings and the introduction of a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-880 in Alameda county.

1.1.3 BART ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the Proposed Project, the following eight additional BART extension alternatives are addressed in this EIR. The design options for the Proposed Project are also applicable to these Alternatives:

Alternative 4. A 5.4-mile BART extension with two stations, at Irvington and Warm Springs. It parallels and relocates the SPTCo and UPRR railroad tracks.

Alternative 5. A 5.4-mile BART extension with two stations, at Irvington and Warm Springs. It has the same alignment as the Proposed Project but is shorter in length.

Alternative 6. A 7.8-mile BART extension with two stations, at Warm Springs and South Warm Springs. It would follow the same alignment as the Proposed Project, but without the Irvington station.

Alternative 7. A 7.8-mile BART extension with two stations, at Warm Springs and South Warm Springs. It would be on an aerial structure through the Irvington District and would not have an Irvington Station.

Alternative 8. A 7.8-mile BART extension with two stations, at Warm Springs and South Warm Springs. South of Washington Boulevard it would be constructed in the median of Osgood Road and Warm Springs Boulevard on an aerial structure.

Alternative 9. A 5.4-mile BART extension with one station at Warm Springs. It has the same alignment as the Proposed Project but is shorter in length.

Alternative 10. A 7.8-mile BART extension with one station at South Warm Springs. It has the same alignment as the Proposed Project.

Alternative 11. A 7.8-mile BART extension with two stations, at Irvington and South Warm Springs. It has the same alignment as the Proposed Project.

1.2 BART EXTENSION PROGRAM

BART's Extension Program is a long-term commitment to provide rapid rail service to residents of the Bay Area. The objective of the extension program is to expand the current BART network into areas greatly needing additional mass transit. The program involves the collaboration and cooperation of BART, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), existing transit providers, local planning authorities, federal and state agencies, local governments, and the citizens of the Bay Area.

On April 24, 1980, the BART Board of Directors adopted its first extension staging policy which identified and proposed four extensions for initial construction to Antioch, Livermore, Warm Springs, and San Francisco Airport. The policy has been revised several times since 1980 and currently supports extensions inside the District and outside the District in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties (see Table 1-1).

The extension staging policy is currently divided into three phases for both inside current district and outside current district projects with all extensions within each phase to be implemented concurrently. Through this guidance, BART has focused on Phase I extensions that are inside current district or under funding agreements (West Pittsburg, Warm Springs, Dublin, Colma-San Francisco Airport, and the San Francisco Muni Metro Extension Project) and Phase I outside current district extensions (Milpitas). The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) recommends implementation of each of these Phase I extensions through MTC Resolution No. 1876, *New Rail Transit Starts and Extensions*. Further, recently passed sales tax increases in Alameda, Contra Costa and San Mateo Counties, along with recent bridge toll increases, funding commitments from the California Transportation Commission, completed preliminary cost-sharing agreements between BART and the San Mateo County Transit District and possible federal funding, all have provided a funding base for implementation of extensions to West Pittsburg, Dublin, Warm Springs and San Francisco Airport. In keeping with the current BART Board Extension Staging Policy, outlined in Table 1-1, the Warm Springs Extension if adopted by BART's Board, will fulfill BART's commitment to southern Alameda County and to the entire BART District.

Table 1-1 BART EXTENSION STAGING POLICY ¹

PHASE	INSIDE CURRENT DISTRICT OR UNDER FUNDING AGREEMENTS
I.	North Concord-West Pittsburg ² Irvington-Warm Springs ⁸ Castro Valley- Dublin ^{3,8} MUNI Metro Extension Project ⁴ Colma-Tanforan-San Francisco Airport ⁵
II.	Pittsburg-West Antioch-East Antioch Pleasanton-West Livermore-East Livermore ³ San Francisco ⁶ San Pablo-Hilltop Oakland Airport Connector ⁷
III.	San Francisco ⁶ Pinole-Hercules/Rodeo-Crockett San Ramon Corridor

NOTES:

- The several segments shown under each Roman number are understood to be implemented concurrently, to the extent that funding is available. BART will be the operator for any new heavy or light rail transit starts or extensions within the three BART counties.
- To be extended east beyond West Pittsburg as funding permits, per SB 1715 of 1988.
- Third station may be constructed only with funds additional to those identified in MTC Resolution 1876 (as revised in 1989).
- The San Francisco Project is identified through coordination with the City and County of San Francisco as the MUNI Metro Extension to the CALTRAIN Depot South of Market.
- Agreement of February 29, 1990 with SAMTRANS to proceed with SFO extension, subject to BART project approval.
- Specific San Francisco Project to be identified through coordination with the City and County of San Francisco. Section 29034.5 of the California Public Utilities Code lists an extension of District services and facilities to the northwest section of the City and County of San Francisco as a District service commitment.
- A people-mover, or some other mode of travel, to the Oakland Airport to be established before or at the same time as an extension of BART to the San Francisco Airport.
- Funding from Proposition 116 shall not be allocated to the Warm Springs Extension (WSX) until funding for the Dublin-Pleasanton Extension has been guaranteed.

PHASE	OUTSIDE CURRENT DISTRICT ⁹
I.	Milpitas
II.	Millbrae-Menlo Park Milpitas-San Jose
III.	Menlo Park-San Jose

- Subject to a satisfactory cost-sharing arrangement with San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties and project approval by BART. Pursuant to Section 29034.5 of the California Public Utilities Code, only non-District funds may be spent by the District for the purpose of extending services and facilities outside of District's January 1, 1971 boundaries until the District meets specified service commitments within the 1971 boundaries.

1.3 THE EIR PROCESS

The goal of the EIR process is to provide information for consideration by the BART Board of Directors in consultation with other decision makers; to ensure the opportunity for public and agency input to the decision process; and to develop and present detailed information on the environmental effects of the proposed project and alternatives.

In March 1991, a notice of preparation of this EIR, and an initial study of the Warm Springs extension, were circulated to responsible agencies and members of the public known to have an interest in the project. In addition, a public scoping meeting was conducted at Irvington High School in Fremont on March 20, 1991 to inform the public of the Proposed Project and alternatives, and to elicit comments on issues that should be addressed in the EIR.

This is the second Draft EIR on the Warm Springs extension project. An earlier Draft EIR was published in May 1990 and comments were received through July 5, 1990. Because of changes in the project and in the range of alternatives to be studied, BART has elected to publish a new Draft EIR. This report supersedes and replaces the May 1990 Draft EIR.

1.4 PURPOSE AND NEED

1.4.1 THE NEED FOR IMPROVED SERVICE

The purpose and need for the proposed Fremont-Warm Springs BART extension project are directly related to the current and anticipated growth in employment and population in the coming 15 to 20 years in southern Alameda County, in particular the City of Fremont. BART's Warm Springs Extension would provide improved transit service to better balance local and regional transportation demand now, and provide increased transportation capacity for future growth in areawide employment and population.

Southern Alameda County is one of the fastest-growing subregions in the San Francisco Bay Area. Between 1990 and 2010, the Fremont area is expected to provide 64,230 new jobs to the Bay Area work force. In addition, housing for over 10,000 to 12,000 new households is expected to be built in the project area by 2010, while over 30,000 new housing units are

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projected to be built in southern Alameda County.¹ Because the increase in employment will exceed the number of new households, areawide commuters will require greater access to employment centers in southern Alameda County.

Given the need for greater regional access, there are discrete limits on possible highway and freeway expansion. State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) estimates that I-880, the primary north-south freeway in the area, can be expanded from the present 4- to 6-lane section to an 8- to 10-lane section. However, the future demand is expected to exceed this capacity by as much as six additional lanes. Such limitations on the expandability of the freeway network combined with the growth projections for this area requires consideration of alternative travel modes to better meet anticipated travel demand. The proposed BART Warm Springs Extension Project is being developed in response to this need and in response to the following specific mandates:

- BART Extension Staging Policy states that the Warm Springs Extension is a priority inside-current-district Phase I extension project to be advanced concurrently with all other Phase I extensions.
- The Warm Springs Extension is a programmed BART extension project for implementation as defined by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's revised New Rail Transit Starts and Extension Program (MTC Resolution #1876 as amended).
- The Warm Springs Extension is a voter-approved and sanctioned Measure B sales tax project in Alameda County.
- The Warm Springs Extension is a Transportation Control Measure project to improve the region's air quality (MTC Resolutions #2131 -- TCMs for the Contingency Plan of the 1982 Air Quality Plan).
- The Warm Springs Extension is required to be delivered for construction as specified by the Boatwright Law (SB 1715/Chapter 1259 of 1988).²

¹ Association of Bay Area Governments, *Projections' 90*, pp. 90, 91, 96. City of Fremont General Plan 1990, pp. 3-6, Table 3-2, pp. 3-7, Table 3-3.

² This state law concerns the timing and funding of BART's East Bay Phase I extensions.

1.4.2 PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives developed for this project draw on statements from state, regional and local governments, and from the BART District. Together they form a broad overall framework for project development and provide a context for the assessment and evaluation of alternatives.

Goal 1: Improve Public Transportation Service to Increase Mobility. As rising population and income place greater pressure on existing transportation services, improvements should be made to provide continued and improved access to employment, housing, commercial and recreational activities.

Objectives

- Increase accessibility to activity centers and to the region as a whole.
- Relieve increasing congestion on the highway network and street system by providing choices between transportation modes (auto, bus, rail, etc.).
- Maximize the use of public transportation, particularly during the peak-commute periods.
- Increase the speed, comfort and reliability of public transportation.
- Reduce travel time for commuters in the corridor.
- Provide adequate facilities (stations, parking, etc.) to serve transfers between modes (auto, bus, rail, etc.) and between regional and local transit services.

Goal 2: Improve Environmental Quality. Transportation improvements should increase regional accessibility and transportation efficiency while minimizing adverse environmental effects. Where possible, they should enhance the environment.

Objectives

- Conserve non-renewable resources such as energy and land.
- Support regional plans to meet state and federal air quality standards.

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- Promote displacement of air-polluting regional auto trips to transit trips.
- Minimize potential negative air and noise impacts and energy consumption.
- Minimize the displacement of homes and businesses and impacts on existing development.
- Minimize impacts on existing natural resources.

Goal 3: Compatibility with Adjacent Land Uses and Planned Development. Transportation improvements should be compatible with adjacent land uses and should be consistent with planned regional development.

Objectives

- Provide access to the transportation system in a manner which reinforces local and regional land use and urban development policies.
- Minimize displacement and disruption of existing land uses.

Goal 4: Provide Transportation Services That Make Efficient and Effective Use of Financial Resources. Public transportation systems should provide for the most efficient and effective use of limited financial resources while providing the greatest benefit to the public.

Objectives

- Maximize operating efficiency.
- Make the best use of existing facilities.
- Seek cost-effective solutions to transportation needs, taking into account capital, maintenance, operating, administrative, travel time and other related costs.
- Maximize user and community benefits from transportation investments.

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Goal 5: Provide Transportation Services Which are Financially Attainable. Public transportation improvements should be considered in view of the availability of financial resources. Implementation of the plan and any subsequent modifications should be based on realistic estimates of this resource availability.

Objectives

- Maximize the return for investment within the context of limited availability of regional, state and federal funds.
- Develop transportation plans which can be implemented incrementally, consistent with need and funding availability.

Goal 6: Provide Transportation Services Equitably to all Segments of the Population. A transportation system should be designed to meet the needs of all segments of the population, with particular attention given to the transportation-disadvantaged including elderly, disabled, young, and low-income individuals.

Objectives

- Increase the mobility of the transportation-disadvantaged, including the elderly and disabled.
- Seek a fair distribution of costs and benefits among various social groups.
- Develop a transportation system that will reinforce the social and economic vitality of the region's communities and neighborhoods.

Goal 7: Support Community and Institutional Goals. The transportation system planning process should maximize community acceptance and political and institutional support.

Objectives

- Seek consistency with state, regional and local goals and objectives.
- Provide for a process that encourages public comment and participation and is open and understandable to the general public.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE EIR

The following chapters discuss the Proposed Project and BART alternatives in detail. Chapter 2 defines the Proposed Project, the eleven alternatives and the design options. Chapter 3 discusses the environmental setting and impacts and mitigations of the Proposed Project, alternatives, and design options. Chapters 4 through 8 discuss growth-inducing, cumulative, unavoidable, irreversible impacts of the Proposed Project and alternatives. Chapter 9 discusses the other mode, alignment, and station site alternatives once considered in this corridor but not evaluated in this document.

1.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Areas of controversy for the proposed Warm Springs Extension include but are not limited to the following:

- Selection of the project to be implemented. This will include a specific route and alignment, including the length and number of stations to be built.
- Selection of design options, if required, including both the aerial or subway alignments through Central Park, street crossings for Paseo Padre Parkway, Washington Boulevard and Warren Avenue and/or realignment of the railroad near the end of the line at South Warm Springs.
- Funding for the design options.

1.7 PROJECT PHASING

The proposed planning process including the certification of the EIR, issuance of the required permits, and the complete design of all engineering plans will take three years, from 1991 to 1993. The proposed construction period will occur from 1993 to 1998.

1.8 ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

The following issues must be resolved prior to the project's implementation:

- Selection and approval of a project alternative: The BART Board could take no action (Alternatives 1, 2 or 3) or they could select the Proposed Project or any of the build alternatives (4 through 11). Involved in these decisions is a selection of the length of the Warm Springs Extension: 5.4 or 7.8 miles, the number and location of stations among the three proposed, and the specific alignment: along the rail corridor or Osgood/Warm Springs Boulevard.
- Selection of design options if applicable: The BART Board, if they find one or more design options necessary, will have to select among the design options for vertical and horizontal alignments through Central Park, for aerial or at-grade options for the crossing of Paseo Padre Parkway, Washington Boulevard and Warren Avenue and/or for relocation of the railroad in the South Warm Springs area.
- Adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to lessen significant impacts. Mitigation measures have been developed to reduce or eliminate impacts in all areas of environmental analysis included in this EIR. The BART Board will have to identify measures to be incorporated into the selected project alternative for implementation so as to eliminate or reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Specific findings on mitigation measures to be rejected will also have to be made.
- Completion of a Mitigation Monitoring Plan. This reporting program/monitoring plan must be prepared so as to assure the implementation of mitigation measures chosen by BART to mitigate or avoid significant impacts.