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March 23, 2012  
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Public Record

March 19, 2012

California Office of Planning & Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812

Re: City of Alameda d/b/a Alameda Belt Line Railroad - Abandonment of Exemption - in City of Alameda, CA, STB dkt AB 1090X (petition for exempt abandonment for 2.61 miles (approx) of inactive rail line)

Dear Agency:

On or about April 27, 2012, we expect to file with the Surface Transportation Board a notice of exemption seeking authority to abandon a line of railroad located the City of Alameda, CA, between Milepost 0 and end of line at Milepost 2.61. Attached is an Environmental Report and Historic Report describing the proposed action and any expected environmental and/or historic effects, as well as a map of the affected area. We are providing this report so that you may review the information that will form the basis for the STB's independent environmental analysis of this proceeding. If any of the information is misleading or incorrect, if you believe that pertinent information is missing, or if you have any questions about the Board's environmental review process, please contact the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA), Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, SW, Washington, DC 20423, telephone 202-2450295 and refer to the above Docket No. AB 1090X. Because the applicable statutes and regulations impose stringent deadlines for processing this action, your written comments to OEA (with a copy to our representative) would be appreciated by April 19, 2012, so we can attach them to this report. Your comments will be considered by the Board in evaluating the environmental and/or historic preservation impacts of the contemplated action. If there are any questions concerning this proposal, please contact our representative directly. Our representative in this matter is Charles H. Montange who may be contacted by telephone at 206-546-1936 or by mail at Law Offices of Charles H. Montange, 426 NW 162d St., Seattle, WA 98177. You may also telephone Lori Taylor, the Community Development Director for the City of Alameda, at 510-747-6899, if you have questions.

Respectfully,

John Russo  
City Manager  
City of Alameda d/b/a Alameda Belt Line

Re: City of Alameda d/b/a Alameda Belt Line Railroad - Abandonment of Exemption - in City of Alameda, CA, STB dkt AB 1090X (petition for exempt abandonment for 2.61 miles (approx) of inactive rail line)

**CC:**

California Office of Planning & Research- State Clearinghouse  
California EPA  
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
Hon. Nate Miley, President Alameda County Board of Supervisors  
US EPA - Region 9  
US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 1  
US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 8  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-San Francisco District  
National Park Service - Pacific West Region  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
National Geodetic Survey Geodetic Services Division  
California Office of Historic Preservation  
Susan Muranishi -County Administrator  
California Public Utilities Commission

BEFORE THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

CITY OF ALAMEDA d/b/a )  
ALAMEDA BELT LINE – )  
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION – ) AB 1090X  
IN CITY OF ALAMEDA, CA )

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT/HISTORIC REPORT

The City of Alameda d/b/a Alameda Belt Line (“ABL”) makes this environmental and historic report in compliance with 49 C.F.R. 1105.7-.8 of the regulations of the Surface Transportation Board (“STB”) in support of a notice of exemption for abandonment pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 1152.50 for a line of railroad extending from MP 0.0 (a point approximately 180 feet east of the intersection of Clement Avenue and Broadway in Alameda, CA) and MP 2.61 (a point approximately at the intersection with Constitution Way, but in all events equal to the endpoint of the 1975 ABL abandonment relating to MP 2.61 to MP 3.44), a distance of approximately 2.61 miles.

The certification of service required pursuant to section 1105.7(c) is attached as Appendix A.

Environmental Report

(1) Proposed action. Applicant proposes to obtain authorization to abandon the line described above. There are no reasonable alternatives. A map delineating the project area is attached as Appendix B.

(2) Transportation System. No local or overhead traffic has moved over the line for over two years. The prior owners of ABL (BNSF and UP) caused a switch connecting ABL to the UP mainline to be removed some years ago. Because the line has not been used for some time, there will be no diversion of freight or passenger traffic to other modes.

(3) Land use. (I) (Local plans) Based on consultation with local and regional planning officials, and review of official planning documents, the proposed action is consistent with the existing land use plans of the City of Alameda, in which the line is located in its entirety. See Appendix C.

(ii) (Agricultural land) The proposed action will not have any impact on prime agricultural land as the line is all within an urban and urbanized area (the City of Alameda).

(iii) (Coastal Zone Management Act) The proposed action will not result in any changes to the existing physical conditions in the area or to lands within the Coastal Zone. Future improvements to remove or replace tracks on lands within 100 feet of the Inner Harbor shorelines subsequent to abandonment will require review and approval by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to ensure that any future improvement within 100 feet of the shoreline is consistent with the public shore line access goals and objectives of the San Francisco Bay Plan and the Coastal Zone Management Act. The applicant is committed to obtaining BCDC approval for all permits that are duly required pursuant to the CZMA. As a result, in applicant's judgment, the proposed action will not affect land or water uses within a State Coastal zone designated pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act.

(iv) (Alternative public use) Portions of the rail line are in city streets or street rights of way, and the streets are used and useful for non-rail transportation. Other portions of the rail line may be suitable for park or trail uses. City currently plans to railbank the bulk of the line in question (in particular, the portion from MP 0 to approximately MP 1.85, at the eastern edge of the old railyard) pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1247(d) and to retain the right of way intact for future rail purposes, and for compatible interim uses, including trail use. In addition, City owns the fee

interest in the portions of the rail line in city streets or in the former railyard. Since the property comprising the line will be preserved as necessary for future rail reactivation and can be employed in the interim for street, trail and park uses, the action is consistent with alternative public use.

(4) Energy. (I) The proposed action will not impact transportation of energy resources.

(ii) The proposed action will not impact transportation of recyclable commodities.

(iii) The proposed action will have no significant impact on energy efficiency.

(iv) The proposed action will not result in the diversion of rail to motor carriage of any traffic.

(5) Air. (I) Inapplicable. The proposed action will not result in increases in rail or railyard traffic.

(ii - iii) Inapplicable for similar reasons.

(6) Noise. Inapplicable.

(7) Safety. (I) (Public health and safety) Applicant expects no adverse impact on safety.

(ii) (Hazardous material transport) Inapplicable.

(iii) (Hazardous waste sites or spills) Applicant's knowledge of waste sites or spills is limited to that set forth in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment by Belinda Blackie, PE, R.E.A., March 8, 2010, which may be reviewed on the City of Alameda web site on the Community Development page, at the following web address:

<http://www.cityofalamedaca.gov/getdoc.cfm?id=7471> .

None will be adversely impacted by the proposed action.

(8) Biological resources. (I) The proposed action will not likely adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as critical habitat.

(ii) No wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, national or state parks or forests will be affected.

(9) Water. (I) The action is consistent with applicable federal, state and local water quality standards.

(ii) Since the proposed action will not entail any construction resulting in any off-railroad bed disturbance, no section 404 permits should be required, and no designated wetlands or 100 year flood-plains will be affected.

(iii) For similar reasons, no section 402 permits should be required.

(10) Proposed mitigation. Applicant anticipates no adverse environmental impacts to mitigate from this action.

#### Historic Report

In compliance with section 1105.8(d), Applicant states as follows:

(1) Map. A map is attached as Appendix B.

(2) Description of rail line. The railroad line in question in part runs in city streets pursuant to a franchise. Outside of city streets, the line is of variable width, and includes a rail yard of approximately 18 acres in size. The former owners removed most of the rail from the yard, as well as switches connecting the line to the UP system. The line commences at MP 0.0 (a point approximately 180 feet east of the intersection of Clement Avenue and Broadway in Alameda, CA) and MP 2.61 (a point approximately at the intersection with Constitution Way, but in all events equal to the endpoint of the 1975 ABL abandonment relating to MP 2.61 to MP 3.44), a distance of approximately 2.61 miles. The line lies entirely within an urbanized setting (City of Alameda), and is surrounded by commercial and residential uses.

(3) Photographs of railroad structures 50 years old or older. The only railroad structure

remaining on the premises (but not at its original location) which may be 50 or more years old is an old wood frame building at the rail yard. Photos are attached to Appendix D (consultation with CA SHPO). To Applicant's knowledge, the building was used by railyard workers, but was not a depot or station. To Applicant's knowledge, the building has no historic significance. All other structures either burned down or were removed by the prior owner.

(4) Data concerning such structures. See (3) above.

(5) Brief narrative history. Commencing in 1918, the City of Alameda constructed some 6,364.5 feet of track, basically along Clement Avenue from a point near its intersection with Broadway, westerly to Grand Street. The city-owned facility was originally operated by Southern Pacific, which also had trackage in Alameda. The Alameda Belt Line, jointly owned by Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe and Western Pacific, was created for the sole purpose of owning and operating the Belt Line. The City sold its line to the ABL in 1925. See Acquisition and Construction of Line by Alameda Belt Line, 105 ICC 349 (1926). ABL subsequently extended the line to a length of 3.44 miles. ABL received authority to abandon 0.83 miles (MP 2.61 to MP 3.44) in 1975. Due to mergers, ABL was eventually jointly owned and operated by BNSF and Union Pacific. ABL last operated in 1998, when its last major shipper, a Del Monte cannery, closed. The Union Pacific then provided service for all remaining customers on the line through trackage rights over MP 0 to MP 1.8. See Union Pacific Railroad Company – Trackage Rights Exemption – Alameda Belt Line, F.D. 33682, served Nov. 24, 1998. In the latter part of 2001, the last customer ceased use of the line, and the then owners of Alameda Belt Line removed the switch near Clement and Broadway to Union Pacific trackage at that location.

Trackage was also evidently removed from the rail yard, and the owners offered the property for sale. The City of Alameda, taking note of the apparent de facto abandonment and also taking note of its option to repurchase in the original contract of sale of its line to Alameda Belt Line, duly notified the then-owners of Alameda Belt Line of City's intent to re-acquire the line. Litigation in state court then ensued, during the course of which the City obtained authority from STB to re-acquire the line. See City of Alameda – Acquisition Exemption – Alameda Beltline Railroad, F.D. 34798, served April 3, 2006. STB authorized discontinuance of the Union Pacific trackage rights over the ABL in Union Pacific Railroad Company – Discontinuance of Trackage Rights Exemption – in Alameda County, CA, AB 33 (Sub-no. 291X), served April 8, 2010. The City closed its re-purchase of the line on March 23, 2010. The prior owners had allowed the line to deteriorate, and had removed switches and facilities to the point that the line could not be operated. The City retained a consulting firm (RL Banks) to assist it in evaluating rehabilitation costs, operational requirements and costs, and rail demand, for the purpose of identifying options for proceeding. The consultant's reports indicated that freight use was not self-sustaining at this time and that current prospective business was insufficient to justify the investment now necessary to restore the line to use, or to operate it if restored. The City as Applicant accordingly has elected to seek an abandonment authorization in order lawfully to terminate common carrier obligations on the line. The City intends to railbank (16 USC 1247(d)) the line from MP 0 to MP 1.85 (eastern edge of old railyard) among other things to ensure its availability for future rail reactivation.

(6) Documents available concerning historic structures. Applicant does not believe there are historic structures on the line and in any event has no documents concerning any structures on

the line.

(7) Opinion on historic sites. Applicant does not believe that any site or structure on this line meets the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. On January 20, 2012, the applicant received notification that the California Office of Historic Preservation concurred that the proposed action would not affect any historic properties. The letter of concurrence is attached as Appendix E.

(8) Activity which might affect recovery of archeological resources and description of surrounding terrain. Other than original roadbed and road construction, and construction activity by adjoining landowners in an urbanized setting, Applicant is unaware of conditions which will affect the recovery of archeological resources. The surrounding terrain is flat, but with many paved surfaces.

Copies of any correspondence received to date of submission concerning this ER/HR not otherwise referenced in this document are attached in Appendix F

Submitted by: City of Alameda d/b/a Alameda Belt Line

Appendix A: Certificate of Service for ER/HR

Appendix B: Map

Appendix C: Discussion of Local Plans

Appendix D: Consultation with CA SHPO (including photos of remaining structure)

Appendix E: January 20, 2012 Letter from Office of Historic Preservation

Appendix F: Other correspondence (if any) to date of submission

# Appendix A

## Certificate of Service

By my signature below, I certify service of this Environmental Report on all parties specified in 49 CFR 1105.7b as set forth in the attached list by US Mail, postage prepaid, first class or equivalent, this 19th day of March, 2012.

California Office of Planning & Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

California EPA  
1001 I Street  
P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
50 California Street, Suite 2600  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Hon. Nate Miley,  
President Alameda County Board of Supervisors  
1221 Oak St. # 536  
Oakland, CA 94612

US EPA - Region 9  
Att: Regulatory Review Office, CED-2 (Kathleen Goforth)  
75 Hawthorne St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 1  
Eastside Federal Complex  
911 NE 11<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-4181

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 8  
2800 Cottage Way, W-2606  
Sacramento, CA 95825

# Appendix A

National Park Service - Pacific West Region  
Christine Lehnertz-Regional Director  
333 Bush Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94104-2828

Lincoln E. Burton, State Conservationist  
Richard E. Lyng USDA Service Center  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
430 G Street, #4164  
Davis, CA 95616-4164

Communication and Outreach Branch, NOAA,N/NGS12  
National Geodetic Survey SSMC3 #9202  
1315 East-West Hwy  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

California Office of Historic Preservation  
Att: Review and Compliance  
1725-23d St., Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Susan Muranishi  
County Administrator  
Alameda County  
1221 Oak St, Room 555  
Oakland, CA 94612

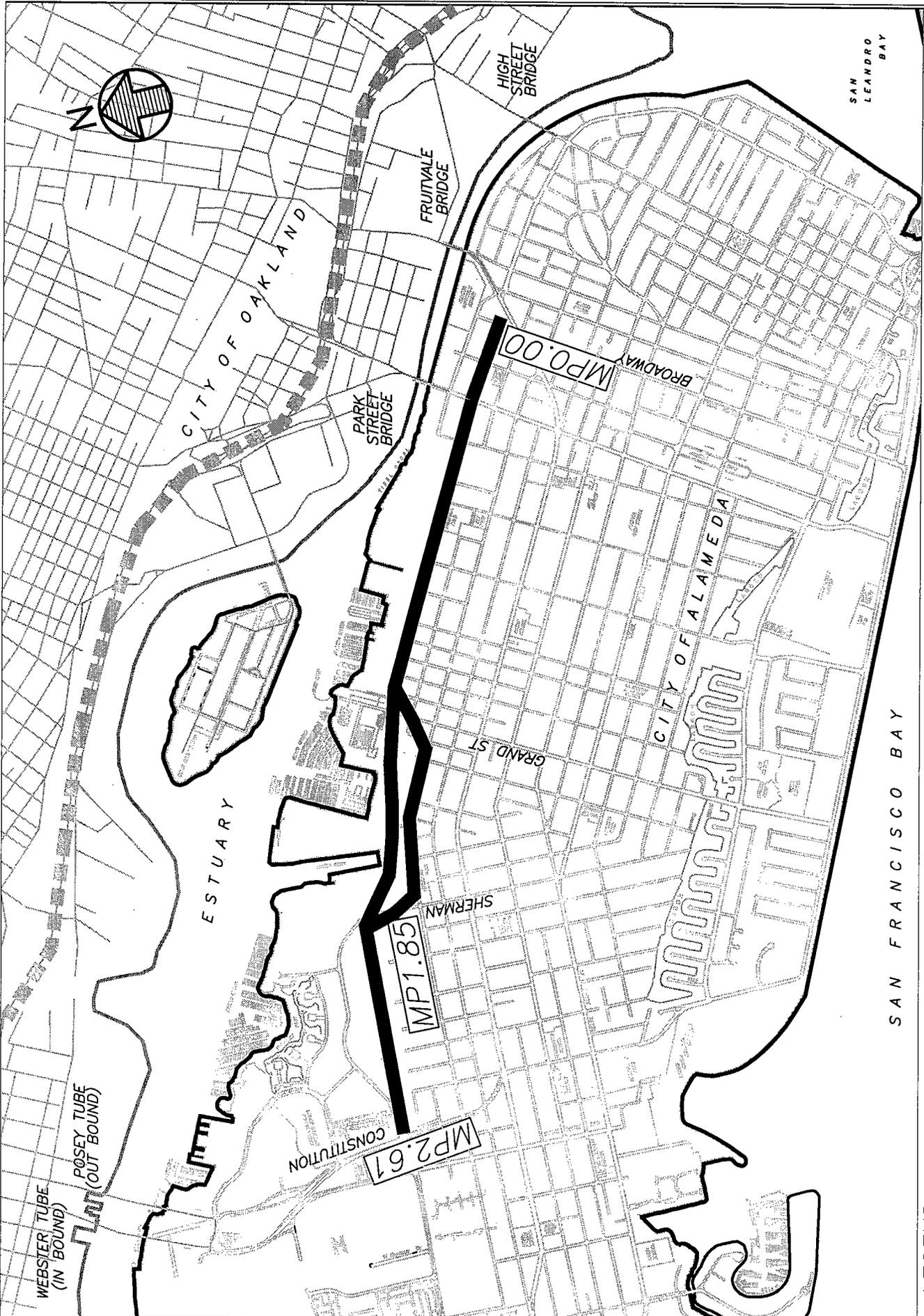
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
South Pacific Division  
Att: Counsel's Office  
1455 Market St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103-1398

California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Lori Taylor  
Community Development Director  
City of Alameda

ALAMEDA BELTLINE RAILROAD, M.P. 0.00 TO 2.61  
 CITY OF ALAMEDA, CA

DRAWN: FDB  
 DATE: NOV 2011  
 SCALE: 1"=2000'

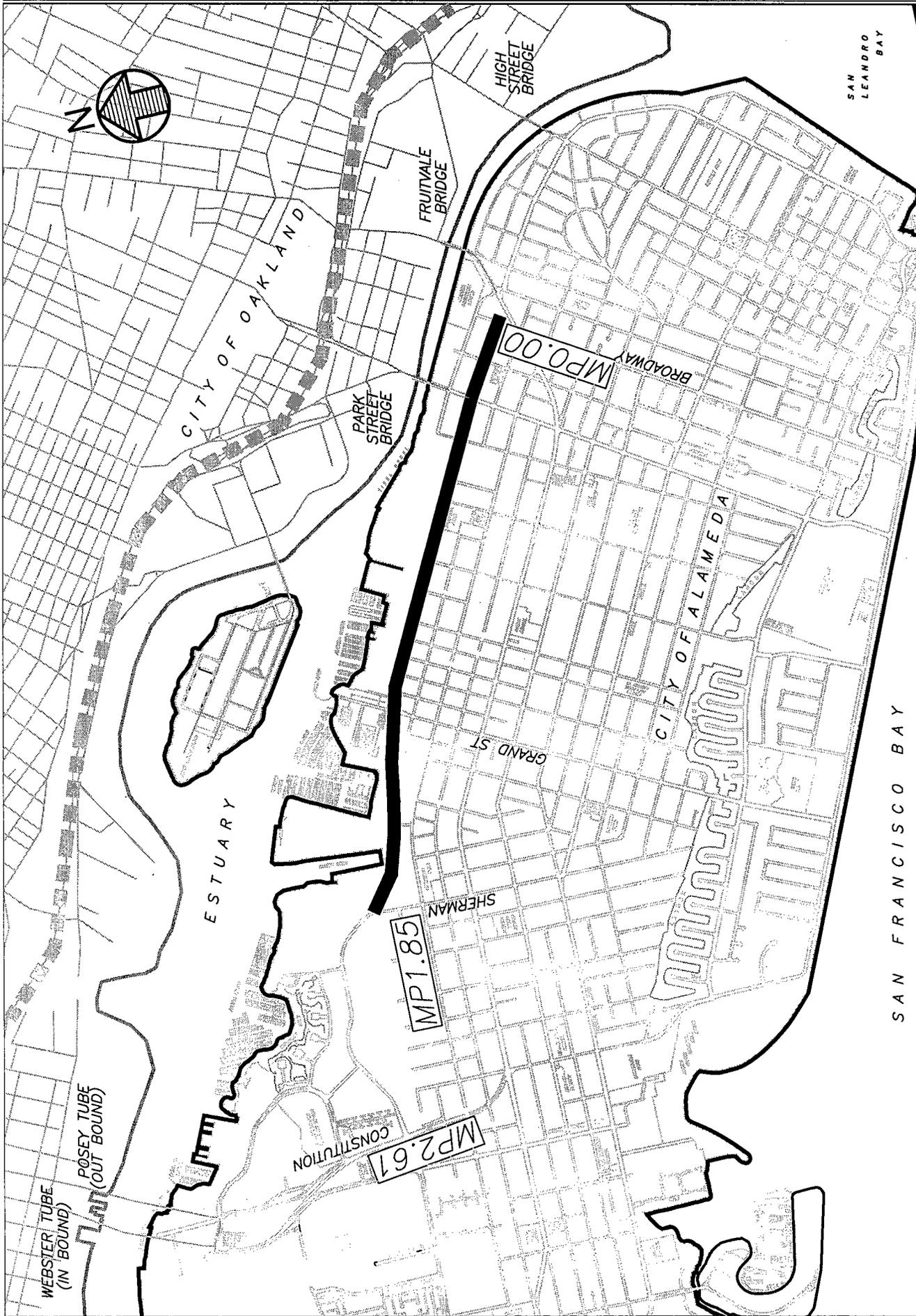


LEGEND

-  PROPOSED ABANDONMENT MILE POST 0.00 to 2.61
-  PRINCIPAL HIGHWAYS

ALAMEDA BELTLINE RAILROAD, M.P. 0.00 TO 2.61  
 CITY OF ALAMEDA, CA

DRAWN: FDS  
 DATE: NOV 2011  
 SCALE: 1"=2000'



LEGEND

-  TRACKAGE TO BE RAILBANKED
-  MILE POST 0.00 to 1.85
-  PRINCIPAL HIGHWAYS

# Appendix C

## **Review of Relevant Planning Documents Germane to ABL Railroad Right of Way**

by: Andrew Thomas, AICP  
Planning Services Manager  
Planning and Building Dept., City of Alameda

### **Summary:**

City of Alameda has substantially revised its planning documents since 2008. However, the City's General Plan continues to support preservation of the ABL railroad corridor, specifically the "Clement Avenue" Alignment, for cross-Alameda transportation services, including rail. This Alignment is identified in the General Plan as an "Exclusive Transit Right of Way" on Clement Street and extending westerly. The designation of the Alignment as an exclusive transit corridor is manifest in the Map (attached). The most relevant written policies from the various Elements of the revised General Plan are set forth below, and call for preservation of a public right of way for rail and other compatible purposes on the Alignment. The City proposes to terminate current common carrier obligations and to "railbank" (preserve for future rail use and permit trail and other compatible public uses) the "Clement Avenue" Alignment. This proposal is consistent with the relevant planning documents.

### **General Plan Policies:**

#### Chapter 10: Northern Waterfront

- 10.6.a. Extend Clement Avenue through the Northern Waterfront from Grand Street to Sherman to facilitate the movement of trucks, transit and/or rail, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- 10.6.b. Maintain a public right of way for a future rail/transit corridor along Clement Avenue from Grand Street to Sherman Street as part of a citywide transit corridor.
- D-M 1. The site plan should allow for a future rail/alternative vehicle corridor from Sherman to Grand Street within the Clement Avenue Right of Way.

#### Citywide Transportation Element

- 4.1.1.g Work with appropriate regional agencies to identify the feasibility of developing presently unavailable alternative modes such as citywide and regional light rail, expanded ferry options and Bus Rapid Transit.
- 4.1.7.d Develop strategies to preserve and identify required rights-of-way.
  - 1. Pursue opportunities to utilize the corridor of the former Alameda Belt Line railroad for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation.

# Appendix C



# Appendix C

## Explanation of “Exclusive Right of Way” from Transportation Element (adopted 2008)

### Exclusive Transit Right of Way:

Identify future dedicated right of way routes for bus rapid transit or light rail service. Possible candidates include Lincoln Avenue which is a centrally located Island Arterial with numerous residential areas surrounding. Connects to main commercial areas on Webster Street and Park Street.

- **Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail**
  - o High capacity, frequent transit service for intra-city and regional transportation
- **Lane widths and curb returns**
  - o Wider lane widths or wider curb lanes to minimize conflicts with bicyclists
  - o Wider radii, and lane widths or wider curb lanes to accommodate transit vehicles
- **Bus bulb-outs**
  - o Improve transit operations
  - o Clearly designate bus stop location
- **Enhanced bus stops/stations**
  - o Raised platform for level boarding
  - o Platform length shelters and seating areas
  - o Off-vehicle fare payment
  - o Clearly designate transit corridor / transit way
  - o Improve transit service experience and encourage transit use
- **Passenger information**
  - o Provide up-to-date schedule and routing information
  - o Provide surrounding neighborhood map
  - o Provide real-time bus arrival information as available
  - o Enhance transit service experience
  - o Encourage transit use
- **Signal priority/pre-emption, right-of-way priority**
  - o Improve transit operations
  - o Useful for longer, congested corridors and frequent service areas
- **Pedestrian amenities**
  - o Wide sidewalks
  - o Curb extensions
  - o Crosswalk paving, markings
  - o Landscaped sidewalk buffer
  - o Equal priority as Primary Transit Streets
  - o Connectivity to other modes, adjacent neighborhoods and destinations



November 23, 2011

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson  
California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street,  
Sacramento, California 95816

Subject: Alameda Belt Line Rail Abandonment Application

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

The Alameda Beltline Railroad ended active operations in Alameda in approximately 1998 but has never been authorized for abandonment by the relevant federal regulatory agency (the Surface Transportation Board or "STB"). City of Alameda acquired the inactive Alameda Beltline Railroad approximately two years ago pursuant to a contract option applicable should the former owner determine to cease use of it. After carefully evaluating the cost of rehabilitating and operating the railroad for active rail freight rail service and the likely demand for such service within Alameda, the City has concluded that income from operation would not even cover operational expenses at this time and that restoration is accordingly not prudent, especially given current economic conditions. In order to address the continuing federal freight rail common carrier obligation on the line, we plan to seek a so-called "exempt" abandonment authorization from STB for the entire remaining portion of the rail line, defined as extending from a point approximately 180 feet east of the intersection of Clement Avenue and Broadway (MP 0) to end of track at approximately Constitution Avenue (MP 2.61) in Alameda. Union Pacific, which had "trackage rights" over the bulk of the corridor, recently received discontinuance authority from STB for those trackage rights.

Because an "exempt" abandonment authorization from the STB amounts to a licensing action by the federal government, STB must comply with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In this regard, STB regulations require us to prepare a "Historic Report," for which we invite your comment and advice, and which we will circulate to you for further comment when it has been prepared pursuant to STB regulations. We are also requesting your concurrence with our findings that the undertaking will have no effect on historic resources.

Site Description:

As shown in the exhibits, the abandonment area includes the following three sub areas:

*Sheet 1 of 3:* In this area, the abandonment runs down the center of an existing City street (Clement Avenue) from Broadway to Grand Street. The rails are still in the middle of the street in some areas, but in others they were removed. The City has no plans or resources to remove them at this time.

*Sheet 2 of 3:* In this area from Grand to Sherman, the line splits between Minturn and Grand and then reforms at the entrance to the former rail yard. (The rail yard is the large 18 acre area shown on pages 2 and 3.) Throughout this area, some of the tracks have been removed by the prior owner of the railroad, and in some cases the prior owner of the railroad sold off pieces of the underlying right of way, such as the section on Buena Vista between Hibbard and Stanton.

*Sheet 2 and 3 (the former Rail Yard):* The former rail yard is a large 18-acre vacant lot. The former owner of the railroad removed most of the trackage and associated improvements. The single remaining structure (at 1925 Sherman Street) is discussed in the Historic Resources Inventory section below.

Description of Undertaking:

The City is requesting an exempt abandonment authorization of the line by the STB, pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 1152.50 (two-year out of service exempt abandonments). The City, however, anticipates “railbanking” the bulk of the line pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1247(d) to preserve it for future rail and interim trail purposes, and for other compatible public purposes. As we understand railbanking, this will prevent the portions of the line in question from being interrupted by sales, easement extinctions, or other severances. In the event STB authorizes abandonment, the City currently anticipates development of interim improvements to the right of way for a “Cross Alameda Trail” which would provide safe and convenient access for bicyclists and pedestrians across our island community.

Historic Resources Inventory:

In 1988, prior to the end of rail operations, the City of Alameda completed an Historic Resources Inventory of the Alameda Belt Line Railway. The Inventory is attached for your information as exhibit B. The inventory concludes that the Railroad should be considered a resource, which may have historical importance because of its role in the “economic/industrial” history of the City of Alameda.

Not surprisingly, some of the facts in the 1988 inventory are now out of date. Between 1988 and 1998, the Alameda Belt Line Railroad slowly began to reduce its operations in Alameda. During this period, much of the trackage (rails) shown in the 1988 inventory was removed and almost all of the associated facilities were either removed or destroyed by the railroad. However, one structure shown in the 1988 Inventory at 1925 Sherman continues to exist on the site. Exhibit 3 includes a number of recent photographs of the building.

Rather than suffer ABL's owners (UP and BNSF) efforts to fragment the line piecemeal, the City after prolonged litigation was allowed to exercise a contract option to acquire what remained of the ABL, closing on that acquisition in 2010. Shortly thereafter, UP abandoned trackages rights over the line. Faced with studies showing high rehabilitation costs and insufficient rail demand, the City now intends to pursue an STB abandonment authorization.

Findings and Determination:

We find that the proposed undertaking will have no effect on the historic resources in the area. Our findings are based upon the following conclusions:

- Abandonment will allow the City to preserve the rail and existing facilities for future rail use and for compatible uses (such as bicycle and pedestrian trails) in the interim.
- The City of Alameda is a Certified Local Government with a long history and deep commitment to historic preservation. As an identified historic resource in the City of Alameda, the Railway and the remaining associated structures will fall under the purview of the City of Alameda Historic Advisory Board and Alameda Municipal Code Section 21-18 Preservation of Historic Resources.

Request:

At this time we are requesting your concurrence with our finding and determination of no effect. We would appreciate a response by January both to allow an opportunity for further consultation if necessary and for incorporation of the SHPO response into the Historic Report we will circulate and also file with the STB later that month.

If you have any questions, or would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager at 510-747-6881 at any time.

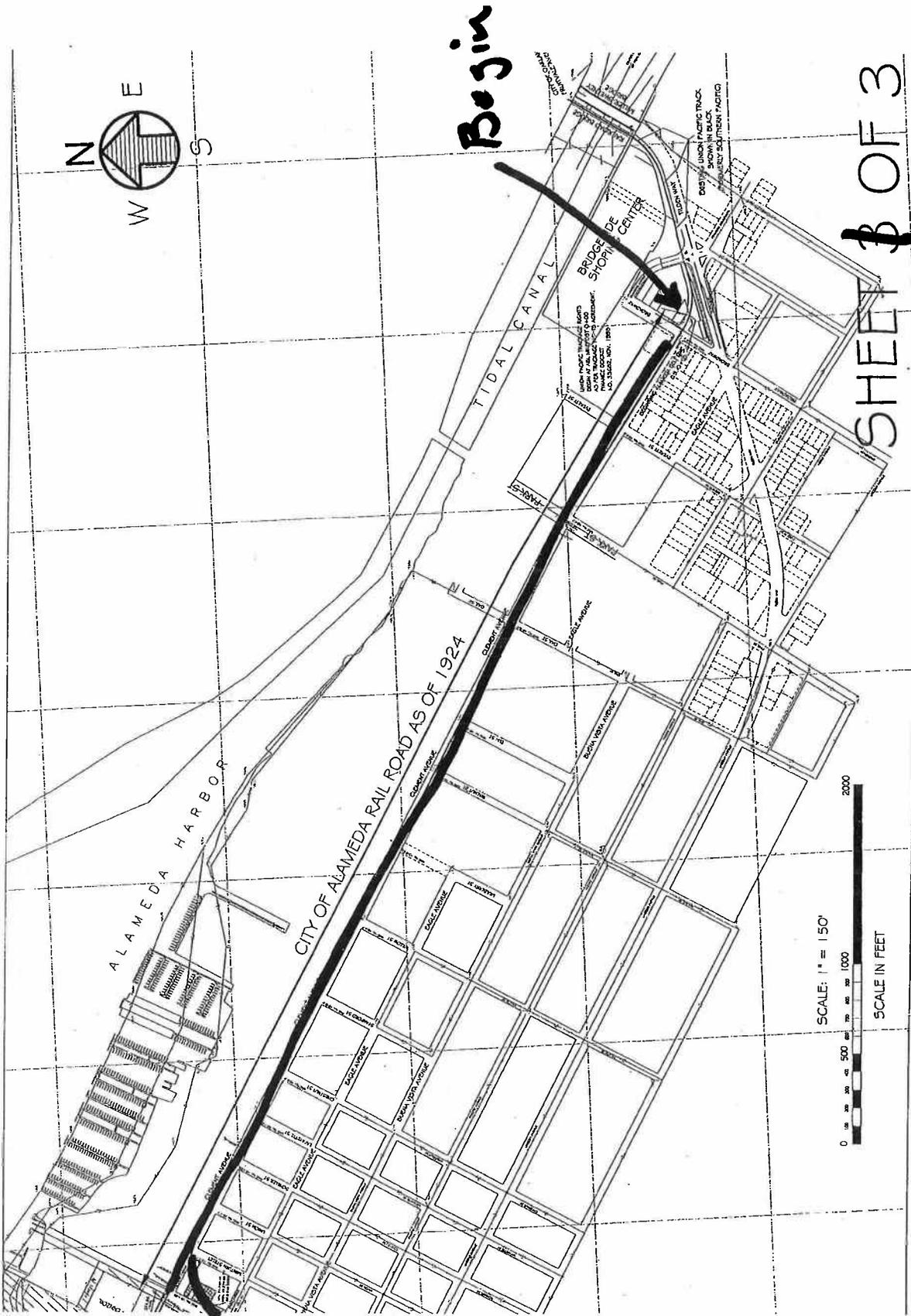
Sincerely,



Lori Taylor  
Community Development Director

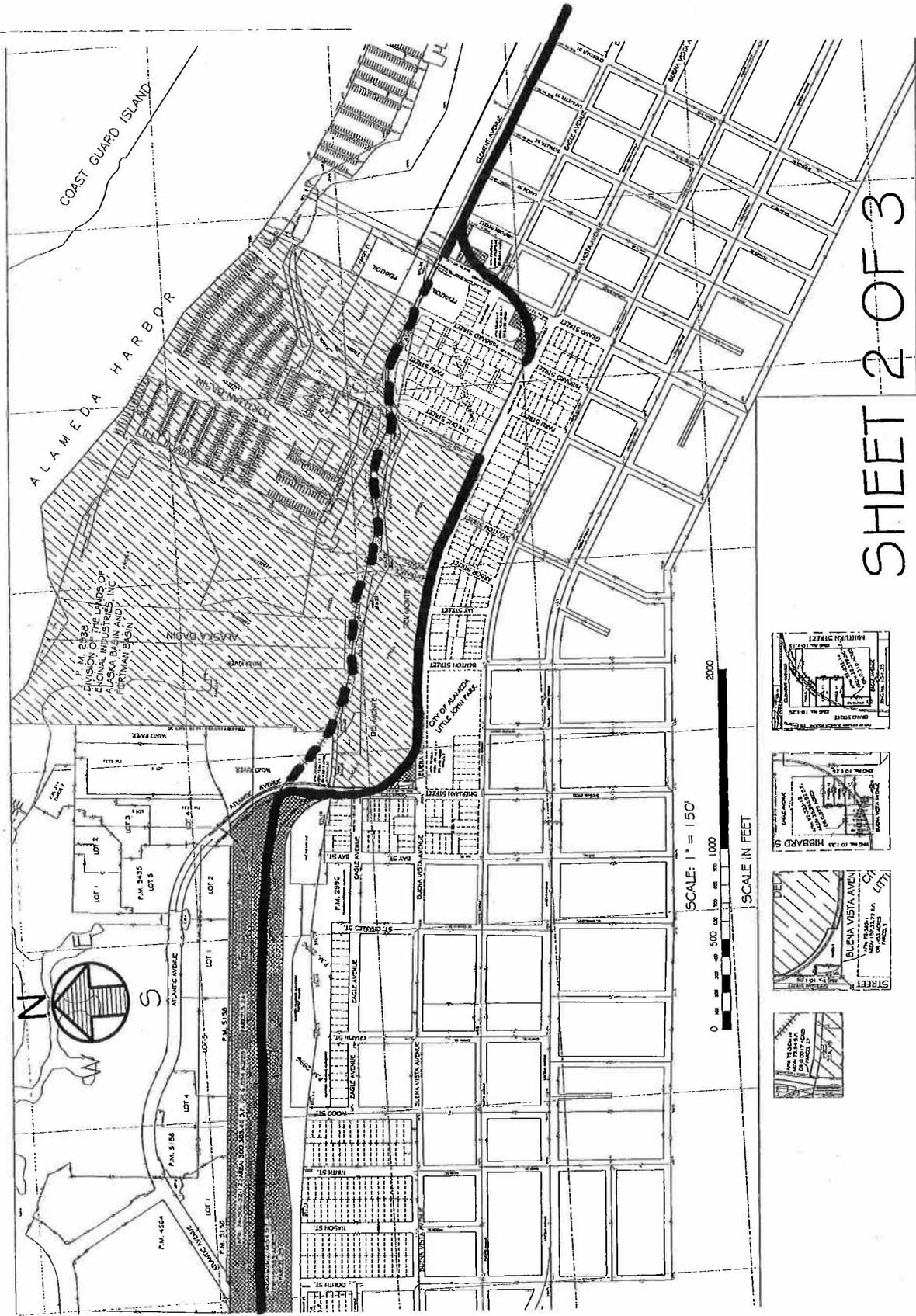
Exhibits:

1. Maps
2. Historic Resources Inventory
3. Recent Photographs of 1925 Sherman St.

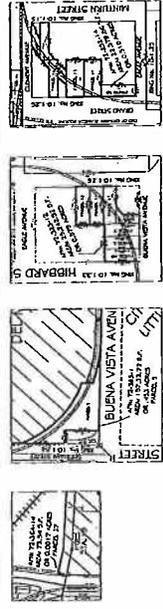


**— Abandon**

Exhibit 1



SHEET 2 OF 3



SCALE: 1" = 150'



SCALE IN FEET

--- Rail bank + Future Rail Alignment  
 — Abandon



HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

Ser. No. 4501 - -  
HABS HAER Loc S SHL No. NR Status 5D  
UTM: A 10/567780/4181730 C 10/564080/4180161  
B 10/567780/4180160 D 10/564080/4181730

IDENTIFICATION

- 1. Common name: Alameda Belt Line Railway
- 2. Historic name: Alameda Belt Line Railway
- 3. Street or rural address: 1925 Sherman Street  
City Alameda Zip 94501 County Alameda
- 4. Parcel number: Multiple - See Continuation Sheet #1
- 5. Present Owner: Multiple - See Continuation Sheet #1 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ownership is: Public  Private
- 6. Present Use: Railroad Original use: Railroad

DESCRIPTION

- 7a. Architectural style: Railroad
- 7b. Briefly describe the present *physical appearance* of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

Attach Photo Envelope Here

Photos next page

Exhibit 2

- 8. Construction date: 1918-1927  
Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Factual \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Architect None
- 10. Builder 1918: A.J. Grier  
1927: unknown
- 11. Approx. property size (in feet)  
Frontage \_\_\_\_\_ Depth \_\_\_\_\_  
or approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_  
IRREG: 2 miles long.
- 12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)  
February, June 1988

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

#4 Parcel Numbers:

072-0292-014  
072-0323-012  
072-0326-004  
072-0364-014  
074-0906-027  
074-0906-032-004  
074-0906-032-006

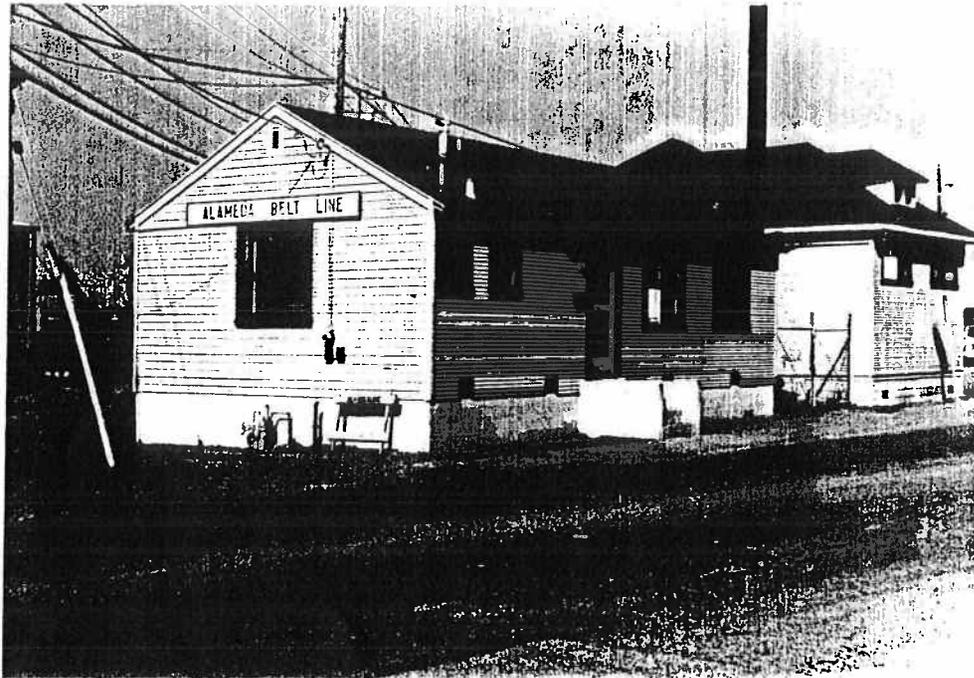
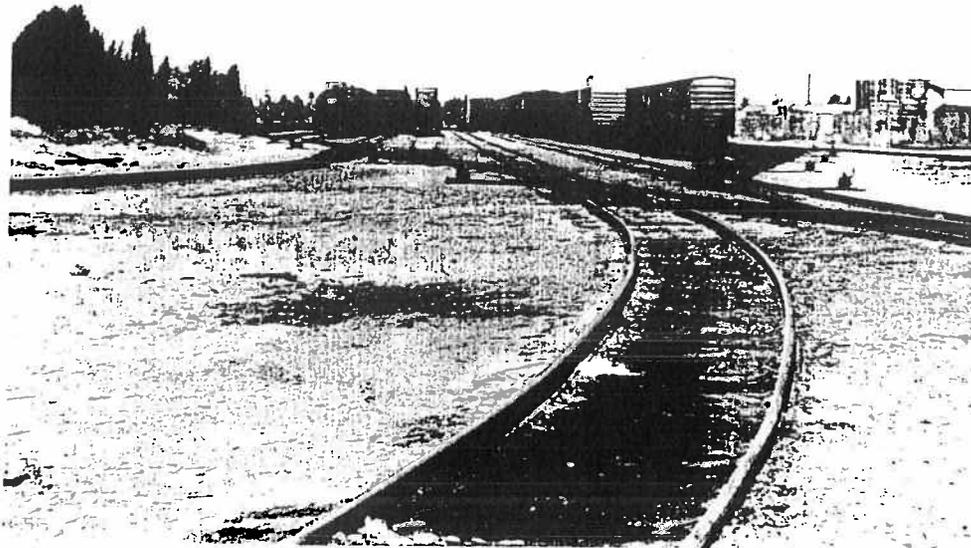
#5 Present Owners:

The Alameda Belt Line tracks cross land in 3 categories:

- 1) Public City of Alameda right of way, mostly on Clement Avenue from Tilden Way to Hibbard Street;
- 2) company owned land between Hibbard and Constitution Way, listed by parcel in item number 4, above, and
- 3) land owned by others, mostly customers on whose land spur tracks are laid. Owners of land in the latter case are not listed here, the reason being that the tracks are still owned by the Alameda Belt Line. In a National Register nomination the parcels crossed by these tracks may also have to be listed. They are of equal importance with the main line tracks to the whole system.

The Alameda Belt Line itself is owned jointly by the Santa Fe and the Union Pacific Railroads (Union Pacific bought out Western Pacific) and is administered by the Santa Fe Railroad at the following address:

One Santa Fe Plaza  
5200 East Sheila Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90040



CONTINUATION SHEET #2

#7b. Description

The Alameda Belt Line Railway runs about two miles in an east-west direction across the northern, industrial edge of Alameda. Today it runs from the Southern Pacific line on Tilden Way about 90 feet east of Broadway to its yards just east of Constitution Way. The route of the main line (called the "main lead" by the company) is via Clement Avenue, Grand Street, Buena Vista, and Sherman where it branches west to the yard and north to the old ferry slip. At Grand a major network of spurs proceeds in the westerly direction of Clement while the main line dips south; this network rejoins the main line at Sherman. Other spurs branch off along the length of the route. Altogether, including main lines, spurs and yards, the line consists of about 10 miles. These lie on public right of way, on land owned by the Belt Line in the case of the main line, and on land owned by others in the case of spurs.

Since the engine house burned about 1980 the Belt Line has had one principal building, the Yard House at 1925 Sherman Street. The Yard House is a rambling wooden structure in three parts: an old house (ca. 1910) on the north, linked to an equal sized block on the south (ca. 1925) by a connecting building. All three are unified visually by asbestos-shingled gabled roofs, narrow horizontal banded siding, and a uniform coat of paint. The old house has a hip roof with a hip-roofed gable and a ventilated wooden foundation cladding. The connecting wing and southern block have reinforced concrete foundation walls and gabled roofs of different pitches. The three wings were built at different times, the southern block between 1932 and 1948. The other two wings may have been moved to the site. Behind the Yard House are two small wooden equipment sheds.

CONTINUATION SHEET #3  
#19. Significance

The Alameda Belt Line Railway, initially also known as the Industrial Railway or the Municipal Railway, was built in 1918 by the City of Alameda following years of discussion and the prompting of the United States Shipping Board. The City was eager to more fully open up the northern waterfront to industrial development and the Shipping Board was concerned about utilizing the waterfront as the county entered the First World War. The first phase of the railway was approved, from Broadway to the Alaska Packer's Association property on Grand Street along Clement Avenue together with an "industrial highway," a widened Clement Avenue, in February 1918. Ground was broken April 22, 1918 and the job was finished May 23, 1918 at a cost of \$27,001. The principal contractor was A.J. Grier. The City Manager, C.E. Hewes, took an active role in promoting and building the railway. Although initially it was to be operated by the City's Board of Public Utilities, it was operated from the beginning by Southern Pacific.

In January 1925, the City proposed to extend the Belt Line west of Grand Street to Encinal Terminals and other proposed developments. The City did not have money for the project and proposed to sell the existing tracks and the right to extend them to Southern Pacific, already operating in Alameda along Lincoln Avenue, and the Western Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads, not yet operating in Alameda. Such an arrangement would link Alameda to three major railroads and all the markets they served. Southern Pacific refused to enter the venture and fought it in court to preserve its monopoly on freight traffic in Alameda. Southern Pacific lost and Western Pacific and Santa Fe bought the existing trackage from the City for \$30,000 and formally named the railroad the Alameda Belt Line. They issued \$500,000 in common capital stock to finance the project including the acquisition of land and construction. The Alameda Belt Line was to be run with five directors, two from each company and one from the City. The two companies would own the line equally with the Santa Fe railroad spending an additional \$200,000 for a rail ferry slip at the north end of Sherman Street.

Construction was also delayed by the objections of neighborhood residents, led by the Alameda Women's Improvement Club who felt tracks on Buena Vista would bring unwanted problems into a residential area. In the end these objections were overridden and City Council approval of the Belt Line extension and the California Packing Company warehouse, which would be one of the Belt Line's principal customers, were granted on the same day in February 1927.

CONTINUATION SHEET #4

#19. Significance Continued

In 1929 plans were announced to extend the line another mile west of the yards. Later this extension would be used to build the Naval Air Station. At its most extensive, the Alameda Belt Line operated over 17 miles of tracks with two engines. In the beginning and during wartime the Belt Line ran day or night as it was needed, but in recent years it has run only from the late afternoon into the night to avoid congesting automobile traffic. During the day Southern Pacific collects cars in its Oakland yards which it brings across the Fruitvale Bridge after midnight. The next afternoon, the Belt Line delivers cars to individual customers and picks up loaded cars which Southern Pacific takes back to Oakland during the night. The operation today requires an engineer, two helpers and a yard master. The Belt Line carries box cars, open-top gondolas, flat cars, and tank cars. For customers not located on the Belt Line, there are "team tracks" where rail cars can be loaded onto trucks. Its principal customers today are within the network of spurs between Grand and Sherman Streets.

The ferry slip is no longer in existence, the tracks west of Constitution Way have been removed, many of the spurs have been removed and the industrial property along the Belt Line turned to other uses, and the engine house is gone. Belt Line offices have moved out of an old house at 1816 Sherman occupied in 1932, and out of the old Superintendent's Office, now the Yard House, at 1925 Sherman Street. The Yard House is now headquarters and locker room for the train crew. Still, the Belt Line is an active ongoing enterprise, serving six regular customers.

CONTINUATION SHEET #5

#21. Sources

Alameda City Building Permit Index.

Sanborn Insurance Co. Maps, 1948, 1932.

Alameda City Resolutions Index.

Alameda City Council Minutes Index.

"Waterfront Rail Line to be Built", Alameda Times Star, March 20, 1918.

Alameda City Manager, Annual Report, 1918, 1927, 1929, 1932.

Oakland Tribune Yearbook, 1926, 1927.

"Belt Line Terminal to Start", Alameda Times Star, February 26, 1927.

United States War Department:

The Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, and the U.S. Shipping Board. Port Series No 12: The Ports of San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, etc., 1927.

"A Look at Belt Line Operation, History," Alameda Public Library Clipping File, September 23, 1974.

Barry Wood, "The Alameda Belt Line", Model Railroader, Volume 47:4 (April 1980), p. 80-84.

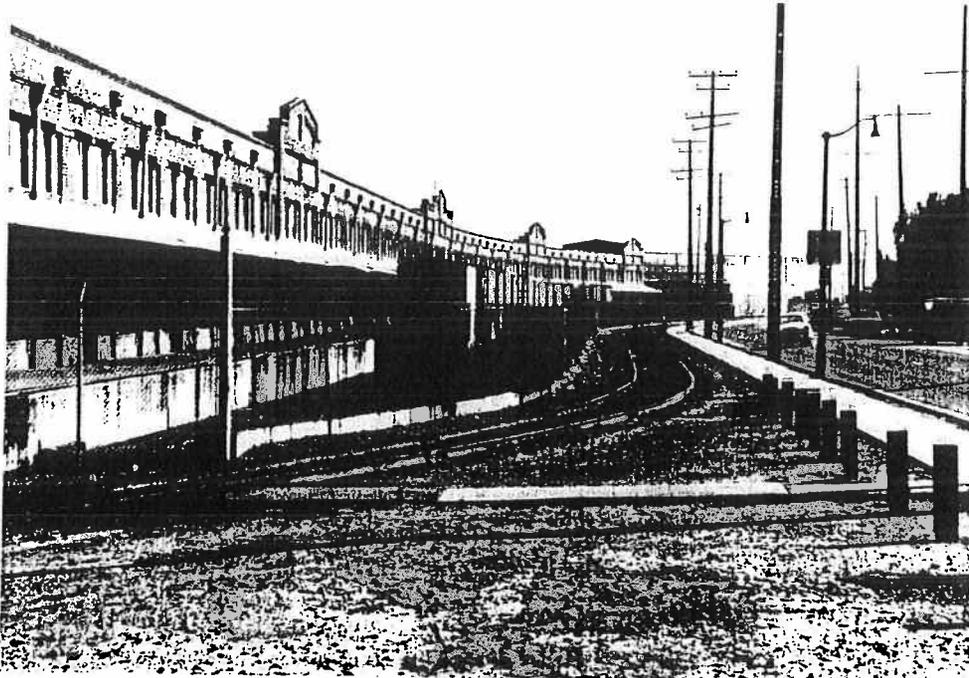
Phil Koppel, Superintendent of the Alameda Belt Line, June 8, 1988.

CONTINUATION SHEET #6

Features of the Alameda Belt Line Railway

1. UTM: 10567780/4181730 10/567780/4180160 10/564080/4180160 10/564080/418173

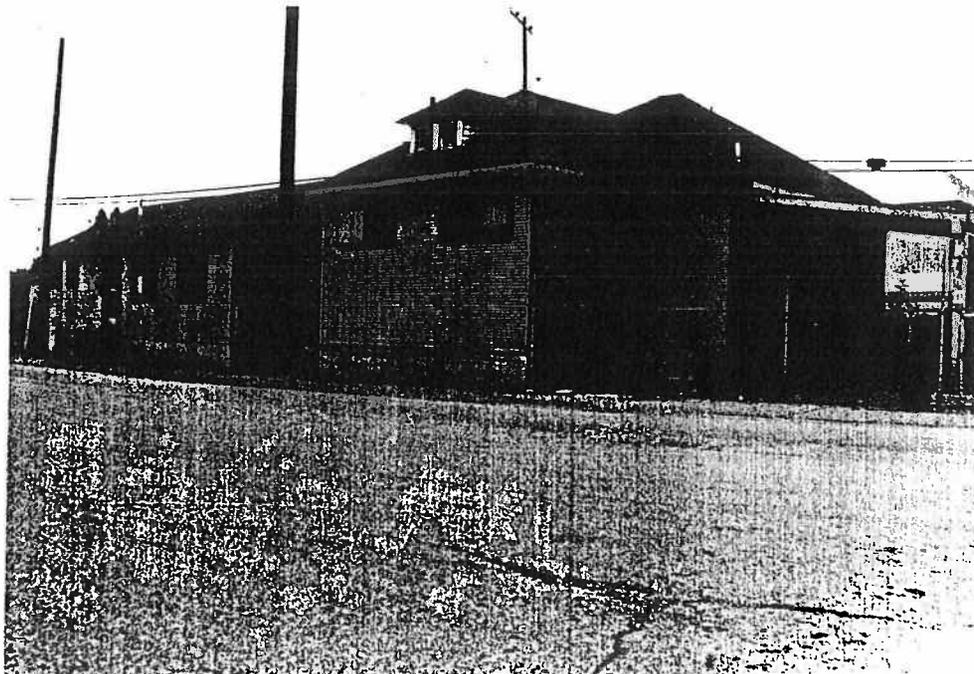
Railroad line between the Southern Pacific line at Tilden Way and the yard east of Constitution Way.



2. UTM: 10/565000/4181320

Yard House

Rambling 3-part building in a u-plan.

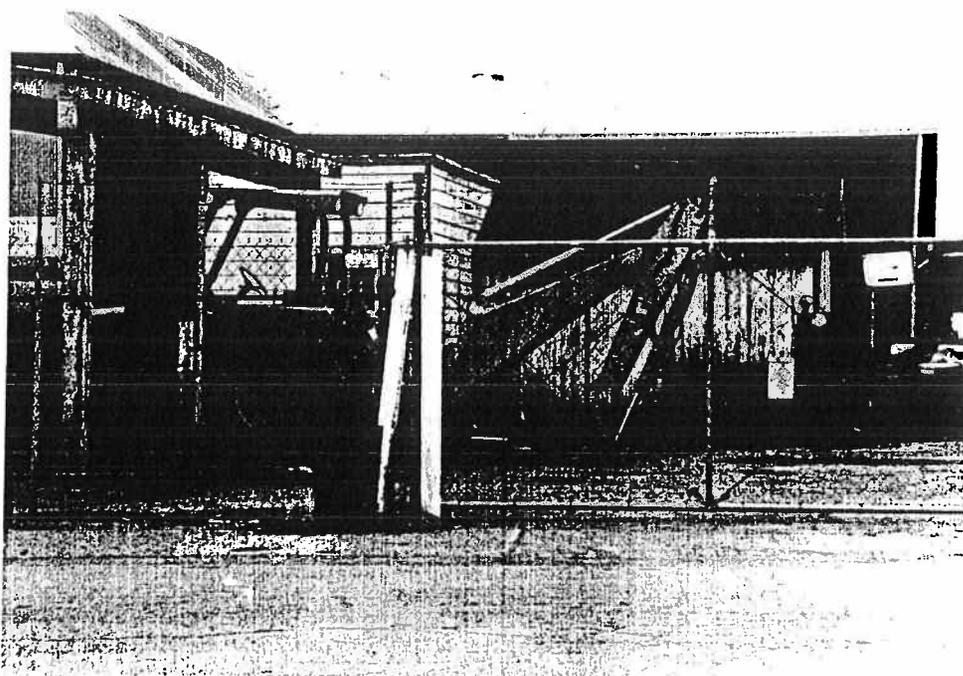


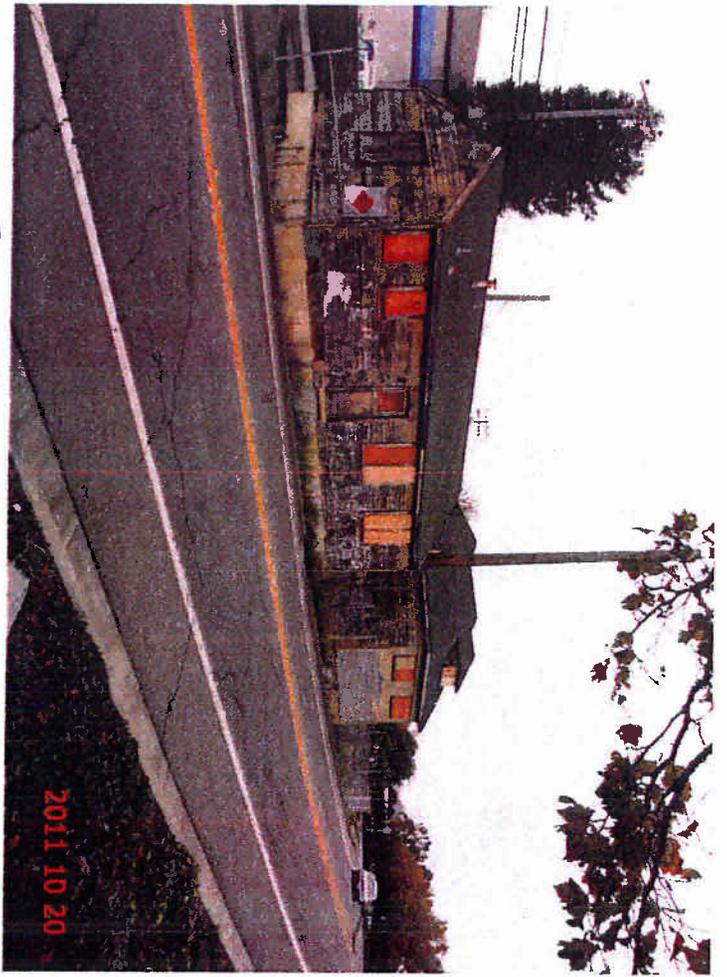
CONTINUATION SHEET #7

3. UTM: 10/565000/4181330

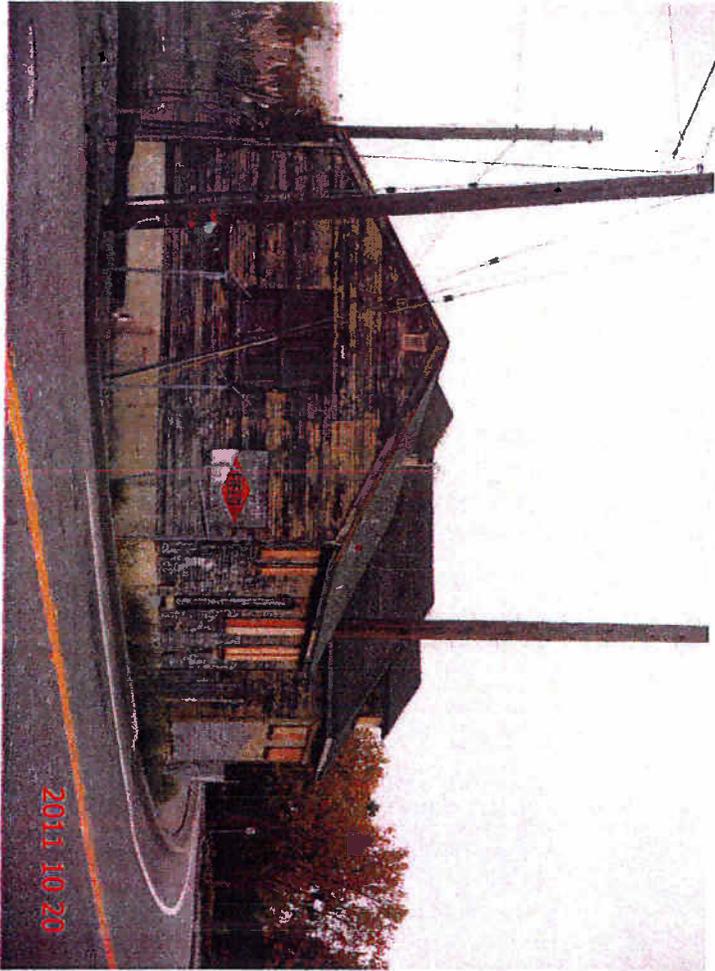
Sheds

Wood frame sheds behind yard house.





EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

Exhibit 3



NORTH ELEVATIONS



NORTH



NORTH ELEVATION

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100  
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo@parks.ca.gov  
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



20 January 2012

Reply To: STB111129A

Lori Taylor  
Community Development Director  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 190  
Alameda, CA 94501-4477

Re: Abandonment Exemption of a portion of the Alameda Beltline Railroad, Alameda County, CA

Dear Ms. Taylor:

You are initiating consultation on behalf of the STB regarding the above referenced undertaking. The City of Alameda is requesting my assistance in assessing any potential effects of the abandonment action in accordance with 36 CFR 800, regulations and implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

As I presently understand it, the undertaking consists of abandonment of a portion of the Alameda Beltline Railroad extending from the point approximately 180 feet east of the intersection of Clement Avenue (MP 2.61) and Broadway (MP 0) to end of the track close to Constitutional Avenue (MP 2.61) in Alameda. Union Pacific, which had "trackage rights" over the bulk of the corridor, recently received discontinuance authority from STB for those trackage rights.

You are requesting that I concur with the determination of "No Historic Properties Effectuated" for the undertaking. As I understand it, the Alameda Beltline is locally listed but is not a historic property. Thus, I concur with the determination of "No Historic Properties Effectuated."

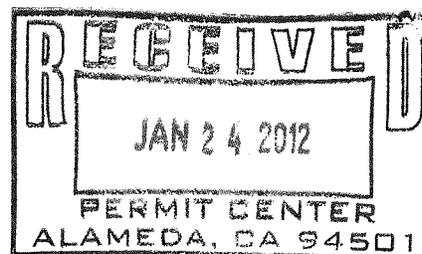
Thank you for considering historic properties in your planning process. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Blosser of my staff at (916) 445-7048 or e-mail at [ablosser@parks.ca.gov](mailto:ablosser@parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Susan K Stratton for*

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer

MWD: ab



# **Appendix F**

Written comments received on this ER/HR prior to filing of actual notice of exemption to be included here.

California Office of Planning & Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

California EPA  
1001 I Street  
P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815

San Francisco Bay Conservation and  
Development Commission  
50 California Street, Suite 2600  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Hon. Nate Miley, President Alameda County  
Board of Supervisors  
1221 Oak St. # 536  
Oakland, CA 94612

US EPA - Region 9  
Att: Regulatory Review Office, CED-2  
(Kathleen Goforth)  
75 Hawthorne St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 1  
Eastside Federal Complex  
911 NE 11<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-4181

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 8  
2800 Cottage Way, W-2606  
Sacramento, CA 95825

National Park Service - Pacific West Region  
Christine Lehnertz-Regional Director  
333 Bush Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94104-2828

Lincoln E. Burton, State Conservationist  
Richard E. Lyng USDA Service Center  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
430 G Street, #4164  
Davis, CA 95616-4164

Communication and Outreach Branch,  
NOAA,N/NGS12  
National Geodetic Survey SSMC3 #9202  
1315 East-West Hwy  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

California Office of Historic Preservation  
Att: Review and Compliance  
1725-23d St., Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Susan Muranishi  
County Administrator  
Alameda County  
1221 Oak St, Room 555  
Oakland, CA 94612

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
South Pacific Division  
Att: Counsel's Office  
1455 Market St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103-1398

California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Department of Parks & Recreation  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814