



## NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the Golden Gate Bridge Physical Suicide Deterrent System Study. As required by CEQA, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being sent to interested agencies to request participation in the preparation and review of this document. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that the District is beginning preparation of the environmental document and to solicit information that will be helpful in the environmental review process. Information that will be most helpful at this time would be descriptions of concerns about the impacts of the Proposed Project and suggestions for alternatives that should be considered.

Please send any response you may have within 30 days from the date you receive the notice, or by July 16, 2007. Your response, and any questions or comments, should be directed to:

Jeffrey Y. Lee, P.E., Senior Civil Engineer  
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District  
P.O. Box 9000, Presidio Station  
San Francisco, CA 94129  
Phone: (415) 923-2023  
Email: [jylee@goldengate.org](mailto:jylee@goldengate.org).

**An agency scoping meeting has been scheduled to review this project and solicit preliminary comments for consideration in the environmental document.**

**Date: Tuesday, July 17, 2007**  
**Location: Golden Gate Bridge District Board Room**  
**Time: 10:00 a.m.**

**Please RSVP to Jeffrey Y. Lee by July 13, 2007.**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Golden Gate Bridge Physical Suicide Deterrent System

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Golden Gate Bridge (See Figure 1 for regional and local site locations.)

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** The Project would involve installation of a physical suicide deterrent system on the Golden Gate Bridge. At its April 22, 2005, meeting the District Board of Directors established the Project purpose to be the consideration of a physical deterrent system that reduces the number of injuries and deaths associated with jumping off the Bridge. The need for the proposed physical suicide deterrent system on the Bridge stems from the following:

- The Bridge's sidewalks are open to the public, and the existing outside railing along the sidewalks is four (4) feet high. Individuals of varying heights, weights, ages and sexes, who were not using the Bridge sidewalks for their intended purpose, have climbed over the existing railing and jumped to their death. There is no other physical barrier preventing an individual from jumping, once the railing has been scaled.
- In 2005, there were 622 known suicides in the nine Bay Area Counties, of which 23 were estimated to occur at the Bridge. Further, in that same year 58 persons contemplating suicide were successfully stopped, and the individuals were taken off the Bridge and transported to a local hospital for a psychiatric evaluation pursuant to Section 5150 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code.
- Although official figures have not been maintained through the years, since 1937 it is estimated that approximately 1,300 individuals have committed suicide by jumping off the Bridge.

The first phase of the Project evaluated conceptual designs for their performance during high winds to determine which concepts would and would not affect the aerodynamic stability of the Bridge. Meteorological and topographical analyses of wind hazards specifically associated with the Bridge site found that the Bridge could be subjected to winds of up to 100 miles per hour. Very small changes in the shape of the Bridge cross-sections (including the spacing and design of rail and fence elements) can have a significant impact on the Bridge's aerodynamic stability during high winds. Conceptual designs that negatively affected the aerodynamic stability of the Bridge under high winds were eliminated from further consideration, in accordance with the Board's established criterion that mandated maintenance of the aerodynamic stability of the Bridge.

**PROJECT ALTERNATIVES:** Based on the results of the wind testing, the alternatives selected for evaluation in the EIR/EA fall within three generic categories: adding to existing railing, replacing existing railing, and utilizing nets that cantilever out horizontally. Figures 1.1 through 3.3b provide illustrative examples of these generic concepts. During preparation of the environmental document these concepts will be further refined so as to meet the following Board adopted criteria:

- Must impede the ability of an individual to jump off the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Must not cause safety or nuisance hazards to sidewalk users including pedestrians, bicyclists, District staff, and District contractors or security partners.

- Must be able to be maintained as a routine part of the District's on-going Bridge maintenance program and without undue risk of injury to District employees.
- Must not diminish ability to provide adequate security of the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Must continue to allow access to the underside of the Bridge for emergency response and maintenance activities.
- Must satisfy requirements of State and Federal historic preservation laws.
- Must have minimal visual and aesthetic impacts on the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Must be cost effective to construct and maintain.
- Must not in and of itself create undue risk of injury to anyone who comes in contact with the suicide deterrent system.
- Must not prevent construction of a moveable median barrier on the Golden Gate Bridge.

**PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** It is anticipated that installation of a physical suicide deterrent system may result in environmental effects in the following issue areas:

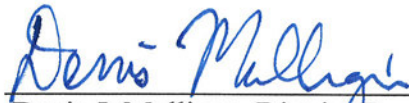
**Land Use** – Construction of the Project may alter the physical appearance of the Bridge and may potentially affect the maintenance and operation of the Bridge.

**Historic Resources** – The Bridge has been determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Construction of the Project could result in adverse effects on features of the Bridge that contribute to its historic significance. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC §470f) requires federal agencies (and those seeking funding from federal agencies) to take into account the effects of their undertakings upon historical resources. A Section 106 evaluation will be prepared during the environmental review process.

**Visual Resources** – The Bridge is a world-recognized engineering masterpiece. The Project may alter the appearance of the Bridge to viewers from adjacent areas and may affect the views from the roadway and walkways of the Bridge. Therefore, a Visual Impacts Assessment will be prepared as part of the environmental review process.

**Parklands** – The Bridge is located within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Any modifications to the Bridge would occur within a public parkland protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 USC §303). A Section 4(f) report will be prepared as part of the environmental review process.

Date: June 14, 2007

  
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Denis J. Mulligan, District Engineer

Attachments: Project Location Map  
Illustrative Concepts



# PROJECT LOCATION MAP

GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



FIGURE 1