

CHAPTER 4 - COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

4.1 DOCUMENTING COORDINATION

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process to determine the scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures, and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including project development team meetings, interagency coordination meetings, stakeholder meetings, and public meetings and workshops. This chapter summarizes the results of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District's (District) efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

4.1.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A public involvement program has been developed to guide the District through a public information and outreach process for the project. The public involvement program provides a variety of communication methods to educate the public on the current scope of the study, including its impacts and benefits. Thorough information will be provided to educate the public about the study, and at targeted project milestones the study team will solicit input and feedback from the public and agencies as to their specific needs, issues, concerns, and recommendations. By educating through a variety of informative communication tools, the community and agencies will be well-equipped to provide meaningful public input.

Key elements of the public involvement plan include:

- Educating the public and agencies through effective communication tools
- Providing multiple opportunities for input on study alternatives
- Managing and organizing comments received, and presenting input in a concise manner to decision-makers

Public Website and Public Comment System

On May 11, 2007, public outreach activities were initiated by launching the public Web site (www.ggbsuicidebarrier.org). The Web site was developed with a fully integrated public comment system and provides a fair and

factual presentation of the evaluation process and ongoing opportunities for public input. The interactive public comment system is designed to provide stakeholders with a Web-based platform for submitting comments on the study and the environmental document. The public comment system is altered at key milestones to solicit input specific to key phases of the project.

Wind Study Report

On May 24, 2007, a Wind Study Report was released which detailed the effects of wind on long-span bridges, documented the wind testing, summarized the results, and provided initial concepts for a deterrent system. The report was presented to the Building and Operating Committee of the District's Board of Directors (Board) at their regularly scheduled meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 24, 2007. A media briefing packet was circulated and the report was posted on the public Web site. For approximately two months following the release of the report, the public comment system was structured to solicit specific feedback on the wind study report and the design concepts presented.

Bridge District Board Meetings

As all Board meetings are open to the public, public comments received during formal public comment periods will be part of the public record and will be incorporated into the process and the environmental document. In addition, all comments received at District Board meetings will be reviewed by the project team for consideration as they may relate to the Golden Gate Bridge Physical Suicide Deterrent System Study.

Release of the Draft EIR/EA

The release of the Draft EIR/EA is a major opportunity for public involvement and education. With the release of the document, the environmental impacts of the alternatives, including visual, historic, and cultural resources, will be disclosed. Two public open houses will be held to provide information about the project alternatives and to allow the public, agencies and organizations to provide comments. Informational materials, including a Citizens' Guide and a fact sheet, will be developed to help the public digest the complex technical data contained in the environmental document. These tools will aid the public in understanding the study and help solicit focused comments on the facts of the environmental document.

Media Relations

The District Public Affairs Director will conduct all media communications, create media packets and attend public meetings, as necessary.

4.1.2 AGENCY CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Notice of Preparation

On June 14, 2007 the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was issued for the environmental document. The NOP was mailed to more than 70 agencies to solicit input on which alternatives and issues should be evaluated in the environmental document. The distribution list for the NOP is included in Appendix C.

On July 17, 2007 an agency consultation meeting was held at the District to receive comments on the NOP. Attendees included Jeffrey Lee, Denis Mulligan, John R. Eberle, Mary Curry, and Michael Conneran from the District; Steve Morton and Mike Barbour from DMJM Harris; Phyllis Potter and Heidi Rothrock from CirclePoint; Kerri Davis and Rafael Montes from the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC); Hsien Tang and Kelso Vidal from California State Department of Transportation (Department); and Andrea Lucas from the Golden Gate National Recreation Area/National Park Service (GGNRA/NPS).

State Office of Historic Preservation Consultation

The District, in conjunction with the Department, is continuing consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) following 36 CRF 800.6, to arrive at a resolution of the adverse effect. The Department, in accordance with Stipulation XI of the Section 106 PA, will prepare a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to memorialize measures that would mitigate the adverse effect this undertaking will have on the historic property. The MOA signatory parties will be the District, the Department, and SHPO. The District sent a letter to interested parties in April 2008 notifying interested individuals and organizations that the project is anticipated to have an adverse effect on the Bridge and to solicit their input. Any responses to this letter will be included in future drafts of this document and the environmental document.

- The District, in conjunction with the Department, initiated consultation with SHPO following 36 CRF 800 and held a project meeting on site at the Bridge to discuss Section 106 process on November 20, 2007. The meeting included the Department's Local Assistance staff and Architectural Historian Alicia Otani (Department PQS), as well as Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) staff historians, and the deputy SHPO in attendance.
- The District prepared a draft letter to parties interested in historical resources. The letter was circulated in late April 2008 to seek comment and information pertaining to the historic significance of the Bridge and the potential effect the project may have on the character-defining features of the property. Copies of the letter, the list of recipients, and the responses received are in Appendix C. Responses to this letter will be incorporated in this document upon receipt.

- The Draft Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR), including Historical Resources Evaluation Report (HRER), and updated DPR523 forms, were submitted to the Department in April 2008.

4.1.3 ONGOING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This section will be expanded upon after submittal of this draft report as the Section 106 process continues for the project, and will describe all steps taken to ensure public concerns were taken into account. If concerns are raised by public agencies or other interested parties, this section will identify all actions taken by the project to ensure public concerns are incorporated into the Section 106 process. The District also will continue to maintain the public information Website for the project at www.ggbsuicidebarrier.org.

- Ongoing public participation opportunities include District Board meetings, which are open to the public. Public comments received during formal public comment periods will be part of the public record and will be incorporated into the process and the environmental document. In addition, all comments received at District Board meetings will be reviewed by the project team for consideration as they may relate to the project.
- The District, in conjunction with the Department, is continuing consultation with SHPO following 36 CRF 800.