

**Appendix D**  
**Historic Evaluation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Train Station**  
**(Alan Dreyfus)**

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## APPENDIX D

### Historic Evaluation of the 16th Street Train Station within the Project Area Prepared by Alan Dreyfus, AIA, April 22, 2004

#### The Southern Pacific 16th Street Station and Signal Tower

##### Description

The 16th Street Station is a terra cotta clad structure located at the northwest terminus of 16th and 17th Streets. It is set at the rear of an open paved area approximately 200 feet from Wood Street. The Station shares the site with a large complex of utilitarian structures set diagonally to the east. The view of the Station is almost entirely unobstructed from the north, west and south. The front façade is especially visible from Wood and 16th Streets.

The Station consists of a central, main structure about 50' tall, flanked by symmetrical, lower side wings to the north and south. A large L-shaped baggage wing extends to the north and west of the north wing. An elevated concourse runs along the entire west side of the Station, extending beyond the Station to the north and south. Original plans indicate that the entire complex was constructed at one time, between 1910 and 1912. A rectangular 3-story Signal Tower, constructed at a later date, is located about 150 feet to the north of the Station, along the line of the original tracks.

The exterior of the Station is clad in granite colored terra cotta over a granite base. The windows are steel sash deeply inset in the façade. The hipped roof, originally clay tile, is now covered in rolled composite roofing. The bare metal sub-structure of a marquee remains above the main entry. The concourse is constructed of steel columns and girders with two decorative steel canopies extending for its full length. The stairs accessing the concourse are cast iron with marble treads.

The interior of the central section is entirely occupied by the General Waiting Room that occupies the full 3 stories. The floors are marble, and there is evidence of a tall, marble wainscot that once ran the entire circumference of the room. The walls and ceilings are elaborately decorative molded plaster.

The Signal Tower is constructed of reinforced concrete with a stucco exterior, and a hipped roof with broad eaves.

The 16th Street Station is a City of Oakland Landmark. In 1988 a DPR historic resources inventory form was completed by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, and the Station was given a National Register status of 3, "appears to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register". The Station and Signal Tower were also recorded in a California Department of Transportation Architectural Inventory/Evaluation form in 1990, and were evaluated as eligible for the National Register. The 16th Street Station and Signal Tower appear to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, for their association with the development of rail transportation in the Bay Area and on a national level. The Station also appears to be eligible

under criterion C for its architectural significance as an exceptional example of train station design.

### **Condition**

The buildings have been unoccupied since the station sustained structural damage in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and the deterioration has been significant in that time.. The exterior terra cotta is in generally good condition, showing minimal spalling or cracking, although it is covered with graffiti in many places. Diagonal grouting lines are visible on the north and south walls of the General Waiting Room where repairs were made to stabilize areas that were damaged in the earthquake. The decorative metal is missing from the entry marquee, much of the glazing is broken, and the original tile roof is missing, although a number of the tiles are stored inside the Station.

The interior is in a very deteriorated condition. The marble wainscot has been almost entirely stripped from the Waiting Room walls, and the plaster walls and ceiling have suffered substantial damage from vandalism and lack of weatherproofing. Two huge paintings that occupied the north and south walls of the Waiting Room are missing, with the exception of a small corner of one on the south wall. Most doors are missing, as are the original clocks, the decorative light fixtures and the restroom partitions and fixtures.

## Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### **Introduction**

The project being analyzed is described in the Project Description and in the *Central Station Master Plan* prepared by Pyatok Associates. The guidelines for development are described in *Section 5.0 Development Standards* of the Master Plan, and specific standards affecting the 16th Street Station and adjacent projects are described in *Section 5.80 16th Street Train Station*. There are potential impacts to the 16th Street Station that derive from implementation of the proposed project, both from new construction that is planned adjacent to the Station and from the adaptive reuse project planned for the Station.

### **New Construction**

#### Demolition

The location of planned new construction to the north and west of the Station will potentially require demolition of some significant portions of the Station. Project construction to the north will require the demolition of the baggage wing and the portion of the raised concourse that extends over the baggage wing, and beyond it to the north. The required extension of 16th Street through to the frontage road will result in the demolition of the portion of the concourse that extends beyond the Station to the south. A required access road to the west will result in the demolition of 70% of the remaining concourse, including one of the decorative canopies.

While not as significant as the General Waiting Room and its symmetrical wings, these portions of the Station are original, and an integral part of its historic use. Demolition of these portions of the Station will have an unavoidable significant adverse impact on the historic integrity of the Station.

*Suggested Mitigation Measures*

1. *Seismically strengthen and rehabilitate the exterior of the General Waiting Room and the symmetrical wings to the north and south, including the remaining portions of the passenger concourse, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings (Secretary's Standards)*
2. *Record the 16th Street Station in accordance with the procedures of the Historical American Building Survey (HABS).*
3. *Salvage architectural elements and materials from the portion of the building to be demolished including terra-cotta cladding, windows, doors and hardware to be re-used in the rehabilitation of the General Waiting Room.*

*Implementation of these mitigation measures will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.*

Setting

Currently the building setting is an industrial landscape with few buildings in the near vicinity. Adjacent railroad tracks make its use clear. Construction of new high density housing adjacent to the Station and the Signal Tower, as proposed, will significantly alter the historic setting of both the Station and the tower. This alteration of the historic context has the potential to weaken the physical relationship between the structures and to obscure their original uses. The alteration of the setting constitutes an unavoidable significant impact of the proposed project on the Station.

*Suggested Mitigation Measures*

1. *Install plaques on the exterior façade of the Station and the Signal Tower that identify their historic uses and include additional historical information.*
2. *Create a display on the interior of the Station using historic photos and documents to give a more complete history of the Station and the Signal Tower.*
3. *Create a feature in the proposed public plaza that recalls the historic use of the Station. The feature could be sculptural, for example a railroad element, or a landscape feature, as for example pathways or paving patterns that recall the paths of the trolley cars that originally served the Station.*

*Implementation of these mitigation measures will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.*

New construction also has the potential to adversely impact the architectural setting of the Station by the blocking views of the Station and/or by the diminution of its prominence. For the most part, the location and scale of new construction described in the master plan is restricted in such a manner as to preserve the most important view corridors and to prevent adjacent new construction from overshadowing the Station. Specifically, the view of the front façade will be protected by designating areas to the south and east of the building as "non-development areas" This will preserve the view of the Station from Wood and 16th Streets, the main approaches to the Station. New construction to the west is limited in height to 30 feet with a required setback of 40 feet. This will allow for retention of the current view of the Station from west, where the views are primarily from the elevated sections of Highway 880.

New construction to the northeast, however, is permitted to 65 feet in height and requires a minimum setback of only 15 feet. The small setback is appropriate for the area to the north, as this area is currently occupied by the baggage wing and existing utility sheds. However, the existing construction is limited in height to approximately 25 feet, and the 65-foot height limit will allow for construction of structures that are taller than the Station, and that will potentially block the view of Station from the northeast. This could be mitigated to a less than significant level by restricting the height of adjacent construction to 25 feet.

New construction is permitted within 15 feet of the Signal Tower to a height of 65 feet as well. Preliminary plans indicate that a non-development zone extending from the terminus of 18th Street will border the Signal Tower on the north, and that a required access road will border the tower to the west. This will preserve views of the tower from the northwest, including the 880 freeway and the frontage road which currently provide the best views of the tower. The remaining new construction has the potential to totally eliminate all other long-range view of the Signal Tower. As the Signal Tower is a small structure, only 35 feet tall at its peak, limiting the height of surrounding construction might not reveal enough of the building to significantly reduce the potential impact on these views.

#### *Suggested Mitigation Measures*

1. *Limit the height of new construction adjacent to the main Station and along Wood Street to 25 feet.*

*Implementation of these mitigation measures may reduce the impact on the Station to a less than significant level, but will not reduce the potential impact on the Signal Tower .*

#### **Adaptive Reuse**

The potential impacts of an adaptive reuse project are addressed in The *Central Station Master Plan*. The Master Plan includes the following standards for the treatment of the 16th Street Station and the Signal Tower:

### General Standards

1. Any renovation, modification or addition to the 16th Street Station shall conform with standards set forth in of the Planning Code "Special regulations for designated landmarks".
2. Any re-use of the 16th Street Station shall include stabilization and repair of exterior materials to improve the exterior appearance and to ensure a water tight building envelope.
3. For the purpose of these standards, the primary portion of the Station is defined as the General Waiting Room and the symmetrical wings to the north and south.

### Standards for Additions to the 16th Street Station

1. Additions to the Train Station are permitted subject to the following limitations:
  - a. No addition to the existing Train Station shall exceed a total building footprint greater than 20% of the existing structure to be retained.
  - b. No addition to the existing Train Station shall exceed the height of the north or south wings that flank the General Waiting Room (approximately 25 feet in height).
  - c. No addition shall be made to either the primary façade facing the 16th Street Plaza or the southern façade, facing the 14th Street non-development area.
2. No additions are permitted to the Signal Tower.

The Master Plan dictates conformance with section 17.102.030 of the Planning Code, which mandates design review for any alteration to a designated City Landmark. Design review criteria states that the proposed alteration will not adversely affect the exterior appearance or character of a landmark building, which will provide a level of assurance that the project will not have a significant impact on the exterior of the Station or the Signal Tower. Additionally, by restricting any potential additions to the Station to areas where demolition of building wings are proposed as part of the total project development, and restricting the footprint and height of any proposed addition, these guidelines reduce the possibility of an addition having an adverse impact on the exterior of the Station. The Master Plan dictates that no additions will be allowed to the Signal Tower.

The standards included in the master plan do not address the treatment of the interior of the Station or Signal Tower as part of any planned re-use. Potential impacts to the interiors include:

1. Damage to the historic fabric caused by inappropriate installation of new structural elements, mechanical systems or finishes.

2. Loss of historic fabric due to reconfiguration of the interior or removal and replacement of original finishes.
3. Alteration of the historic appearance due to insertion of incompatible new construction or the installation of incompatible fixtures and fittings.

These potential impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level by mandating that the rehabilitation of the main Station and the Signal Tower comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings.

*Suggested Mitigation Measures:*

1. *Stipulate that rehabilitation of the historic structures shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings.*

*Implementation of these mitigation measures may reduce the impact to a less than significant level.*