



Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Lead Agency)
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
2150 Webster Street, Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 464-6000

County Clerk, Counties of:

- Alameda
- Contra Costa
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara

Project Title: BART Substation Cable Replacement Program

Project Applicant: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Project Location - Specific: Multiple locations along BART right-of-way

Project Location – Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco

Project Location – Cities: Albany, Berkeley, Dublin, Fremont, Hayward, Oakland, Pleasanton, San Leandro, Union City; Antioch, Concord, El Cerrito, Lafayette, Orinda, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, Walnut Creek; San Francisco

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The BART transit system transmits electrical power to its traction power substations, which in turn provide the power to the train cars, through 34.5 kilovolt (34.5 kV) cables. Many of these 34.5 kV cables are over 50 years old and are reaching the end of their useful life and need replacement. The existing 34.5 kV cable runs in a duct bank adjacent to the track except where the track is on an aerial structure and the cable is suspended adjacent to the tracks. The old duct bank will be abandoned in place and the new cable installed in a new at-grade duct bank along the perimeter of the BART alignment.

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Same

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption: 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities
- Statutory Exemptions: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

None of the exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, which would prohibit the use of a categorical exemption, apply to the project. The program would replace existing traction

power infrastructure. The project is necessary to meet current standards of public health and safety. No expansion of current space or current use is proposed. Construction activity will be within BART property reducing or eliminating potential construction impacts to surrounding communities.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Donald Dean

Phone/Email: 510-287-4844 / ddean@bart.gov

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No



Signature: _____ **Date:** 11/28/2023 **Title:** Mgr. of Environmental Review

Donald Dean

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110. Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 2112.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____



SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

2150 Webster Street, Oakland, CA 94612

NOTICE OF CEQA EXEMPTION

Project Name: BART Substation Cable Replacement Program
Project Address: Multiple locations
Counties: Alameda
Contra Costa
San Francisco
BART Project No.: 15EJ450, 15EJRRA, 15EJRRC, 15EJRRK, 15EJRRR
Project Sponsor: BART Infrastructure Delivery
Project Contact: Anthony Valdiosera
avaldio@bart.gov/510-304-2082

Date of CE Determination: November 28, 2023

This CE will be filed with the County Clerk: Alameda Contra Costa San Francisco
San Mateo Santa Clara

PROPOSED PROJECT

Project Location

The proposed program involves infrastructure improvements within the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (District) in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and the City and County of San Francisco. The Cable Replacement Program eventually would include replacement cable along much of BART’s mainline tracks.

Project Background

To provide safe and reliable service, the BART system must be in good working order. However, many of BART’s assets, including its 34.5 kilovolt (34.5 kV) cables, are over 50 years old and are reaching the end of their useful life and need replacement. These 34.5 kV cables transmit power to the traction power substations, which in turn provide the power to the train cars.

The system is designed to provide redundant left and right 34.5 kV cables feeding the substations. When one of the cables fails, the system runs on only one cable. If the remaining cable were to fail, operations would be affected by either reducing train speeds, reducing train frequency, or preventing trains from operating through the affected segment of track. This

increases commute time for passengers and negatively impacts other portions of the system. These cable failures require immediate action to return to normal operations. Repairs sometimes can take months and pull valuable maintenance resources from other areas of the system.

The cable replacement program is critical to the system's traction power infrastructure and will support future additional train capacity via follow-on projects and programs aimed at relieving system congestion. The Cable Replacement Program is essential for improving reliability, the overall rider experience, and maintaining BART's state of good repair.

Project Description

The existing 34.5 kV cable runs in a duct bank adjacent to the track except where the track is on an aerial structure and the cable is suspended adjacent to the tracks. The old duct bank will be abandoned in place and the new cable installed in a new at-grade duct bank along the perimeter of the BART alignment except along aerial structures where it will be suspended adjacent to the structure.

In addition to replacement of the 34.5 kV cable, the cable replacement program will include the following upgrades to the system:

- Replace existing Paper Insulated Pipe Enclosed cable with new Ethylene Propylene Rubber (EPR) cable for improved insulation.
- Install isolation disconnect switches at substations, which allow power to be shut off in isolated segments to allow for safer future maintenance with limited impacts to operations.
- Install new fiber optic cable (288 strands) in the right-of-way between stations (train control room through train control room), which allow for continued communications between train control rooms.

Cable replacement work will be conducted within the BART right-of-way during BART's overnight non-revenue hours by small work crews (approximately 6-10 workers). BART staff will perform the cable replacement work. All work will be conducted consistent with the BART Facilities Standards.¹

Permits

Lane closures or lane encroachment permits would be required when work is conducted under or adjacent to BART aerial structures over roadways. BART would work with the local jurisdictions or the California Department of Transportation to obtain the necessary permits.

¹ BART Facilities Standards provide guidance and minimum standards for BART facilities and practices and for safeguarding patrons, the public, and employees, as well as safeguarding property and on-going operations. The Standards regulate and control the design, construction, quality of materials, equipment, and installation of facilities within the jurisdiction of the BART system.

EVALUATION

The work would upgrade the District’s traction power system by replacing old and unreliable power cables. The new cables would replace existing cables, and no expansion of the existing system or existing use would occur. The cable replacement program would represent a minor change to the District’s existing infrastructure. Following construction, the public would not recognize any apparent physical changes to the system. The replacement is essential to the continued safe operation and improvement of BART transit operations.

Work would take place on BART property. Some heavy equipment, such as hi-rail vehicles, concrete trucks, and concrete pumpers, may be required depending on the situation. Although the cable replacement would occur during the late night, non-revenue hours, the crew size would be relatively small, and work activity would not differ markedly from other BART maintenance activities. The nighttime construction is not expected to create an unreasonable intrusion on adjacent residential areas.

Possible Exceptions to CE

If a project is ordinarily exempt under any of the potential categorical exemptions, CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 provides specific instances where exceptions to otherwise applicable exemptions apply. In these cases, the CEQA exemption would not apply to a project.

Yes	No	Would the project be precluded from a Categorical Exemption due to the following exception per Guidelines Section 15300.2?
	X	(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located. A project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.
	X	(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.
	X	(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
	X	(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

X	(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
X	(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Relevant Exemptions

The project would meet the criteria of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301-Existing Facilities: a Class 1 exemption.

	Statutory Exemption
	Ministerial Exemption
X	Categorical Exemption: 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities
	Emergency Exemption
	Other Exemption

15301. Existing Facilities

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(d) would apply to the project:

(d) Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it was determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide or flood.

The project is determined to meet the qualifications for a Categorical Exemption for the following reasons among others:

1. None of the exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, which would prohibit the use of a categorical exemption, apply to the project.
2. The program would replace existing traction power infrastructure.
3. The project is necessary to meet current standards of public health and safety.
4. No expansion of current space or current use is proposed.
5. Construction activity will be within BART property reducing or eliminating potential construction impacts to surrounding communities.

DETERMINATION

No further environmental review is required. The project is categorically exempt under CEQA. An exemption from environmental review pursuant to the provisions of CEQA has been considered and approved:



By Donald Dean
BART Manager of Environmental Review

11/28/2023

Date