

SF Railyards Working Group (RWG)



San Francisco
Planning

March 19 2024

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the **unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone** who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.



Meeting Purpose

1. Provide updates on **neighborhood urban design efforts**
(informational, 5 min)
2. Provide updates on **DTX (Portal) and PAX efforts**
(informational, 15 min)
3. Discuss **Caltrain's Preliminary Business Case** alternatives
(explorative, 25 min)

Agenda

Opening
10 min

Welcome and settling-in

Check-in: agenda and updates:

- Neighborhood projects and community updates

Content
45 min

1 Provide updates on neighborhood urban design efforts (5 min)

- *Informational item*

2 Provide updates on DTX and PAX efforts (15 min)

- *Informational item, clarifying questions*

3 Discuss Caltrain Preliminary Business Case alternatives (25 min)

- *Presentation of alternatives (5-7 min)*
- *Clarifying questions to understand alternatives (20 min)*

Closing
5-7 min

Group action items & activities

Project team next steps

An aerial, grayscale photograph of San Francisco, California, showing the city's dense urban landscape. The image captures the city's iconic architecture, including the Transamerica Pyramid and other skyscrapers in the background. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the distance, spanning the Golden Gate Strait. The city's streets are a grid, with a prominent railway line running through the center. The text 'Community Updates' is overlaid in a large, orange, sans-serif font, and '(RWG)' is written below it in a smaller, gray font.

Community Updates

(RWG)

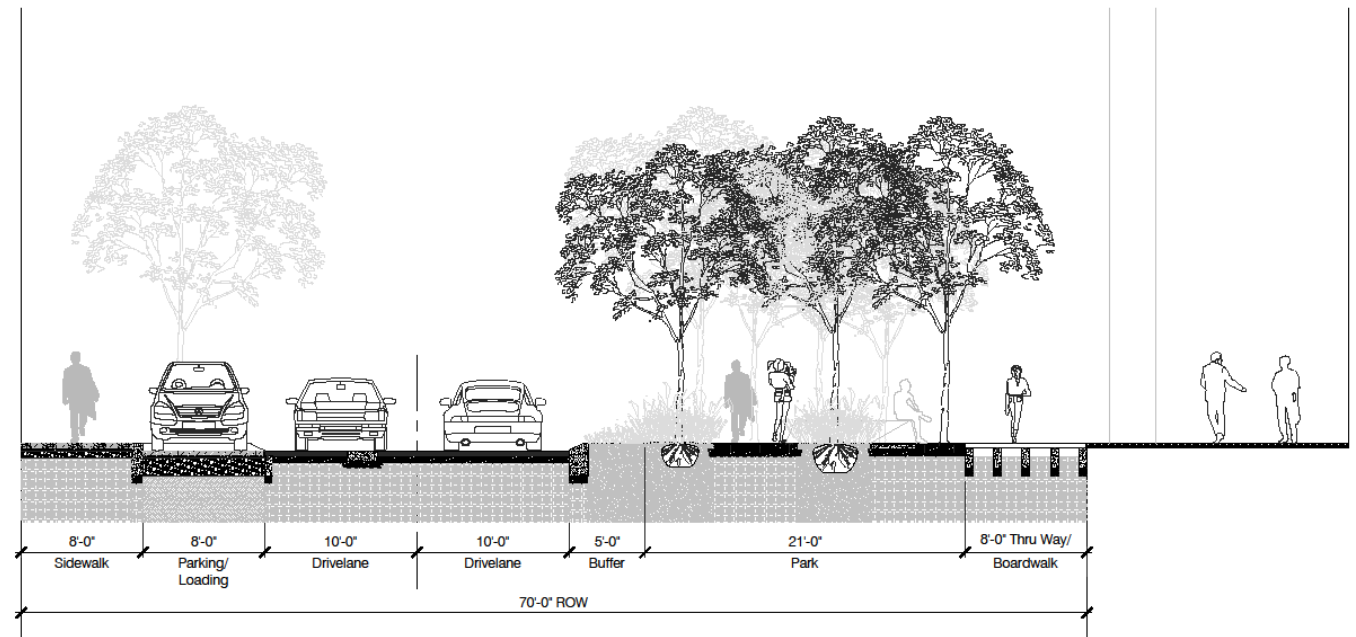
Community updates

- What have you heard since we last met?

Neighborhood projects / efforts

Bluxome Street Linear Park (5th to 4th Streets)

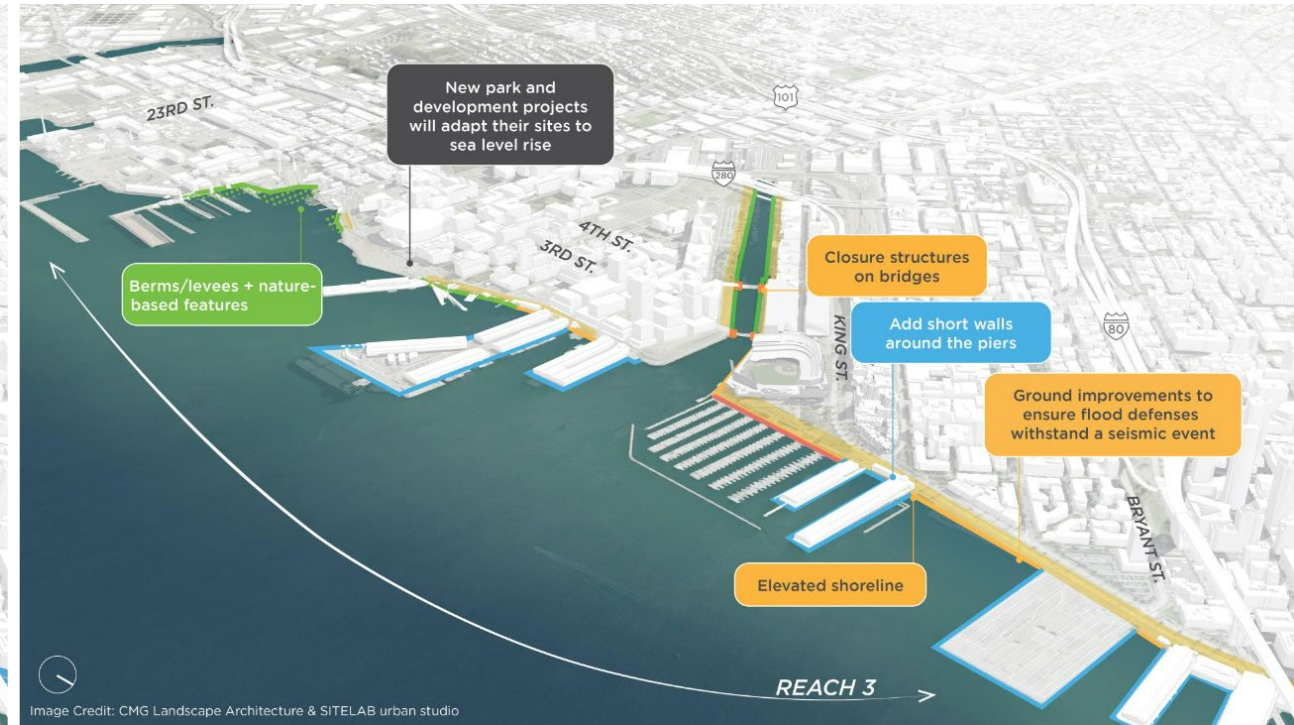
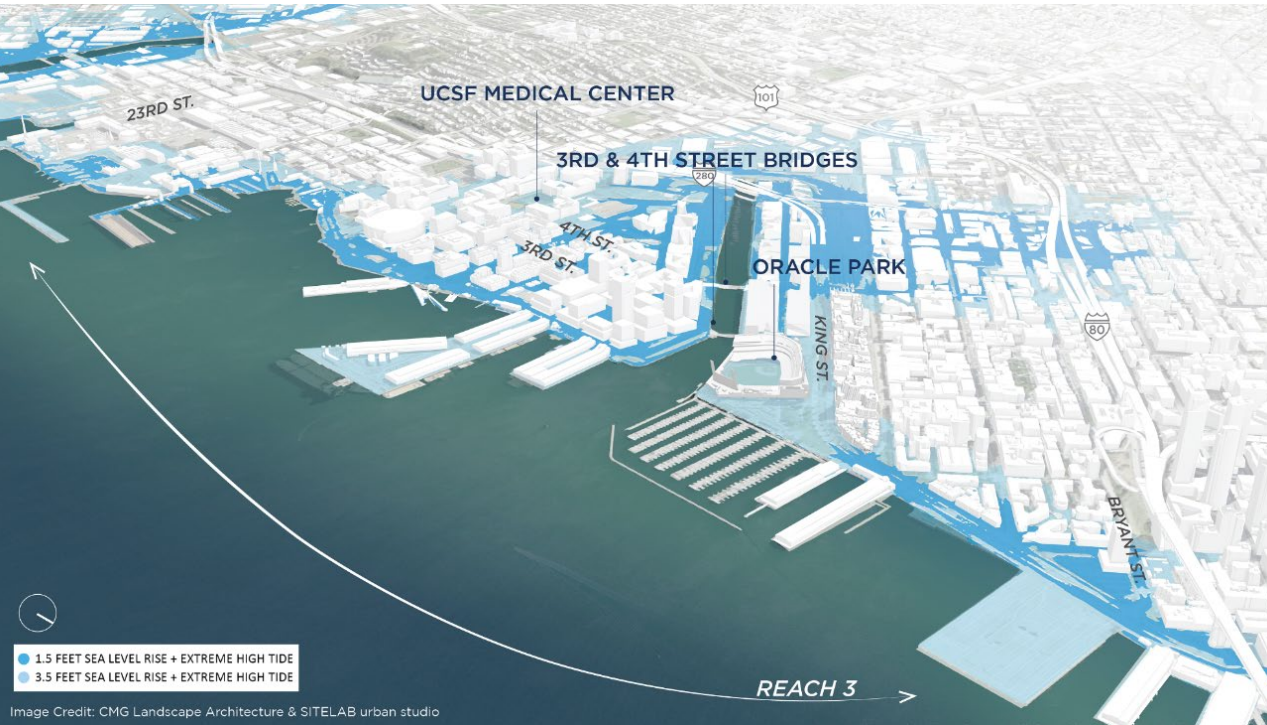
- Entitled as part of 88 Bluxome mixed-use development (2019)
- Update: Major Encroachment Permit in process



3 Bluxome Street Section at Park
Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0"

Neighborhood projects / efforts

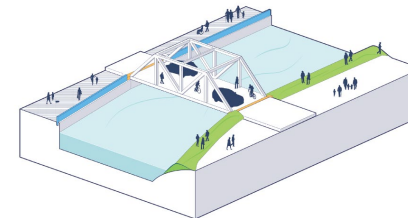
SF Port Waterfront Flood Study – Draft published and 60-day comment period is underway



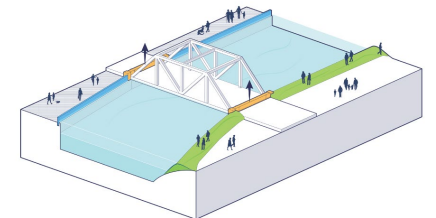
[San Francisco Waterfront Flood Study - Draft Plan | SF Port](#)

[San Francisco Waterfront Flood Study \(arcgis.com\)](#)

[Mission Creek \(arcgis.com\)](#)



Construct Shoreline Flood Protection with Closure Structures



Closure Structures during a Flood Event

An aerial, grayscale photograph of a city street, likely San Francisco, showing a wide street with multiple lanes, a set of tracks in the center, and various buildings on either side. The background shows a bay and hills.

Urban Design: Public Realm & Streetscape Opportunities

(Hugo Errazuriz, AECOM)

Progress Summary

Where we are...

- Completed mapping of existing conditions within and around the study area, including previously planned proposed activities *(presented during RWG Meetings 5 & 6)*
- Gathered input from mapping and tour, and identified preliminary areas for improvements and potential public realm opportunities *(presented during RWG Meeting 6)*
- Current focus is on **streetscape needs assessment** leading to **concept design**, including a toolkit of public realm strategies, and a matrix that relates the strategies to RWG priorities (as developed in the Context Dashboard).

Streetscape Design

Objectives... Why...

What are hoping to do with the streetscape improvements:

- **people first:** designed for pedestrian comfort _____   
- **safety of movement:** clear areas for multimodal movement _____  
- **active and inclusive:** programs and uses _____    
- **green:** water-sensitive design _____  



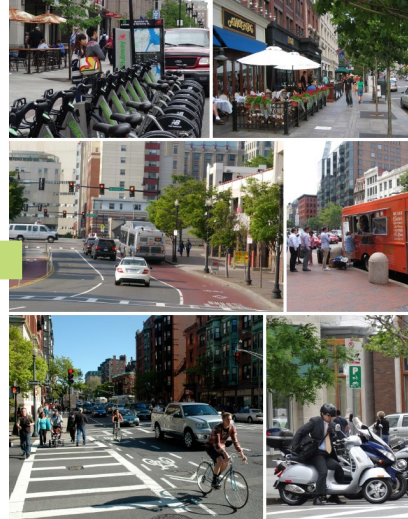
*Others? What else would you like to see here?
How does this relate to the RWG priorities?*

Streetscape Design Public Realm Opportunities

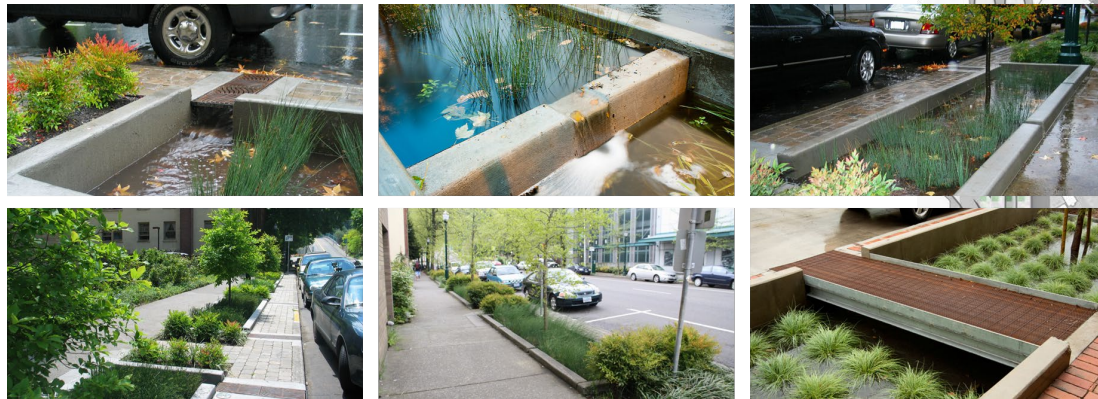


<https://sfplanning.org/resource/better-streets-plan>

SF Better Streets | A guide to making street improvements in San Francisco



Complete streets best practice and inspiration

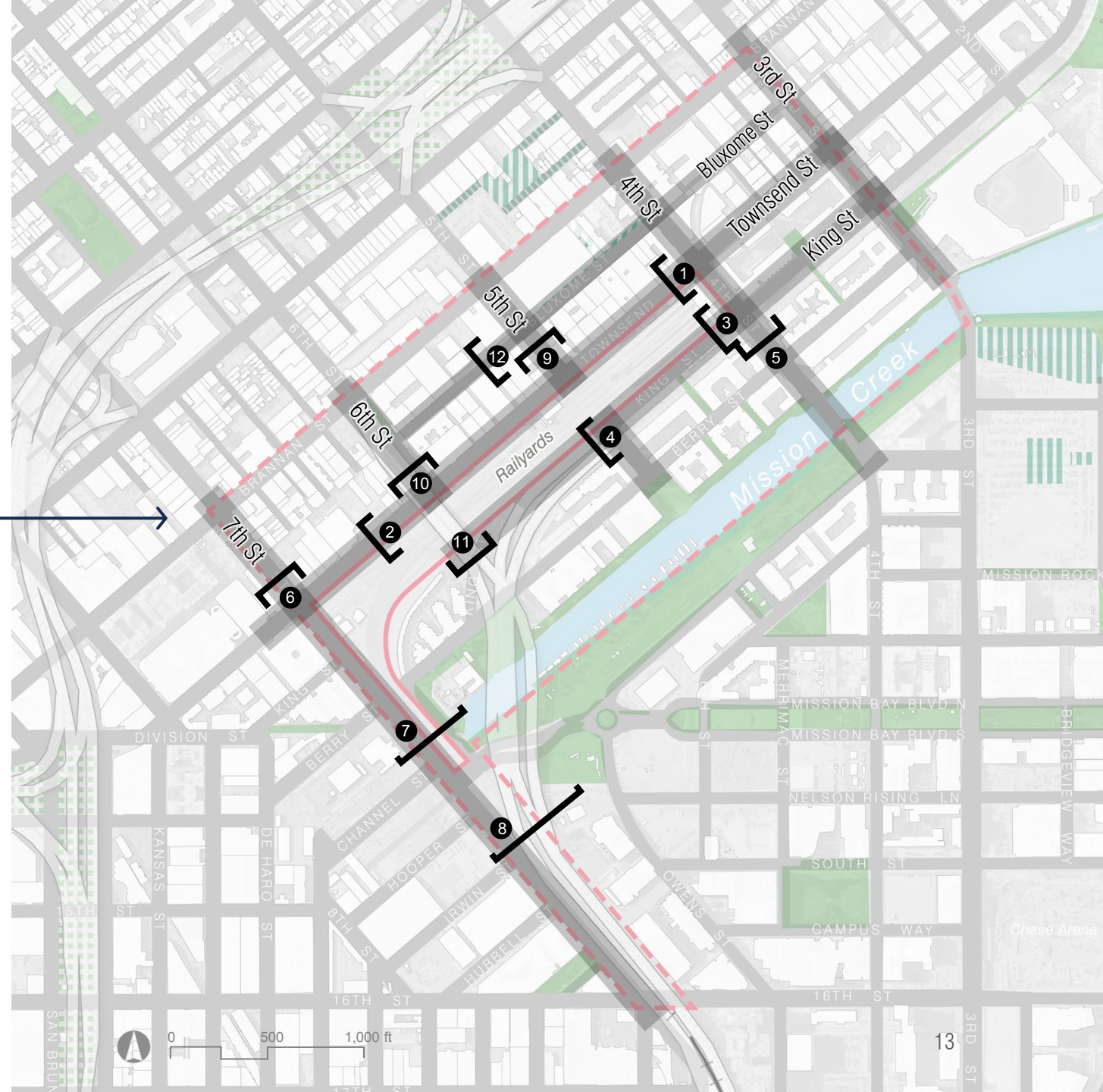


Incorporation of stormwater management and green strategies

Streetscape Opportunities

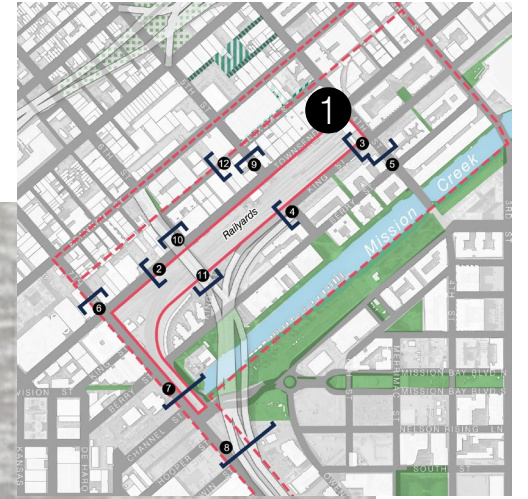
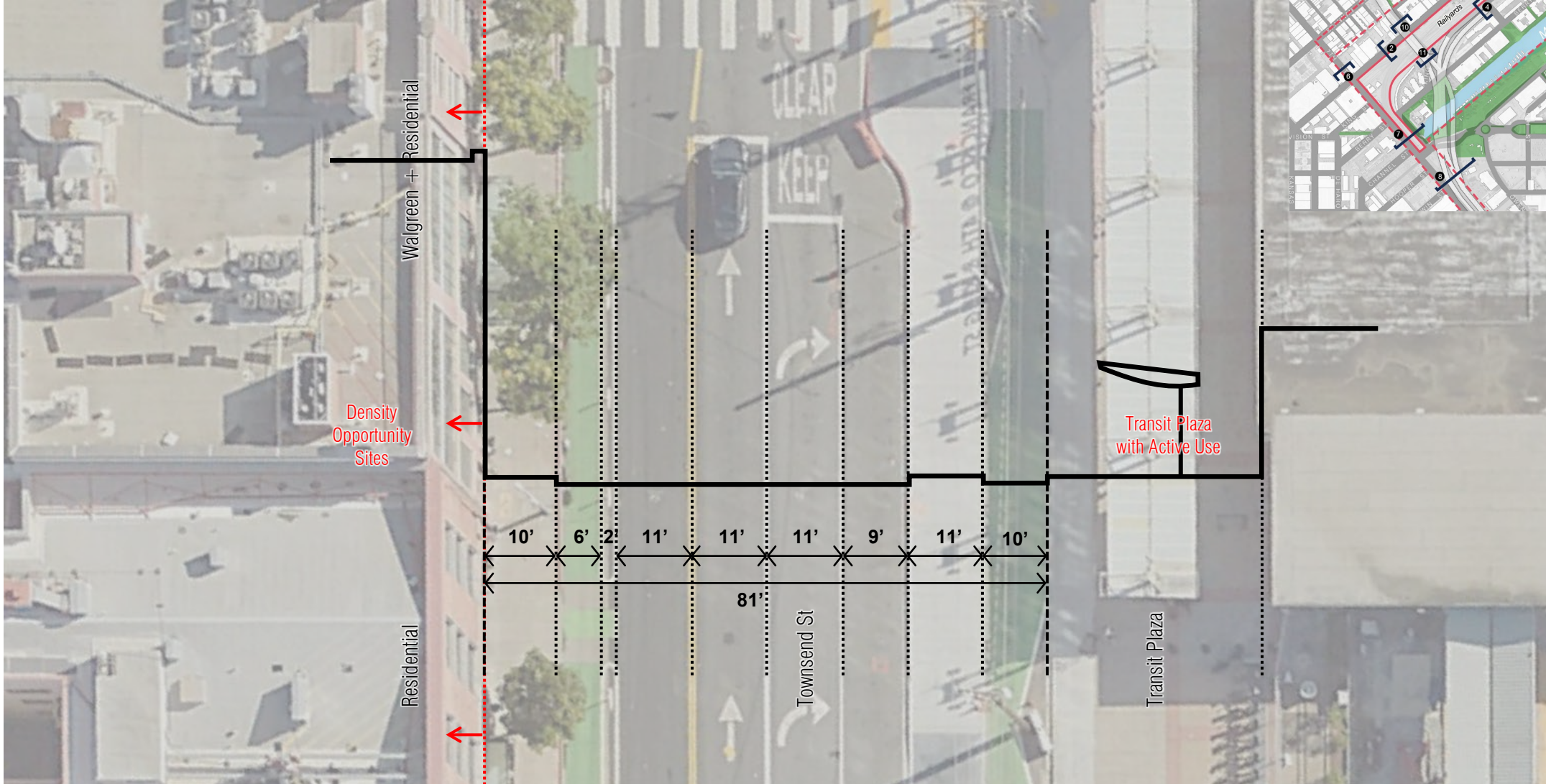
Street selection and classification

Based on information gathered from the neighborhood mapping exercise and the potential public realm opportunities findings, we have identified 12 street sections to help guide our **streetscape needs assessment**



Current Conditions

1. Townsend St / 4th St - Mixed-use



Current Conditions

1. Townsend St / 4th St - Mixed-use

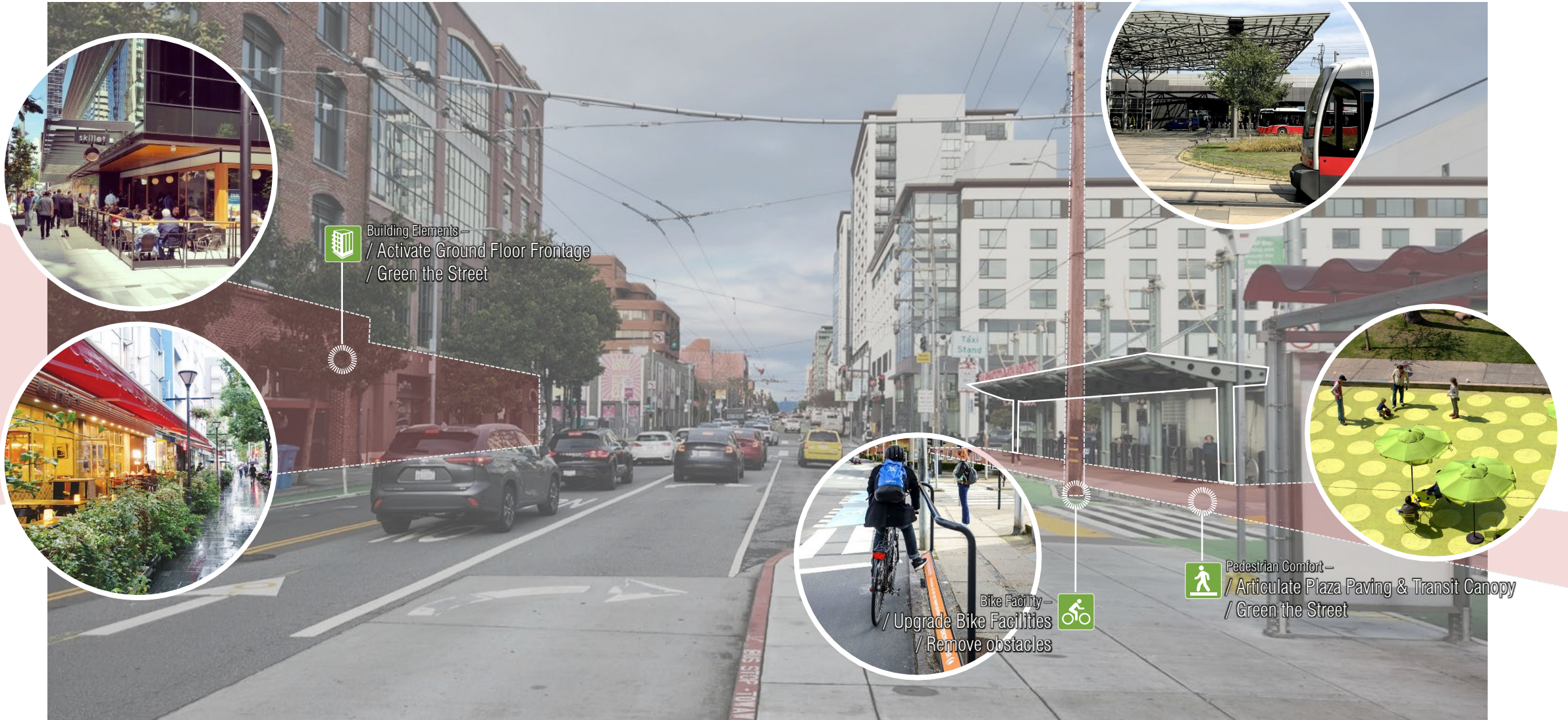
Preliminary Observations

- Crossing is not safe and the sidewalk needs continuity
- Poor active ground floor frontage
- Bicycle lane is interrupted by posts and other obstacles
- Vehicular movement/direction is confusing
- Others?
- To be added...



Potential Improvements (reference only)

1. Townsend St / 4th St - Mixed-use



Building Elements –
/ Activate Ground Floor Frontage
/ Green the Street

Pedestrian Comfort –
/ Articulate Plaza Paving & Transit Canopy
/ Green the Street

Bike Facility –
/ Upgrade Bike Facilities
/ Remove obstacles

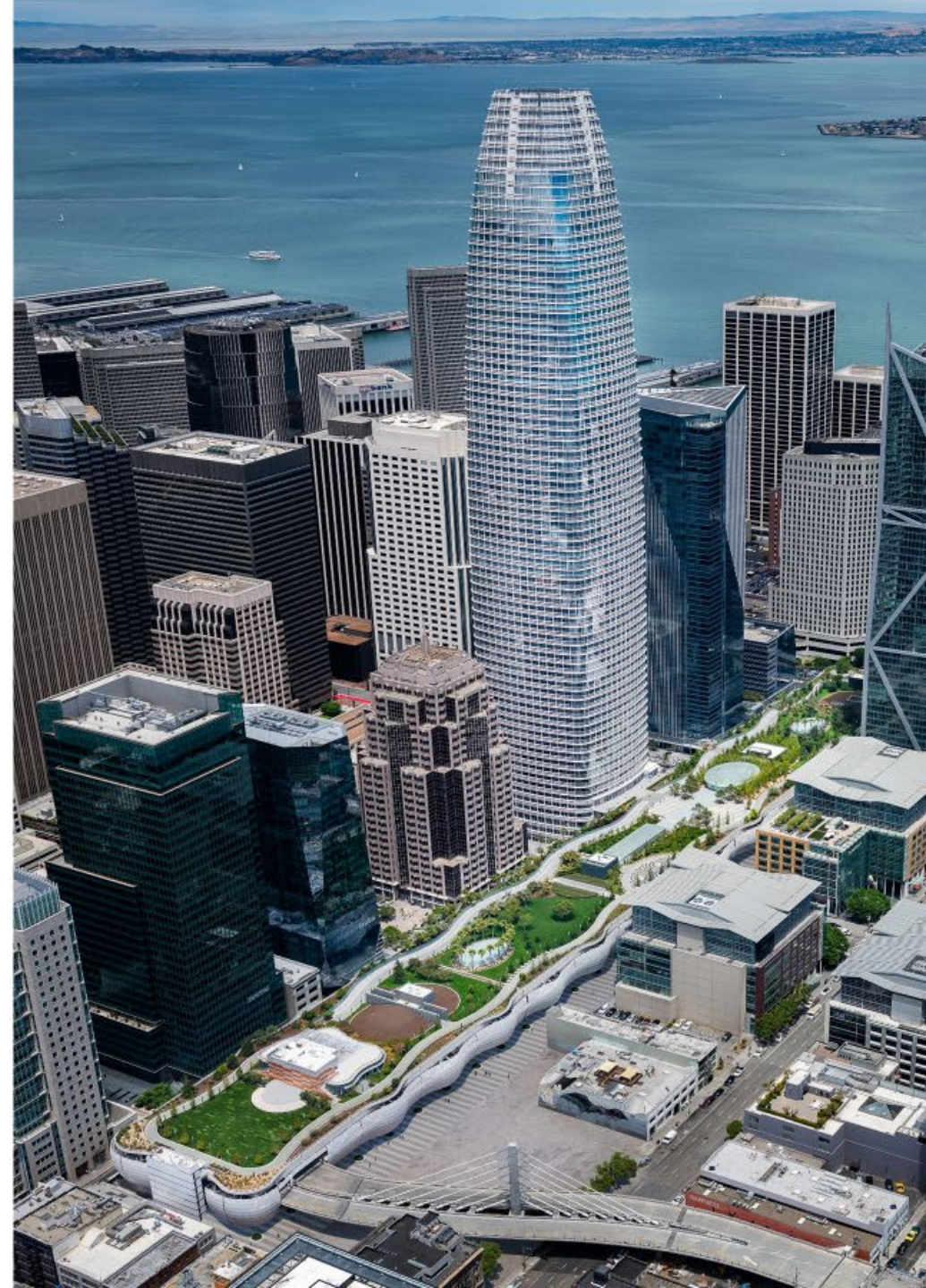


The Portal (DTX) Update

(Lily Madjus Wu, TJPA)

The Portal Status

- In the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts CIG program pipeline:
 - Dec 2021: Entered Project Development (PD) phase
 - Spring 2024:
 - Received Medium-High rating Feb 2024
 - Recommended for \$500M in President Biden's FY 2025 proposed USDOT budget
 - Expects entry into the Engineering phase and federal share confirmation of 49.4% of cost
- Secured \$60M in TIRCP PD funding to advance preconstruction activities
- Selected Progressive Design Build as our project delivery method for our largest construction contract 40-CT Main Civil and Tunnel
- Completed 30% design and generated industry interest resulting in an impressive set of four respondent teams to our RFQ for the 40-CT contract





PAX Update

(Jesse Koehler, CTA)

PAX Project Background

- **Railyard Alignment & Benefits Study (SF Planning - Completed 2018)**
 - Established neighborhood connectivity, safety, rail operations, and traffic goals
 - Studied undergrounding the at-grade crossings in the area to address local traffic challenges
 - Established the PAX alignment, extending south from the 4th & King Railyards to continue the tunneled alignment of The Portal / DTX
- **Southeast Rail Station Study (SF Planning - Completed 2022)**
 - Studied potential future station locations within San Francisco in the Dogpatch and Bayview
- **PAX Initiation Study (SFCTA - Completed 2022)**
 - Evaluated multiple tunnel alternative alignments south of DTX interface
 - Considered project constraints and narrowed range of feasible alternatives



PAX Project Development

2020-22

Project Initiation
Study (planning/
concept design)



~18-24 months
Starting Summer/Fall 2024

Pre-
Environmental
Bridging Study



Potential Future Phase

Environmental

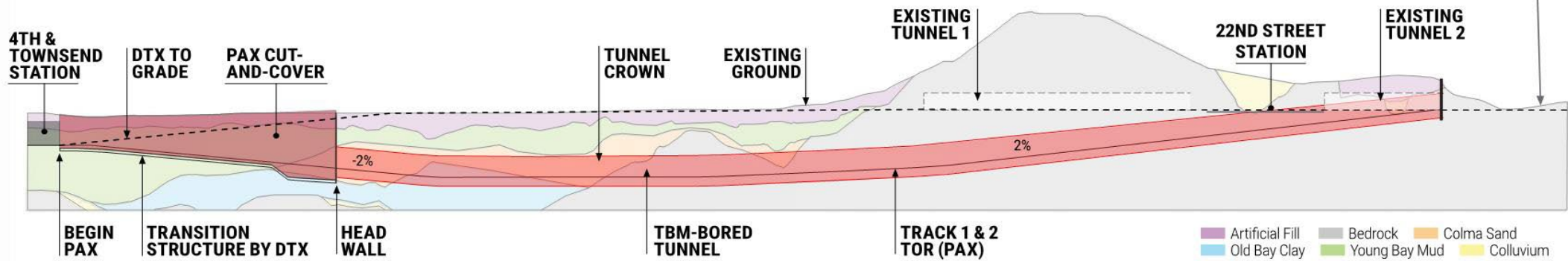
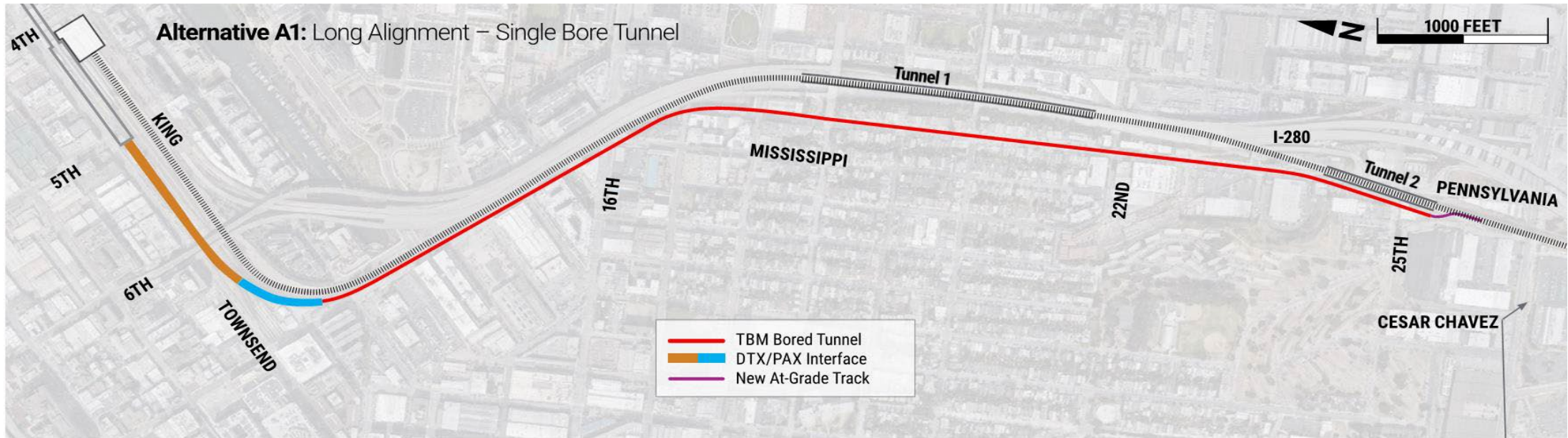
Key Outcomes:

- Developed and narrowed feasible alternatives
- Prepared planning-level cost estimate
- Advanced assessment of project interfaces

- Assess current planning context
- Refine technical understanding of alternatives
- Look for opportunities to reduce project cost and risk
- Public and stakeholder engagement
- Scoping of subsequent phase

- Advance preliminary design
- Funding Plan development

Example Alternative





Preliminary Business Case Update

(Caltrain – DJ Baxter)

PBC Process

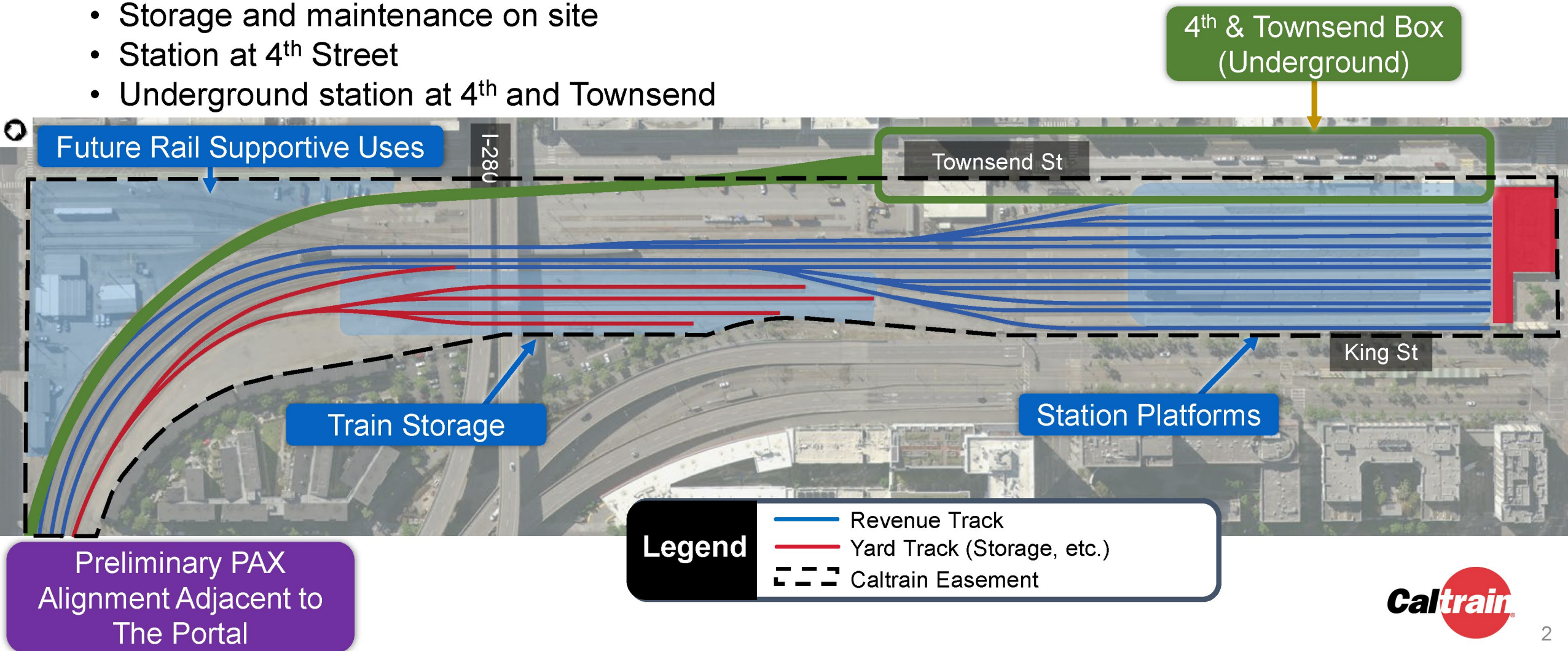
*The Preliminary Business Case (PBC) is a **study of alternatives** and will require board action to help determine a viable path forward.*



Baseline Condition – The Portal Complete

Infrastructure:

- Storage and maintenance on site
- Station at 4th Street
- Underground station at 4th and Townsend



PBC Alternatives

1

PHASE 1: (unified design) + Offsite Storage as Precursor

- Independent design allows for all potential Phase 2 scenarios
- Phase 1 options meets Caltrain and Prologis requirements
- Offsite Storage is required as a precursor
- Creates early-stage development and modernized rail station for Caltrain at 4th and King



2

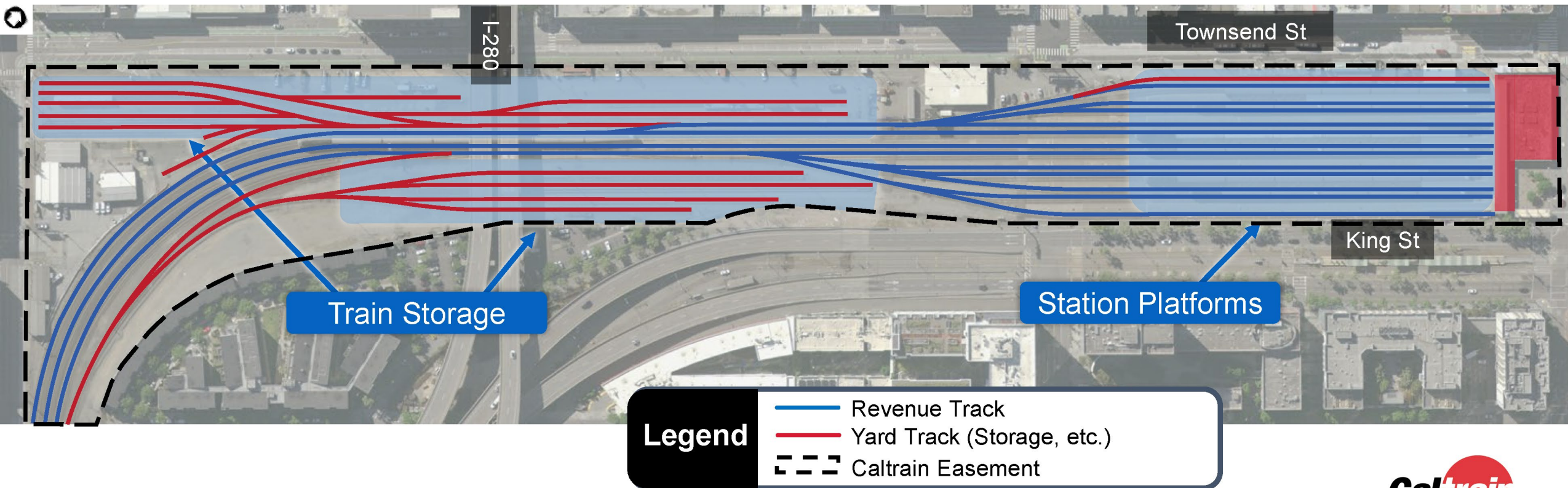
PHASE 2: (3 potential paths forward) + Offsite Storage as Precursor

All Phase 2 Railyard Alternatives are dependent and linked to timing of The Portal, the PBC process will not select a single preferred outcome

Baseline Condition – without The Portal

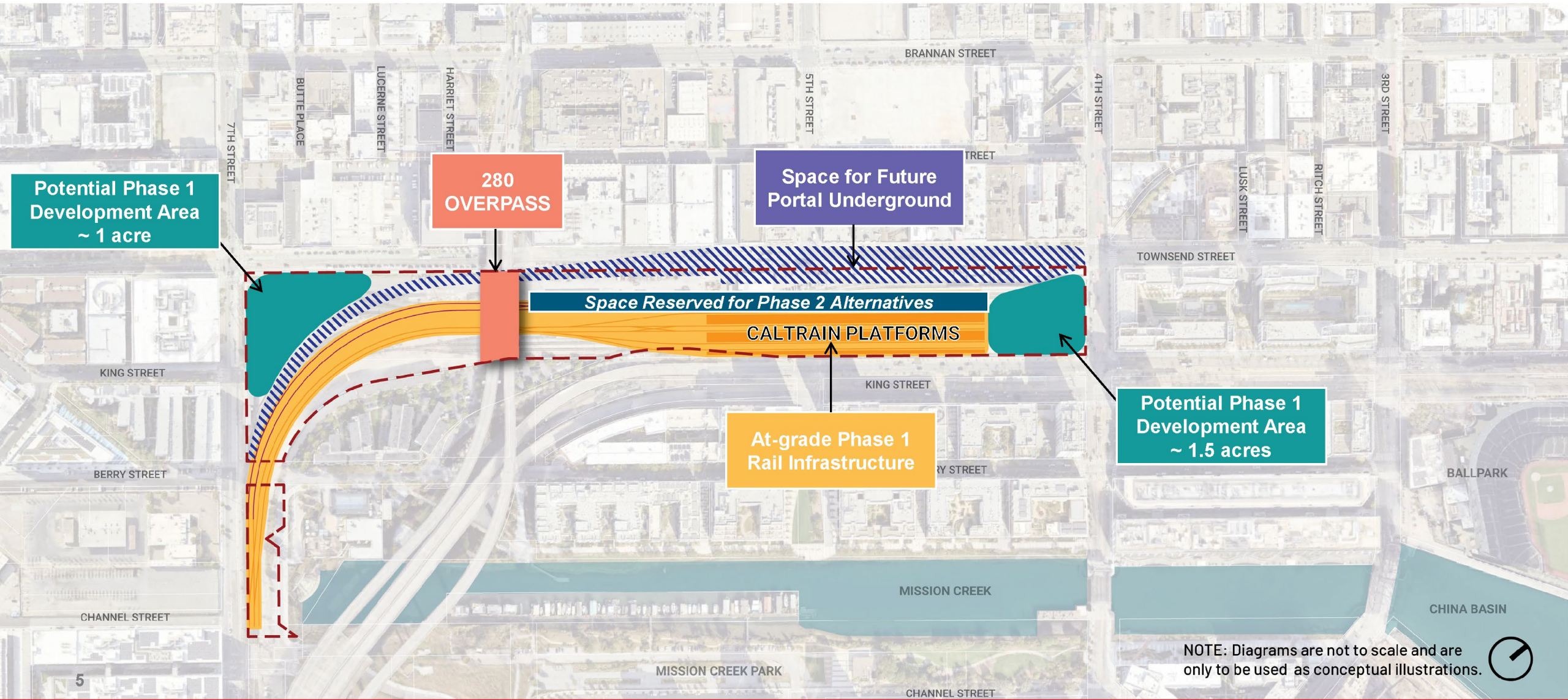
Infrastructure:

- Storage and maintenance on site
- Station at 4th Street



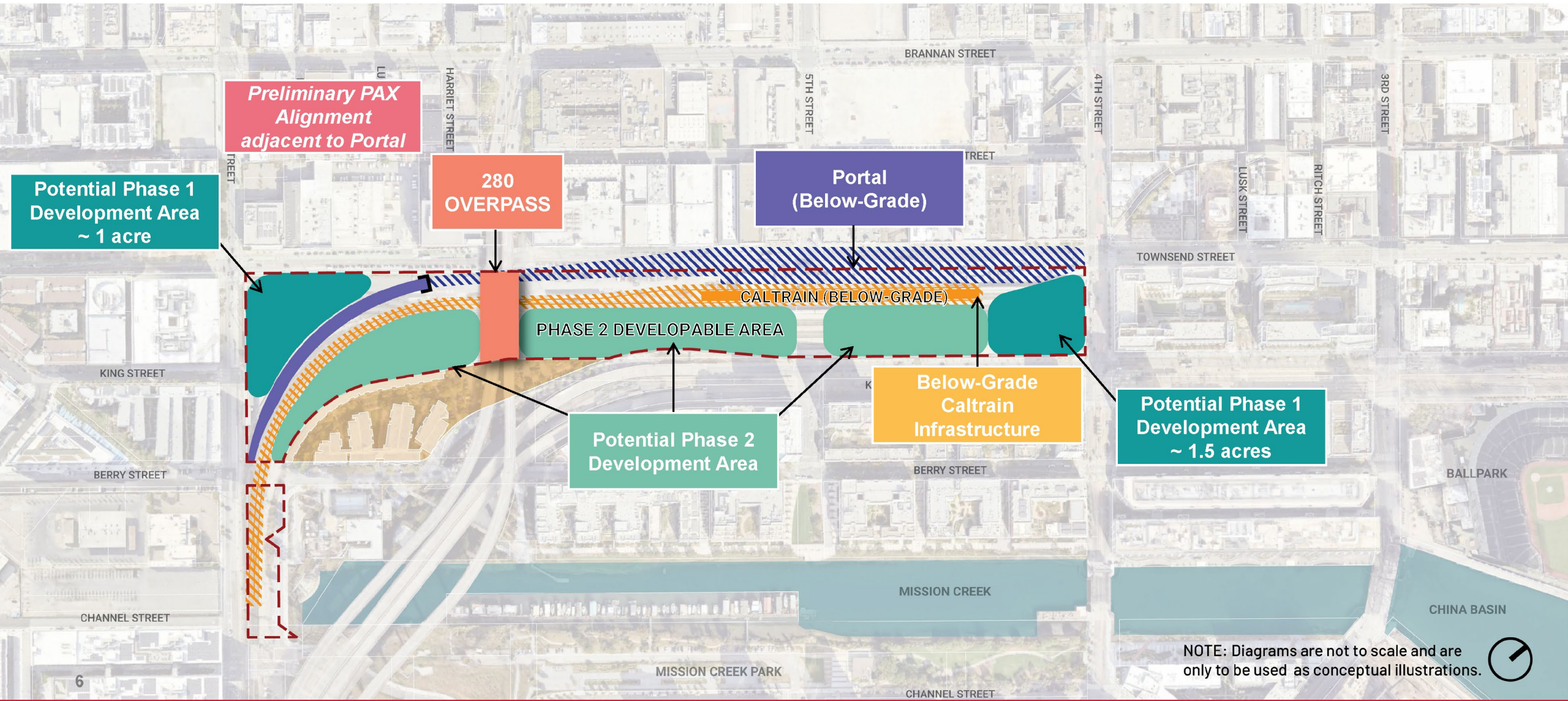
Phase 1: Modernized Caltrain Station

At-grade Phase 1 solution with modernized platforms and station



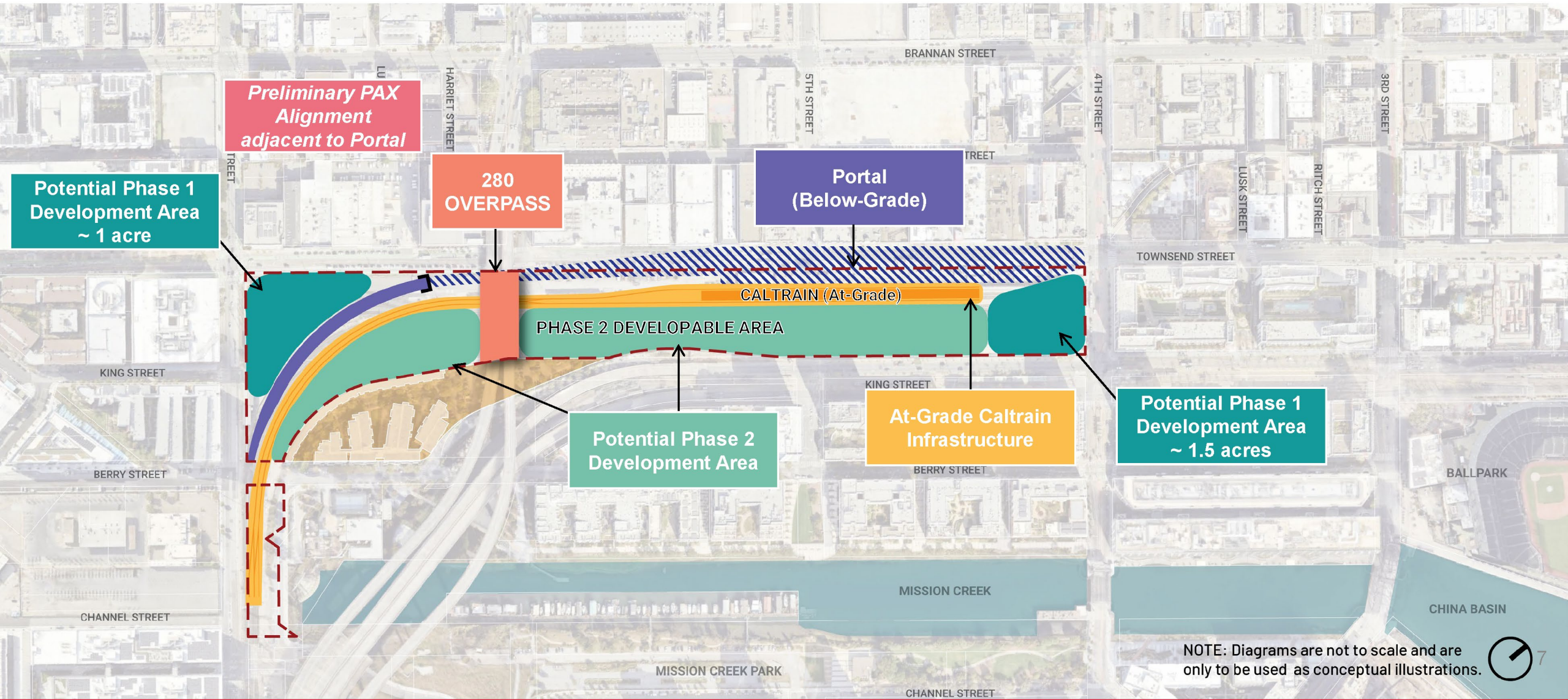
Phase 2: Alternative 1a (Portal on-schedule)

The Portal complete plus one underground Caltrain platform



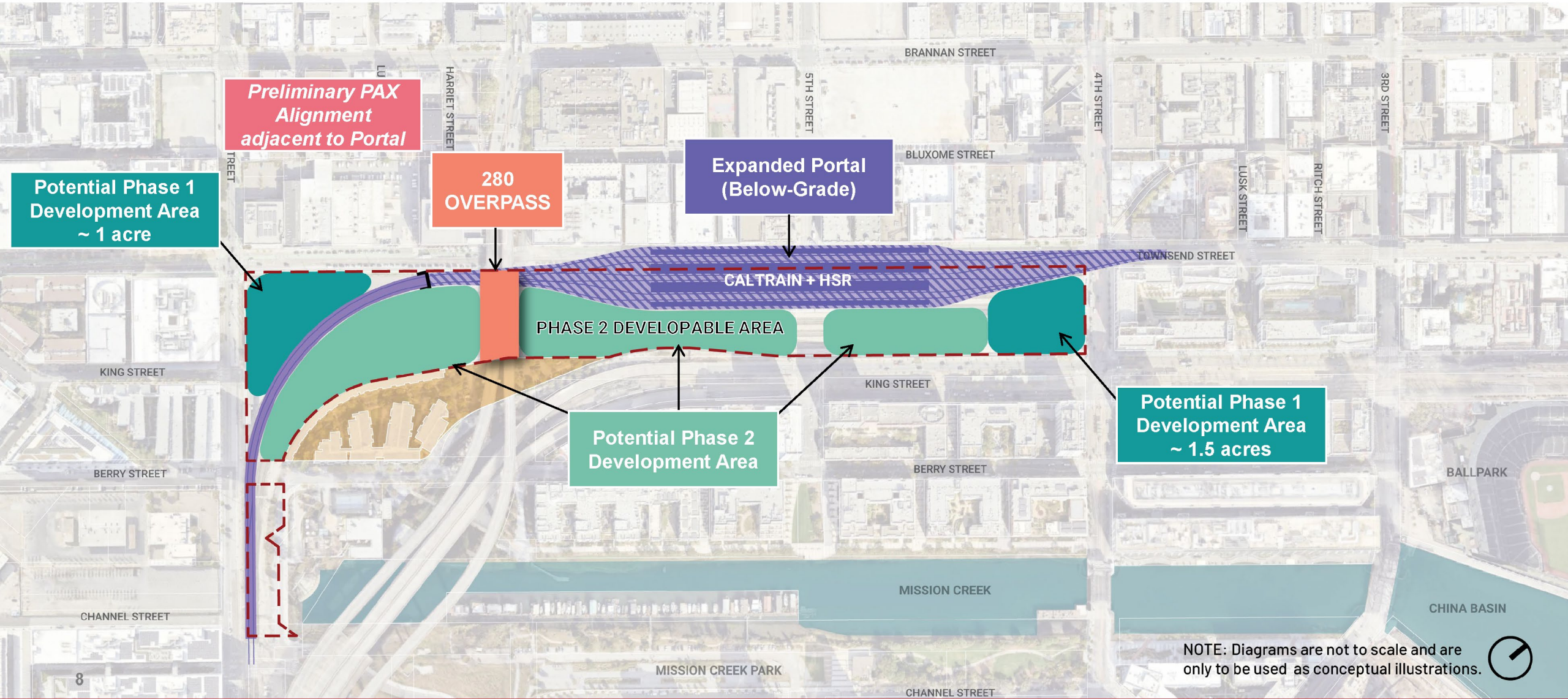
Phase 2: Alternative 1b (Portal on-schedule)

The Portal complete plus one at-grade Caltrain platform



Phase 2: Alternative 2 (Portal extended schedule)

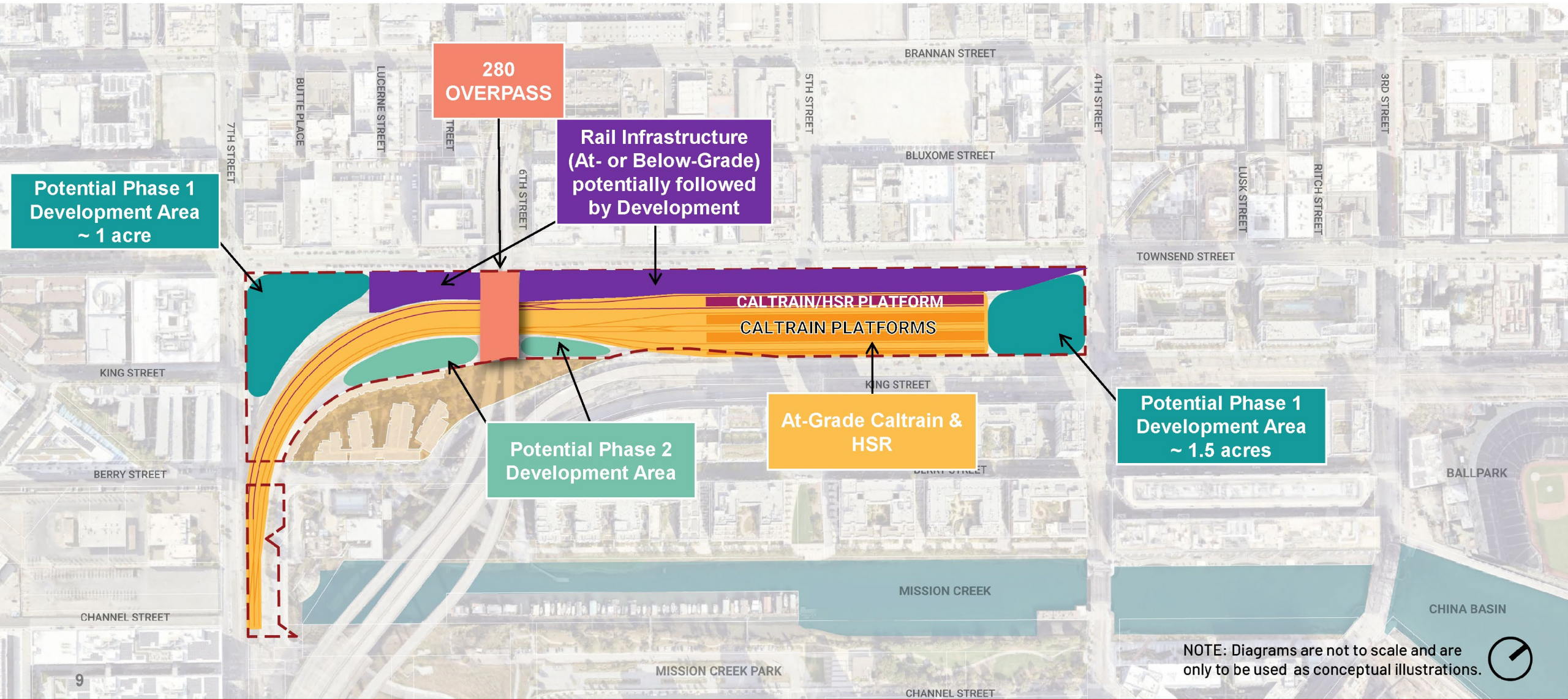
The Portal is redesigned to provide additional Caltrain infrastructure



NOTE: Diagrams are not to scale and are only to be used as conceptual illustrations.



Phase 2: Alternative 3 (At-Grade Infrastructure)



NOTE: Diagrams are not to scale and are only to be used as conceptual illustrations.



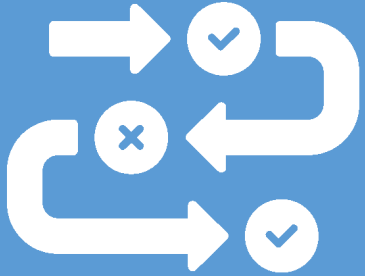
Storage Needs Analysis

- **Some offsite storage is required in every phase, in any Alternative, to support the Adopted Service Vision (ASV)**
 - *ASV = 8 Caltrain + 4 HSR trains per hour (tph)*
- In the baseline conditions, Caltrain has the onsite capacity for 13 trainsets

Caltrain's North-End Storage Needs to Support Railyards Development		
	Moderate Growth	High Growth
Total Storage Needed	• 13 electrified tracks	• 21 electrified tracks
Caltrain Future Storage Need based on Railyards Alternatives	• 1 track available onsite • 12 tracks needed offsite	• 1 track available onsite • 20 tracks needed offsite

Note: Revenue platform tracks are considered in onsite storage capacity, except that 1 platform track must be maintained clear at any given time for contingency scenarios. The figures in Table 2 reflect this operational consideration.

Decision Making and Next Steps



Caltrain Board Decision

- Approval to advance the study of Phases 1 & 2
- Approval of an amended/new MOU with Prologis



Post-PBC Workplan

- Advance Rail/Infrastructure Work
- Continued analysis of storage needs
- Identification of potential funding sources
- Visioning and Master Planning
- Public outreach
- Ready for CEQA and Entitlement Process

An aerial, grayscale photograph of San Francisco, California, showing the city's dense urban landscape. The image captures the city's iconic architecture, including the Transamerica Pyramid and other skyscrapers in the background. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the distance, spanning the Golden Gate Strait. The foreground shows a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with a prominent railway corridor running through the center. The overall scene is presented in a muted, monochromatic palette, with the text overlaid in a contrasting color.

Comments and Questions

(RWG – Provided prior to meeting)

General comments

- The presentation does not address the surrounding area or community.
- This is the first introduction of the concept of off-site storage.
- The potential Phase 1 development area is underwhelming.

Clarifying questions

Portal/ DTX/ PAX

- When will the group know more about planning and timelines for Portal/ DTX, high-speed rail?
[was this addressed in earlier item 2?]
- What is the likelihood the Portal will remain on schedule?
- How do the PBC alternatives relate to PAX? Which alternatives help advance or constrain PAX?

Clarifying questions

Off-site storage

- Should the RWG assume that off-site storage is confirmed?
- Will offsite storage require dedicated land and facilities owned by JPB [Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, Caltrain]?
- Who will pay for offsite storage?
- How does current litigation between CA High-Speed Rail and City of Brisbane over train storage impact the approach/viability of Caltrain finding storage space?
- Prologis owns commercial buildings in Brisbane, are they viable storage locations?
- Is train storage along the ROW in southern San Francisco a viable storage option if space above storage were activated for community uses?

Clarifying questions

Resilience

- With the Port's recent release of the Waterfront Coastal Flood Study, how do the findings in the report impact the current thinking around the above grade vs. below grade infrastructure in the PBC Alternatives? Are there additional considerations given the likelihood of sea level change and impacts to rail infrastructure?

Clarifying questions

Development

- Other cities build over rail; is the assumption that later phases of development will have to be “unencumbered” by rail?
- Even if Caltrain and/or Portal rail is below-grade, what are the limitations of building over the tracks?
- The AMP presentation made reference to high/ medium/ low growth ridership scenarios. Do these scenarios materially affect the railyards development itself? How? (i.e., amenities, greenspace, housing...)
- What types of height and density will be required to make any phase/alternative viable?

Clarifying questions

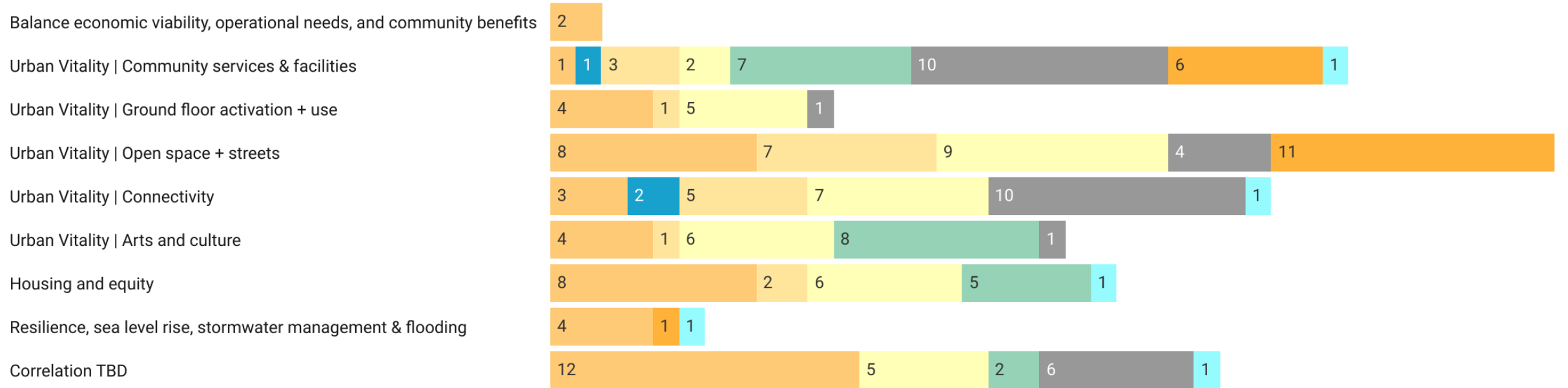
Phase 1

- Did the team consider different Phase 1 scenarios/ approaches?
- How will Phase 1 support/advance the goals identified through community efforts and working group discussions? (connectivity, safety, ground floor activation, affordable housing...)

Railyards Working Group Emerging Themes

Representation of RWG emerging themes across analyzed neighborhood plans - each entry represents a policy, measure or community input item.

■ Central SoMa (South of Market) Area Plan
 ■ Rail Alignment and Benefits Study
 ■ Showplace - 2021 update
 ■ Showplace Square Potrero Area Plan
 ■ SoMa Pilipinas CHHESS
 ■ UCSF long range development plan
 ■ Western SoMa Area Plan
 ■ SF Waterfront Study (Port of SF)



Created with Datawrapper

Other questions

Reactions

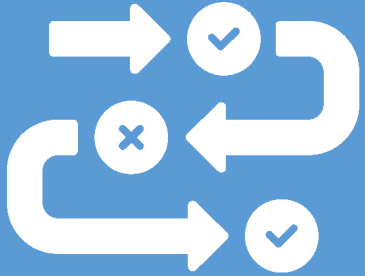
- How would you describe the Caltrain's AMP Committee members' reaction to this presentation?

An aerial, grayscale photograph of San Francisco, California, showing the city's dense urban landscape. The image captures the city from a high vantage point, looking down a major thoroughfare that runs parallel to the waterfront. In the foreground, several sets of railroad tracks run down the center of the street. To the right, a multi-lane highway curves along the edge of the city. The background features the city's skyline with numerous skyscrapers, including the Transamerica Pyramid, and the Golden Gate Bridge spanning the water. The text "Next Steps" is overlaid in a large, orange font, and "(All)" is centered below it in a smaller, black font.

Next Steps

(All)

Decision Making and Next Steps



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- Public outreach
- Readyng for CEQA and Entitlement Process

Next Steps Q2 2024

Railyards Working Group

- Questions
- Asynchronous input and regular updates to align with PBC process, *is this working?*
- In person meeting (?)

Project team

- Addressing RWG questions/ comments related to PBC/PAX/DTX.
- Continue to develop Public Realm and Streetscape Design.
- Coordination with The Portal (DTX), PAX and the PW/PUC Stormwater Management Studies.
- RWG meeting #8, June 18th 2024 from 5:30pm to 6:45pm

Thank You

sfplanning.org/railyards

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