



**REPORT TO THE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

AGENDA ITEM NO. VIC
HPC MEETING: 08/22/16

August 22, 2016

FROM: DANIEL ZACK, AICP, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Development and Resource Management Dept.

APPROVED BY

BY: KARANA HATTERSLEY-DRAYTON, M.A.
Historic Preservation Project Manager
Secretary, Historic Preservation Commission

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: REVIEW AND PROVIDE COMMENTS ON DESIGN PROPOSAL AND
SALVAGE PLANS FOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS FOR THE BELMONT
AVENUE SUBWAY AND TRAFFICE CIRCLE, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED
RAIL AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1606(b)(6).

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission review the attached draft memorandum prepared by California High-Speed Rail (CHSR) staff and consultants and provide comments. City of Fresno Preservation and Public Works staff have reviewed and approve the revisions to measures first proposed for the Belmont Overcrossing, Traffic Circle and Belmont Avenue subway in the August 2012 *Final Built Environment Treatment Plan Merced to Fresno Section Project EIR/EIS(BETP)*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has prepared a draft Memorandum which describes revisions to treatment plans for architectural elements from the Belmont Avenue Subway, Traffic Circle and Union Pacific (Southern Pacific) Railroad Bridge. The three resources are located to the east of Roeding Park and were constructed in 1932. The Subway and Traffic Circle were evaluated as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the environmental review for the High-Speed Rail Project. Both the railroad bridge and Belmont Avenue subway will be demolished as they lay within the right-of-way for the new High-Speed Rail corridor. Initially the BETP recommended incorporating architectural elements from these resources into the new Belmont Overcrossing which will be constructed at this location. These measures no longer are feasible due to practical concerns from an engineering perspective as well as legitimate requests on behalf of the Union Pacific Railroad and the City of Fresno. The Railroad Company has requested receipt of the two Southern Pacific Railroad seals which are affixed to the railroad bridge in order to preserve them in their museum in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The City of Fresno has requested receipt of the bronze dedication plaque affixed to the eastern end of the Belmont Subway. The plaque will be stored until an appropriate interpretive exhibit can be prepared and placed in a location that is publicly accessible. This wayside exhibit will include the plaque as well as photos and information about the Belmont Avenue Subway. The Treatment Plan also required that the new Belmont Avenue Overcrossing reflect the original design and character of the Belmont Avenue Subway and

Traffic Circle. The proposed design for the new bridge incorporates the lancet designs of the subway as an intaglio or hollow relief pattern into the bridge parapet.

BACKGROUND

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) proposes to construct, operate and maintain an electric-powered high-speed train (HST) system in California. Two of the nine sections of the 800-mile route meet here in Fresno; a Merced to Fresno HST Project would connect a Merced station and a Fresno station. A Fresno to Bakersfield HST Project would connect Fresno with Bakersfield to the south. Due to federal funding, the project meets the definition of a "federal undertaking," pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.16(y). As a consequence the Project must comply with both federal and California environmental laws and protocols. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead agency for compliance with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as other federal laws. The California High-Speed Rail Authority is serving as a joint-lead agency under NEPA and is the lead agency for compliance under the California Environmental Quality Act.

In August 2011 the joint agencies released an EIS/EIR for the two sections, Merced to Fresno and Fresno to Bakersfield. As part of the technical studies for these environmental reports, historic surveys were prepared that identified and evaluated the cultural resources within the Project's Area of Potential Effect (APE), with "cultural resources" defined as including "prehistoric archaeological sites, historic-era sites, traditional cultural properties as well as historic buildings, structures, landscapes, districts and linear features." Pursuant to FMC 12-1606(b)(5)(6) the Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to participate in environmental reviews and to comment on land use and planning as they may affect designated Historic Resources, Historic Districts and Heritage Properties "as the Commission deems appropriate." In addition, both federal and State statutes ensure public participation. In December 2011 Mayor Ashley Swearengin signed an Agreement with the California High-Speed Rail Authority accepting Consulting Party status for the City of Fresno pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act

CONCLUSION

City of Fresno Preservation and Public Works staff has worked collaboratively with the HSR and Union Pacific Railroad on these revised treatment measures and has found these revisions appropriate. The Historic Preservation Commission is asked to review and provide comments.

Attachments: Exhibit A -- *Memorandum, Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle: Design Proposal and Salvage Plan for Architectural Elements*
12 August 2016.
Exhibit B - Photo, Belmont Avenue Subway Plaque, 1932



Memorandum

DATE: August 12, 2016

TO: Stephanie Perez (Federal Railroad Administration), Julianne Polanco (State Historic Preservation Officer), Kathleen Forrest, Historian (Office of Historic Preservation), Patrick Boyd, Chair (City of Fresno Historic Preservation Commission)

FROM: Dennis Kong (HSR Environmental), Robert Ramirez (CP-1 PCM), Macie Cleary (TPZP)

SUBJECT: Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle: Design Proposal and Salvage Plan for Architectural Elements

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the process for implementation of pre-construction treatment measures for the Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle described in the Merced to Fresno Section Built Environment Treatment Plan (BETP). Section 4.1.4.1 of the BETP calls for the preparation of a technical memorandum describing the rationale for the proposed design of the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing and a plan for the salvage of architectural elements from the existing Belmont Avenue Subway, specifically the Southern Pacific emblems and dedication plaque. The BETP also requires this memorandum be accompanied by engineering drawings, at 30 percent completion, depicting the proposed context-sensitive Belmont Avenue Overcrossing design. This memorandum also addresses necessary procedural modifications to fulfil the existing treatment measures resulting from discussions with project stakeholders.

Background

The Belmont Avenue Subway (Bridge No. 42C0072) and Traffic Circle is located in and along the proposed right-of-way for the California High Speed Train (HST). Completed in 1932, the Belmont Avenue Subway Bridge and Traffic Circle is a combined effort between Fresno County, the City of Fresno, the State of California and the Southern Pacific Railroad and was part of the efforts to eliminate dangerous at-grade railroad crossings. The subway and its associated 200 foot radius traffic circle roadway approach is the first configuration of this type in California to address a key railroad grade-separation along former State Route 99, and is one of the earliest examples of traffic circles in the West. The project was the first to incorporate a traffic circle as a design approach to a subway.

The Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) based upon the survey and evaluation conducted for the HST project in 2011. Both the subway and traffic circle are treated as a single historic property for the purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). As part of the previous investigation and analysis, the property was determined to be eligible under Criterion C for its engineering design, both as the first configuration of this type in the American west that solved a key railroad grade crossing problem along former State Route 99, and as an example of the work of City of Fresno

Engineer Jean L. Vincenz. The period of significance for the property was determined to be 1932, the year that the structures were built.

The Belmont Avenue Subway is located east of the traffic circle and carries local traffic below the Southern Pacific railroad tracks which is included as part of the historic property. The subway is formed by a reinforced concrete and steel girder bridge spanning 42 feet. While the subway allows vehicle traffic on Belmont Avenue to pass under the Southern Pacific railroad tracks, the traffic circle serves as the intersection between Belmont Avenue (to the east and west) and the Golden State Boulevard (to the north) and N. Wesley Avenue (to the south).

The subway structure is characterized by the balustrade with lancet openings, concrete retaining walls, textured panel surfaces, and a pedestrian tunnel. Other notable features of the subway structure are the Southern Pacific Railroad Company emblems at the center of the balustrade (Figure 1). The blue and gold Southern Pacific Lines emblem was placed at similar bridges and overcrossing throughout the United States. The ubiquitous symbol became iconic, representing the enormity of the transportation empire established by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. Despite the rail line's success, the company was acquired by Union Pacific Railroad in September of 1996. The emblem to be removed prior to demolition at the Belmont Avenue Subway reflects the material integrity of the property as well as its historic association with the important railroad line.

Also at the subject property is a plaque commemorating the construction of the subway attached to the end post of the northeastern railing facing Belmont Avenue (Figure 2). It appears that a similar plaque once existed on the post at the end of the southwestern railing, but that plaque has since been removed.



Figure 1. Southern Pacific Emblem (possibly metal on concrete), view east.



Figure 2. Plaque mounted at northeast end of the subway, view north.

Plan for Salvage of Architectural Elements from Belmont Avenue Subway

The pre-construction treatment measures for the Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle discussed in Section 4.1.4.1 of the BETP called for the salvage and incorporation into the design of the new overcrossing structure architectural elements from the original structure, specifically the one original remaining commemorative subway plaque and two Southern Pacific emblems. This measure was designed to retain key materials and design elements from the original structure and display them in a manner that would convey the property's historical significance to the public. Salvaged items are all elements of the Belmont Avenue Subway. No elements of the Traffic Circle were identified for salvage.

Southern Pacific Emblems

Pre-construction treatment measures in the BETP called for the two Southern Pacific emblems located on the railings of the railroad bridge spanning the subway to be salvaged and incorporated into the new overcrossing structure. However, during a meeting between the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), City of Fresno, and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) held on April 28, 2016, the UPRR, who owns the existing railroad bridge, expressed a desire to retain the two Southern Pacific emblems (Attachment 1). The UPRR indicated they would curate the emblems at their museum in Council Bluffs, Iowa, or at a different museum to be determined at the discretion of UPRR. The Authority and City of Fresno agreed with this request. The decision by UPRR to retain the emblems therefore has made this portion of the treatment measures impossible to implement. As such, prior to demolition, the Southern Pacific Emblems will be salvaged and surrendered to their rightful owner, UPRR. Because UPRR's ownership of the emblems; this action will represent fulfilment of the Authority's obligation with regard to the Southern Pacific Emblems as outlined in the BETP treatment measures.

Belmont Avenue Subway Plaque

Likewise, Section 4.1.4.1 of the BETP called for the Belmont Avenue Subway plaque to be salvaged and incorporated into the new overcrossing structure. Discussions between the Authority and Tutor-Perini/Zachry/Parsons JV (TPZP) concluded that incorporating the plaque into the new structure may prove to be an unsuitable placement following the salvage of this item. The overcrossing structure would provide a limited opportunity for the public to view the plaque

and would require additional interpretive materials in order to properly explain the plaque's relationship with the new overcrossing structure. While the new overcrossing structure may have appeared to be an appropriate location to incorporate the salvaged items in the early conceptual phases when the BETP was written, the structure's overall design provides limited opportunities for the public to safely view the plaque. Additionally, the plaque would be out of context in relation to the new structure.

Therefore, the Authority has proposed incorporating the plaque into an interpretive exhibit as an alternative use for the Belmont Avenue Subway plaque. Incorporating the plaque into an interpretive exhibit will allow members of the general public safe access to the salvaged object. Together with text and images, the display will offer patrons a medium to consider the significance of the plaque within an appropriate historical context in the absence of the original subway structure. This alternative use was presented to the City of Fresno during the April 28, 2016 meeting and the City of Fresno agreed (Attachment 1). UPRR requested the plaque be removed prior to demolition of the existing subway structure. Arrangements for the plaque's removal and temporary storage will be coordinated between the Authority and the City of Fresno.

Per the BETP, possible public locations for the interpretive exhibit would include the Fresno Department of Public Works, Fresno County Library, the Fresno Historical Society, or Fresno City Hall. Other public locations for the interpretive exhibit are possible but will need to be identified and approved by the consulting parties. Specific details regarding the exact location and design of the interpretive exhibit will have to be worked out as part of the construction-period treatment measures for Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle discussed in Section 4.1.4.2 of the BETP. This will require further consultation between the Authority, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the City of Fresno.

Proposed Design for the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing

The Merced to Fresno BETP called for the new HST structure over Belmont Avenue to "respect the original design and character of the Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle by quoting (but not replicating) distinctive design features such as the balustrade or textured panels". Given these parameters, discussions between the Authority and TPZP design staff have resulted in a proposed design for the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing that will incorporate the pierced lancet architectural element featured on the railings of the current Belmont Avenue Subway structure (Figure 3). This design motif is a prominent feature of the existing subway structure and is an architectural element that can be replicated and applied as intaglio or a hollow relief pattern along the bridge parapet of the replacement overcrossing structure. As depicted in Figure 4, the parapet of the replacement overcrossing structure quotes the lancet motif without replicating the original design.



Figure 3. Pierced lancet architectural element on the Belmont Avenue Subway railings, view west.

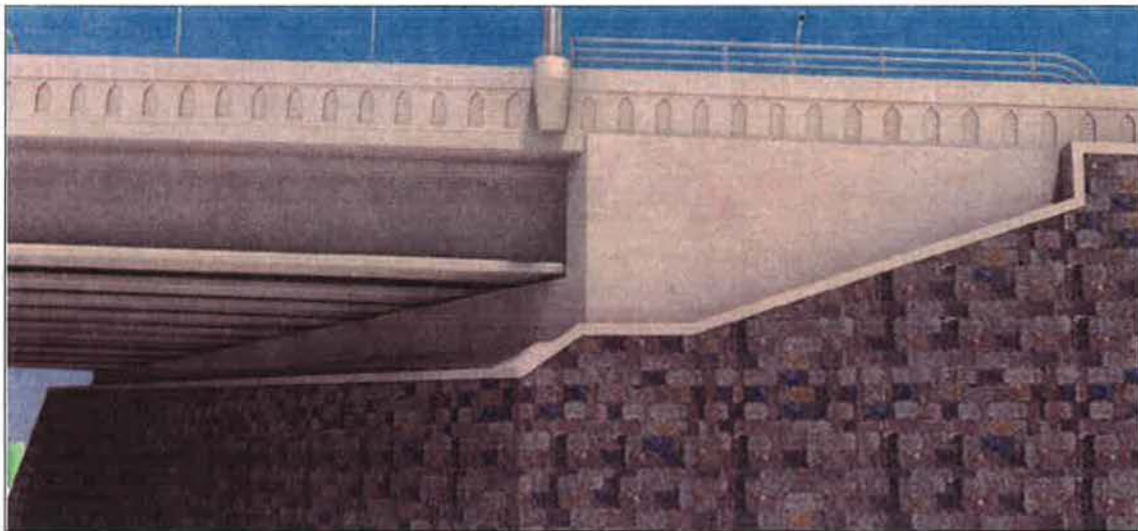


Figure 4. Simulation showing the lancet architectural element applied to the Belmont Overcrossing parapet.

This proposed design was presented to the City of Fresno on May 6, 2016 and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on May 24, 2016 (Attachment 2). During these discussions, representatives from the City of Fresno Public Works and Historic Preservation departments agreed with the proposed design and recommended that the lancet architectural intaglio pattern be at least 1.5 inches in depth and that the design be applied to the concrete pedestrian barriers located on the overcrossing retaining walls. In addition, the FRA concluded that including the lancet architectural element on the pedestrian barriers would mirror the original subway structure design and fulfill the intent of the pre-construction treatment measure for the Belmont Subway and Traffic Circle discussed in Section 4.1.4.1 of the BETP. Initial engineering drawings for the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing called for the placement of metal beam guardrails along sections of the overcrossing structure. These guardrails will be replaced with concrete barriers in order to create a continuous medium to carry the lancet design across the entire overcrossing structure.

The pre-construction treatment measures for the Belmont Avenue Subway and Traffic Circle called for the preparation of this memorandum and inclusion of nominal (30 percent completion) engineering drawings for review and comment by SHPO and City of Fresno Historic Preservation Commission. Unfortunately the overcrossing design was allowed to advance beyond the nominal stage before this memorandum was completed. At present, the overcrossing design drawing has advanced to a draft final stage as evidenced by the design submittal presented in Attachment 3. Despite the advanced nature of the engineering drawings, there is still the opportunity to continue any necessary design refinements prior to the issuance of the final ready-for-construction (RFC) drawings. In the interim, the Authority has worked with TPZP to ensure the necessary changes to the overcrossing design would be made to fulfill the treatment measures discussed in the BETP and those changes would be reflected in the RFC engineering drawings that have yet to be prepared. The Authority will coordinate directly with TPZP environmental and design staff to ensure any recommended refinements resulting from SHPO and City of Fresno Historic Preservation Commission review of this memorandum and design drawings will be made prior to the issuance of the RFC drawings.

Attachment 1

Stakeholder Consultation Regarding Salvage of Architectural Elements from Belmont Subway

MEETING AGENDA

BELMONT SUBWAY ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

MEETING INFORMATION

Date: April 28, 2016
Location: Call-in
Time: 3:00 PM
Call-In Number: 323.921.0091
Call-In Code: 8003657#
Attendees: Robert Ramirez, Jesus Avitia, Mary Schroll, Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Randall Morrison

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discuss with the City of Fresno and UPRR the salvage/retention of SPRR emblems and Belmont Subway dedication plaque

ACTION ITEMS

The meeting included Robert Ramirez, Cultural Resources and Jesus Avitia, Railroad Coordinator for the High Speed Rail Authority, Mary Schroll, Sr. Manager Industry & Public Projects for UPRR, and Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Historic Preservation and Randall Morrison, Public Works for the City of Fresno. All parties agreed to the following:

- UPRR will retain the two Southern Pacific Emblems presently located on the railings on eastern and western side of the railroad bridge. UPRR will curate the emblems at their museum in Omaha Nebraska.
- The City of Fresno will retain the dedication plaque attached to the end post on the northeastern end of the railing facing Belmont Avenue. The Authority will incorporate this plaque into an interpretive exhibit to mitigate the adverse effect of demolishing the historic subway structure.
- UPRR has requested the plaque be removed in advance of structure demolition. Arrangements for the plaque's removal and storage will be coordinated between the Authority and the City of Fresno.

OTHER NOTES OR INFORMATION

The City of Fresno concurred with the above summary in an email dated May 2, 2016

TITLE: Belmont Subway Structure Emblems **DATE:** 05/02/2016
CONTRACT: UPRR ECM Agreement
TO: Attn: Mary R. Schroll
Union Pacific Railroad Company
10031 Foothills Blvd. **STARTED:**
COMPLETED:
NEED DATE: 05/10/2016
Roseville, CA 95747
Phone: 916.789.6111 Fax:
FROM: Hugo Mejia, PE
California High-Speed Rail Authority
1401 Fulton Street
Suite 300
Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: Fax:

Related Contract Documents: Spec. Section:

REQUESTED INFORMATION:

The following memorializes the April 28, 2016 meeting between the Authority, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), and the City of Fresno regarding the salvage/retention of architectural elements from the Belmont Ave Subway structure. The meeting discussed the salvage and retention of two emblems and a dedication plaque presently part of the Belmont Avenue Subway structure. The meeting included Robert Ramirez, Cultural Resources and Jesus Avitia, Railroad Coordinator for the High Speed Rail Authority, Mary Schroll, Sr. Manager Industry & Public Projects for UPRR, and Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Historic Preservation and Randall Morrison, Public Works for the City of Fresno. All parties agreed to the following:

- UPRR will retain the two Southern Pacific Emblems presently located on the railings on eastern and western side of the railroad bridge. UPRR will curate the emblems at their museum in Omaha Nebraska.
- The City of Fresno will retain the dedication plaque attached to the end post on the northeastern end of the railing facing Belmont Avenue. The Authority will incorporate this plaque into an interpretive exhibit to mitigate the adverse effect of demolishing the historic subway structure.
- UPRR has requested the plaque be removed in advance of structure demolition. Arrangements for the plaque's removal and storage will be coordinated between the Authority and the City of Fresno.

Please provide your concurrence for the above described actions.

RESPONSE:

The comments above are correct except UPRR stated it would curate the emblems at their museum in Council Bluffs, IA, not Omaha, NE. Please note - UPRR, at its sole discretion, may select a different museum when the time comes.

The agreements made in this call and memorialized in this RFI supersedes the response to RFI 037.

Attachment 2

Stakeholder Consultation Regarding Belmont Overcrossing Design

MEETING AGENDA

BELMONT OVERCROSSING DESIGN

MEETING INFORMATION

Date: May 6, 2016
Location: City Hall, Room CH35-3054
Time: 2:30 PM
Call-In Number: N/A
Call-In Code: N/A
Attendees: Robert Ramirez, Dennis Kong, Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Randall Morrison

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Belmont Overcrossing parapet design.

ACTION ITEMS

The meeting included Robert Ramirez, Cultural Resources and Dennis Kong, Central Region Environmental for the High Speed Rail Authority and Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Historic Preservation and Randall Morrison, Public Works for the City of Fresno:

- The current design of the parapets for the Belmont Overcrossing will be changed to reflect the architectural elements on the existing Belmont Avenue Subway railings. This design refinement will fulfill the pre-construction treatment measures to mitigate the adverse effects of demolition of the historic Belmont Avenue Subway discussed in Section 4.1.4.1 of the Merced to Fresno Built Environment Treatment Plan. TPZP will produce an illustrative mockup of this design refinement which will be included in a memorandum discussing the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing design and plan for salvaging architectural elements from the historic subway structure. This memorandum will be submitted to the City of Fresno and the State Office of Historic Preservation for their review and concurrence.
- The City of Fresno has requested the design refinement for the Belmont Avenue Overcrossing also be applied to the Olive Avenue Overcrossing. This will maintain an architectural continuity between the two overcrossings and Roeding Park. This aesthetic grouping is the result of discussions between the Authority, TPZP and the City of Fresno regarding aesthetics for structures within the City of Fresno.
- The City of Fresno is aware the design refinement will be in relief and only on the outside of the overcrossing parapet. The City of Fresno has requested the relief elements be 1.5 inches in depth.
- The City of Fresno has also requested the design refinement be applied to concrete sidewalk barriers located on the overcrossing retaining walls. The Authority is aware the construction of concrete sidewalk barriers on overcrossings is currently under review. This issue will need to be resolved by the Authority, TPZP and the City of Fresno before the design refinement can be extended to this construction feature.

OTHER NOTES OR INFORMATION

The City of Fresno concurred with the above summary in an email dated May10, 2016

MEETING AGENDA

BELMONT SUBWAY BETP COMMITMENTS

MEETING INFORMATION

Date: May 24, 2016
Location: Call-in
Time: 10:00 AM
Call-In Number: 877-829-8910
Call-In Code: 9479789#
Attendees: Robert Ramirez, Michael Murphy, Dennis Kong, Stephanie Perez, Lynn Marie Whately, Meg Scantlebury

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Agreement with City of Fresno and UPRR for salvage/retention of emblems and dedication plaque
 - a. UPRR will retain SP emblems
 - b. Authority will retain dedication plaque
 - c. Dedication plaque will be incorporated into interpretive exhibit
2. Agreement with City of Fresno on design of parapet for Belmont Overcrossing
 - a. Attached simulation shows incorporation of existing Belmont Subway architectural elements onto new overcrossing.
3. Draft memorandum discussing salvage plan and overcrossing design will be revised to reflect changes. Simulation and agreements will be incorporated into memorandum.

ACTION ITEMS

Based on the May 24, 2016 meeting, the following actions items will be addressed:

1. Dennis Kong and Robert Ramirez will discuss with Hugo Mejia the issue of replacing the metal beam guard currently part of the Belmont overcrossing design with a concrete pedestrian barrier. Use of this type of barrier will provide a medium to carry the parapet design on the bridge span along the entire overcrossing structure thereby fulfilling the BETP commitments for Belmont overcrossing design. FRA agrees the use of the concrete pedestrian barrier type would be specific to the Belmont overcrossing structure and its application to other overcrossings in the City of Fresno would be considered a betterment.
2. The Authority/PCM will work with TPZP to include a discussion in the memorandum regarding incorporating the dedication plaque into an interpretive exhibit. Incorporation of the plaque into an interpretive display would likely be the best alternative use of this item and would also fulfil the construction-period treatment measure for Belmont as discussed in Section 4.1.4.2 of the BETP. We will also determine the feasibility of incorporating the dedication plaque onto the new overcrossing.
3. Robert Ramirez will verify with TPZP that pedestrian safety standards were taken into consideration during the design of the Belmont overcrossing and provide this information to the FRA.
4. Robert Ramirez will obtain Belmont MSE wall specifications from the contractor and provide this information to FRA.
5. The revised Belmont memorandum will be submitted to FRA which will then be sent to the City of Fresno and SHPO for review and concurrence.

OTHER NOTES OR INFORMATION

Attachment 3

Facility Plans for West Belmont Avenue Grade Separation

BELMONT AVE. SUBWAY

CONSTRUCTED JOINTLY BY THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC CO.,
THE COUNTY OF FRESNO AND THE CITY OF FRESNO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF FRESNO

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P.H. MCMURTRY

GEORGE E. MACHEN
MIKE JONES

COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRESNO

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER
Z.S. LYMEL

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LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS
JEAN VINCENTI
AND CITY ENGINEER

THOMPSON CONSTRUCTION CO.
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

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