



Bridge Rail Foundation Newsletter

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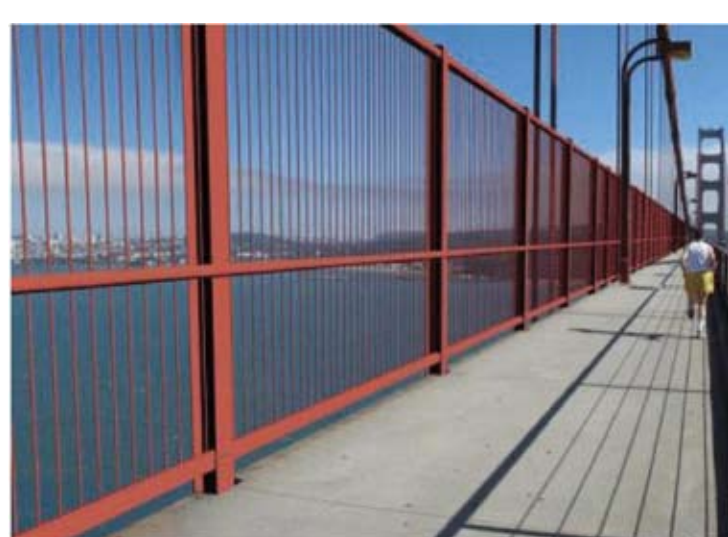
July 2008—EIR Special #1
Vol 2 #5

Raise the Rail—Stop the Suicides

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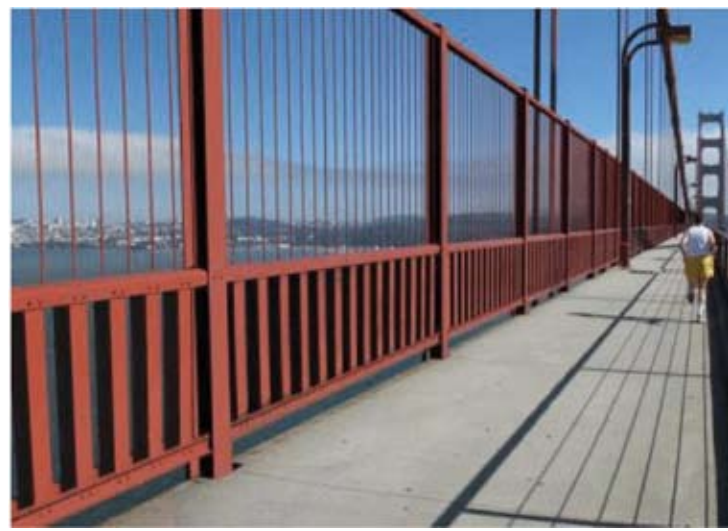


Bridge District Releases Draft EIR for Suicide Deterrent

The draft Environmental Impact Report on a suicide deterrent system for the Golden Gate Bridge was released today. The draft is now open for public review, and will be the subject of two public hearings set for later this month (see below). The public comment period will remain open for several weeks, then close while the district considers the comments and assembles a final EIR.

Photos in this special edition newsletter represent the five options the GGB is considering. They were produced by the bridge district for the EIR.

[Link to the GGB web site for the entire set of EIR documents.](#)

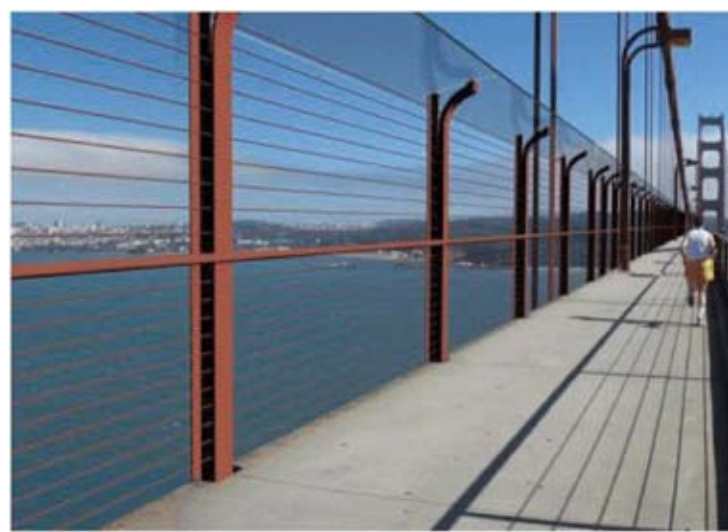


Hearing Dates Set—

The bridge district plans public hearings on its Draft EIR in July. Two hearings will be held as follows:

#1 Marin—Tuesday, July 22
3:30pm to 7:30pm
Embassy Suites Hotel
Mill Valley & Sausalito Conf. Rooms
101 McInnis Parkway
San Rafael, CA 94903

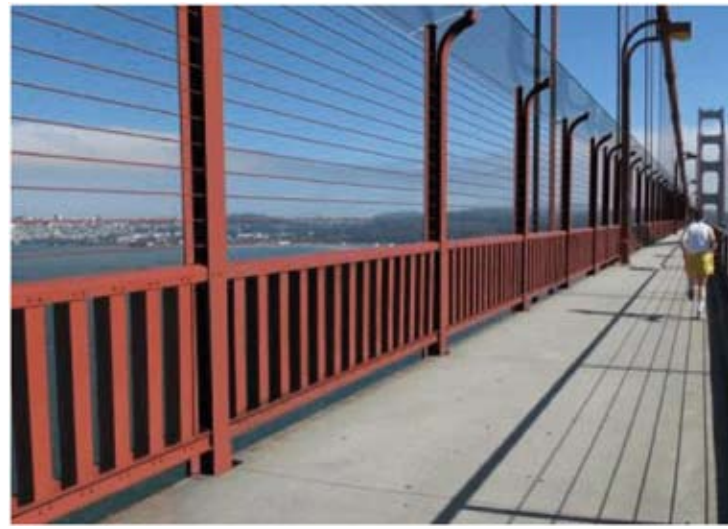
#2 San Francisco—Wednesday, July 23
3:30pm to 7:30pm
San Francisco Ferry Building, Pier 1
Port Commission Hearing Room
2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94903



Speak Out

The public comment period is particularly important for advocates of raising the rail—we must make our voices heard and our presence known. Please take advantage of every opportunity to tell the District how important it is to finally put a stop to the deaths at the Gate:

- Attend the hearings and speak out.
- Write the district—both traditional letters and email will have an impact. For direct input to the district, [Click Here](#)
- Get organizations you know and work with to endorse raising the rail and communicate that to GGB.
- Sign the online petition sponsored by the Whitmer Family. To sign up, [Click Here](#).
- Start a letter writing campaign among friends and associates.



A Few First Thoughts

One option the EIR presents is to take no action at all—let the deaths continue. Obviously any response you pass on to the district should address rejecting this option outright.

Another option is a netting system under the bridge. Our concern here is that netting systems are hard to maintain, and could easily fall into disrepair (especially considering the District's ongoing budget deficit). In addition, the system itself could attract people who want to test it—think frat house initiation rites. Further, retrieving individuals from a netting system is an additional cost and may put emergency service personnel at risk. Simply building a taller railing avoids all these problems.

Each of the other four options presented for a taller railing should prevent suicides without creating an additional problem. One of these is likely the answer to the suicide problem.



Further Reading

There is a long, thoughtful article in last Sunday's New York Times Magazine. The article reviews recent information that upends the traditional view of suicide inevitability. It also demonstrates that most suicides are preventable and that most attempters, once stopped, will not subsequently kill themselves. There are also important references to the successful installation of taller railings on other bridges.

[Click here to link to the article](#)

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