



*The "Grand Central Station of the West"*

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This week, Transbay Joint Powers Authority selected Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects and Hines's design for a new transit center and skyscraper in downtown San Francisco. Since the removal of the Key System rail lines, the current Transbay bus terminal has been in a deteriorating state. Commuters who travel through the bus station express disgust with the human excrement on the ground and homeless people sleeping on the benches. The new Transbay Terminal will replace the current building with a new, modern, glass structure, which includes a roof-top park that will absorb carbon dioxide from the buses. A 1,200 feet obelisk-shaped skyscraper with 1.6 million square feet of prime real-estate space will be adjacent to the terminal. Wind turbines at the top of the tower will reduce reliance on dirtier energy sources. Caltrain will be extended to the terminal by 2018 and room for the future high speed rail will also be available, making the Transbay Terminal once again the central transportation hub of San Francisco. The total cost of the skyscraper and the transit terminal will be 3.4 billion dollars (the price includes the tower, terminal and the rail connections). Phase I, which is only the above ground section (the terminal building and the bus station - not including the rail) will cost 983 million dollars, a hefty sum just for a bus terminal. Construction will begin in 2008 and a temporary terminal for commuters will be set up nearby until its completion in 2014.