

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Will Travis, Executive Director [415/352-3653 travis@bcdc.ca.gov]
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SUBJECT: Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island Redevelopment Project, City and County of San Francisco; Pre-Application Review
(For Board consideration on November 9, 2009)

Project Summary

Project Sponsor: Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) and Treasure Island Community Development (TICD)

Project Representatives: Jack Sylvan, Treasure Island Redevelopment Project Director, TIDA; Kevin Conger, Principal, CMG Landscape Architecture, on behalf of TICD; Dilip Trivedi, Principal, Moffatt and Nichol on behalf of TICD.

Project Site. Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island are located in the center of the San Francisco Bay within the City and County of San Francisco (Exhibit 2). The proposed Redevelopment Plan Area includes approximately 400 acres of land on Treasure Island, approximately 150 acres of land on Yerba Buena Island (YBI) and about 550 acres of tidal and submerged lands adjacent to the islands. The US Navy currently owns the land and is in the process of conveying most of these areas to the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA). The Bay surrounds the project site on all sides.

Treasure Island. From 1936 to 1939, the Works Progress Administration created Treasure Island (TI) for the Golden Gate International Exhibition in 1939 using fill from the Bay and the Sacramento Delta. In 1941, the U.S. Navy took possession of the land and occupied the island for more than five decades. The former military base on TI covers approximately 450 acres. Currently, 900 residential units and approximately 91 buildings for non-residential uses cover approximately 65% of TI, yet only a portion of the residences and buildings are usable. The U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps occupies an approximately 36-acre site in the center of the island (Exhibit 5). The entire island has approximately 3.35 miles of shoreline, resulting in approximately 36-acres of land located within the Commission's 100-foot shoreline band (Exhibit 17 and 18).

The overall site is relatively flat with minimal native vegetation. Current ground elevations range from approximately six feet above sea level on the northwestern edge to approximately 14 feet above sea level near the southern edge.



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Yerba Buena Island. Private parties, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy have owned Yerba Buena Island since the 1840s. The U.S. Coast Guard currently operates an approximately 35-acre site on the southeast side of the island, and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) occupies an approximately 20-acre parcel that includes portions of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and tunnel (Exhibit 5). On the island there are currently 100 residential units and 10 non-residential buildings within the Redevelopment Plan Area. Not all of the buildings are habitable.

Yerba Buena Island is a very steep island with valuable habitat and vegetation. The entire island ranges from sea level to approximately 340-above sea level at its peak. With over 1.8 miles of shoreline, approximately 21 acres are within the Commission's 100-foot shoreline band (Exhibit 17).

Seismic Stabilization. Prior to redevelopment on Treasure Island, the project sponsors have proposed to increase all seismic safety standards on the island and the historic buildings through a geotechnical stabilization plan. The details of this plan will be discussed at a future Design Review meeting. However, the general components of the plan include: stabilization of the causeway connecting Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island; densification of the existing fill and new fill to provide long-term protection against flooding and potential future sea level rise throughout the island; and strengthening and raising the perimeter berm around the island.

Proposed Project and Public Access/Amenities. The proposed redevelopment of Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island includes: 6,000 to 8,000 residential units; 450,000 square feet of retail space; up to 500-hotel rooms a cultural center; a new ferry terminal and transit program; approximately 300 acres of new public park and open space; and an approximately 3.5-mile public shoreline trail around TI and various trails on YBI. The proposed project would redevelop both Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island over four phases spanning 10 to 15 years. Currently, the project sponsors are working on transferring the land from the U.S. Navy to the Treasure Island Development Agency (TIDA) and developing a Draft Environmental Impact Report.

The project sponsors state that the goal of the proposed project is to create the most sustainable large development project in the United States. They have partnered with the Clinton Climate Change Initiative's Climate Positive Development Program, which supports the development of large-scale urban projects that demonstrate that cities can grow in ways that are "climate positive." In addition, they have agreed to implement economically viable Green innovations in buildings, utilize clean energy, and use green technology in waste, water and transportation management.

The redevelopment of Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island includes five primary components: (1) residential; (2) open space and recreation; (3) transportation; (4) commercial and adaptive reuse; and (5) community and public facilities.

1. **Residential.** The proposed TI project includes from 6,000 to 8,000 residential homes. Thirty percent of the units would be at below-market rate, and 435 of those units would be used to house formerly homeless individuals and families through the Treasure Island Homeless Development Initiative Program.

New development on YBI includes a wellness lodge, a hotel, and new residential units in the center and on the west side of the island placed primarily on sites where buildings currently exist.

- 2. Open Space and Recreation.** The proposed TI project includes approximately 300 acres of new open space (Exhibit 6 and 10). A multi-use path would be built around the entire perimeter, including a 30-foot-wide, 3,800-foot-long shoreline path within a proposed 20-acre Western Shoreline Art Park on the west side of the island (Exhibit 13) and a 40-foot-wide, 1,800-foot-long promenade along the marina on the south side (Exhibit 12). The extensive pedestrian and bicycle paths within and around the island would connect to YBI and the eastern span of the Bay Bridge (Exhibit 15). An approximately 100-acre great park on the north end of the island would include passive open space, sailboat and small craft launch sites, an approximately four-acre stormwater wetland, and an environmental education center. Various neighborhood parks with playgrounds, plazas and community gardens would be integrated between the residential units. East of the residential units, a 20-acre organic urban farm and a 25- to 40-acre regional sports park is proposed. The project proposal also includes a three-acre cultural park and ferry terminal near the Town Center and commercial core (Exhibit 11) and a one-acre public plaza for retail, dining and outdoor performances near the marina. At the southeastern corner of the site, the project sponsors have proposed to renovate Pier One for public access, including a park and plaza at the foot of the pier.

Proposed open space on YBI includes a 6-acre hilltop park, trails connecting from the hilltop park to the shore and to Treasure Island, and approximately 64-acres of beach access, natural habitat and a garden restoration (Exhibit 6 and 10).

- 3. Transportation.** The primary mode of transportation for the proposed project is public transit (Exhibit 14). Through parking management, pricing and other policies, auto access would be discouraged.

Located at the southwest corner of TI and adjacent to the commercial core described below, a new ferry terminal would provide service to downtown San Francisco and be within a 12-minute walk of 80% of the proposed residences. Bus service off the island would also be provided from the San Francisco Civic Center and the Transbay Terminal and from the East Bay. Buses are proposed every five to 15 minutes. On the island, electric or alternative fuel shuttle-buses would be provided, and a fleet of bicycles would be available at the Ferry Terminal for visitors and residents to use. The project sponsors have proposed to establish a comprehensive transit pass built into the housing cost of the residents and the hotel room rates. In addition, a proposed congestion-pricing program would charge residents to use their car during peak travel periods (6am to 9am and 4pm to 7pm, Monday through Friday).

- 4. Commercial and Adaptive Reuse.** The proposed project includes a mixed-use commercial core located at the southwest corner of the island (Exhibit 11). Redevelopment of three historic buildings is proposed to help create approximately 450,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space between the ferry terminal and Clipper Cove. A public promenade adjacent to the proposed retail and entertainment amenities would be built near the new marina (Exhibit 12).

The YBI project proposal includes rehabilitating for public use the historic Nimitz House, eight Senior Officers' Quarters, known as the "Great Whites," and the Torpedo Building primarily located on the east side of the island.

Combined, the TI and YBI development would also include up to 500 hotel rooms.

5. **Community and Public Facilities.** The proposed project includes various community and educational facilities including a community center, a childcare space, a school, and a space for the Treasure Island Homeless Development Initiative. Public amenities, such as a Treasure Island Sailing Center and a new Treasure Island Historic Museum are also included in the project proposal. Education facilities would include a Treasure Island Elementary School and the Delancy Street Life Learning Academy Charter High School.
6. **Bay Fill.** Currently, the project sponsors have not provided Bay fill quantifies for the related development, the ferry terminal, or any shoreline protection.

San Francisco Bay Plan Policies. The *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan) **Public Access** policies state that access should “be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline,” be designed—using the Commission’s *Public Access Design Guidelines*—“to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline,” be conveniently located near parking and public transit, “permit barrier free access for the physically handicapped...and include an ongoing maintenance program.” Additionally, these policies state in part that “public access should be sited, designed and managed to prevent significant adverse effects on wildlife.”

The Bay Plan **Appearance, Design and Scenic Views** policies state in part that “all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay” and that “maximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas, from the Bay itself, and from the opposite shore.” These policies also state, in part, that “[s]horeline developments should be built in clusters, leaving open area around them to permit more frequent views of the Bay,” and, further, “towers, bridges or other structures near or over the Bay should be designed as landmarks that suggest the location of the waterfront when it is not visible especially in flat areas.”

The Bay Plan **Transportation** policies state partly that “ferry terminals should be sited at locations that are near navigable channels...” and, wherever possible, “near higher density, mixed-use development served by public transit.” In addition, these policies state that shoreline projects and bridges over the Bay “should include pedestrian and bicycle paths that will either be a part of the Bay Trail or connect the Bay Trail with other regional and community trails.”

The Bay Plan **Recreation** policies state partly that “ferry terminal configuration and operation should not disrupt continuous shoreline access.” Regarding new marinas, the recreation policies state, in part, that development “should include public amenities, such as viewing areas, restrooms, public mooring docks or floats and moorages for transient recreational boaters, non-motorized small boat launching facilities, public parking, [and] substantial physical and visual access...” These policies also state, in part, that waterfront parks should also include launch facilities for a variety of boats, including non-motorized, and camping facilities accessible by boat.

The Bay Plan **Safety of Fills** policies state in part that, “[t]o prevent damage from flooding, structures on fill or near the shoreline should have adequate flood protection including consideration of future relative sea level rise as determined by competent engineers.” Additionally, the policies state that, “[t]o minimize the potential hazard to Bay fill projects and bayside development from subsidence, all proposed development should be sufficiently high

above the highest estimated tide level for the expected life of the project or sufficiently protected by levees....”

Lastly, the **Bay Plan Map No. 4** identifies Yerba Buena Island as a site for waterfront beach/park priority use and describes further Bay Plan policies as follows:

- **Yerba Buena Island South of Bay Bridge** - “[W]hen no longer owned or controlled by the federal government, redevelop for recreational use.”
- **Yerba Buena Island North of Bay Bridge** - Provide “(1) a large public open space at the center of Yerba Buena Island; (2) a large public open space on the plateau on the eastern peninsula, adjacent to and beneath the eastern span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge; and (3) a linked system of trails near the shoreline and at the upper elevations that connect vista points and open spaces. Vista Points should provide views of the Bay Bridge, San Francisco Skyline and other important Central Bay features. The remainder of the island upland of the shoreline band may be developed for other uses consistent with the Bay Plan recreation policy 4-b, and with the applicable public trust provisions and statutes.”
- **Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Islands - Clipper Cove** - “[E]xpand marina and other water-oriented recreation uses, provide water access for small water craft, such as kayaks, and for swimming. Preserve beaches and eelgrass beds.”
- **Treasure Island** - “When no longer owned or controlled by the federal government, redevelop for public use. Provide continuous public access to Bay in a manner protective of sensitive wildlife. Provide parking and water access for users of non-motorized small boats, including at north end of the Island. Develop a system of linked open spaces, including a large open space at the northern end of the island.”

Public Access Issues. The staff believes that the project raises a number of issues for the Design Review Board (Board) to address in its review. However, in its first review of the project, the Board should focus on issues related to site planning, such as: (1) whether the proposed project provides adequate, usable and attractive public access spaces, and whether the project provides adequate connections to and continuity along the shoreline; and (2) whether the proposed project maintains and preserves the visual quality of the Bay and shoreline, and enhances the public’s view of the Bay and shoreline, especially in relation to the proposed structures.

1. **Does the proposed project provide adequate, usable, and attractive public access spaces?** In addition to the Bay Plan Public Access policies, the *Public Access Design Guidelines* (Guidelines) state that public access spaces should be “designed and built to encourage diverse, Bay-related activities along the shoreline”, to create a “sense of place”, and be “designed for a wide range of users.” The Guidelines also state that, “access areas are utilized most if they provide direct connections to public rights-of-way such as streets and sidewalks...” The Guidelines further state that this may be accomplished by “incorporating the designated Bay Trail route into shoreline projects and providing clear and continuous transitions to adjacent developments.”

The proposed project, which includes 6,000 to 8,000 residential units, 450,000 square feet of retail space, up to 500-hotel rooms, a cultural center, a new ferry terminal and transit program, would also result in approximately 300 acres of new public park and open space, including an approximately 3.5-mile public shoreline trail around TI and various trails on YBI (Exhibit 6 and 10). Some of the featured public areas include: a 20-acre Western Shoreline Art Park, an approximately 100-acre great park with sailboat and small craft

launch sites, wetlands and passive open space, neighborhood parks, a 20-acre organic urban farm, a 25- to 40-acre regional sports park, a three-acre cultural park and a one-acre public plaza. While a marina near Clipper Cove will be a part of the overall redevelopment plan, the current project sponsors have not included it in this proposal.

In part, the public access proposal includes: a Class I multi-use trail along the entire shoreline; various Class I and II trails and various open space areas on Treasure Island; and a Class II trail on Yerba Buena Island (Exhibit 15). Design details of several key shoreline features, such as the ferry terminal, marina, the great park, the Western Shoreline Art Park and the cultural park and public plaza near Clipper Cove, are not yet available.

The Board should advise the Commission and the project proponents whether the proposed public access areas are sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use and variety of users, designed to take advantage of existing site characteristics and opportunities, facilitate access in and through the developed areas, and are conveniently located near transit and parking facilities. The Board should also consider whether the areas proposed for habitat restoration would be sited, designed and managed to prevent adverse effects on wildlife.

2. **Does the proposed project maintain and enhance the visual quality of the Bay, shoreline and adjacent developments?** In addition to the previously-cited Bay Plan policies on Appearance, Design and Scenic Views, the Design Guidelines state that “the design character of public access areas should relate to the scale and intensity of the proposed development.” In order to achieve this objective, the Guidelines suggest that “[v]iew opportunities, shoreline configuration and access points are factors that determine a site’s inherent public access opportunities,” and “utilizing the shoreline for Bay-related land uses as much as possible....”

The Treasure Island proposal includes: a commercial core with several tall residential structures, a marina and a ferry terminal along the southern edge of the island; two distinct residential clusters, one along the west side of the island and another near the southeast end of the island; and both passive and active open space along the entire north shore and northeast side of the island (Exhibit 17). According to the project sponsor, both the Clipper Cove Promenade (Exhibit 12) and the City Side Art Park and Cultural Park (Exhibit 13) would provide at least 30-foot-wide public access trails and a variety of public uses in addition to the proposed plazas and open spaces. The Yerba Buena Island proposal includes: two residential clusters; two mixed-use areas based on the existing locations of historic buildings; and open space with trails, a beach and various parks, including a hill top park which would provide views from the highest point of YBI.

Improved vehicular and bicycle/pedestrian circulation is proposed between the two islands and a new connection for bicycles and pedestrians would be built at the new east span of the Bay Bridge where it meets Yerba Buena Island.

The Board should advise the Commission and the project proponents on whether the proposed project design complements and enhances the public’s view of the Bay from the shoreline and through the project site, especially in relation to the various proposed structures. Although, the proposed site and building design is in an early stage, advice is sought on whether: (1) the project provides visual interest and variety in building massing

and height as it related to the shoreline open space; and (2) the building footprints create a diversity of public spaces along the Bay.