

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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**TO:** Design Review Board Members

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**SUBJECT: Alameda Marina Mixed-Use Development; First Pre-Application Review**  
(For Design Review Board consideration March 5, 2018)

## Project Summary

**Project Proponents & Property Owners.** Pacific Shops, Inc. (“PSI”) and City of Alameda (“City”)

**Project Representatives.** Sean Murphy, Alameda Marina/Pacific Shops, Inc. (Owner/Lessee and Developer); Charles Olson, Lubin Olson (Attorney); David Burton, KTGy (Architect); Clay Fry, Studio fcf (Architect); Bill Smith, Smith+Smith (Landscape Architect); Josh Burnam, Anchor QEA (Consultant); and Angelo Obertello, cbg (Civil Engineer)

**Project Site.** The approximately 44-acre project site is located at 1815 Clement Avenue, on the north waterfront of the City of Alameda, Alameda County. The project site is bound by the Oakland Estuary to the north, the U.S. Navy Operational Support Center to the east, Clement Avenue to the south, and a City-owned parcel to the west, which includes the Alameda Municipal Power Department and the Grand Street public boat launch facility along the Bay.

The project site consists of public tidelands and privately owned land (including submerged land). Approximately 27 acres of the project site is owned in fee by PSI. This includes most of the upland portion of the site, as well as a portion of the marina and graving dock structure, both of which are located in the Bay. The remainder of the project site, including the majority of the site within the Bay and along the shoreline, is owned by the City and leased to PSI.

**Existing Conditions.** The site was first developed in 1914 as a shipyard, and later expanded, most significantly in the 1940s to support wartime shipbuilding. A remnant graving dock remains at the site from this period, as do roughly 30 buildings that were constructed for the shipyard expansion. Starting in the 1960s, much of the shipbuilding infrastructure was removed, and the site was used primarily for boat repair and maintenance, upland storage, light industry, and a boat marina.

The marina covers approximately 12 acres of the project site, including 11 piers and approximately 530 boat slips. The land portion of the site contains approximately 250,000 square feet of maritime, commercial and retail, warehouse and storage uses, including dry storage for boats and recreational vehicles, such as sail and motor boats. Approximately 83 percent of the land portion of the site is paved in asphalt or concrete and used mostly for circulation or outside

storage for boats and recreational vehicles. There are approximately 37 buildings on the site, which cover about 16 percent of the total land area. The site has entrances along Clement Avenue at Stanford, Chestnut, and Schiller Streets, but mostly the site is not visible from the street due to the presence of buildings and fencing.

Much of the shoreline infrastructure along the approximately 4,000-foot-long edge has exceeded its useful life and shows sign of deterioration. Many wooden piles supporting wharf decks or floating docks are experiencing dry-rot, and the project proponent indicates that various existing wharf decks along shoreline have been deemed unstable and too dangerous for public access. Shoreline protection at the site is comprised of various types of existing rip-rap slopes, timber, steel, and concrete seawall construction, and this system is likewise degraded and has failed at various locations along the shoreline.

Public access is provided pursuant to BCDC Permit No. 1988.025.01 along 355 feet of shoreline at the project site, and is available to the public between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. daily through an access gate at the intersection of Clement Avenue and Stanford Street. Shoreline public access extends approximately 9 to 20 feet inland of the bulkhead. The approximately 4,085 square feet of public access at the project site includes walkways along the shoreline adjacent to the marina gangway, two picnic tables and trash containers, three benches, and 520 square feet of landscaping (Attachments A and B).

**Proposed Project.** The proposed project would redevelop the site to allow for a mix of uses including maritime, marina, commercial, retail, residential and open space. Specific project elements are as follows:

1. **Maritime and Commercial Development and Adaptive Reuse.** The project would provide up to 250,000 square feet of maritime and commercial space which would be clustered primarily within a “commercial core” along Shiller and Lafayette Streets. This space would be located within four proposed new commercial buildings—each two- to three-stories tall and ranging from 2,600 to 42,000 square feet in size—as well as within 11 existing buildings at the site, which would be adaptively reused. Approximately 250 people would be employed at the project site at full build-out.
2. **Residential Development.** The project would provide up to 760 residential units, including 103 affordable units. At full build-out, the project would house approximately 1,932 people. The project proponents are considering three types of residential buildings: (1) townhomes, (2) stacked flats, and (3) wrap buildings. The townhome buildings would be typically 2 to 4 stories tall, with individual units ranging from approximately 1,400 to 2,300 square feet in size and containing 2 to 4 bedrooms. The stacked flat buildings would be typically 3 to 4 stories tall, with individual units ranging from approximately 1,600 to 2,200 square feet in size and containing 3 to 4 bedrooms. Wrap buildings would be typically 4 to 5 stories tall, with individual units ranging from approximately 700 to 1,100 square feet in size and containing 1 to 3 bedrooms and studios.
3. **Marina.** Approximately 3,000 square feet of pier stubs and 4,700 square feet of nearshore docks would be demolished. The boat hoist would be relocated. Floating headwalks would be installed. No additional slips would be added beyond the 530 existing, however certain slips and piers would be reconfigured, in some cases to allow for larger boats. The marina would be dredged as part of this redevelopment.

4. **Street Grid and Circulation Routes.** The project would continue the City’s existing street grid through the site along extensions of Schiller, Lafayette, Stanford, and Willow Streets. New streets would have minimum 5-foot sidewalks and crosswalks at every intersection. View corridors are proposed along the alignment of Union and Chestnut Streets. A 5- to 16-foot-wide Bay Trail is proposed running primarily along the shoreline. The Bay Trail will connect to the Grand Street boat launch to the west, but at the site’s eastern edge, the Bay Trail will turn back through the site and connect to Clement Avenue as shoreline access is not currently available at the neighboring U.S. Navy facility. A cycle track will be provided along Clement Avenue.
5. **Shoreline Protection.** The project would repair or replace seawalls, bulkheads, and revetments along 4,000 feet of the shoreline. New seawalls and revetments would be placed on the outside face of existing walls. Approximately 11,750 square feet of fill would be required to implement the proposed shoreline protection work.
6. **Public Access and Open Space Areas.** The project would provide public access along approximately 4,000 feet of the shoreline and 4.25 acres of landscaped open space across the project site. Improvements would include a new segment of the Bay Trail, access at the existing wharfs, the new Harbor View Park, and access improvements at the graving dock. The following public access improvements would be provided under the proposed design:
  - a. *Commercial Core Area.* This area is envisioned as a working waterfront, which while allowing public access along pedestrian corridors, may include limitations on access as necessary to ensure safety among the various users. The area would consist of a plaza and park area, in addition to the working dock.
  - b. *Wharf Promenade.* The existing long wharf would provide bike facilities, a multi-use recreational promenade, seating, public art, marina artifacts, a “nautical landscape,” pedestrian plazas, a history kiosk, and gathering areas for small groups.
  - c. *Harbor View Park.* The new Harbor View Park would provide bike facilities, seating, BBQ/picnic areas, passive recreation space, a shade structure, benches, large and small group gathering areas, a public lawn, and a multi-use plaza. A 48-space public parking lot would be located inland, adjacent to the park.
  - d. *Graving Dock Aquatic Park.* The Bay Trail and open space areas 16 feet-wide would line each side of the graving dock. Additional sideyard planting ranging from 17 to 30 feet-wide would buffer the public access areas from the townhouses. A planted sloped or tiered edge would make up the grade between the elevated finish grade and the existing edge of the graving dock. An accessible floating dock would be installed within the graving dock to provide new recreational access to the site for kayak launching, stand-up-paddle board use, and other recreational uses. A footbridge would be provided across the graving dock at Harbor View Park creating a loop trail around the graving dock at the finish grade elevation. The on-land component of the park would provide for traditional park facilities, as well as a dog park.

**Phasing.** The project may be constructed and occupied in phases. The anticipated phasing is four phases as shown on the phasing diagram and is as follows:

- Phase 0: This phase runs in parallel to Phases 1, 2, and 3 and covers the boat marina and associated in-water improvements and upgrades, including shoreline stabilization and improvements.
- Phase 1: Maritime and Commercial Core and Multifamily Residential High Density, and Waterfront Open Space, covering the approximate area between Minturn Street and Lafayette Street.
- Phase 2: Multifamily Residential, Multifamily Residential Medium Density, Waterfront Open Space, and Open Space covering the approximate area between Chestnut Street and Willow Street.
- Phase 3: Multifamily Residential High Density, Waterfront Open Space, and Open Space covering the approximate area between Lafayette Street and Chestnut Street.

Shoreline and land side infrastructure improvements would occur in each phase, as necessary. The anticipated phasing may have sub-phases and may be adjusted due to economic conditions or land acquisition timing. Construction is anticipated to occur between 2019 and 2024.

**Resilience and Adaptation to Rising Sea Level.** The project proponents indicate that flood and sea level rise protection measures would include elevating the shoreline a minimum of 36 inches above the 100-year flood elevation of +10 NAVD88 to +13' NAVD88. Other measures include constructing seawalls to the +13' NAVD88 elevation, or higher. Berms would be constructed around some historic buildings that cannot be raised by 36 inches.

### Commission Findings, Policies & Guidelines

**Physical and Visual Access.** The San Francisco Bay Plan (Bay Plan) policies on Public Access state, in part, that “maximum feasible access to and along the waterfront and on any permitted fills should be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline...” Bay Plan policies on Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views state, in part: “All bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay...” The Commission’s Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part: “View opportunities, shoreline configuration and access points are factors that determine a site’s inherent public access opportunities.” The guidelines also state that viewing the Bay is the “most widely enjoyed ‘use’ and projects should be designed to “enhance and dramatize views of the Bay.”

The Bay Plan Recreation policies state, in part, that “[d]iverse and accessible water-oriented recreational facilities...should be provided,” and that waterfront parks “should emphasize hiking, bicycling, riding trails, picnic facilities, swimming, environmental, historical and cultural education and interpretation, viewpoints, beaches, and fishing facilities.” Where practicable, the policies state that “access facilities for non-motorized small boats should be incorporated into waterfront parks.” Additionally, parking that accommodates expected use should be provided, as well as “launching facilities, restrooms, rigging areas, equipment storage” and should be accessible to ensure boaters can easily launch their watercraft.

The proposed project provides public access along the shoreline running the length of the project site. At its narrowest point, at the western edge of the project site, this access is approximately 5 feet in width. Access is also provided at a new pedestrian plaza within the commercial core of the site, at existing wharf structures, and within the new Harbor View Park and Graving Dock Aquatic Park. Small human-powered boats would launch from a floating dock located within the graving dock.

In extending the north-south street grid through the project site at Willow, Stanford, Lafayette, and Schiller Streets, and by providing view corridors at Chestnut and Union Streets, additional visual transparency is achieved at the site compared to the walled-off condition that exists today along much of Clement Avenue.

**Sense of Place and Historic Interpretation.** The Bay Plan policies on Recreation state: “Interpretive information describing the natural, historical, and cultural resources should be provided in waterfront parks where feasible.” The Commission’s Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part, that public access spaces should create a “sense of place” and should be designed in a manner that “feels public,” that is, “in a way that makes the shoreline enjoyable to the greatest number of people.”

The Public Access and Open Space plan for the proposed project indicates that marina artifacts, a “nautical landscape,” and a history kiosk would be provided at and around the long wharf.

**Circulation.** The Bay Plan policies on Public Access state, in part that “[i]mprovements should be designed and built to encourage...movement to and along the shoreline...” and that “[a]ccess to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available. Diverse and interesting public access experiences should be provided...” The Commission’s Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part, that a shoreline development should “...provide a clear and continuous transition to adjacent developments,” “use local public street networks to inform shoreline site design and to extend the public realm to the Bay,” and “provide connections perpendicular to the shoreline.”

As discussed above, the proposed project would extend the City’s north-south street grid at Willow, Stanford, Lafayette and Schiller Streets. The primary east-west connection across the site would be the Bay Trail. The Bay Trail would connect to the Grand Street boat launch at the western side of the project site. Because no shoreline access is provided at the Navy facility to the east of the site, the Bay Trail connects to Clement Avenue following the alignment of the graving dock.

**Sea Level Rise.** The Bay Plan policies on Public Access state, in part, that “...public access should be sited, designed, managed, and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding,” and that “[a]ny public access provided as a condition of development should either be required to remain viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding, or equivalent access consistent with the project should be provided nearby.”

The project proponents have not provided extensive information regarding the resiliency and/or adaptability of the proposed project to floods and sea level rise, but do indicate that the site would be raised in grade by at least 36 inches, or that seawalls would be constructed to the same height.

## Board Questions

**The Board’s advice and recommendations are sought on the following issues regarding the design of the proposed public access:**

***Physical and Visual Access:***

1. Is the proposed public access—in terms of area and the amenities provided—sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use from new residents, employees, and visitors to this segment of the shoreline?
2. Does the design of the public space take advantage of the Bay setting, and does it provide for adequate opportunities to get close to and experience the water?
3. Does the design include the appropriate sort of amenities for the public at this location, and will it feel inviting to the public?
4. Does the design create clear delineations between public areas and private development? Are there areas of potential conflict between these uses, and if so, how could they be resolved?
5. Is there adequate and appropriately sited public parking provided for the public amenities at the site?
6. Will adequate public access areas be provided with each phase of development?
7. No details have yet been provided about site furnishings, signage, planting, or lighting. Does the Board have advice on these amenities?
8. No details have yet been provided on management and maintenance. Does the Board have advice on these topics?

***Sense of Place and Historical Interpretation:***

9. Does the design take advantage of the unique historical features in its design, or are there additional opportunities to enhance the public’s understanding of the site and its relationship to the Bay?

***Circulation:***

10. Does the proposed project provide clear connections for all users to the Bay from Clement Avenue, and otherwise maximize the opportunities for the public to access and view the Bay?
11. Does the design minimize the potential for conflicts among pedestrians and cyclists within the shoreline open space area?
12. Is the Bay Trail, which ranges from 5 to 16 feet in width, designed to adequately provide for the anticipated level of demand at this location, and does it follow the best possible route through the project site?

***Sea Level Rise:***

13. What are the potential adverse effects to the proposed public access improvements from anticipated sea level rise, and what are appropriate design responses to achieve resiliency to, or adapt to, these conditions?