

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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TO: Design Review Board Members

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SUBJECT: Ferry Building Alterations Project in the City and County of San Francisco; First Pre-Application Review

(For Design Review Board consideration April 10, 2023)

Project Summary

Project Proponents

Hudson Pacific Properties; Port of San Francisco.

Project Representatives

Carl Cade and Jane Connors, Hudson Pacific Properties (Project Proponent); Lada Kocherovsky and Peter Birkholz, Page & Turnbull (Architect and Historic Consultant); Sarah Kuehl, EinwillerKuehl (Landscape Architect).

Project Location (Exhibit 2)

The proposed project site is the Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza, located on the San Francisco waterfront, in the City and County of San Francisco. The site is approximately 5 acres bounded on the west by the Embarcadero and by the Bay on the east. It is located directly north of the Embarcadero (WETA) Plaza and south of the Embarcadero's Pier 1 (Figure 1).

Project Overview

The proposed project involves alterations to the San Francisco Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza that would affect existing public access areas along the building's exterior and in the plaza. The proposed physical improvements to the plaza include lighting, paving, increasing the amount of public seating, adding a retail kiosk, and redesigning the South Promenade as an activation zone similar to a café zone. The proposed alterations to the building would involve relocating doors and glazing in the building's entry portico to create a uniform face and enclose the entryway, constructing a metal canopy structure in the designated café/market zones on the western side of the building, enclosing the arcades on the western side of the building for commercial uses, and creating "Bayfront Kitchens" by removing the interior glass walls on either side of the central breezeway and expanding the restaurant dining areas onto the Eastern Promenade public access area.





Figure 1: Project Location

Project Site

Site History (Exhibits 3 and 4)

The Ferry Building is located on the San Francisco waterfront at the foot of Market Street, in the ancestral territory of the Yelamu people of the Ramaytush Ohlone. The site is located on artificial fill placed in the 1800s to expand the shoreline outward from its historic location near day Montgomery Street. The modern-day shoreline was established by the construction of the Embarcadero Seawall, completed in 1916, which underlies the Embarcadero roadway.

The Ferry Building opened in 1898 as the Union Depot and Ferry House, and functioned as a main transportation hub connecting San Francisco to rail services in the East Bay and the broader Bay Area. Prior to the construction of the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges and shifts in transportation habits, the Ferry Building was one of the busiest transportation terminals in the world. The building originally had two floors, where the ground floor was used primarily for ticketing services, baggage and freight handling, and storage, and the second floor provided public access and circulation to the ferries.

In 1967, the Commission issued BCDC Permit No. 1967.011.00 for the removal of abandoned ferry slips and the construction of approximately 8.08 acres (352,000 square feet) of pile-supported fill, which was subsequently amended in Permit No. 1967.011.01 to allow for 5.03 acres of pile-supported fill, including what is now the approximately 138,000-square-foot platform over the BART tube and ventilation structure of which the Ferry Plaza is part. The permit also allowed fill for later phases of the project that were never built, as well as the use of the filled areas for a ferry landing and terminal.

In 1998, the Commission approved BCDC Permit No. 1997.007.00 for the Port to place new fill for a new north ferry terminal portal (now Gate B), a new south ferry terminal portal (now Gate E), a publicly accessible sheet pile breakwater (Pier 14), a new North Promenade, an extension and widening of the East Promenade on the Bay side of the building, and extensions to the South Promenade. The permit also authorized other improvements in the building's vicinity.

The Ferry Building was rehabilitated in 2003 to transform it into a market hall. Taking advantage of the demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway following the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, and undoing layers of renovations from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the 2003 restoration made alterations to the building to improve economic viability and openness, while restoring much of the exterior and the second-floor nave to their historic configurations. The rehabilitation included work authorized under BCDC Permit No. 2000.001.00. Authorized improvements included an extension of the second floor cantilevered over the East Promenade which would provide weather-protected public access, further widening of the East Promenade, and the renovation of the Ferry Building for restaurants and a market hall on the ground floor and offices on the upper floors. Subsequent amendments through 2019 established the farmers market and defined public access improvements for the 49,000-square-foot Ferry Plaza.

The Ferry Building was designated a City and County of San Francisco Landmark in 1977 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) in 1978. In 2006, the Ferry Building was also listed as a contributor to the National Register Port of San Francisco Embarcadero Historic District.

Existing Conditions

The project site covers approximately 5 acres of the San Francisco waterfront, and includes the Ferry Building, the Ferry Plaza, and surrounding promenades. These areas see a wide variety of users, including ferry passengers, both commuters as well as other visitors; marketplace vendors; office tenants; tourists and shoppers in the building, in the plaza, and along the Embarcadero; restaurant patrons; ferry and BART operators; and farmers market vendors, operators, and visitors.

The Ferry Building has a footprint of approximately 3 acres and consists of a publicly accessible ground floor retail area (called the marketplace), and a second floor with private office tenants. The building is managed by Hudson Pacific Partners, which leases the building and plaza from the Port of San Francisco. Key features of the Ferry Building include the café zones and arcades on the west face of the building and outdoor seating for businesses under the cantilevered second floor along the eastern face of the building. The north café zone is currently occupied by an outdoor dining patio for Gott's restaurant north of the pass-through entrance, and public seating under a glass canopy south of the pass-through that is also used by the farmers market. The south café/market zone is currently occupied by outdoor seating for the Ferry Plaza Wine Merchant, with the remainder of the space utilized by the Ferry Building Farmers Market on market days. The North Arcade is used by vendors and related seating areas, while the South Arcade is used for storage and farmers market operations.

The Ferry Plaza, including the South Promenade, is approximately 1.5 acres in size. On non-market days, the Ferry Building currently provides public seating for 120 persons at 30 tables in the center of the plaza – an increase from the 62-person seating requirement in the permit to provide more outdoor recreational opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The farmers market operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 AM to 2 PM, and on Saturdays from 8 AM to 2 PM. The Saturday market utilizes the Ferry Plaza as well as the Ferry Building café zones and portions of the greater ferry platform, while

the weekday markets are limited to the café zones. Access for delivery and utility vehicles is permitted along the South Promenade—also used by pedestrians to access both the plaza and the building—although access times and parking are limited by BCDC Permit No. 2000.001.05. The Ferry Building operator currently has an active amendment request for a special events program and a time extension for both the farmers market and vehicle authorization.

Public Access

There are a number of existing BCDC permits associated with public access on and around the project site. Relevant public access requirements are summarized below and in Figure 2.

1. **1967.011.01** authorized Bay fill for the ferry platform (including the area of Ferry Plaza) and additional platforms that were not constructed. The permit required public access on the perimeter of the authorized platforms that are not required for ferry operations and that do not interfere with berthing, to be landscaped and permanently maintained. The public access area was not specified in a permit exhibit.
2. **1973.010.17** authorized the restaurant bayward of the Ferry Plaza, as well as the Golden Gate Ferry terminal and ferry landing on the northern side of the Ferry Plaza. The permit required public access on those areas of the proposed ferry terminal that can be used for public access consistent with ferry operations, as well as around the perimeter of the restaurant building.
3. **1990.008.13** authorized a number of roadway projects on the Embarcadero as well as the Muni Metro turnback. The permit required the provision of the Embarcadero Promenade fronting the Ferry Building as dedicated public access. The permit allows for 30-foot-wide café/market zones in front of the Ferry Building to be used as outdoor dining (now also used for the farmers market).
4. **1997.007.09** authorized the placement of up to 13,066 square feet of fill for a north ferry portal, a south ferry portal, a publicly accessible sheet pile breakwater, the North Promenade, an extension and widening of the East Promenade, extensions to the South Promenade, and demolition of Pier 1/2. Required public access includes the North Promenade, the new South Promenade extension, the East Promenade, access along a trestle to the breakwater, and a concourse through the Ferry Building, as well as other improvements.
5. **2000.001.05** authorized the Ferry Building rehabilitation project and the farmers market on the Ferry Plaza. Required public access areas include the additional expansion of the East Promenade, two additional 10-foot-wide pass-throughs through the Ferry Building and any café zones or retail markets, improvements to the pass-through entrances, ground floor public restrooms, 24 bike parking spaces, removal of a portion of the Golden Gate Ferry terminal extending over the East Promenade, and the Ferry Plaza.
6. **2016.001.03** authorized new gates for the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) San Francisco Bay Ferry, including the relocation of Gate E and new gates F and G, a Bayside promenade and passenger area, the Embarcadero Plaza, and an evaluation period for the Embarcadero Plaza farmers market. Public access requirements include the East Bayside Promenade, the Embarcadero Plaza, and a walkway connecting the promenade to Herb Caen way.

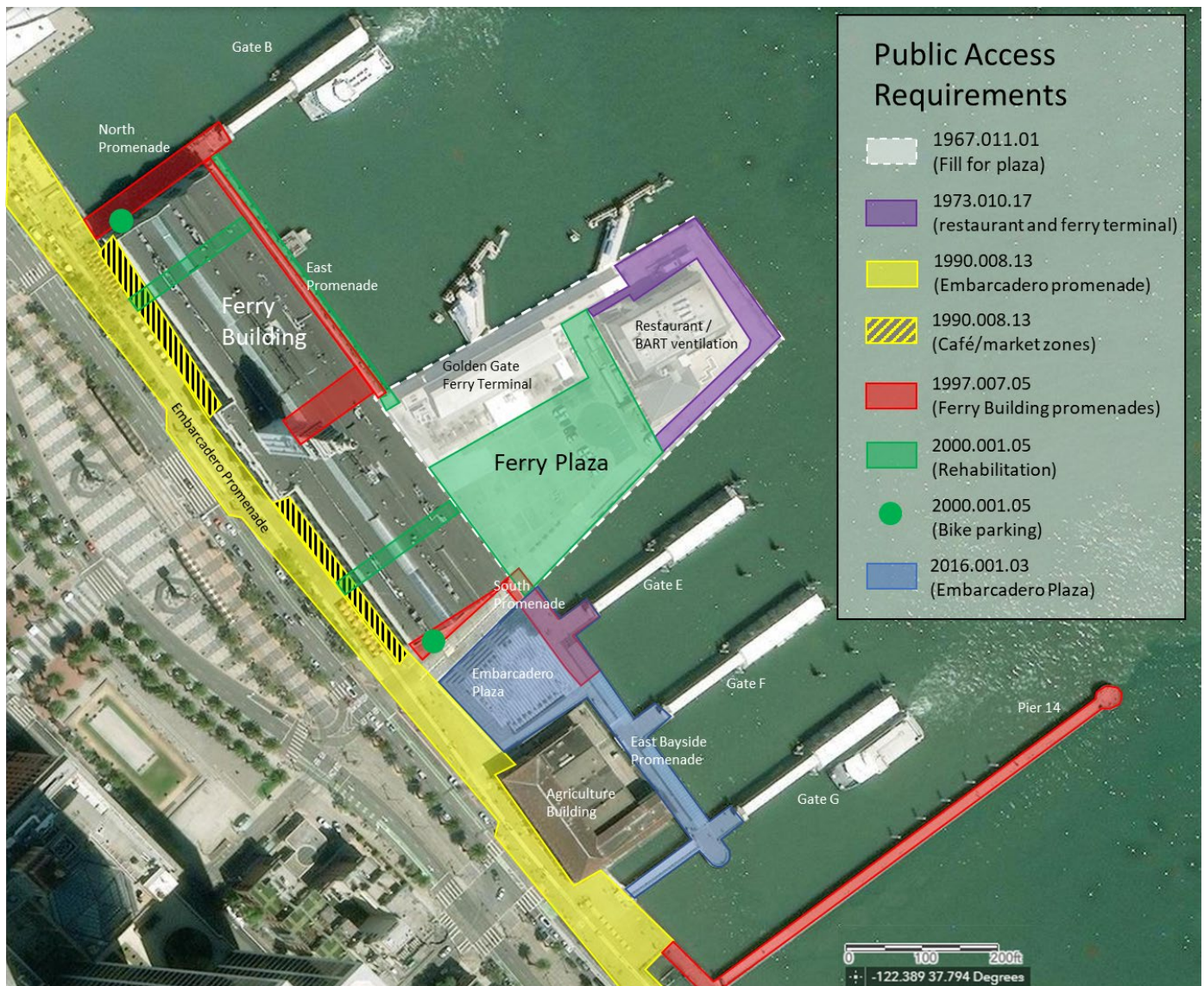


Figure 2: BCDC-Required Public Access

Site Access (Exhibit 5)

The project site is a regional transportation hub, serving as an embarkation point for multiple ferry lines in proximity to local San Francisco Muni bus and streetcar services, while also being located along the Embarcadero roadway.

Ferry services include San Francisco Bay Ferry (operated by the Water Emergency Transportation Agency, or WETA) routes to Vallejo, Richmond, Harbor Bay, and Alameda/Oakland; and Golden Gate Ferry routes to Tiburon, Larkspur, Sausalito, and Angel Island. Gate B is located on the Bay side of the Ferry Building and is accessed via the North and East promenades. Golden Gate Ferry operates some of its routes from a terminal building located on the north side of the Ferry Plaza. Gates E, F, and G are located just south of the Ferry Building and Ferry Plaza, on the Bay side of the Embarcadero Plaza and the Agriculture Building.

The west side of the building opens onto the Embarcadero Promenade, a multi-use segment of the Bay Trail that runs from Pier 45 to 2nd Street. Additional bicycle lanes are provided in the Embarcadero right-of-way. The Embarcadero offers vehicular access to I-80, which provides regional access to the

East Bay and South Bay. The San Francisco Muni F-Line runs heritage streetcars between Market Street and Fisherman's Wharf along the center of the Embarcadero, with a dedicated Ferry Building stop.

The Ferry Building is about 0.2 miles from the Embarcadero Station, serving all San Francisco Muni streetcar routes (with the exception of the F-line) and BART routes serving all destinations. The building is also about 0.5 miles from the Salesforce Transit Center, 0.7 miles from the Greyhound bus station, and about 1.6 miles from the Caltrain Station at 4th and King streets. Muni bus routes 9, 14, 2, and 6 directly serve the Ferry Building, with several others operating in the vicinity.

Social and Environmental Context

The Commission has developed a Community Vulnerability Mapping Tool to help inform its analysis of how socioeconomic indicators and contamination burdens contribute to a community's vulnerability to climate change. The mapping tool collects information at the level of Census block groups using 2020 data and at the level of the Census tract using CalEnviroScreen 3.0, and is used by the Commission Staff to help identify certain Equity Priority Communities. These communities include those disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and hazards that can lead to negative public health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation, and those with higher concentrations of people with socioeconomic characteristics associated with a higher degree of social vulnerability.

According to the mapping tool, the social vulnerability of areas approximately one mile around the project site ranges from low to highest. While the characteristics of each block group varies, some general observations are as follows:

1. Areas identified as highest social vulnerability all have indicators in the 90th percentile for renter occupancy, no vehicle, no high school degree, limited English proficiency, and very low income, while most have indicators in the 90th percentile for disability rates, individuals over 65 living alone, non-U.S. citizens, and people of color.
2. Areas identified as having high social vulnerability all have indicators in the 90th percentile for no vehicle, and most are in the 90th percentile for renter occupancy. Most have indicators in the 70th percentile (some in the 90th percentile) for individuals over 65 living alone, no high school degree, non-U.S. citizens, limited English Proficiency, and disability. Some have indicators in the 70th or 90th percentile for children under 5 and single-parent households.
3. Most areas identified as having moderate social vulnerability have indicators in the 90th percentile for no vehicle ownership. Most also have a combination of indicators in the 70th percentile (some in the 90th percentile) for renter occupancy, individuals over 65 living alone, and non-U.S. citizens. Other indicators of note in some block groups include households with children under 5 and individuals with limited English proficiency.
4. Areas identified as having low social vulnerability all have indicators in the 90th percentile for no vehicle ownership. Most are in the 70th percentile for renter occupancy. Other indicators in the 70th percentile include non-U.S. citizens, very low income, single-parent households, and individuals over 65 living alone.

Areas north of Market Street are indicated as having lower contamination vulnerability, characterized by indicators in the 90th percentile for hazardous waste and impaired water bodies, while some have indicators in the 90th percentile for hazardous waste. Areas south of Market Street are indicated as having moderate contamination vulnerability, characterized by indicators in the 90th percentile for cleanup sites, hazardous waste, and impaired water bodies, while many also have indicators in the 70th percentile for groundwater threats.

The two block groups closest to the project site are both identified as having moderate social vulnerability, with high rates of renter occupancy, no vehicle ownership, individuals over 65 living alone, and non-U.S. citizenship. The block group containing the Ferry Building has contamination vulnerability indicators in the 90th percentile for hazardous waste facilities, and the 80th percentile for impaired water bodies. The next closest block group, directly south, has indicators in the 90th percentile for hazardous cleanup activities, hazardous waste facilities, and impaired water bodies, and indicators in the 70th percentile for groundwater threats.



Figure 3: Community Vulnerability

Proposed Project

Project Scope (Exhibits 6 – 8)

The proposed project includes alterations to the Ferry Plaza, including the South Promenade, as well as to the interior and exterior of the Ferry Building, including the entry portico, the arcades and café/market zones on the western face of the building, and the area surrounding the central breezeway exit onto the Bay side of the building. Each area is addressed in greater detail below.

Ferry Plaza (Exhibits 9 – 35)

The proposed project seeks to improve the transition between the Ferry Building interior and the Ferry Plaza, and to activate more of the plaza in order to encourage more usage by visitors and ferry passengers at times outside of the Saturday Farmers Market. The proposal would involve design changes to link circulation patterns between the inside and outside of the building and guide visitors arriving from the ferries or the Embarcadero, supporting the long-term growth of the region's ferry service. It would also involve an increase in programming and event opportunities in the plaza.

Proposed new elements include the following:

1. **Seating.** BCDC Permit No. 2000.001.05 currently requires tables, chairs, and/or site furnishings to accommodate at least 50 people in the center of the plaza, as well as at least two moveable picnic tables, although the Ferry Building has been approved to provide seating for 120 people and no picnic tables since the beginning of the pandemic. The project would replace the requirement with furnishings to seat at least 80 people in the center of the plaza, and furnishings to seat at least 26 people along the southern edge of the plaza overlooking the Bay.
2. **Paving and Lighting.** The grid of the existing pavement in the Ferry Plaza would be minimally repaired and the grid lines would receive surface treatment for graphic visibility. A new contrasting paving band is proposed around the perimeter of the plaza. New light fixtures are also proposed for the plaza perimeter.
3. **Kiosk.** An approximately 500-square-foot kiosk and storage facility is proposed in the northeast of the Ferry Plaza to provide a light food or beverage service and act as a visual draw to bring visitors towards the Bay. The project proponent is studying an alternative location for the kiosk from what was initially being considered due to a request from the farmers market operator to avoid impacting the layout of the market. Both locations are near the northeastern corner of the plaza. Both locations provide a sight line from the Ferry Building and avoid blocking the entrance to the Golden Gate Ferry Terminal. The second location requires additional research to confirm structural feasibility and alignment for fire access.
4. **South Promenade.** Proposed changes along the southern edge of the building are intended to provide clear visual structure to differentiate between pathways, vehicular access, and plaza spaces and to guide the movement of people. These include a new 19-foot-high, 26-foot-tall gateway signage, graphic pavement design, lights, banners, and seating and planting fixtures along the vehicle access route as well as a new perimeter easement activation zone. The perimeter easement activation zone is intended to function similarly to a café/market zone, providing outdoor seating to activate the space south of the building, although specific programming of the area has not yet been determined. Special Condition II.B.5 in BCDC Permit No. 1997.007.09 identifies a 12- to 15-foot-wide corridor within the South Promenade to be reserved for public access purposes (see Figure 2). The Findings of the permit state that while this area was reserved for the public, it was not dedicated to allow the Port and BCDC the flexibility to consider revisions to the public's use of the area at a later time when the Ferry Building was renovated.

The redesign of the plaza would also involve relocating the statue of Gandhi from its current location in the center of the plaza to one of three proposed sites along the perimeter of the platform and in the WETA Plaza.

The Ferry Plaza and its surroundings may be impacted by future infrastructure updates to address sea level rise and by improvements to accommodate a potential new tenant at the Ferry Plaza East Building at the eastern end of the plaza. This proposal is intended to allow for experimentation and testing of wayfinding strategies that could be integrated with any future projects.

Entry Portico (Exhibit 36)

The entry portico is centrally located on the western face of the Ferry Building, fronting the Embarcadero. The portico comprises five bays: bay 1 provides access to the northern section of the ground floor marketplace, bay 2 is an elevator vestibule, bay 3 provides access to the central breezeway through the building, bay 4 includes the stairway to the second-floor offices, and bay 5 provides access to the southern section of the marketplace (see Figure 4). Currently, bays 1, 2, 3, and 5 incorporate non-historic glass partitions and glazed doors, but the glazing for bays 1 and 5 are located further within the structure (at line B in Figure 4) than the glazing for bays 2 and 3 (at line A in Figure 4). The project proposes to relocate the glazing of bays 1 and 5 in line with the existing glazing at bays 2 and 3, allowing for more of the portico area to be enclosed.

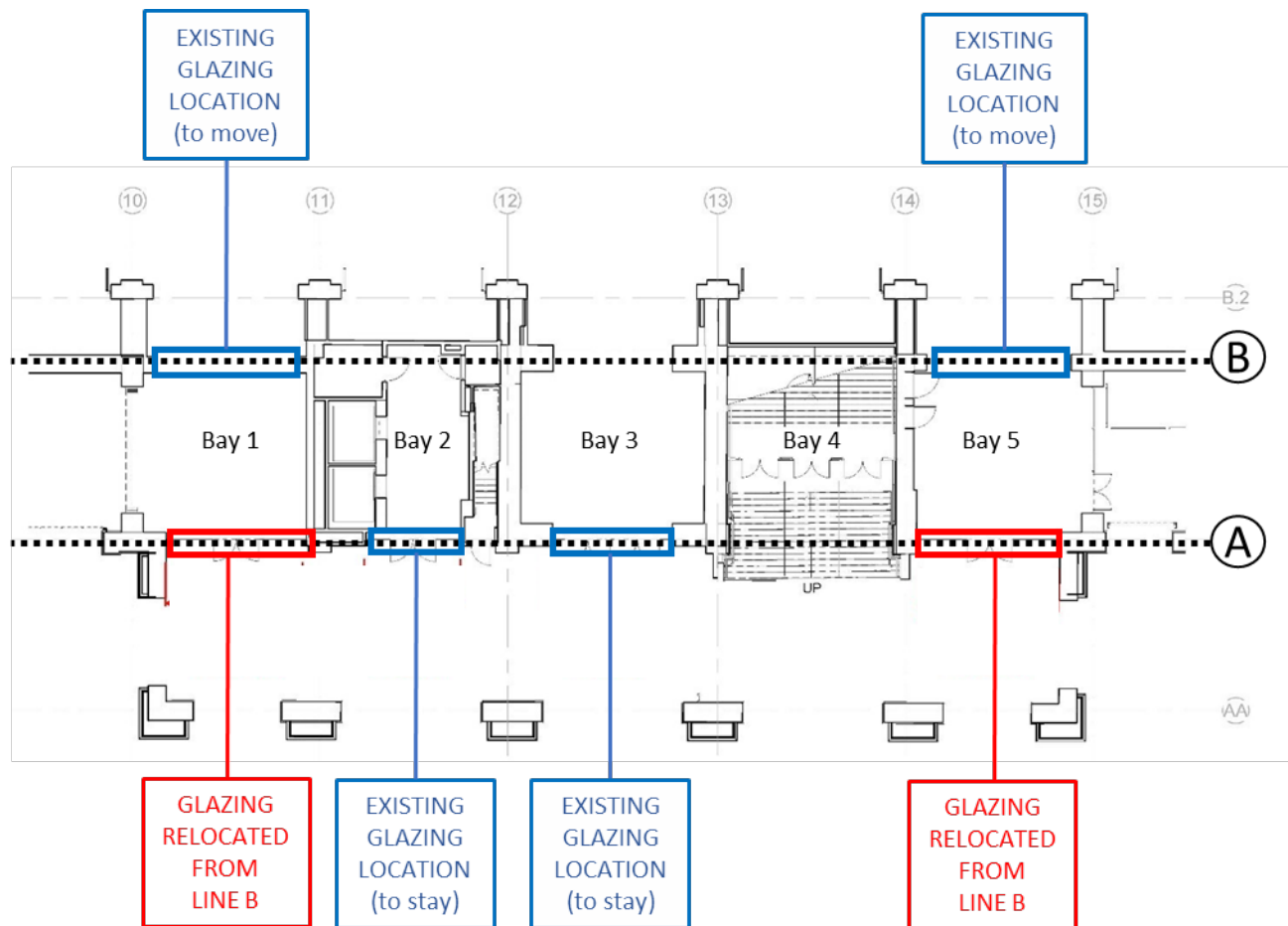


Figure 4: Alterations to Entry Portico

Arcades and Café Zones (Exhibits 37 – 39, 44 – 47)

The entry portico is flanked on either side by the North Arcade and the South Arcade. Outside of the arcades are 30-foot-wide designated café/market zones, portions of the dedicated public access area that may be used for limited outdoor dining, as designated in BCDC Permit No. 1990.008.13. The North Arcade café zone currently consists of public seating covered by a glass canopy. The project proposes the introduction of furnishings and the construction of two freestanding lightweight metal-framed canopy structures, separated by a six-foot wide circulation corridor along the face of the building, and structurally independent of the building. The canopies are proposed to define and protect the outdoor

seating areas. The canopies would contain lighting, signage, moveable overhead panels to provide shade and weather protection, and moveable furniture. The canopy structures will extend between column line 5 to 9 at the North Arcade and 16 to 20 at the South Arcade (see Figure 5).

Each of the two open-air arcades along the west façade of the building contains approximately 4,130 square feet that is currently used in a variety of ways, including as storage, commercial units, and unprogrammed space. The project proposes to enclose the North Arcade to create two or more additional commercial units. The existing roll-down metal grille system that is mounted behind each opening of the arcade would be removed. Glass partitions consisting of an operable glass wall system with fixed transoms fabricated with metal framing within the arched openings above would be installed behind the openings to the arcades at their west wall from column line 5 to 9 and 16 to 20. The larger rectangular opening between column line 9 and 10 will have a similar operable glass wall system that will be full height to the bottom of a fixed grille/louver supplying air intake to the interior space. This operable glass wall system will be hidden behind each column when fully opened and retracted. The large rectilinear openings between column lines 4 and 5 at the North Arcade and column lines 20 and 21 at the South Arcade will be left open to the exterior and will contain mechanical vents with decorative grilles at the top portion of their openings to provide required fresh air and exhaust for the spaces within the arcades. These necessary vents with decorative grilles will replace the rolling overhead doors and decorative grilles that were installed as part of the 2003 renovation. A permanently fixed glazed wall with glazed doors will be installed at the north end of the arcade at column line 5 and a glazed operable partition at column line 10 to allow the arcades to be closed and secured.

Within the arcades, one or more demising walls will physically separate the various commercial units. The forward portion of the demising wall (closest to the Embarcadero) will be both transparent and operable. This will allow each commercial area to be secured when necessary, while also ensuring that each arcade remains single volume with views and movement along the length of the space.

Hudson Pacific is seeking approvals from the Port under the terms of their ground lease for alterations to both the north and south arcades of the primary façade and their respective café zones; the schedule for the South Arcade is to be implemented at a later date that will be coordinated with future leases and/or lease renewals for those areas. The South Arcade is encumbered with a subtenant lease obligation so the enclosure of this space will commence after sublease expiration in 2027.

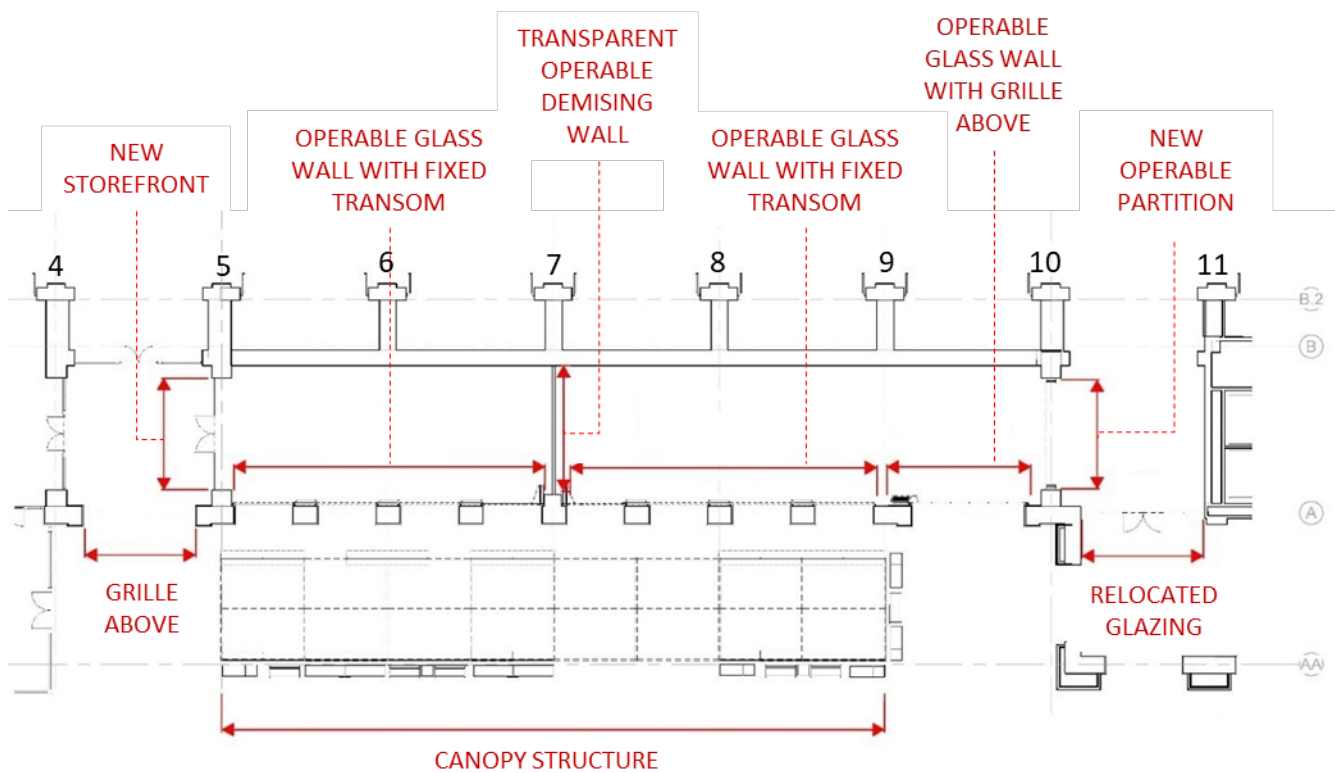


Figure 5: Alterations to North Arcade

Bay Front Kitchens (Exhibits 40 – 41)

Along the Bay side of the Ferry Building, the project proposes installing “Bay Front Kitchens” that combine existing commercial units along the interior central breezeway with the open seating areas on either side of the central breezeway exit on the east façade (see Figure 6). The proposed design retains the current BCDC central breezeway easement as a wide corridor that bisects the building. The areas to the north and south of the breezeway would be altered by removing the fixed storefront assemblies that were installed in 2003 and adding food and beverage sales and seating. Operable metal panel systems will be installed along the north and south sides of the breezeway, allowing the seating areas to be opened or closed to the interior corridor, as needed. The east wall of the central breezeway, which opens to the rear façade along the Bay and includes a single pair of doors, will be replaced with a new glass storefront with two sets of paired doors.

The existing non-historic glazing systems along the rear façade, including the two bays to the north and one bay to the south of the breezeway, will be removed and built out eastward, thereby enclosing this area within the building. This new glazing system will feature an operable wall system that can open the seating area to the exterior. The reproduction and original cast-iron columns located at the east façade will be retained in place. The current locations of these columns are not original to the building, as they were relocated to this location during the 2003 rehabilitation.

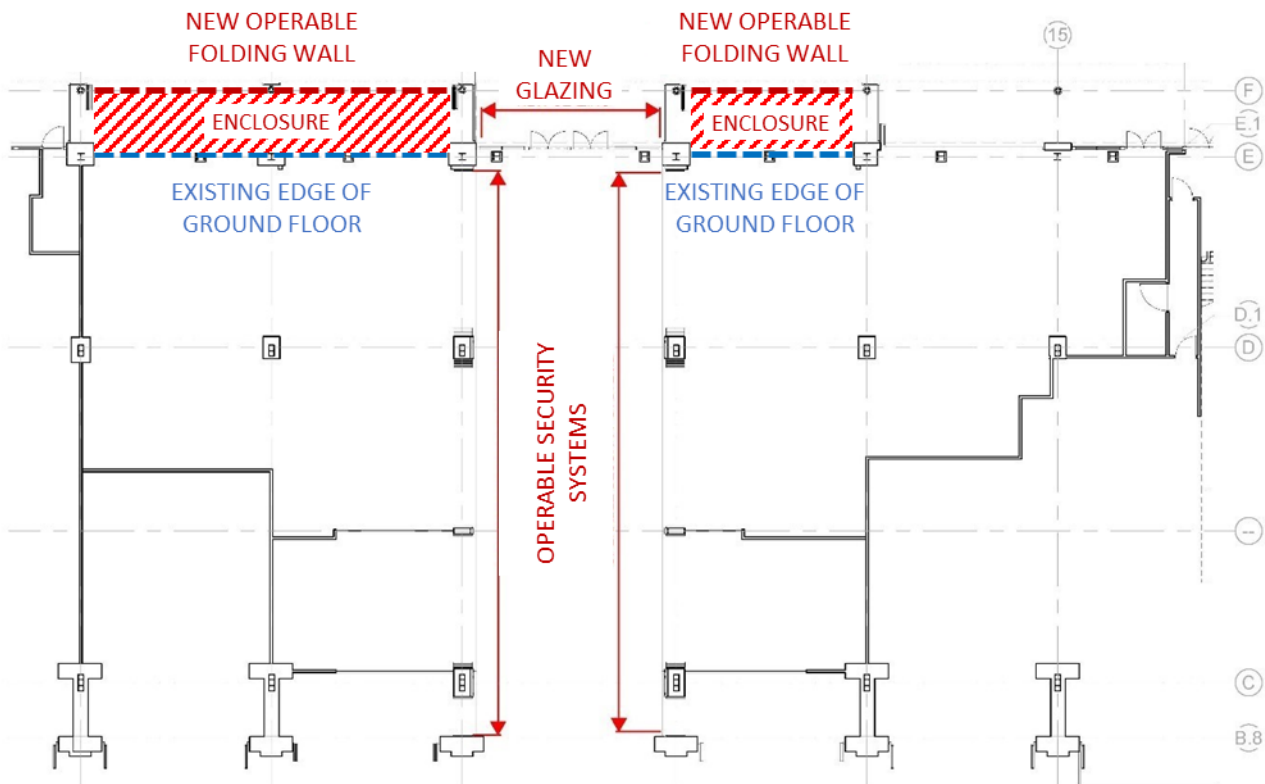


Figure 6: Bay Front Kitchens

It should be noted that the areas proposed to be enclosed by the new folding wall system are public access areas required in BCDC Permit No. 2000.001.05. The Findings of the permit explain that the additional 12 feet of width added to the Eastern Promenade at the time was to ensure that the promenade would still have the same amount of public access area open to the sky after the extension of the second floor covered 9 feet of the previously available public access. Additionally, the 9 feet of covered public access was anticipated by the Findings to be available to the public as shelter during rainy weather but otherwise usable for outdoor dining.

Sea Level Rise

Base Flood Elevation (BFE) and ground elevation at the project site is +11 feet NAVD 88. Sea level rise at 2050, under the 2018 Ocean Protection Council Sea Level Rise Guidance high emissions, medium-high risk aversion scenario, is projected to be +1.9 feet NAVD 88. At 2100, under the same scenario, sea level rise is projected to be +6.9 feet NAVD 88. With the current ground floor elevation, the project site could be subject to flooding in 2050 during the 100-year storm. In 2100, the project site would be inundated at Mean High Water.

The project consists of superficial improvements to the building and plaza and is not intended to extend the life of the any structures on site; therefore, no adaptation measures are included in the current proposal. Resilience of the project site may instead be considered in the future as part of an ongoing effort by the Port of San Francisco to address the waterfront's vulnerabilities at a larger scale.

Public Engagement

The project proponent has begun outreach to community-based organizations and stakeholder groups to discuss the project. To date, these groups have included neighborhood associations, such as the Telegraph Hill Neighbors Association and the Gateway Tenants Association; Ferry Building merchants; Foodwise, the farmers market operator; SF Heritage; and Golden Gate Ferry, with additional outreach planned for BART and WETA. Following design review, the project proponents plan to share the project at the Port of San Francisco's Northern Advisory Committee to introduce the project to the public and receive comments.

Commission Plans , Policies, and Guidelines

San Francisco Bay Plan Policies

The San Francisco Bay Plan (Bay Plan) contains a number of policy sections relevant to the design of the public access areas for this project, including the sections on Public Access; Environmental Justice and Social Equity; and Appearance, Design and Scenic Views.

The Bay Plan's Public Access policies state 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" (Policy 2); that "public access improvements provided as a condition of any approval should be consistent with the project, the culture(s) of the local community, and the physical environment, including protection of Bay natural resources" (Policy 8); and that "access to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means" (Policy 10). The project involves alterations to public access areas required by previous permits to provide maximum feasible public access for prior projects.

Public Access Policy 5 states that "public access that substantially changes the use or character of the site should be sited, designed, and managed based on meaningful community involvement to create public access that is inclusive and welcoming to all." The project team is incorporating a public outreach program into its design process.

Public Access Policy 6 states that "public access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding." The project does not include any sea level rise adaptations but the project site would ideally accommodate any adaptation projects that may be designed in the future.

The Bay Plan's Environmental Justice and Social Equity Policy 3 states that "equitable, culturally-relevant community outreach and engagement should be conducted by local governments and project applicants to meaningfully involve potentially impacted communities for major projects and appropriate minor projects in underrepresented and/or identified vulnerable and/or disadvantaged communities," and "evidence of how community concerns were addressed should be provided." The project site is not within an area identified by BCDC's Community Vulnerability Mapping Tool as having high social vulnerability; however, the project is a landmark in San Francisco's downtown area and there are a number of high- and higher-vulnerability areas nearby.

The Bay Plan's Appearance, Design and Scenic Views policies state that "all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay" (Policy 2), and that "views of the Bay from vista points and from roads should be maintained by appropriate arrangements and heights of all developments and landscaping between the view areas and the water" (Policy 14).

The project is located on the San Francisco waterfront, thus any exterior improvements could affect the visual character of the shoreline and Bay.

As shown on Bay Plan Map No. 5, the project site does not have a priority use designation.

San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan Policies

The project is covered by BCDC's *San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan* (SAP) and is located within the area designated by the plan as the Northeastern Waterfront. The following general and geographic-specific policies are potentially relevant to the proposed project.

General Policy No. 6, Required Public Access, states that maximum feasible access should be provided, and provides the following direction for public access areas: public access should be located at ground or platform level, with minor variations in elevation permitted; public access should be open to the sky, although some covering may be allowed if it serves the public areas and does not support structures; attention should be given to perimeter access along the platform edge; and other uses may extend to the platform edge if they enhance the total design of the project, make public access more interesting, and do not divert the public way along more than 20 percent of the total edge, and only for short distances. The project proposes enclosures of existing public access areas along the eastern and western faces of the Ferry Building, as well as improvements along the perimeter of the Ferry Plaza platform.

General Policy No. 7, View Corridors, states that important Bay views along the Embarcadero and inland streets should be preserved and improved. Minor encroachment into the view corridors from level inland streets may be permitted if the encroaching element has a distinct maritime character, is separated from the shoreline by water, and adds variety to waterfront views, or where minor structures (such as kiosks) are desirable to provide public amenities contributing to a continuity of interest and activity along the waterfront, or where essential maritime facilities cannot reasonably avoid view blockage. Additionally, Northeastern Waterfront Bay View Policy No. 1 states that diverse views of the Bay, the City, and waterfront and maritime activities should be provided at frequent intervals along the Embarcadero and Herb Caen Way, the Bayside History Walk, and from public plazas and public access on piers.

The project proposes improvements along the South Promenade and in the Ferry Plaza, which provide Bay views from the Embarcadero and WETA Plaza.

The Northeastern Waterfront Public Access policies state that public access should be provided free of charge and should provide direct physical and visual connections to the Bay (Policy No. 1); that public access should generally be accessible at any time, although reasonable restrictions may be approved to promote public safety (Policy No. 2); and that public access should emphasize passive recreation and focus on its proximity to the Bay and its views and unique experiences (Policy No. 3). The project proposes alterations to existing public access areas.

Northeastern Waterfront Public Access Policy No. 13 includes the following provisions for public access design relevant to the project: paving should be compatible with the adjacent building materials and overall project character; site furnishing should include lighting, seating, trash and recycling, and public access and interpretive signage; vehicle circulation in public access areas should be limited to necessary service and maintenance vehicles and be concentrated during late night and early morning hours; microclimactic conditions should be addressed by providing places that are sheltered from the wind

and receive maximum sun exposure; signage should be provided to inform the public of the history of the Bay and waterfront; improvements should be designed to be low maintenance; and queues for excursion boats and ferries should be managed so that public access is maintained and no structures prevent access to the shoreline. The project proposes new paving and site furnishings such as lighting, seating, and signage in the Ferry Plaza and South Promenade; both the Ferry Plaza and the South Promenade are part of the site's vehicular circulation for service and maintenance vehicles; the project proposes enclosing or covering existing public access areas on the site (ex: the Bay Front Kitchens and kiosk); the project proponent is seeking to minimize maintenance requirements for proposed improvements; and the project site involves ferry facilities.

Public Access Design Guidelines

The *Public Access Design Guidelines* state that public access should feel public, be designed so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user's appreciation diminished by structures or incompatible uses, and that there should be visual cues that public access is available for the public's use by using site furnishings, such as benches, trash containers, lighting, and signage. The *Public Access Design Guidelines* further state that public access areas should be designed for a wide range of users, should maximize user comfort by designing for weather and day and night use, and that each site's historical, cultural, and natural attributes provide opportunities for creating projects with a "sense of place" and a unique identity. The project will affect gateways to the Ferry Building and Ferry Plaza, including the building's entry portico and the South Promenade, and improvements are intended to welcome the public to further utilize the Ferry Plaza and help inform safe and convenient circulation among the site's different users.

The *Public Access Design Guidelines* also provide guidance that projects should provide visual access to the Bay and shoreline by organizing development to allow Bay views and access between buildings, and siting projects so that they enhance and dramatize views of the Bay; enhance the visual quality of the Bay and shoreline by providing visual interest and architectural variety while complementing the appearance of the Bay and adjacent development; and take advantage of the Bay setting by orienting projects towards the Bay and orienting public access areas to take advantage of views of opposite shores and landmarks. The project is located on the waterfront and is seeking to design the Ferry Plaza and South Promenade to enhance the experience of visitors and draw them towards the Bay.

The *Public Access Design Guidelines* further state that projects should provide connections along the shoreline by incorporating the Bay Trail and promoting safe pedestrian and bicycle access. The project site is adjacent to a segment of the Bay Trail and is connected to a number of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The area sees high volumes of both bicycle and pedestrian traffic, as well as vehicular traffic and transit and the project will need to consider how visitors connecting to the site will continue to circulate through without conflict.

Board Questions

Staff recommends the Board frame its remarks of the proposed public access improvements considering the proposed development project. The Board may wish to refer to the public access objectives found in the Commission's Public Access Design Guidelines. Additionally, please provide feedback on the proposed public access improvements with respect to the Commission's policies on sea level rise, and environmental justice and social equity.

The seven objectives for public access are:

1. Make public access **PUBLIC**.
2. Make public access **USABLE**.
3. Provide, maintain, and enhance **VISUAL ACCESS** to the Bay and shoreline.
4. Maintain and enhance the **VISUAL QUALITY** of the Bay, shoreline, and adjacent developments.
5. Provide **CONNECTIONS** to and **CONTINUITY** along the shoreline.
6. Take advantage of the **BAY SETTING**.
7. Ensure that public access is **COMPATIBLE WITH WILDLIFE** through siting, design, and management strategies.

Staff also has the following specific questions for the Board's consideration:

1. How does the project proposal result in public spaces that "feel public," and does the project proposal allow for the shoreline to be enjoyed by the greatest number of people?
2. Do the alterations sufficiently maintain or enhance connectivity to and along the shoreline? Are the enhancements and programming compatible with the existing structures and uses in the area? Are there any potential issues or concerns to be mindful of as the concept develops?
3. Does the enclosure of the private dining areas on the East Promenade for the Bay Front Kitchens enhance activation and support inviting and usable public access areas? Is it necessary to enclose the private dining areas?
4. Are the alterations on the Ferry Plaza sufficiently flexible to accommodate the variety of proposed programming while maintaining usable public access for existing user groups?
5. Are the improvements proposed for the Ferry Plaza likely to be successful in attracting additional visitors to use the space during non-market days, afternoons, and evenings?
6. What additional details about the programming of the perimeter easement activation zone in the South Promenade are needed to understand the potential for use conflicts, circulation issues, and benefits for public access?
7. Are there additional improvements that could improve the public access experience?