San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
375 Beale Street, Suite 510, San Francisco, California 94105 tel 415 352 3600
State of California | Gavin Newsom – Governor | info@bcdc.ca.gov | www.bcdc.ca.gov

December 22, 2023

TO: Design Review Board Members

FROM: Lawrence Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Ashley Tomerlin, Senior Bay Design Analyst (415/352-3657; ashley.tomerlin@bcdc.ca.gov)
Schuyler Olsson, Senior Environmental Scientist (415/352-3668; schuyler.olsson@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: City of Alameda De-Pave Park, Alameda; First Pre-Application Review
(For Design Review Board consideration on January 8, 2024)

Project Summary

Project Proponent
City of Alameda

Project Representatives
Amy Wooldridge (City of Alameda); Justin Long (City of Alameda); Kevin Conger (CMG); Corbett Belcher (CMG)

Project Location (Exhibits 5-9)[1]
The approximately 21-acre De-Pave Park project site (Site) is located along San Francisco Bay in the western end of the City of Alameda. It is on property owned by the City of Alameda (City), within the southern and central area of the larger former Naval Air Station Alameda site (now commonly referred to as Alameda Point). It is accessed by Monarch Street from the north. The Site is bounded to the east by Seaplane Lagoon (an inlet of San Francisco Bay); to the south by San Francisco Bay; to the west by wetlands owned by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA wetlands); and to the north and east by Seaplane Lagoon Promenade, a public area running along the northside of Seaplane Lagoon. The VA wetlands are part of a larger 624-acre site owned by VA and located directly west of the Site, which includes a 512-acre conservation management area with both planned and existing wetlands, a future columbarium, a veterans' hospital, and related facilities for veterans.

[1] Exhibit numbers refer to page numbers in the "Exhibits" document posted along this staff report on the corresponding DRB agenda webpage.

Project Overview (Exhibits 22-24)
The proposed De-Pave Park Project (Project) was conceived and approved by Alameda City Council in 2014 as part of the 2014 Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan for Alameda Point, which established the development parameters for 150 acres surrounding Seaplane Lagoon. The plan includes a series of waterfront public spaces surrounding the three sides of the lagoon, transitioning from a more urban character on the east side to the more ecologically-focused De-Pave Park on the west side.

The Project would involve creating an urban ecological park by removing much of the Site's existing World War II-era concrete runway spaces and onsite buildings; repurposing remaining materials for public access areas and amenities; and establishing new tidal wetlands, a pilot eelgrass restoration area, and other native habitats appropriate for San Francisco Bay. The project team intends to maximize re-use of on-site materials and design the park as a model for open space and habitat restoration areas that can be adapted to sea level rise over time.

In addition to natural habitat areas, the park would include an accessible pedestrian and bicycle pathway (central promenade) that would provide opportunities for viewing shorebirds, waterfowl, and marine mammals in their natural habitat; additional trails and observation areas; fishing opportunities; a learning lab and other gathering spaces; an enlarged public sandy beach; a discovery play area; parking and restrooms; and related amenities. Additionally, the Project would provide wildlife connectivity and viewing opportunities of the VA wetlands habitat that is not accessible to the public.

Prior Review by Design Review Board
This is the project's first review by the Design Review Board.

Project Site

Site History (Exhibit 7)
According to EcoAtlas, the Site is located on artificially filled land that was historically shallow water habitat. It is within the traditional indigenous homelands of the Ohlone people.

The Site includes large areas of concrete and buildings that are a remnant of the 1,400-acre Naval Air Station Alameda, a historic World War II base that was constructed through filling and dredging of shallow water habitats beginning in the 1920s through the 1940s. In 1997, the base was decommissioned and transferred to the City of Alameda. Alameda Point is now being redeveloped by the City to include 1,400 housing units, 5.5 million square feet of commercial space, and over 200 acres of parks and open space.

The Site was used by the Navy for a range of aircraft-related activities, including testing and repairing aircraft engines, aircraft parking, and aircraft corrosion protection. Several former buildings and facilities used by the Navy have since been demolished onsite.

The Site has a history of onsite use of chemicals. Based on soil sampling done by the Navy prior to land transfer to the City, some areas of the Site contain legacy soil contaminants, primarily petroleum hydrocarbons and metals. The Navy released the Site as having acceptable levels for park uses and the City is conducting additional sampling for contaminants to provide a complete evaluation of the constituents. Based on the results, the City's design team will consider the cost of removing/replacing soil not suitable for reuse relative to the project's ecological and public access goals.

Existing Conditions and Public Access (Exhibits 18-19)

The existing 21-acre Site is flat, and most of it (approximately 17.4 acres, or 83%) is covered by concrete and remnant buildings associated with the former Naval Air Station Alameda (this area includes the area of riprap along the shoreline). The shoreline of the Site is a subgrade "seawall" dike, armored with large stone riprap visible from the surface. The remaining approximately 3.6 acres is covered by ruderal upland habitat and a small pocket beach at the northwestern corner of Seaplane Lagoon, which is used by the public for swimming and wading at low tide. According to the City, the beach is difficult to access and is therefore not heavily used.

Adjacent to the Site, a long riprap jetty extends east into Seaplane Lagoon near the Site's southeastern corner. Additional jetties extend west into Seaplane Lagoon from the opposite side, sheltering the lagoon's inner shoreline from wave exposure. Natural habitats surrounding the Site include: muted tidal salina and ruderal uplands to the west on the VA property, and subtidal Bay habitat to the south and east. The VA plans to enhance the muted tidal salina, and create a new fully tidal salt marsh adjacent to the Site on VA property as mitigation for the VA Alameda Point Multi-specialty Outpatient Clinic and Columbarium project (authorized under BCDC Consistency Determination No. C2013.004.01).

There are many birds that use Seaplane Lagoon and nearby open spaces at Alameda Point, creating a unique opportunity to expand the wetland habitat. Within the VA property to the west of the Site, there is an abandoned runway area used as a nesting site and loafing area of endangered California Least Terns (*Sternula antillarum browni*), located approximately 0.3 miles from the Site. A biological opinion authored by the US Department of Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) limits trees and structures within areas of De-Pave Park to reduce perching opportunities for predator species. In recent project discussion as part of the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) pre-application process, the USFWS have indicated that certain structures, such as the restroom and the barbecue trellis, will be acceptable if equipped with anti-perching devices.

The current elevation of the Site is just above 10 feet North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88)[2], or roughly 3.6 feet above current mean higher high water (MHHW). With the FEMA Base Flood Elevation at the Site also at 10 feet, the site may be vulnerable to coastal flooding during extreme storms at current sea levels (see "Sea Level Rise" section below for more detailed information).

The Site is currently open to the public but not improved for public access. There is no BCDC-required public access at the site, but BCDC Permit No. M1998.036.01 requires public access immediately adjacent to (east of) the Site along the north side of Seaplane Lagoon. Buildings 25 and 29 at the Site host a range of businesses open to the public (see "Community Engagement" below).

[2] All elevations in this report are given in NAVD 88

According to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) online Bay Trail Interactive Map, a planned Bay Trail segment would run north to south along the shoreline through the Site before veering west and wrapping around the shoreline of Alameda Point. However, the City's Master Infrastructure Plan, completed in 2014 and amended in 2020, calls for a flood protection levee ("MIP Levee") that would run through portions of Seaplane Lagoon and Alameda Point, including a segment running east-west through the north end of De Pave Park. The City is thus proposing an alternate Bay Trail alignment that would follow the MIP Levee alignment running east-west through the north end of the Site, then connect to a planned seasonal trail that would run diagonally along the edge of the VA wetlands located west of the site, before continuing along the shore of Alameda Point (see Exhibit 13). This seasonal trail near the VA wetlands does not yet exist, but is required by BCDC to be built under BCDC Consistency Determination No. C2013.004.01, prior to the occupancy of the associated outpatient clinic (estimated to be approximately mid-2027); the seasonality is due to the nesting and loafing site of the California Least Tern. The City has stated that they plan to engage Bay Trail staff at MTC on this issue starting in January of 2024.

Figure 1. Project Location and 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 blocks and is used by the Commission Staff to help identify certain Equity Priority Communities. These communities include those disproportionally 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 indicative of a higher degree of social vulnerability.

According to the mapping tool, the site is located within a 2020 census block in Alameda that is designated as having a "high" level of social vulnerability, based on high percentiles (70th or above) for the following indicators: Renter, No Vehicle, Disabled, Single Parent, and Very Low Income. The block is also ranked as having "high" contamination vulnerability, with a CalEnviroScreen 4.0 (a statewide pollution burden assessment) score of 77 out of 100. The area is also listed by the UC Berkeley Displacement Typology (2017) as experiencing ongoing gentrification and/or displacement.

Proposed Project

Project Description (Exhibits 22-27)

The Project would involve establishing an approximately 21-acre, ecologically-focused De-Pave Park. A guiding principle for the Project is to create a place for nature and nature-oriented public access in the most sustainable way possible. The Project is designed to reduce its carbon footprint by minimizing new paving and maximizing reuse of existing paving for trails, surfacing, and site furniture elements, and as crushed paving for fill in upland areas that will be elevated for resilience to future sea level rise. The project team is striving for a balanced cut and fill by using all soils excavated through the wetland creation for elevated areas.

The Site is within walking and biking distance for many low-income residents, including an affordable housing development for seniors and Alameda Point Collaborative, which provides permanent supportive housing and services for formerly homeless families.

1. **Natural Areas.** The existing rip rap shoreline would be lowered by approximately six feet along approximately 50% of the shoreline, and would be breached at its central point. This would allow for the establishment of new natural habitats at the Site, including rocky intertidal habitats along a gravel beach in the central area of shoreline, tide pools at the southern end of the Site that could be explored by the public, a central tidal marsh channel that would connect to new tidal marsh habitats further to the west, and an expanded sandy beach in the northeastern corner of the Site. The Project would also include creating native upland coastal scrub habitat areas that would buffer the tidal marsh areas and provide space for the marsh to migrate inland as sea levels rise.

   In addition, a pilot eelgrass bed restoration area would be planted offshore near the tide pools at the southeastern corner of the site. Eelgrass beds are a rare and beneficial habitat in San Francisco Bay that provide a range of important functions, including foraging and shelter for young fish and invertebrates, spawning surfaces for Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*), reduction of coastal erosion, carbon sequestration, and other benefits.

2. **Public Access Elements.** The length of the park would be connected with a central 24-foot-wide, shared-use promenade (central promenade), utilizing predominantly existing paving at existing grade, with an inlaid historic steel rail running down the center. Northern portions of the central promenade would be built of decomposed granite. The central promenade would run north to south along the shoreline, and include a timber bridge crossing over the new tidal wetland channel.

   The north end of the park would be elevated above existing grade to match the elevation of the abovementioned proposed MIP Levee, and would serve as the park's entry area. This area would include the following amenities:

   - A levee-top trail running east to west (proposed Bay Trail alignment) that would connect to the above-referenced seasonal trail;
   - Five picnic areas, including three small group areas, one open large group area, and one large sheltered barbecue area;
   - A discovery play area, including stone and timber play elements, play mulch, and planted areas;

- An expanded sandy beach that could be used for wading, swimming, and launching of small non-motorized watercraft. The beach area would also include an accessible concrete ramp connecting the beach to the parking area, and large beach terrace steps leading to the beach and constructed from re-purposed concrete slabs;
- An interpretive overlook located east of the central promenade, which would provide views of the wetlands, the rocky shoreline, and Seaplane Lagoon, and would include large interpretive panels about the Site;
- A restroom with an outdoor foot wash and water bottle fill station;
- A parking area for approximately 60 vehicles;
- Three bicycle parking areas (for approximately 42 bicycles);
- Secondary decomposed granite pathways connecting the picnic areas, beach, discovery play areas, and interpretive overlook; and
- Additional interpretive elements near the park entrance.

The central promenade would transition down in grade from the north end of the park to meet the existing grades in the central and southern portions of the park. The southern and central portions of the Site would include:

- A timber bridge along the central promenade, passing over the tidal breach area;
- A learning lab and additional gathering spaces, all of which can be used for outdoor education classes and wildlife viewing areas. Plaza spaces near the south end would retain and utilize the most interesting segments of concrete paving and steel rail features to create gathering spaces and an appreciation of the Site's industrial past and ecological future;
- An elevated interpretive overlook built of decomposed granite, located at the southwestern end of the Site;
- A boulder tide pool area (referenced above), built from relocated natural riprap stones, which would provide an urban location to observe pools and marine life at different water levels;
- A decomposed granite fishing trail that would provide fishing access along the southern edge of the Site;
- Secondary pathways made of existing concrete and asphalt paving;
- Two bicycle parking areas (for approximately 28 bicycles); and
- Additional interpretive elements south of the timber bridge.

Additionally, distributed throughout the Site would be 27 benches and approximately 25 large sculptural seating plinths constructed from repurposed concrete slabs. Finally, low cable and mesh fencing would border the central promenade and the property line with the adjacent VA wetland, to prevent dogs and people from disturbing habitat areas.

Special Events
The City does not plan to host special events at the Site, due to the limited space and the ecologically-focused nature of the Park. The City has stated that special events would be hosted in other parts of the larger Seaplane Lagoon area.

Sea Level Rise (Exhibits 36-38)
Exhibits 37 and 38 show the Site in plan view along with current and expected future water levels. Current water levels for the Site are the following, according to data provided from the project proponent and obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Moffat & Nichol:

- Mean Higher High Water (MHHW): 6.37 feet
- 1-year Extreme Tide (King Tide): 7.68 feet
- 100-year stillwater level elevation (100-year SWEL): 9.82 feet
- Base Flood Elevation (BFE): 10 feet (AE Zone)

To plan for future sea level rise, the project team relied on the high-emissions, medium-to-high risk aversion scenario from the California Ocean Protection Council's 2018 Sea Level Rise Guidance, which is a conservative scenario corresponding to a 1-in-200 (0.5%) likelihood of occurrence. Sea level rise projections based on this scenario are: +1.9 feet by 2050, +3.5 feet by 2070, and +6.9 feet by 2100. Under these projections, in 2050, the expected water levels at the Site would be approximately 8.27 feet (MHHW), 9.58 feet (King Tide), and 11.9 feet (BFE). In 2070, the water levels would be approximately 9.87 feet (MHHW), 11.18 feet (King Tide), and 13.5 feet (BFE). Finally, in 2100, they would be approximately 13.27 feet (MHHW), 14.58 feet (King Tide), and 16.9 feet (BFE)[3].

Currently proposed site elevations are shown on Exhibits 36 through 38. At the northern end of the Site, key public access features, including the central promenade, the discovery play area, the picnic areas, the interpretive outlook, and the Bay Trail segment would be raised to match the elevation of the proposed MIP Levee (15 feet, or approximately 8.63 feet above current MHHW). At this elevation, these areas would remain above the MHHW level projected for 2100, but would be overtopped during a base flood event with approximately five feet of sea level rise (projected between 2080 and 2090). The City indicated that these areas could be raised along with the MIP Levee to address sea level rise in the future. The parking and restrooms in the northern end of the Site would remain at their current elevations of around 9.1 feet, behind the MIP Levee.

[3] These projected water levels assume a linear increase of given water levels commensurate with the expected amount of sea level rise; actual water level increases will likely be non-linear and vary from these numbers.

Also in the Site's northern end, beach terrace steps would lead down to the sandy beach, which would be built to an elevation of approximately 9.0 feet at its high point. At this elevation, the high point of the beach would remain above MHHW through approximately 2.63 feet of sea level rise (projected in approximately 2060), though the terrace steps leading to the beach would be at higher elevations and could continue to provide access to the water when the beach is inundated. The project team does not currently have plans to adapt the beach to higher levels of sea level rise.

In the central and southern portions of the park, most of the public access improvements, including the central promenade, the learning lab area, and the decomposed granite fishing trail, would be built at current grade, ranging from approximately 10.5 to 10.8 feet. At these elevations, these areas would be just above the current BFE of 10 feet, so would be vulnerable to flooding during extreme storms not long after project construction, and with greater frequency as sea levels rise over time. The areas would be overtopped at MHHW with approximately 4.13 feet of sea level rise (projected between 2070 and 2080), and would be overtopped during annual king tides with approximately 2.82 feet of sea level rise (projected between 2060 and 2070).

The City is proposing to keep these areas at their existing grade as part of its goal to minimize the park's carbon footprint from construction. To address sea level rise in this area of the park, the City plans to construct an elevated boardwalk on top of the proposed central promenade, using the thick paving as a mat slab foundation, which would continue to provide public access to the southern end of the park at higher sea levels. However, as currently proposed, the remaining public access areas in the southern end of the park, including the learning lab area, the fishing trail, and the trail to the elevated bird overlook, would not be raised in the future. Therefore, there would be less publicly accessible area at the park with future sea level rise.

The City has also indicated that the proposed tidal marsh areas would have room to migrate into higher elevations (upland coastal scrub areas) with sea level rise over time, but have not yet provided specifics of the expected pace and nature of the habitat change over time.

Community Engagement (Exhibits 15-17)

According to the City, initial community engagement efforts related to this project began in 2014, when a broad public input process was conducted for the Alameda Point Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan, which included De-Pave Park. In 2020, the project team worked closely with relevant stakeholders including representatives from local environmental organizations, the kayak/watercraft community, and residents of Alameda Point Collaborative to develop the De-Park Vision Plan, which was discussed publicly at the Recreation and Parks Commission with final approval by City Council.

In 2023, the team has continued community engagement with three rounds of opportunities for public input. The first round, in April 2023, included in-person workshops held at the proposed park site and at Alameda Point Collaborative; an online survey with 693 respondents; marketing on social media; and flyers in multiple languages distributed to a wide variety of relevant local organizations. In September 2023, the team held two in-person community meetings to solicit input on these three design alternatives, including: a tour for Alameda Point Collaborative residents; a second community meeting for the broader community; an online survey which received hundreds of responses; and other community events.

The final round of community input will occur in January/February 2024 and will include targeted outreach to the angler community, Alameda Point Collaborative, Alameda Housing Authority, and the broader community.

The City also conducted targeted outreach to the tenants of Buildings 25 and 29 that will be removed as part of the Project. These tenants include businesses such as St. George's Spirits, Dash Cellars, Brix Beverages and Urban Legends in Building 25; and a number of local makers and artisans in Building 29. The City is working to identify alternate locations for the tenants of these buildings, and stated that tenant improvement credits or other tenant assistance may be negotiated.

The community engagement efforts to date have resulted in, or demonstrated support for, several modifications to the park design, including: the removal of Buildings 25 and 29; increased size of the nature/discovery play program; siting of the trail locations and fence alignments to minimize habitat impacts; refinement and enlargement of nature overlook and learning lab spaces; siting of the parking lot further to the north, away from habitat areas and out of the view corridor of Seaplane Lagoon Promenade; addition of an outdoor foot wash at the restroom; addition of the tide pool area; and other elements.

In addition, after meeting with Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District staff, the City removed proposed salina habitat areas from the project design and replaced it with coastal scrub habitat, due to the salina's potential to provide mosquito breeding opportunities close to a public access area.

Approval & Construction Timeline
The City is currently going through the pre-application review process with the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT), and received grant funding from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) for project design and planning. The City will be applying for additional grants in 2024 to fund permitting and construction.

Commission Plans, Policies, and Guidelines

San Francisco Bay Plan Policies
The *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan) contains several policy sections relevant to the design of the public access areas for this project, including the sections on Public Access; Recreation, Appearance, Design and Scenic Views; Shoreline Protection; Climate Change; and Environmental Justice and Social Equity.

Public Access Policy No. 2 states, 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…" These policies also provide specific details on the locations and types of features that should be included in public access areas. Policy No. 10 states, in part, that "access to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare" and Policy No. 8 states, in part, that "…improvements should be designed and built to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline, should provide barrier free access for persons with disabilities, for people of all income levels, and for people of all cultures to the maximum feasible extent, should include an ongoing maintenance program, and should be identified with appropriate signs – including using appropriate languages or culturally-relevant icon-based signage."

In natural areas and where habitat or species may be impacted by public access, Policy No. 4 states, in part, that "public access should be sited, designed and managed to prevent significant adverse effects on wildlife…" and that "siting, design and management strategies should be employed to avoid or minimize adverse effects on wildlife, informed by the advisory principles in the Public Access Design Guidelines." In considering this balance between public access and wildlife, the Board needs to consider the likely human use of the area, the potential for significant adverse effects (such as impacts to species, impacts on breeding and foraging areas, fragmentation of wildlife corridors, etc.), site specific information, and the best available scientific evidence and expert advice. These effects are also to be considered within a regional context.

In considering public access designs and potential future climate change, Public Access Policy No. 6 states, 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 access should be designed consistent with the physical and natural environment. Public Access Policy No. 7 states, in part, that "Any 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 Bay Plan **Recreation** Policy No. 1 states, in part, that "diverse and accessible water-oriented recreational facilities, such as marinas, launch ramps, beaches, and fishing piers, should be provided to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population… and improved to accommodate a broad range of water-oriented recreational activities for people of all races, cultures, ages and income levels…waterfront parks should be provided wherever possible." And Policy No. 5 requires that within these parks, the Bay resources should "be described with interpretive signs. Where feasible and appropriate, waterfront parks and wildlife refuges should provide diverse environmental education programs, facilities and community service opportunities, such as classrooms and interpretive and volunteer programs."

The Bay Plan Recreation Policy No. 3a encourages construction of recreational facilities, such as parks, along the Bay so long as "they are located, improved and managed consistent with the following standards:…(3) Be feasible from an engineering viewpoint.; and (4) Be consistent with the public access policies that address wildlife compatibility and disturbance. In addition:…(7) access to marinas, launch ramps, beaches, fishing piers, and other recreational facilities should be clearly posted with signs and easily available from parking reserved for the public or from public streets or trails…(8) To reduce the human health risk posed by consumption of contaminated fish, projects that create or improve fishing access to the Bay at water-oriented recreational facilities, such as fishing piers, beaches, and marinas, should include signage that informs the public of consumption advisories for the species of Bay fish that have been identified as having potentially unsafe levels of contaminants…"

Regarding water recreation that is proposed onsite, such as the beach, Recreation Policy No. 3d states, in part, that "launching lanes should be placed where wind and water conditions would be most favorable for smaller boats." The policies state that "(3) Additional launching facilities should be located around the Bay shoreline, especially where there are few existing facilities. These facilities should be available free or at moderate cost. Launching facilities should include adequate car and trailer parking, restrooms, and public access…(6) Fill for ramps into the water, docks, and similar facilities should be permitted."

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..." These policies also state, in part, that "shoreline developments should be built in clusters, leaving open area around them to permit more frequent views of the Bay."

The Bay Plan **Shoreline Protection** policies state, in part, that, "all shoreline protection projects should evaluate the use of natural and nature-based features such as marsh vegetation, levees with transitional ecotone habitat, mudflats, beaches, and oyster reefs, and should incorporate these features to the greatest extent practicable. Ecosystem benefits, including habitat and water quality improvement, should be considered in determining the amount of fill necessary for the project purpose. Suitability and sustainability of proposed shoreline protection and restoration strategies at the project site should be determined using the best available science on shoreline adaptation and restoration." The policies also state, in part, that "adverse impacts to natural resources and public access from new shoreline protection should be avoided. When feasible, shoreline protection projects should include components to retain safe and convenient water access, for activities such as fishing, swimming, and boating, especially in communities lacking such access. Where significant impacts cannot be avoided, mitigation or alternative public access should be provided." Finally, the policies state "the Commission should encourage pilot and demonstration projects to research and demonstrate the benefits of incorporating natural and nature-based techniques in San Francisco Bay."

On the subject of **Climate Change**, the Public Access Policy No. 7 states, in part, that, "any 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 Bay Plan's Climate Change Policy No. 5 states that "wherever feasible and appropriate, effective, innovative sea level rise adaptation approaches should be encouraged."

Bay Plan policies on **Environmental Justice and Social Equity** state, in part, 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…" (Policy No. 3), and that "if a project is proposed within an underrepresented and/or identified vulnerable and/or disadvantaged community, potential disproportionate impacts should be identified in collaboration with the potentially impacted communities. Local governments and the Commission should take measures…to require mitigation for disproportionate adverse project impacts on the identified vulnerable or disadvantaged communities in which the project is proposed" (Policy No. 4).

As it relates to community engagement in the design of shoreline public access, Bay Plan policies on Public Access state, in part, 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 and embraces local multicultural and indigenous history and presence. In particular, vulnerable, disadvantaged, and/or underrepresented communities should be involved. If such previous outreach and engagement did not occur, further outreach and engagement should be conducted prior to Commission action" (Policy No. 5).

Priority Use Area, Special Area Plan, and Bay Plan Map Notes
The Bay Plan Maps designate those areas that should be reserved for priority land uses on the Bay shoreline. As shown on Bay Plan Map No. 5, the project site is not located within a priority use area, nor is it part of a Special Area Plan. Commission Suggestion A on Bay Plan Map No. 5 suggests the possible re-use of dredge material on Naval Air Station Alameda (Alameda Point). Note 4 points out a harbor seal haul-out near the site that should be protected. BCDC staff will work with the City and its BRRIT partner agencies to ensure local wildlife is protected during construction.

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 Bay Plan Public Access policies on these Design Guidelines state "the Design Review Board should encourage diverse public access to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population. Public access should be well distributed around the Bay and designed or improved to accommodate a broad range of activities for people of all races, cultures, ages, income levels, and abilities."

Board Questions

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

The seven objectives for public access are:

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

In addition, Staff has the following specific questions for the Board's consideration:

1. Is the beach appropriately designed to be usable and accessible now and in the future with sea level rise? Will it be expected to erode and require regular nourishment at current or future water levels? Do the terraced beach steps provide an equivalent water access experience when the beach is inundated due to sea level rise?

2. Does the adaptation approach adequately address program and use areas at the southern portion of the site, which would be inundated with future sea level rise? Are there programs that have not been included in the long-term adaptation plan that should be included or prioritized?
3. What events and event frequency would the Board recommend as triggers (e.g., flooding events, or observed sea level rise amounts), for initiating sea level rise adaptation actions, such as the elevated boardwalk?
4. Do the public access uses at the southern portion of the site necessitate weather protection? If so, does the Board have recommendations on how this could be provided while avoiding conflict with the adjacent habitat area?