

# SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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July 1, 2011

**TO:** All Design Review Board Members

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**SUBJECT: Burlingame Point, City of Burlingame, San Mateo County  
(Pre-Application Review)  
(For Board consideration on July 11, 2011)**

## Project Summary

**Project Proponent and Property Owner:** DES Architects and Engineers, Inc., and 350 Beach Road LLC c/o Millennium Partners

**Project Representative:** DES Architects and Engineers, Inc.

**Project Overview and Existing Conditions:** The proposed project would involve the construction of an office/life science campus with associated buildings, public areas, a parking structure, and a realigned road with the widening of an existing bridge, at an 18.13-acre site located at 300-333 Airport Boulevard, in the City of Burlingame, San Mateo County. The project site is located north of State Highway 101 and Beach Road, and east of Sanchez Channel. (Exhibits 1, 2 and 3). The site is undeveloped and mostly degraded except for Airport Boulevard, which runs along the eastern and northern borders. The shoreline at Sanchez Channel is lined with concrete blocks and is separated from the shoreline by fencing. The eastern shoreline contains degraded rock riprap and concrete blocks. The property located north of the project site is mostly undeveloped and, at its eastern edge, provides a County-managed public parking area and access for the public, including fishermen. Beach Road located south of the project site is developed with light industry buildings. (Exhibit 4) The project site provides unobstructed views of the Bay in the direction of Sanchez Channel (west) and towards Coyote Point Park (east). The view of the site from Beach Road is partly obstructed by light industry buildings. The San Francisco Bay Trail extends along the eastern shoreline parallel to Airport Boulevard. (Exhibit 5)

**Proposed Office/Life Science Campus and Public Access:** The proposed campus includes six buildings: two 5-story, one 7-story, one 8-story (totaling 730,000 square feet); one 37,000-square-foot Amenities Center; one 5.5-level parking structure as well as a level of basement podium parking. Heights of the proposed structures range between approximately 50 to 150-feet-tall. Airport Boulevard would be realigned away from the shoreline and through the proposed campus. At Sanchez Channel and along the eastern shoreline, dilapidated shoreline protection material would be replaced with new shoreline materials, including riprap and vegetation, and include "reach-downs" (such as stairs or ramps; design details not yet available) to the water. Along Sanchez Channel and the eastern shoreline, approximately 100-foot-wide largely public areas would be developed with 12-foot-wide pathways (which would be part of the Bay Trail), a Bay overlook at each shoreline, educational nodes, landscaping and paving, trashcans, lighting, seat walls, art features, and dedicated public parking. The realigned Airport Boulevard would include two 14-foot-wide vehicle lanes shared with bicycles (Class III) with a landscaped median.



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The existing bridge at Sanchez Channel would be widened by 14 feet to accommodate bicycles and pedestrian traffic. (Exhibits 6, 7, 8, and 9).

The eastern shoreline pathway would be accessible at its northern and southern ends via Airport Boulevard. The Sanchez Channel shoreline area would be accessible at the northwest corner of the project site and through a pedestrian promenade located approximately in the center of the site. The public pathway along Sanchez Channel would dead-end at the site's southwest corner directly adjacent to the rear of a building at the neighboring site with the potential for a future connection.

Detailed illustrations of the proposed project are shown on Exhibits 10 to 13.

The proposed project would be implemented in two phases. Phase I would involve construction primarily at the site's eastern side, including Buildings 1 and 2, the Amenities Center, parking, road realignment, and the eastern shoreline public area. Phase II would involve construction on the western side of the site including Buildings 3 and 4, the parking structure, and the Sanchez Channel public shoreline area. (Exhibit 6)

The proposed activities within the Commission's Bay and 100-foot shoreline band jurisdiction include the public access areas at the shoreline, the widening of Sanchez Channel bridge, sections of outdoor dining areas, part of the realigned roadway, and shoreline protection. The proposed buildings, multi-level parking structure, and a major part of the road realignment would occur outside of the Commission's jurisdiction.

**Public Access, View, and Shoreline Improvement Issues.** The McAteer-Petris Act and the *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan) require that maximum feasible public access consistent with the project be provided. The Bay Plan Public Access policies state, in part, that "roadway[s]...should maintain and enhance visual access for the traveler....," and "[t]he Public Access Design Guidelines should be used as a guide to siting and designing public access..." The Bay Plan policies regarding appearance, design, and scenic views state, in part, that "[m]aximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline..." and "[s]horeline developments should be built in clusters, leaving open area around them to permit more frequent views of the Bay." The Bay Plan policies regarding shoreline improvements state, in part, that "[r]iprap revetments...should be constructed of properly sized and placed material that meet sound engineering criteria for durability, density, and porosity....[g]enerally, only engineered quarrystone or concrete pieces that have either been specially cast or carefully selected for size, density, durability, and freedom of extraneous materials from demolition debris will meet these requirements."

The Public Access Design Guidelines state, in part, that "[p]ublic access improvements should be designed for a wide range of users" and uses. Further, the Guidelines state partly that visual access to the Bay and shoreline is important and a way to ensure such access can be provided by "[l]ocating buildings, structures...such that they enhance and dramatize views of the Bay and the shoreline from public thoroughfares..." and by "[o]rganizing shoreline development to allow Bay views and access between buildings." The Guidelines emphasize the importance of connections to and continuity along the shoreline stating that "[a]ccess areas are utilized most if they provide direct connections to public right's-of-way such as streets and sidewalks..." In addressing shoreline erosion control, the Guidelines state partly that "[r]iprap material should be placed so that a permanent shoreline is established by means of an engineered slope not steeper than a ratio of two to one," and that, if designed properly, such improvements can provide opportunities for the public to get close to the water.

The Commission staff believes that the proposed project involving the construction of an office/life science campus with a realigned road and public amenities partly within the Commission's Bay and 100-foot shoreline band jurisdictions raises the following four main issues to be considered by the Design Review Board (Board):

1. **Whether the Proposed Access Areas Provide Diverse Uses.** As proposed, along Sanchez Channel and the site's eastern shoreline, the project would involve the construction of an approximately 100-foot-wide public area including 12-foot-wide Bay Trail pathways, a Bay overlook at both shoreline areas, educational nodes, landscaping and paving, seat walls, and art features. Within both public shorelines, a portion of outdoor dining areas would be constructed. Dedicated public parking area(s) would be located adjacent to the eastern shoreline area. Airport Boulevard would be moved away from the shoreline but would include vehicle lanes shared with bicycles (Class III). Further, a 14-foot-wide dedicated bicycle/pedestrian path would be built on the northern side of Sanchez Channel bridge.

*The Board should consider whether the proposed access improvements would provide a wide range of uses. In addition, the Board should consider whether additional measures would be necessary to ensure that the proposed outdoor dining areas do not adversely affect the public's experience along the shoreline. The Board should consider how the overlooks and educational nodes could be further enhanced with the addition of seating and other elements.*

2. **Whether the Proposed Project Maximizes Viewing Opportunities of the Bay and Shoreline.** Airport Boulevard presently provides unobstructed views of the Bay and shoreline to all users, including those in vehicles. As proposed, the roadway would be realigned away from the shoreline through the campus. Consequently, vehicular traffic, bicyclists and pedestrians traveling on Airport Boulevard would not see the Bay or shoreline until approaching the northwestern edge of the property and the Sanchez Channel bridge. Although views to the Bay from the shoreline band public access areas would be open. Further, from Beach Road towards the project site, the view north of the Bay is partly obstructed by buildings. The proposed Amenities Center (outside of the Commission's jurisdiction) would close one of the remaining view gaps at this location.

*The Board should consider how the proposed realignment of Airport Road would affect Bay and shoreline visual access at the project site. Further, the Board should consider whether the siting of the proposed Amenities Center would affect Bay or shoreline views from the public road and possible siting alternatives to maximize or preserve view at this location.*

3. **Whether the Realigned Road Provides Desirable Connections to the Bay Trail.** As proposed, the realigned Airport Boulevard would have a curved spur at the northern property line linking to the shoreline. Further, as designed, the pathway along Sanchez Channel dead-ends at the southwestern corner of the site adjacent to the rear of a building at a neighboring property; further, the channel pathway does not provide for an obvious connection to the adjoining site when and if future opportunities for public access become available.

*The Board should consider whether, as designed, the curved spur off of Airport Boulevard facilitates a direct connection to/from the shoreline and public pathway or whether a linear design would enhance the connection. Further, the Board should consider whether the dead-end terminus of the Sanchez Channel public path provides for an optimal access experience for the public, whether an alternative design should be considered, and whether a connection to potential future access at the neighboring site should be incorporated at this time.*

4. **Whether the Proposed Project Maximizes Opportunities for Public Access to the Water.** The shorelines at the project site would be restored to provide a more natural-looking experience. As proposed, the shoreline protection system would include riprap, vegetation, and “reach-downs” (such as stairs or ramps) for which design details are not yet available.

*The DRB should consider concepts for potential “reach-downs” particularly how and where such areas could provide better public access to the water.*