

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600 • San Francisco, California 94102 (415) 352-3600 • Fax: (415) 352-3606 • www.bcdc.ca.gov

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TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Ellen Miramontes, Bay Design Analyst [415/352-3643; ellenm@bcdc.ca.gov]
Erik Buehmann, Coastal Program Analyst [415/352-3645; erikb@bcdc.ca.gov]

SUBJECT: Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District - Sausalito Ferry Terminal Vessel Boarding Rehabilitation, City of Sausalito, Marin County; First Review
(For Board consideration on October 6, 2014)

Project Summary

Project Sponsors: Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District and City of Sausalito

Project Representatives: John Eberle, Deputy District Engineer; Norma Jellison, District Manager of Real Estate Services and Property Development; Christian Stark, District Director of Engineering and Maintenance, Ferry Division

Project Site. The existing Sausalito Ferry Terminal is located in the City of Sausalito (“City”), east of the intersection of Bridgeway and El Portal/Anchor Streets. The site is owned by the City of Sausalito and operated by the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (“District”) pursuant to a lease. Approximately 21,571 square feet (0.5 acres) of the 51,402-square-foot site is within BCDC’s Bay jurisdiction.

Project Description: The existing Sausalito Ferry Terminal is nearly 40 years old and nearing the end of its design life. The District proposes to demolish the existing structure and replace it with a new ferry terminal that would provide standardized and smoother loading of vessels and passengers. The proposed project includes public access on the pier. Additional public access improvements, developed through a separate community planning process, would occur landward of the ferry terminal facilities. The two project elements are summarized below:

1. **Proposed Ferry Terminal Facilities.** The existing ferry terminal facilities include an approximately 4,400-square-foot steel float, a 350-square-foot steel gangway, and a 72-square-foot pile-supported timber pier (Exhibit 3 and 9). The proposed ferry terminal would consist of an 8,500-square-foot concrete float, a 1,800-square-foot gangway, and a 2,700-square-foot pier (Exhibit 10). To provide service during construction, temporary terminal facilities would be installed for approximately 14 months. The wider and less steep new terminal elements would provide smoother, safer, and more comfortable boarding and disembarking areas for passengers. The proposed terminal would significantly improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and would also better accommodate pedestrians with bicycles and strollers. Public access currently proposed for the project would include access on the new 2,700-square-foot “access pier” and on the existing 1,471-square-foot “landside pier” (Exhibits 17-19). The access pier would be widened on the north and south sides and accommodate two benches on each side.



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2. **Planning Process for Landside Improvements.** The District has passed grant funding to the City of Sausalito to conduct a separate community planning process to improve public access landward of the ferry facilities. The Ferry Plaza currently includes pathways, landscaping, seating, and a tidal stair. The public access amenities are outdated, awkwardly placed, and not appropriately designed and scaled for the growing number of pedestrians and bicyclists that use the plaza (Exhibit 7 and 8). The community planning process has not yet begun, but the District and the City have identified three general aspects that would be improved by redesigning this landside area (highlighted on Exhibits 22 and 23) as they have stated here:
- a. **Existing Ferry Plaza Public Access and Views Improvements**
 - (1) Improve views to bay from surface streets and the parking lot by removing landscaping that blocks views; replace with native coastal landscaping.
 - (2) Improve pedestrian circulation patterns.
 - (3) Relocate ticket vending machines (TVMs).
 - (4) Explore relocating news racks.
 - (5) Improve area where passengers access Plaza/Downtown from ferries (currently passengers exit into parking lot).
 - (6) Improve way-finding signs at exit from Ferry pier
 - b. **Improve Bicycle Staging Areas**
 - (1) Improve, expand, and relocate bicycle staging areas and bicycle parking.
 - (2) Relocate and improve bicycle ferry reservation and information kiosk.
 - (3) Improve circulation patterns for bicycles and pedestrians.
 - (4) Improve way-finding signs associated with bicycle staging and loading.
 - c. **Improve Circulation between Plaza and Parking Lots, Bus Staging Areas, and Surrounding Retail for Pedestrians, Bicycles, and Vehicles**
 - (1) Improve sidewalk connections between Plaza and Parking Lots 1, 2 and 3, bus staging areas, nearby retail, public restrooms, and nearby parks.
 - (2) Minimize and/or eliminate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.
 - (3) Provide safe pick up and drop off areas that are ADA compliant.
 - (4) Improve way-finding signs to assist in above.

Relevant Commission Law and Policies:

The Bay Plan policies on **Transportation** state, in part:

“Transportation projects should be designed to maintain and enhance visual and physical access to the Bay and along the Bay shoreline. [Ferry terminal] parking facilities should be set back from the shoreline to allow for public access and enjoyment of the Bay.”

The Bay Plan policies on **Public Access** state, in part:

“[P]ublic access improvements...should be consistent with the project and the physical environment...and provide for the public's safety and convenience. The improvements should...permit barrier free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent, should include an ongoing maintenance program, and should be identified with appropriate signs.”

“Access to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available. Diverse and interesting public access experiences should be provided....”

“Public transit use and connections to the shoreline should be encouraged where appropriate.”

“Public access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding.”

“...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 policies on **Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views** state, in part:

“All bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay. Maximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas, [and] from the Bay itself....”

“Towers, bridges, or other structures near or over the Bay should be designed as landmarks that suggest the location of the waterfront when it is not visible, especially in flat areas....”

Public Access Issues. The staff believes that the project raises a number of issues for the Design Review Board to address in its review. The Board’s advice is sought on the following issues:

1. **Proposed Ferry Terminal.** The Board’s advice is sought on the physical access proposed on the widened access pier, including whether the public access area is adequately designed, attractive, and appropriate. The Board’s advice is also sought on whether the project is designed to provide, enhance, and preserve views of the Bay.
2. **Potential Landside Improvements.** At this conceptual stage, the District, the City, and BCDC staff are seeking the Board’s input and advice on the general concepts of the proposed public access improvements landward of the ferry terminal. The Board’s comments are sought on the list of identified general areas for landside improvements as presented by the District and the City in Exhibits 22 and 23. The Board should provide any recommendations they have to improve both visual and physical access to the Bay shoreline in this area.