

# SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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**TO:** All Design Review Board Members

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**SUBJECT: 900 Innes and India Basin Shoreline Park; First Pre-Application Review**  
(For Board consideration on November 7, 2016)

## Project Summary

**Project Proponent and Property Owner.** San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department

**Project Representatives.** Nicole Avril, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department (Property Owner and Project Representative); Philip Vitale, The Trust for Public Land (Project Representative); Ashley Ludwig, Gustafson Guthrie Nichol (Landscape Architect); Jessica Neafsey, Rana Creek (Landscape Architect, Ecological Restoration); Stefan Hastrup, Turnbull Griffin Haesloop Architects (Architect); Drew Gangnes, Magnusson Klemencic Associates (Civil Engineer); Michael Forbes, Fratessa Fores Wong Structural Engineers (Structural Engineer); John Greenlee, Greenlee and Associates (Horticulture); Dilip Trivedi, Moffatt and Nichol (Coastal Engineer); Geoff Smick, WRA (Regulatory Guidance)

**Project Site.** The approximately 14.2-acre project site is located adjacent to the India Basin along the southeastern shoreline of the City and County of San Francisco (Exhibit 2). The project site is bound by PG&E's former power plant to the north; businesses and residences along Innes Avenue to the south and west; and the proposed 700 Innes Project and India Basin Open Space area to the east. The project site includes the existing India Basin Shoreline Park, and the 900 Innes property, which is a former maritime industrial site that contains several historic structures. At present, the park area includes a basketball court, picnic and barbeque areas, play areas, seating, and parking along a vehicular driveway (Exhibit 3). Along Innes Avenue and within the project area is a small parcel that contains a below-grade PG&E electrical substation. The entirety of the project site is located within a *San Francisco Bay Plan*-designated Waterfront Park, Beach Priority Use Area. The project site also carries a Park Priority Use designation under the Commission's *San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan*.

**Project Description.** The proposed project would redevelop the existing City-owned India Basin Shoreline Park along with the adjacent 900 Innes property to create a larger shoreline park. The proposed design would involve significant re-grading of the site and add approximately 2,500 cubic yards of fill in the Bay (Exhibit 7). The redesigned park would be located within a *San Francisco Bay Plan*-designated Waterfront Park, Beach Priority Use Area (Map No. 5). The project site also carries a Park Priority Use designation under the Commission's *San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan* (SAP). Further, the project would be located in the Commission's Bay and 100-foot shoreline band jurisdiction.

The project consists of six distinct park spaces: (1) the Marsh Edge; (2) the Sage Slopes; (3) the Marineway; (4) the Historic Shorewalk; (5) the Neighborhood Edge; and (6) the Scow Schooner Boatyard (Exhibit 11).

1. The **Marsh Edge** area (Exhibits 12 and 15) would replace the existing hard riprap edge along the park and create a vegetated buffer to provide habitat for wildlife and a degree of adaptation for future sea level rise and storm events. Informal pedestrian paths are proposed within the marsh plantings.
2. The **Sage Slopes** area (Exhibits 13-15) would include a playground area, adult fitness stations, a quarter-mile walking loop, informal walking trails, skate trails, and a fenced-in, off-lease dog run nestled within native California sage scrub plantings.
3. The **Marineway** area (Exhibits 24-26) would include a large sloping lawn for active and passive recreation uses, running almost the full length of the park down to the water, where it would transition into a gravel beach that could be used by swimmers and, at high tide, could function as a boat launch. The Marineway would also feature a pier that extends into India Basin to meet a large floating dock with a covered classroom and kayak and boat storage structure. The floating dock would provide an ADA-accessible boat launch.
4. The **Historic Shorewalk** area (Exhibits 22-23) would include a wide stone-paved promenade alongside a water feature with pools of water, both of which follow the path of the historic shoreline of the Bay. The walkway would be lined with benches, porch swings, and areas for picnic tables and gatherings.
5. The **Neighborhood Edge** area (Exhibits 16-18) would run the length of the expanded park along Innes Avenue. This area would include a welcome center and gallery space within the restored historic Shipwright's Cottage; a covered Overlook Pavilion with space for food vendors and an ADA-accessible restroom; an ADA-accessible entry path to the park; a second entry plaza and wood deck with arbor and porch swings; a basketball court; a Class I bikeway; and vehicular access and parking.
6. The **Scow Schooner Boatyard** area (Exhibits 19-21) would retain much of the existing concrete surface of the existing historic boatyard, though some areas would be removed to create new tidal marsh. This area would also include a boat building workshop and maker space within a restored historic structure; areas for seating and picnic tables; a small water feature; shoreline planting; and restored artifacts from the boatyard, including the marineway rails.

**San Francisco Bay Plan and San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan Policies.** The Bay provides an environment for numerous forms of public enjoyment. In terms of recreational uses on the waterfront, the San Francisco Bay Plan (Bay Plan) envisions a variety of accessible, water-oriented recreational facilities and diverse recreational opportunities at for people of all races, cultures, ages and income levels, in order to accommodate a broad range of recreational activities. The Board should therefore consider the following applicable policies and guidelines during this initial review.

The proposed project is located within a Bay Plan-designated Water-oriented Recreation Priority Use Area that prioritizes **waterfront parks and beaches**. The Recreation policies further encourage certain facilities over others within waterfront parks. Facilities are to “capitalize on the attractiveness of their bayfront location,” and are to “emphasize hiking, bicycling, riding trails, picnic facilities, swimming, environmental, historical and cultural education and interpretation, viewpoints, beaches, and fishing facilities,” over facilities that do not need a waterfront location. “Public launching facilities for a variety of boats and other water-oriented recreational craft, such as kayaks, canoes and sailboats, should be provided in waterfront parks where feasible.” “Limited commercial recreation facilities, such as small restaurants” are permitted “provided they are clearly incidental to the park use, are in keeping with the basic character of the park, and do not obstruct public access to and enjoyment of the Bay.” The Bay Trail is to be developed along “an alignment as near to the shore as possible, consistent with Bay resource protection.” Public transportation is to be provided to waterfront parks, as is public parking “in a manner that does not diminish the park-like character of the site.” “Interpretive information describing natural, historical and cultural resources should be provided in waterfront parks where feasible.” Public utilities and services are allowed “provided they would be unobtrusive, would not permanently disrupt use of the site for recreation, and would not detract from the visual character of the site.”

The *San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan* states that “[t]he India Basin area should be developed as a major waterfront park in accordance with the Recreation and Open Space Plan of the City of San Francisco.” The plan states that some fill may be needed, and that “[l]imited development, preferably Bay-oriented commercial recreation, should be permitted on the shoreline, provided it is incidental to public access and water-related recreation and does not obstruct public access.”

The *San Francisco Bay Plan* (Bay Plan) **Public Access** policies state that maximum feasible public access to and along the waterfront should “be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline.” The Bay Plan further explains that public access should be designed—using the Commission’s *Public Access Design Guidelines*—“to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline,” be conveniently located near parking and public transit, “permit barrier free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent...and include an ongoing maintenance program.” These policies state in part that “public access should be sited, designed and managed to prevent significant adverse effects on wildlife,” and that, “whenever public access to the Bay is provided as a condition of development, on fill or in the shoreline, the access should be permanently guaranteed.” These policies further state that, “[a]ny public access provided as a condition of development should either be required to remain viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding, or equivalent access consistent with the project should be provided nearby.”

The 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, from the Bay itself, and from the opposite shore.” These policies also state, in part, “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.” Lastly, the policies state, in part, that “parking areas should be located away from the shoreline.”

The Bay Plan **Recreation** policies state in part, that “recreational facilities, such as waterfront parks, trails, marinas, live-aboard boats, non-motorized small boat access, fishing piers, launching lanes, and beaches, should be encouraged and allowed by the Commission, provided they are located, improved and managed,” following certain standards.

As they relate to **non-motorized small boats**, the Recreation policies state, in part, that “where practicable, access facilities for non-motorized small boats should be incorporated into waterfront parks, marinas, launching ramps and beaches, especially near popular waterfront destinations,” that “access points should be located, improved and managed to avoid significant adverse affects on wildlife and their habitats, should not interfere with commercial navigation,” that “site improvements, such as landing and launching facilities, restrooms, rigging areas, equipment storage and concessions, and educational programs that address navigational safety, security, and wildlife compatibility and disturbance should be provided, consistent with use of the site,” that “facilities for boating organizations that provide training and stewardship, operate concessions, provide storage or boathouses should be allowed in recreational facilities where appropriate,” and that “launching facilities should be accessible and designed to ensure that boaters can easily launch their watercraft. Facilities should be durable to minimize maintenance and replacement cost.”

As they relate to **beaches**, the Recreation policies state, in part, that, “sandy beaches should be preserved, enhanced, or restored for recreational use, such as swimming, consistent with wildlife protection. New beaches should be permitted if the site conditions are suitable for sustaining a beach without excessive beach nourishment.”

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 and lighting. 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.

**Design Review Issues.** The Board’s comments and recommendations are sought on the following:

1. **Does the proposed design provide adequate, usable and attractive public access areas that maximize the public’s use and enjoyment of the site?**

- Does the park provide the appropriate mix of program and amenities for the public that will use this park, and if not, what programs and public access amenities should be provided at this location?
  - Is the project's design consistent with the intent of the Water-oriented Recreation Priority Use designation at the site?
  - Is there adequate and appropriately sited parking provided for the public access areas?
  - No details have yet been provided about site furnishings, signage, or lighting. Does the Board have advice on these amenities?
  - No details have yet been provided on management and maintenance. Does the board have advice on these topics?
2. **Does the proposed project minimize potential conflicts between sensitive habitat and public access uses?**
- Are the proposed habitat enhancement components of the project compatible with the Bay Plan's vision for a park facility within the Water-oriented Recreation Priority Use area?
  - Are the proposed informal pathways and access piers sited to avoid potential conflicts with sensitive habitat?
  - Is the Marineway pier and floating dock designed in a manner to maximize public access and minimize potential adverse affects to Bay habitats?
3. **Are the connections to and through the public access spaces adequate and appropriate to maximize the public's use and enjoyment of the site?**
- Are the connections to the Bay Trail adequate, appropriate, and close enough to the Bay shoreline?
  - Is there adequate space to accommodate the Bay Trail users and park users at the Scow Schooner Boatyard?
  - Does the proposed trail network provide connections between the locations where various users may wish to go?
  - Are the park entrances and access points located in such a way to maximize access to the park from the adjacent community?
  - Are there adequate, usable, and attractive views through the development to the waterfront? From the nearest public roadways?
  - Are the connections to the adjacent properties and public access areas appropriate, usable and enjoyable?

**4. Is the location and design of the proposed non-motorized boat launch appropriate?**

- Does the proposed boat dock permit barrier-free access for persons with restricted mobility?
- Are there adequate support facilities proposed, including in terms of parking, restrooms, equipment storage, etc.?
- Is the distance between the drop-off area and the launch appropriate, and if not, how might the design allow for easier access for recreational boaters and kayakers?

**5. Is the public access designed to be viable in the event of future sea level rise or flooding?**

- Are the public access areas sufficiently elevated, designed to withstand flooding, and/or adaptable to future sea level rise? Is the public access adequate, usable, and attractive during the interim to rising sea levels?