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TO: Design Review Board Members

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SUBJECT: Berkeley Pier and Ferry Terminal Project; First Pre-Application Review
(For Design Review Board consideration on November 3, 2025)

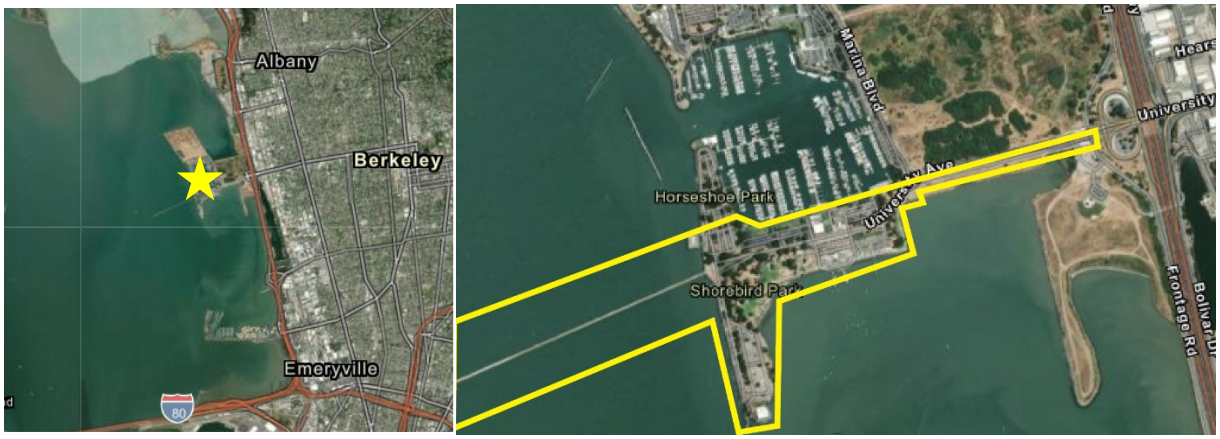
Project Summary

Project Proponent
City of Berkeley and San Francisco Bay Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA)

Project Representatives
Liza McNulty, City of Berkeley Capital Improvement Programs Manager

Project Site
The project is located at the Berkeley Waterfront along the San Francisco Bay in the City of Berkeley, Alameda County. As shown in Figure 1, the project site encompasses the closed Berkeley Pier, including the entry plaza for the Berkeley Pier; the San Francisco Bay waters around the closed Berkeley Pier; the parking lot on Seawall Drive; and adjacent roadways, including Seawall Drive and University Avenue up to Interstate 580 (I-580).

Figure 1. Project Location and Boundary



Project Overview

The Berkeley Water Transportation Pier Ferry Project (Project) includes construction of a new pier, breakwater, and ferry terminal in San Francisco Bay, as well as land-side improvements, including a new plaza, a public restroom, a Class IV bikeway (i.e. cycle track) on University Avenue, and electric vehicle charging. The project would introduce a new zero-emissions electric ferry service, operated by the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), linking Berkeley to San Francisco and Larkspur.

The proposal includes demolishing the existing closed BCDC-required public access fishing pier and replacing it with a new 1,080-foot-long public pier that would provide pedestrian access and include a ferry terminal, connected to a 400-foot-long breakwater. To support ferry operations, dredging would occur along an existing navigation channel, and infrastructure would be added, including charging stations and boarding facilities.

The project also includes improvements to the surrounding Berkeley Waterfront and roadways, such as repaving and restriping, construction of new transportation facilities, and addition of transportation drop-off zones. Additional proposed improvements include a Bay Trail extension, parking lot renovations, landscaping, signage, lighting, and a public plaza with restrooms and bike parking.

Previous Design Review Board Briefing (Appendix A)

The proposed project was previously presented to the Board as a preliminary briefing during the project's early design/environmental review stages, which introduced the overall project concept and broader Berkeley Waterfront context. See Appendix A for a summary of Board comments and applicant responses.

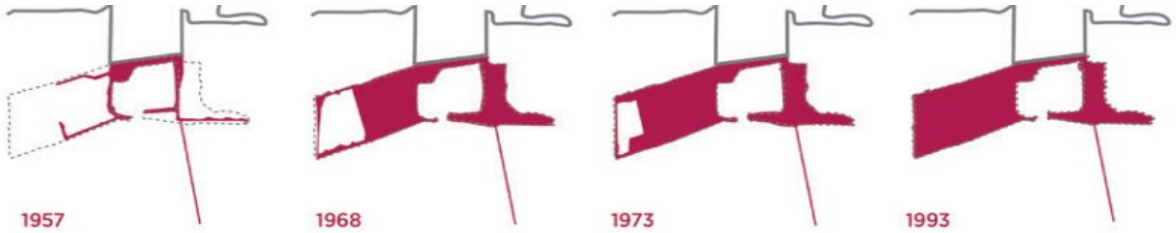
Project Site

Site History

Prior to its industrialization, the Berkeley Waterfront was a tidal marsh, and its first known inhabitants were the Huchiun-Ohlone people. The site of one the Bay Area's oldest Ohlone shellmounds, currently an asphalt parking lot at 1900 Fourth Street, is less than half a mile east of the project site. From the Gold Rush until the mid-20th century, the primary use of the Berkeley Waterfront was commercial maritime transportation. As public pressure for Bay conservation mounted in the 1950s, Berkeley Waterfront land uses shifted from primarily industrial to a mix of commercial development, recreation, and public access.

The Berkeley Marina as it exists today is located entirely on Bay fill, the placement of which began in the early 20th century with the construction of private wharves, followed by the harbor now known as the Berkeley Marina. Filling continued through the early 20th century and ended after the establishment of BCDC in 1965, when the Commission approved a few final fill projects (through 1968) to expand public access, recreation, and limited commercial activity. César Chávez Park, north of the Marina, was originally constructed in 1957 as a municipal landfill, but was capped and opened to the public as a park in 1991.

Figure 2. Fill in Berkeley Marina from 1957 to 1993



Source: 2024 Draft Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan

Berkeley Pier

In 1926, the Golden Gate Ferry Company constructed a causeway extending from the original Berkeley shoreline at Second Street out to deeper water, where automobiles could board a ferry bound for San Francisco. Following the opening of the Bay Bridge in 1937, most ferry services in the region were discontinued and the causeway was formally transferred to the City of Berkeley. The City operated the structure as a public fishing pier until its closure in 2015 due to structural deterioration.

Berkeley Pier Ferry Project Development

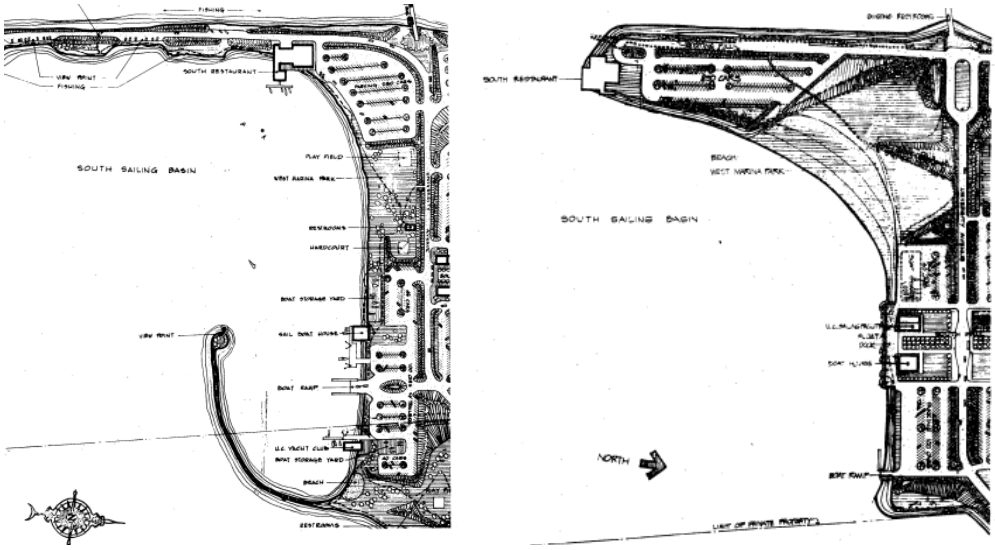
In 2019, in partnership with WETA, the City of Berkeley initiated a feasibility study to determine the feasibility and preferred layout for a new pier that would provide both recreation access and amenities and an all-electric ferry terminal. After a multi-year process that included both technical analyses and public engagement, a preferred alternative was presented to the Berkeley City Council and WETA Board of Directors in 2021.

Permit History

The permitting history at the Berkeley Waterfront is extensive, ranging from minor capital improvement projects to major dredging, fill, and shoreline protection projects. The selected permits listed below are most relevant to the proposed project.

- **BCDC Permit No. 1966.028.00.** Authorized use of 40,000 cubic yards of dredged material from the South Sailing Basin to fill 4.6 cubic acres adjacent to the shoreline in 1966 “for a marina restaurant, public beach, park area, automobile parking, and a relocated and expanded University of California sailing facility.” This permit has not been amended since the original authorization.

Figure 3: Fill Authorized BCDC Permit No. 1966.028.00 (Before and after 1965)



- **BCDC Permit No. 1967.002.00.** Authorized filling of approximately 4.3 acres adjacent to the Berkeley Marina for a pedestrian plaza, automobile parking area, and waterfront walkway north of University Avenue and along Seawall Drive from the Berkeley Yacht Club to the fishing pier.

- **BCDC Permit No. 1979.005.14** Authorized the mooring and use of no more than 100 live-aboard vessels, maintenance of wooden pilings and docks, repairs to utilities and marina infrastructure, and dredging activities within the Bay. Within the shoreline band, it authorized the establishment of several public access areas, landscape improvements, maintenance and expansion of public pathways, and use and maintenance of approximately 25,550 square feet of public parking lot. Required public access improvements include the construction of a public access connection between the property and the neighboring parcels to the east and west to facilitate the completion of the Bay Trail. This is the primary permit for activities within the Berkeley Marina and has been amended 14 times since the original authorization.

- **BCDC Permit No. M1985.050.02**. Authorized activities at Shorebird Park, including the installation of ADA accessibility improvements for pedestrian circulation, site furnishings, restrooms, and access to recreation activities such as the tidepool areas and exercise courts. The permit also requires riprap maintenance and other general in-kind maintenance at the Berkeley Marina.

- **BCDC Permit No. 1982.006.03.** Authorized improvements to the Berkeley fishing pier. Required public access includes the entire length of the Berkeley Municipal Fishing Pier, which must remain open to the public.

- **BCDC Permit No. M1982.088**. Authorized riprap placement as well as replacement of an existing dock with a dock of equal size and a new 1,250-square-foot dock, both to be used for hand-carried watercraft. The entire project area referenced in this permit is intended for public access, and additional public access improvements include: a new public path, site furnishings, and a boat drop-off area.

- **BCDC Permit No. M1998.063.00.** Authorized the construction, use, and maintenance of approximately 7,130 linear feet of a 12-foot-wide section of the Berkeley Bay Trail from Virginia Street to Point Emery, and rock slope protection along West Frontage Road.

- **BCDC Permit No. M2007.008.04.** Authorized the construction of an approximately 2,440-foot-long section of a spur of the San Francisco Bay Trail and improved windsurfing and water access. Required public access improvements include a 1,400-square-foot footbridge, a 160-square-foot bus pad, landscaping improvements and site furnishings, a 500-square-foot windsurfer ramp and staging area, and a new public restroom.

- **BCDC Permit No. M2020.020.00.** Authorized improvements to Marina roadways, including Spinnaker Way, Marina Boulevard, and University Avenue. Required public access improvements include designated crosswalks connecting to established Bay Trail, trail networks, and public recreation amenities; accessible curb ramps, connector paths, pedestrian access points, and pedestrian refuge islands; a contiguous green space between the south side of the eastbound lanes and the Bay Trail; and replacement of old trash receptacles.

  Note that Permit No. M2020.020.00 also requires a new, comprehensive public access signage program that has not yet been implemented at the project site, which will overlap significantly with the Pier Ferry project area.

Existing Conditions

Existing Uses (Exhibits 1-3)

The proposed project would occur along a large extent of the southern Berkeley Waterfront, which the San Francisco Bay Plan designates as a Waterfront Park/Beach Priority Use Area. Adjacent to the South Sailing Basin, the Waterfront south of University Avenue is a key destination for both land- and water-based recreational opportunities in the East Bay, and encompasses popular open spaces such as Shorebird Park, the Shorebird Nature Center, and the Adventure Playground. At the South Sailing Basin—a popular destination for windsurfers, swimmers, and sailors alike—organizations like Cal Sailing and Cal Adventures provide water-based recreation services alongside public amenities such as the South Cove Launch Plaza (a public sailing dock), and a windsurfing staging area. At the end of Seawall Drive next to the former HS Lordships restaurant, which has been vacant since 2018, is an informal launch for board sailing and swimmers. North of University Avenue, recreation amenities include the Inner Harbor Pathway and Horseshoe Park.

The Waterfront also encompasses the Berkeley Marina, which is the largest public marina in the San Francisco Bay. It provides over 1,000 boat slips ranging in length from 20 feet to 84 feet. The Marina is also home to the Berkeley Yacht Club and numerous other boating organizations, such as the Berkeley Racing Canoe Center and charter boats. Nearby commercial uses include the Skates on the Bay Restaurant, Hana Japan and Marina Dockside restaurants at Marina Mall, and the Berkeley Waterfront Offices.

Site Circulation (Exhibit 2)

The project site is currently accessed via University Avenue, which provides transit connections via bus through AC Transit line 51B. A Bay Trail spur runs along the southern extent of the Berkeley Waterfront and joins the broader Bay Trail network at Frontage Road, where it intersects with University Avenue. Existing and proposed parking and transportation demand conditions are discussed in the Transportation and Land Use Context section below.

Planning Context

Land Use

Open space and recreation areas dominate current land uses at the Berkeley Waterfront, accounting for approximately 76 percent of the area through waterfront parks, playgrounds, landscaped areas, public spaces, and trails. Streets and parking lots, which facilitate access to recreation amenities and the Berkeley Marina, occupy approximately 18.5 percent. Commercial recreational uses cover about 3.5 percent, with maritime uses comprising the remaining 2 percent. Note that these percentages do not include water uses, such as the Berkeley Marina Harbor and South Sailing Basin docks.

The Berkeley Waterfront is located on State Public Tidelands. Public Tidelands are generally all subject to the Public Trust Doctrine, and the California State Lands Commission has jurisdiction and management authority over all ungranted tidelands, submerged lands, and the beds of navigable lakes and waterways.

Figure 5: Berkeley Waterfront Land Use Composition

Source: 2024 Draft Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan

Key Planning Documents

Draft Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan

The City of Berkeley has been developing a Waterfront Specific Plan (WSP) to provide a vision for meeting community needs at the Waterfront for the next 25 to 50 years, designate areas for potential commercial redevelopment and new recreation opportunities, streamline project approvals, and provide design guidelines for future projects.

The process began in 2019 in response to City Council concerns about a growing fiscal crisis on the Waterfront. The City published the most recent draft of the WSP in November 2024, however, there is no funding currenly identified to complete the WSP. Note that the Pier Ferry project and the WSP are two separate projects, and the Pier Ferry project does not depend on adoption of the WSP to proceed.

Berkeley Bike Plan

The City is currently undertaking an update of the 2017 Berkeley Bike Plan. A draft of the 2025 Bike Plan was released in July 2025 for public review, with a final plan scheduled for adoption by Januarry 2026. The 2025 Berkeley Bike Plan is intended to, "address locations that currently make it challenging to bicycle or roll, build upon its 'low-stress' network of bicycling and rolling routes, and make bicycling and rolling safer and more comfortable for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, ages, and abilities"(berkeleybikeplan.org).

Proposed Project

Project Elements (Exhibits 7-9)

While construction phasing is still tentative, the project scope is currently broken into three distinct areas (see Exhibit 9, Potential Project Phasing):

- University Avenue
- Ferry Pier Entrance Plaza and Pier-Ferry
- Seawall Peninsula

Dependent on eventual project funding, construction may be broken into additional phases. Each of these areas/phases is described in more detail below. This staff report focuses on the proposed improvements on University Avenue, the Plaza and Pier-Ferry. The Seawall Peninsula improvements are described conceptually below, but design details are still in development and will be presented at a future DRB meeting.

University Avenue Connection to Shoreline (Exhibits 10-14)

The project includes construction of a new raised and protected bicycle lane on University Avenue, connecting to the Bay Trail at the eastern limit of the project just west of Marina Boulevard. This Class IV bikeway (also called a separated bike lane or cycle track) would continue along University Avenue to the Plaza and Pier, where it would connect to the Bay Trail along Shoreline Avenue. The cycle track would be constructed within the existing width of University

Avenue. Sidewalks on both sides of University Avenue would be improved in their existing location along this reach.

The University Avenue cycle track improvements would serve two primary purposes. First, it would encourage Pier visitors and ferry riders to travel by bicycle rather than personal vehicle. WETA ferries include secure, user-friendly bicycle loading and storage, and the Plaza would provide additional secure bike parking.

Second, the cycle track is intended to reduce conflicts on the nearby Bay Trail by providing a dedicated, direct route between the waterfront entrance and the new Pier and Ferry Terminal. This would separate commuter cyclists from visitors seeking a more leisurely waterfront experience.

At the western terminus of University Avenue at Seawall Drive, the project connects the cycle track and sidewalk to the Plaza and Bay Trail and relocates and expands AC Transit infrastructure. These improvements are intended to reduce conflicts among buses, cars, cyclists, and pedestrians and provide capacity for future AC Transit service. The intersection also includes a designated loading zone for private pick-ups, drop-offs, and car shares as another transportation demand management measure aimed at reducing ferry rider parking demand.

Public Plaza (Exhibits 15-28)

The 13,500-square-foot public plaza would connect Seawall Drive and University Avenue to the Pier and Bay Trail. To ensure sea level rise resiliency, the Pier would be constructed at an elevation of approximately 17.6 feet, and the Plaza would be raised to an elevation of approximately 16.5 feet. A Bay-side retaining wall with a guardrail would support this finished elevation.

The Plaza would feature a gender-neutral public restroom (2 to 3 stalls, self-sanitizing), secure bicycle lockers, open-air bike racks, seating, and landscaping. Its layout is designed to highlight key views, with surface treatments, materials, and signage guiding visitors. Open corridors are incorporated to allow emergency vehicle access onto the Pier, in compliance with City public safety requirements.

Pier and Ferry Terminal (Exhibits 29-40)

The proposed Pier, which would accommodate both recreational uses and the ferry terminal, is 22 feet wide and would be accessed through the new entry plaza. It is approximately 1,080 feet long and includes a 400-foot, 14-foot-wide breakwater (subject to change based on forthcoming detailed coastal analyses). Its proposed layout follows the preferred alternative from the Feasibility Study, selected to balance operational needs and public concerns over conflicts between recreational users and ferry service near the Pier. Specifically, the public was concerned by alternatives that included the Ferry operating south of the existing Pier due to potential conflicts with small boats, swimmers, and/or windsurfers. The selected alternative proposes a pier alignment that would largely mirror the footprint of the existing pier, with the addition of a new breakwater. Ferry operations would take place on the northern side of the pier, a location favored by the public during the feasibility study.

Entrance Gate (Exhibit 39):

A gate is proposed at the Pier entrance, which would remain open under normal conditions. It is intended for temporary closure during public safety events, such as tsunami warnings or high wind advisories.

Terminal (Exhibits 37-38:

The ferry terminal and associated infrastructure (gangway, charging float, etc.) are located on the north side of the proposed Pier between the shore and breakwater. Although the Feasibility Study evaluated two terminals for simultaneous docking, the initial construction phase would include only the western-most terminal adjacent to the breakwater. The selected terminal location provides several advantages, such as:

- Sufficient ferry queueing space along the Pier, to reduce potential conflicts at the Plaza or Bay Trail.
- An open-water buffer between the shoreline and terminal, to minimize in-water conflicts with small craft such as kayaks and canoes.
- A clearly defined ferry area, visually distinguished with a shade structure, to help delineate use areas for different activities (e.g., fishing, ferry) along the Pier.

Shade Structure (Exhibit 34-35)

A semi-transparent polycarbonate 300-foot-long, 15.7-foot-wide shade structure along the north side of the proposed Pier would provide architectural interest, protection from sun and rain, and a visual cue for the ferry queuing area. Evening ferry lighting would create a warm glow under the structure.

Recreation Amenities (Exhibit 36)

The Pier and breakwater would both include benches, fishing chairs, and a fish-cleaning station with an accessible sink. The circular ends of the Pier and breakwater are designed to create a sense of arrival, while a curved guardrail adds visual interest and extends from the Plaza throughout the Pier.

Ferry Service

Based on WETA's 2050 Service Vision & Business Plan, ferry departures would be anticipated every 30 minutes during peak commute hours and hourly during off-hours and weekends, with possible special event service and future Larkspur route expansion. Ferry capacity is expected to be around 250 passengers per boat, pending WETA's design and construction of the region's first electric ferry.

Electrification Equipment (Exhibit 40)

The ferry terminal electrification equipment is tentatively planned for an area East of Seawall Drive, north of University Avenue, between the sidewalk and the adjacent Skates/N Lot. Equipment would inlcude a new PG&E transformer (8-foot by 8-foot), switchboard (11-foot by 4-

foot), service cabinet (8-foot by 8-foot), and two distribution panel boards (1-foot by 3-foot each). The height of the equipment would range from 2.5 feet to 8 feet tall.

Seawall Peninsula (Exhibits 8-9)
The Seawall Peninsula includes Seawall Drive, parking (both in the large parking lot and along Seawall Drive facing the San Francisco Bay), a currently vacant restaurant building (formerly HS Lordships), and a narrow pathway that travels around the shoreline (except where in crosses in front of the restaurant). The project scope for this phase of the project includes:

- Replacing the pathway along Seawall Drive between University Avenue and the southern end of the peninsula with a multi-use Bay Trail segment.
- Realigning Seawall Drive to provide space for the expanded Bay Trail width (12 feet wide).
- Reconfiguring the parking lot, including accommodating 10 percent of the parking stalls with electric vehicle chargers.

This staff report refers to the 30-percent Design Documents, which were finalized on June 27, 2025. In July, 2025, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) released updated Bay Trail Design Guidelines. City staff has been working with MTC to review the Bay Trail alignment and guidelines in this area of the project, and is in the process of updating the design to reflect this effort.

While the southern end of the Seawall Peninsula is a informal launch for swimmers and experienced windsurfers, the City is still evaluating the technical feasibility and constraints related to formalized water access as a part of the Pier Ferry improvements. Additionally, the City is currently in negotiations with a potential new tenant for the vacant restaurant building, which could involve revisions to parking arrangements at the Seawall Drive lot. While the occupation and redevelopment plans for the buidling remain uncertain and tentative, it is possible that the 430 parking spaces planned as a later phase of the project at Seawall Drive would be shared between future restaurant patrons and employees and Ferry users. The City of Berkeley intends to present the Seawall Peninsula project design at a future DRB meeting.

Project Schedule

The project design is anticipated to reach the 60-percent design milestone by December 2025, with the 90-percent design submittal and permit application targeted for May 2026. The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is scheduled for public release in February 2026, with the public review period running through early April and a public meeting tentatively planned for late March. Certification of the Final EIR and associated Council action are anticipated in July 2026.

Parking and Transportation Demand

Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan

The Pier Ferry project would involve significant changes to the Berkeley Waterfront's current parking and transportation demand management (TDM) strategy. In March 2025, Berkeley released a public draft of the Water Transportation Pier-Ferry Project Parking and TDM Plan, as well as a May 2025 Addendum. Proposed initial transportation demand management strategies described in those reports include:

- Enhancing Active transportation through University Avenue cycle track improvements and secure bike parking infrastructure;
- Implementing rideshare loading zones and shared micromobility stations; and
- Implementing a paid full-day parking program at the Skates/N Lot and Seawall Lot.

Existing and Proposed Parking Conditions (Exhibits 3-6)

Exhibits 3 through 6 show a total of 1,248 available parking spaces within the mapped area, distributed across multiple established lots that serve a diverse range of waterfront visitors, including:

- Pedestrians and cyclists
- Swimmers
- Kayakers, stand-up paddlers, windsurfers
- Boaters and slip holders
- Charter boat customers
- Restaurant and Yacht Club patrons and employees
- Fishers
- Park and Adventure Playground visitors
- In-car Bay viewers
- City staff

The Pier Ferry Project contemplates three existing parking lots for future ferry user parking, including the Seawall and Skates/N Lots, which are immediately adjacent to the Ferry Plaza and within a 5-minute walk, as well as the Marina Boulevard lot, which is approximately 0.5 miles from the existing fishing pier, or a 10- to 12-minute walk. Existing uses of these lots, as well as existing parking capacity and post-project parking capacity, are summarized in the table below:

Table 1: Existing and Proposed Conditions for Pier Ferry Parking

	Existing Uses	Existing and Post-Project Capacity
Skates/N Lot	Restaurant and Yacht Club patrons and employees, boaters and slip holders, windsurfers, kayakers, paddleboarders	**Existing:** 137 spaces **Post-Project:** Paid full-day ferry parking in ~75 spaces Time-limited parking in the remaining ~62 spaces
Seawall Lot	Windsurfers, kayakers, paddleboarders, in-car Bay viewers, fishers, swimmers, park and playground visitors, pedestrians	**Existing:** 320 spaces **Post-Project:** ~430 spaces* 200 spaces will be paid full day parking for ferry riders.
Seawall Drive Lot	Windsurfers, kayakers, paddleboarders, in-car Bay viewers, fishers, swimmers, park and playground visitors, pedestrians	**Existing:** 90 spaces **Post-Project:** ~20 spaces ** Parking for in car Bay viewing (no paid full day parking for ferry riders)
Marina Blvd Lot	Pedestrians and park visitors	**Existing and Proposed:** 150 Parking Spaces, free full-day parking

**Post-project parking at Seawall Lot may be shared with restaurant patrons at 199 Seawall. See above discussion of potential development at Seawall Drive.*

***Approximately 70 stalls will be removed to accommodate Bay Trail and Stormwater Treatment improvements.*

Ferry Impacts on Parking Demand. Based on the Pier-Ferry Project Parking and TDM Plan and Addendum, current peak waterfront parking demand occurs around 2 p.m. on weekdays and weekends. During current weekday peak demand periods, approximately 83 spaces remain available at Marina Boulevard and approximately 74 spaces remain at Skates/N Lot. During current weekend peak demand periods, approximately 59 spaces remain available at Marina Boulevard and approximately 73 spaces remain at Skates/N Lot. According to the two reports, the combined parking at Seawall Drive, Marina Boulevard, and Skates/N lots provide sufficient capacity to accommodate ferry parking demand without affecting other parking areas, particularly with added management tools and wayfinding improvements.

- Without TDM in place, the reports projected a weekday parking demand of 421 spaces for ferry users (146 more than the 275 spaces currently available at Seawall Drive).

- With TDM strategies in place, weekday demand is projected to be approximately 351 spaces, 70 fewer than without TDM.

Social and Environmental Justice Planning 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 using the American Community Survey (2017-2021) at the level of the Census tract and CalEnviroScreen 4.0 data. Commission staff use the tool to help identify communities with environmental justice burdens. 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.

Figure 6. Community Vulnerability Map

According to the Community Vulnerability Mapping Tool, the project is located within a Census block with a reported population of 1,698 people. The tool identifies the Census block as having Moderate social vulnerability and Highest contamination vulnerability, based on the following indicators in the 90th percentile: presence of nearby cleanup sites, groundwater threats, presence of nearby hazardous waste sites, and vicinity to impaired water bodies. There are no social vulnerability indicators in the 90th percentile, and the social vulnerability indicators in the 70th percentile include: prevalence of renters, households with no vehicle, single-parent households, and individuals over 65 living alone. Other Census blocks near the project site vary from Low to Moderate social vulnerability and Highest to Moderate contamination vulnerability.

Community Engagement

The City of Berkeley and WETA conducted virtual public outreach from January 2021 to October 2021 as part of the Feasibility Study for the proposed project. Activities included three focus group meetings, three community workshops, two City Council working sessions, and one

questionnaire. Since then, the City of Berkeley has conducted additional outreach (January 2025 to April 2025), which to date has included meetings with the following groups and organizations:

- AC Transit
- Berkeley Black Ecumenical Ministers Alliance
- Berkeley Business District Network
- Berkeley Chamber of Commerce
- Berkeley Design Advocates
- Berkeley Democratic Club
- Berkeley Youth Commission
- Berkeley Neighborhood Council
- Berkeley Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission
- Bike East Bay
- East Bay Conservation Committee
- Gilman Coordinating Committee
- Healthy Black Families
- Live Oak Community Center (Community Partner Resource Night)
- Save the Bay
- WETA
- Shuttle operators
- Telegraph for People
- UC Berkeley Urban Studies Student Association
- Washington Elementary School (Black History Month Celebration)
- Walk/Bike Berkeley
- West Berkeley Shuttle Board
- Youth & Parks Commission

Public feedback for the Project received during this outreach effort was generally supportive, with specific suggestions relating to design elements (such as bicycle safety and parking, signage, and planning for future programming). The most common concern expressed during public engagement was that ferry riders will impact the ability for current and future recreation visitors to find parking.

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 Recreation; Public Access; Appearance, Design and Scenic Views; Shoreline Protection; Environmental Justice and Social Equity; and Climate Change.

The Berkeley Waterfront is a designated Waterfront Park Priority Use Area, and is identified in **Bay Plan Map 4, Policy 15:**

- "Preserve marina, beach, small boat launch, windsurfing access, fishing pier, interpretive center and multi-use trails**.** Possible ferry terminal. Allow if compatible with park and marina use; serve with bus public transit to reduce traffic and parking needs. Provide signage regarding fish consumption advisories for anglers."

Recreation

- **Policy 1:** "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 should be well distributed around the Bay and improved to accommodate a broad range of water-oriented recreational activities for people of all races, cultures, ages and income levels."

- **Policy 3.a(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.

- **Policy 3.f. "**Fishing piers should not block navigation channels, nor interfere with normal tidal flow."

- **Policy 9: "**Ferry terminals may be allowed in waterfront park priority use areas and marinas and near fishing piers and launching lanes, provided the development and operations of the ferry facilities do not interfere with current or future park and recreational uses, and navigational safety can be assured. Terminal configuration and operation should not disrupt continuous shoreline access. Facilities provided for park and marina patrons, such as parking, should not be usurped by ferry patrons. Shared parking arrangements should be provided to minimize the amount of shoreline area needed for parking."

Environmental Justice and Social Equity

- **Policy 3**: "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."

Climate Change

- **Policy 3**: "Projects should be designed to be resilient to a mid-century sea level rise projection. If it is likely the project will remain in place longer than mid-century, an adaptive management plan should be developed to address the long-term impacts that will arise based on a risk assessment using the best available science-based projection for sea level rise at the end of the century."

- **Policy 5**: "Wherever feasible and appropriate, effective, innovative sea level rise adaptation approaches should be encouraged."

Shoreline Protection

- **Policy 1**: "New shoreline protection projects… should be authorized if:

  a. The project is necessary to provide flood or erosion protection for… proposed development, use or infrastructure that is consistent with other Bay Plan policies;

  b. The type of protective structure is appropriate for the project site, the uses to be protected, and the causes and conditions of erosion and flooding at the site;

  c. The project is properly engineered to provide erosion control and flood protection for the expected life of the project based on a 100-year flood event that takes future sea level rise into account;

  d. The project is properly designed and constructed to prevent significant impediments to physical and visual public access;

  e. The protection is integrated with current or planned adjacent shoreline protection measures;

  f. Adverse impacts to adjacent or nearby areas, such as increased flooding or accelerated erosion, are avoided or minimized."

- **Policy 5**: "All shoreline protection projects should evaluate the use of natural and nature-based features...and should incorporate these features to the greatest extent."

Public Access

- **Policy 2**: "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 8**: "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 10**: "Access to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means."

- **Policy 5**: "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."

- **Policy 6**: "Public access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding."

Appearance, Design and Scenic Views

- **Policy 2**: "All bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay."

- **Policy 14**: "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."

Public Access Design Guidelines

- Public access should be designed "so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user's appreciation diminished by large nearby building masses, structures, or incompatible uses."

- Public access improvements should be designed for a "wide range of users" and should "provide basic public amenities, such as trails, benches, play opportunities, trash containers, drinking fountains, lighting and restrooms that are designed for different ages, interests and physical abilities."

- Designs should maximize "user comfort by designing for the weather and day and night use."

- Viewing the Bay is the "most widely enjoyed 'use'," and projects should be designed to "enhance and dramatize views of the Bay and the shoreline from public thoroughfares and other public spaces."

- Designs should incorporate "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."

Public Access Design Objectives:

- **Objective No. 3**: "Provide, maintain, and enhance visual access to the Bay and shoreline," for example, by "locating buildings, structures, parking lots, and landscaping of new shoreline projects such that they enhance and dramatize views of the Bay and the shoreline from public thoroughfares and other public spaces."

- **Objective No. 4**: "Maintain and enhance the visual quality of the Bay, shoreline, and adjacent spaces," for example, by "providing visual interest and architectural variety in massing and height to new buildings along the shoreline," "using building footprints to create a diversity of public spaces along the Bay," "locating service facilities away from

the shoreline," and "utilizing the shoreline for Bay-related land uses as much as possible."

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, shoreline protection, 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.

In addition, staff would like the Board's advice on the following issues:

1. Does the plaza design effectively direct site circulation between the broader Berkeley Waterfront and the pier? What design enhancements would you propose to accommodate various modes of transportation and circulation leading to embarkation in this one area?

2. Does the project design sufficiently balance the needs of existing and future recreational users at the project site and the proposed uses associated with the new ferry terminal?

3. Anglers specifically have played a large role in the history of Berkeley Pier. Is the fish cleaning station adequately sited to support this community? Are there additional amenities or design enhancements that should be included to support fishing?

4. What design enhancement would you like to see to improve the connection to the shoreline via the proposed University Avenue Class IV bikeway design?