

Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan

Meeting Summary – Community Workshop #2

Workshop #2, March 16, 2022 – 6:30-9:00 pm via Zoom teleconference

This document summarizes facilitated discussion among members of the public who attended **Community Workshop #2** as part of the Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan public engagement process.

Appendix 1 – Alternates 1-3 & Complementary Uses

Appendix 2 – Breakout Group Notes

Appendix 3 – Public comment submitted after Community Workshop #2

Introduction

The City of Berkeley Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront Department hosted the second in a series of workshops for community feedback on the Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan ([BMASP](#)). The workshop presented preliminary ideas for community discussion on **potential revenue-generating and complementary uses** that may be feasible and desirable in the Marina area.

For the first half of the workshop, City staff and the Hargreaves Jones team (BMASP consultant) presented Marina budget and infrastructure needs, market opportunities, and three land use alternatives to frame breakout group discussions. For the second half, breakout groups of 10-15 discussed the pros and cons of the three land use alternatives. Members of the City/Hargreaves Jones team facilitated discussions and took notes (Appendix 2.) Approximately 75 members of the public participated in the Zoom-based community workshop.

An online questionnaire was posted to the [project website](#) from March 17 – April 22 to extend an opportunity for the public to comment on ideas presented at the workshop. The community also submitted comments via the BMASP project email (Appendix 3).

Community Workshop #2 Agenda

The City/Consultant team presented items 1-4 (presentation [available here](#)).

1. Funding Gap Challenges (Marina revenue/expenses and infrastructure needs)
2. Review of Workshop #1 (Workshop and Questionnaire #1 results)
3. Market Opportunities & Trends Analysis
4. Proposed Revenue-Generating Alternatives (Appendix 3 attached)
5. Breakout Discussions (Evaluate pros/cons of revenue-generating and complementary uses evaluated to date.)

Summary of Key Themes Discussed

For **revenue-generating uses**, there was a fair amount of support for a new hotel/retreat center (if smaller than the DoubleTree and if transit occupancy tax is returned to the Marina Fund) and more food/beverage services (casual dining and food trucks). There was support for an interpretive center/museum as a complementary use, although many thought it would not provide any significant revenue-generation. The concept of an Adventure Park II had limited support.

For **complementary uses**, there was support for dredging the South Basin, followed by small boat and bicycle rentals, and an aquatic boat center (with the condition that it does not displace existing aquatic programs). Participants identified a range of environmental planning and design criteria that should guide the siting of new uses, parking, and associated services. A broad consensus from the five breakout groups was that new uses should harmonize with the existing Marina character and not overwhelm the scale, natural qualities, views, and existing recreational uses.

Breakout Group Discussion Notes

Notes below do not necessarily represent a consensus of a particular breakout group — and in some cases, comments are the opinion of one person. Breakout groups were not tasked with developing consensus recommendations, but were asked to discuss two topics:

- 1) evaluate the pros/cons of Alternative 1-3 (Attachment 1); and,
- 2) discuss the relative priority of the proposed complementary uses. Some groups did not evaluate the alternatives in detail.

Topic 1 – Pros/cons of how revenue-generating uses are located.

Hotel

1. There was general support (not unanimous) for a new hotel with these conditions:
 - should be smaller than the DoubleTree;
 - locate near or adjacent to the DoubleTree (Alternative 1 and 2);
 - consider the function/role of the existing Berkeley Marine Center boatyard;
 - return any Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT or hotel tax) revenue to the Marina Fund;
 - incorporate habitat restoration as an ecotourism amenity for the new hotel; and,
 - harmonize with the existing Marina character.
2. Other comments and ideas for potential development of a new hotel and retreat center:
 - The City should bring in a developer, hotelier, or real estate professional to prepare a competitive RFP to solicit proposals.
 - The recent capital projects at the Marina, as well as a possible second round of improvements, will make the site attractive to potential hotel developers.
 - A hotel could anchor synergistic uses like food/beverage or museum.
 - Avoid “wrecking” the character of the Marina with excess commercial activity.
 - Consider the former Hs Lordships site for a hotel location.

3. Lobby the City Council to return the current DoubleTree TOT revenue to the Marina Fund.

Food/beverage

1. All groups supported more food/beverage options with a particular focus on 'casual dining' and food trucks. Alternatives 2 and 3 had more support than Alt 1 as it might displace slip holder parking; and, Alts 2-3 distribute food services to the north and south sides, possibly capturing more customers.
2. Other comments and ideas for new food/beverage services included:
 - Consider a food tenant for the former Hs Lordships building, which used to be an ideal venue for a celebratory dinner and special events, now lacking in Berkeley.
 - Consider a market and food court like Emeryville Public Market.
 - A seafood market could take advantage of commercial fishing activity at the Marina.
 - Potential aquaculture is too close to storm drains with poor water quality.
 - Persistent winds need to be addressed in the design of a food court/food truck area.
 - Location of food trucks may not be compatible with wildlife.

Interpretive Museum

1. Most participants supported an interpretive center to exhibit cultural, environmental, and maritime history and resources, and to celebrate Ohlone culture. Most participants were skeptical that it would generate any significant revenue.
2. Consider a joint venture with East Bay Regional Park District to create an interpretive museum within Eastshore State Park.

Adventure Park II

1. Among the proposed revenue-generating uses, Adventure Park II had the least support among participants. Some felt it would create a Pier 39 (San Francisco) commercial atmosphere inconsistent with the Marina vibe.
2. Locate such a use away from the shoreline to avoid obstructing bay views along the waterfront, and do not locate it within César Chávez Park.

Topic 2 – Complementary Uses and Events

1. **Dredging the South Basin** was broadly supported.
2. **Berkeley Marine Center boatyard.** This existing facility is a draw for boaters and an integral part of the Marina community and may have potential to generate more revenue.
3. An additional **docking area** for small boats and dragon boats is needed.
4. **Aquatic Boat Center.** There was tepid support for such a use, but participants wanted more clarity on its intended functions and benefits. Also, concern was expressed that the proposed plan would replace Cal Sailing Club. [**Planning team note:** The intent of a new aquatic center

concept is to house the two existing sailing clubs (Cal Sailing Club and Cal Adventures) as well as other community space and function.]

5. **Bike rentals** was supported.
6. Some participants did not view a marine research center as necessary or viable.
7. There was limited discussion on **special events**. The general sentiment was that events require logistical support that might cost the City more than the revenue generated. Some felt that event noise at César Chávez Park would not be consistent with the character of the area.

Comments and Questions on Revenue-Generating Uses

1. Would the suggested museum, aquatic center, Adventure Park, and retreat center uses realistically generate positive revenue?
2. The City should charge for parking at the Waterfront to generate revenue.
3. Caltrans should fund bike trails to the Marina as transportation projects, not the City.
4. Any new TOT revenue should be directed to the Marina Fund, not the General Fund.
5. Jack London Square restaurants do not raise much money.
6. Why does this park need to pay for itself? Does the City require the Rose Garden to pay for itself? Regional funds are needed to pay for this regional park.

Comments on Planning and Design

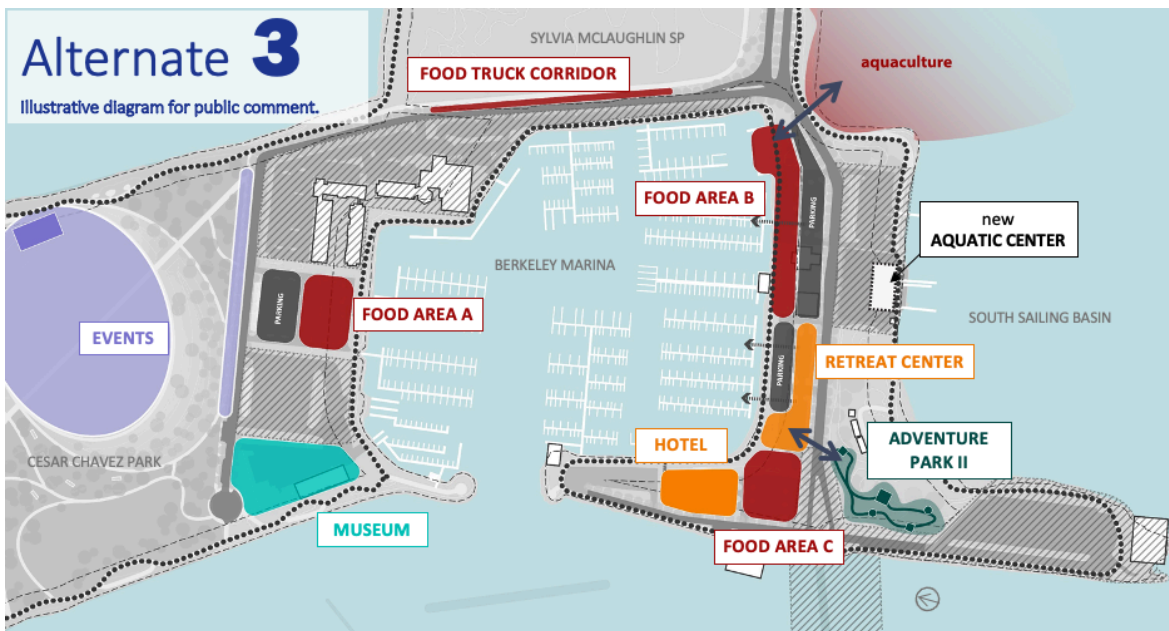
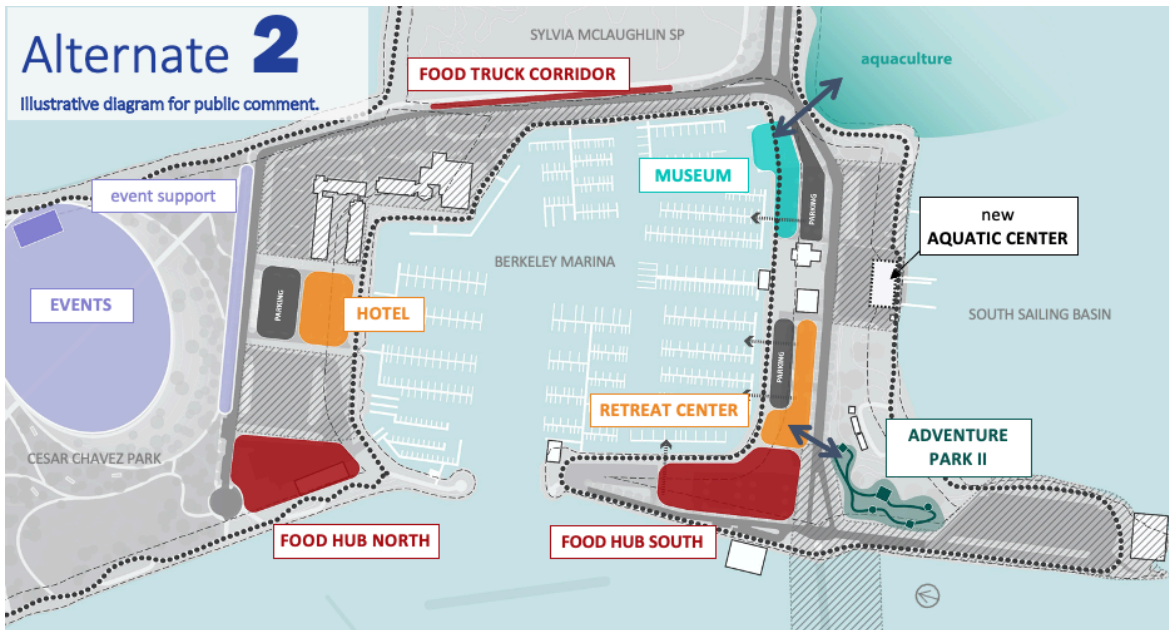
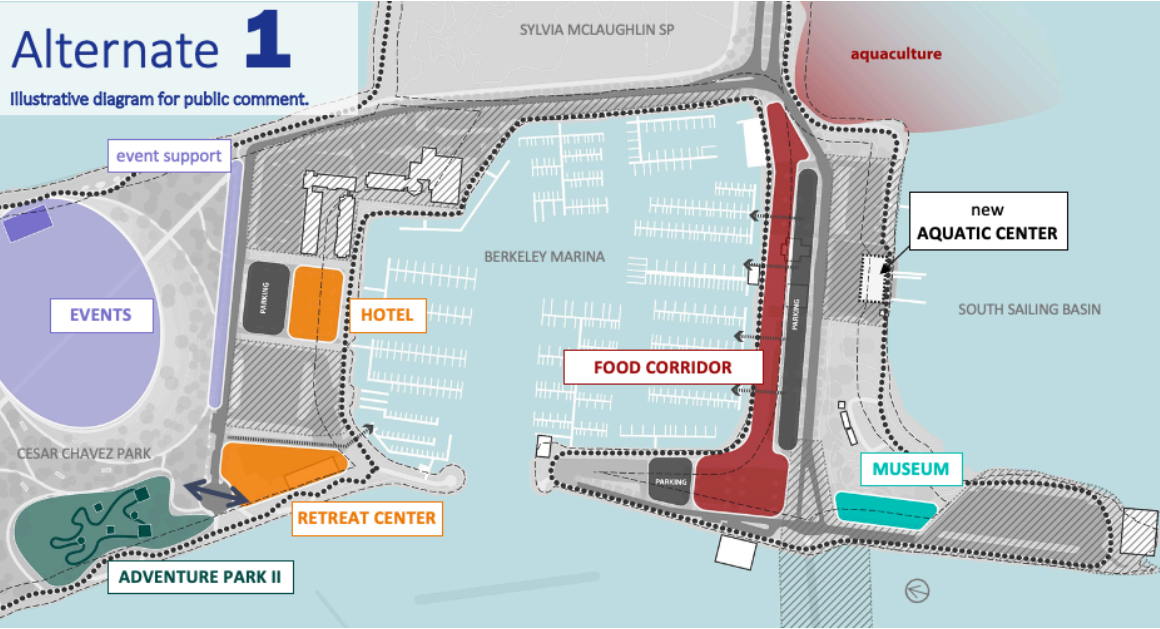
1. New development along the Central Harbor is welcome. The Marina has 28-acres of parking that could be used for revenue-generating uses/events when parking is not occupied. Most of the time, this parking has available space.
2. Parking at the sailing school dock is needed (formerly OCSC, now INSPIRE).
3. The Marina is a park and should not have a lot of “stuff” in it. The north side should remain a park and south side could have more development. More open space might be a better option than a mix of different uses.
4. The new ferry will make the Marina into a “big transit hub” that could impact parking.
5. There should be other improvements made to the area as a recreation space including ADA improvements. (Berkeley was the “home of ADA”) This project should be about more than just development.
6. There should be floating homes, especially given sea level rise.
7. With new uses proposed and a hope for an increase in slip tenancy, there will be a big impact on access for boaters and slip holders. This needs to be considered.
8. New development should be synergistic and reflect a “forward thinking” approach.
9. Why is no housing being proposed? It is the biggest need.

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APPENDIX 1

Community Workshop #2
Alternates & Complementary Uses

March 16, 2022

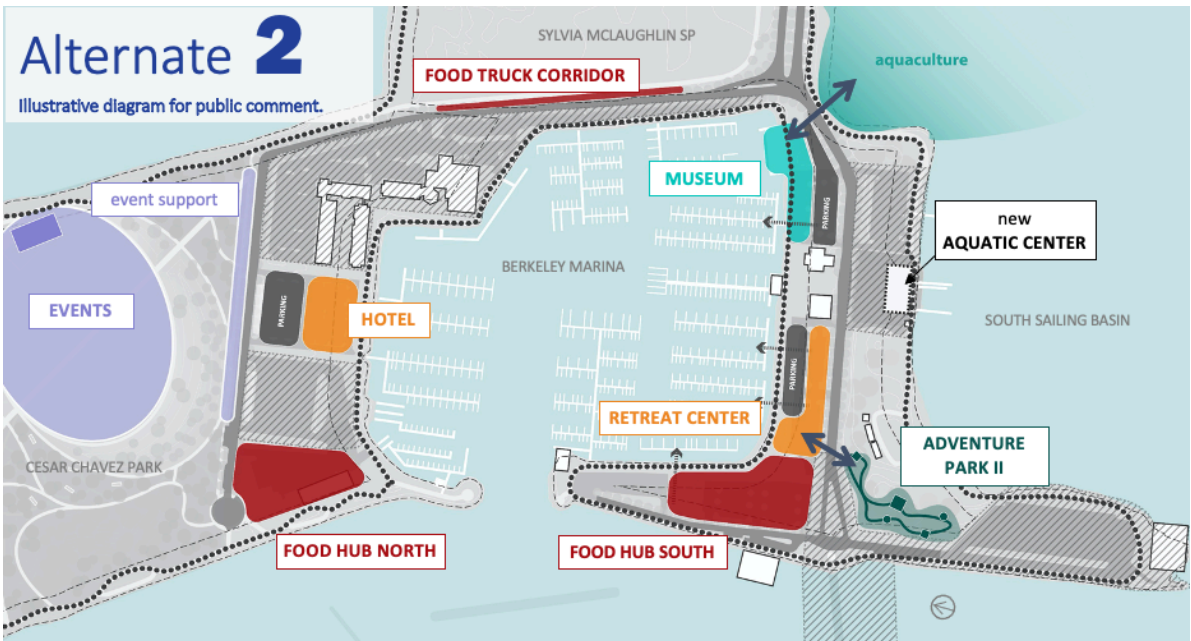
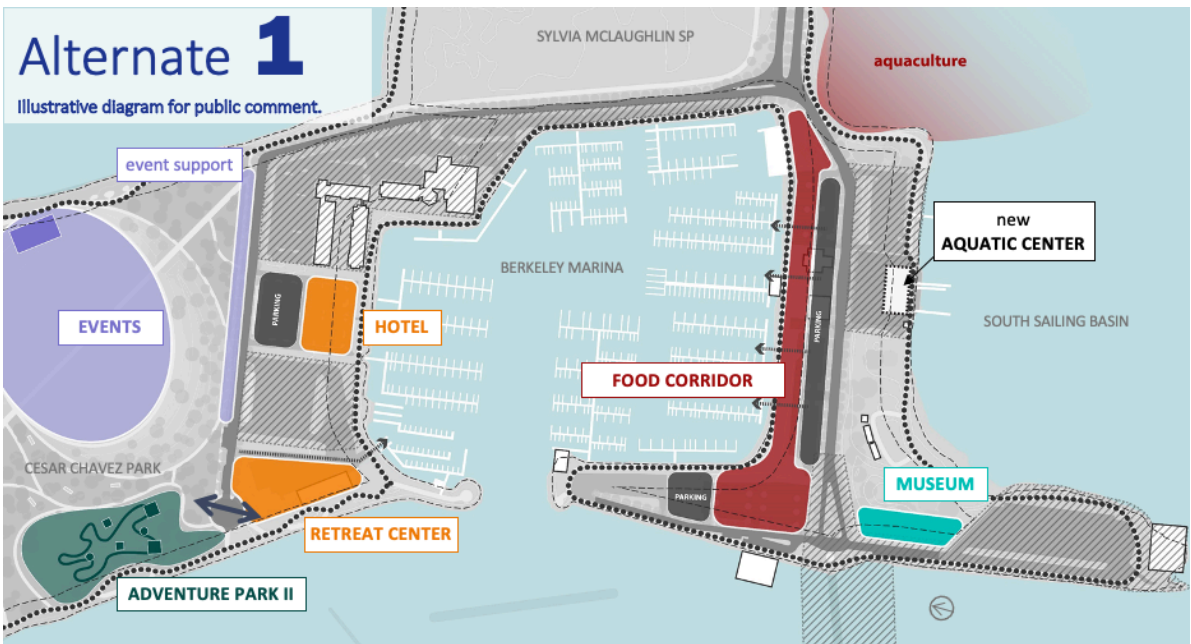


Active/Organized Recreation – Adventure Park II

SMALL
(least)

MEDIUM
(less)

LARGE
Includes ziplines, ropes courses



Events & Festivals

SMALL
12,000 people

MEDIUM
20,000 people

LARGE
30,000 people



Complementary Uses

modest revenue / revenue neutral / community benefit



enjoying nature / park enhancements



APPENDIX 2

Community Workshop #2 — Breakout Group Notes (unedited)

March 16, 2022

Group 1

Ali Endress, facilitator and Eric Swanson, note-taker

Hotel

Need additional time to study locations proposed on the alternates.

Concern that hotel is not as effective in bringing money into the Marina as a restaurant due to hotel tax that goes to general fund.

Future sea level rise and hotel location concern.

Majority preferred smaller hotel.

Habitat restoration and hotel opportunity for ecotourism.

Most showed support for a hotel, especially if done in a smaller scale.

Overwhelming support for tax revenue captured at the Marina to stay at the Marina and not be sent to General Fund

Food/beverage

More casual dining with ability to offer dining for all types of visitors.

Find tenant for Hs Lordships building.

Distribute throughout the Marina to capture more customers as people visit both sides.

Market/food court like Emeryville Public Market.

Seafood market to take advantage of fishing boats.

Interpretive Museum

Participants favored interpretive center or museum to demonstrate cultural, maritime history of the area.

Celebrate Ohlone Native American Culture would be a good use.

In the Pacific Northwest, Native American culture is more widely incorporated into public spaces and would be a good goal at the Marina.

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Informative environmental themes were also mentioned as a potential exhibit

Adventure play

Should be located away from the shoreline to not obstruct views along the waterfront.

Group 2

Nelson Lam, facilitator and Roger Miller, note-taker

Two like Alt-1 for Hotel and locate adjacent to existing.

Need parking at sailing dock (former OCSC, now INSPIRE).

Food corridors appear too congested. Break them up.

Marina is a park. Don't put too much stuff in it.

Need to keep the north side as a park and only do small development on the south side.

New ferry will make the Marina into a big transit hub.

Alt 1 for food options is at our slip holder parking; so place food options on sidewalks.

Placing a Retreat Center at Alt-2 or Alt-3 will take up all our parking.

Question the need for a museum, aquatic center, Adventure Park, Retreat Center — how will these produce revenue?

I like Alt-2 for food trucks. Keep them together.

I like all of these options, and I don't care about the layout for most of these options.

For any new hotel, the city should bring in expertise.

City should charge for parking to generate revenue.

Caltrans should be the one to fund bike trails to the Marina, not city.

Special events will probably cost the city more revenue generated.

Keep noisy activities away from the northside.

Can't use the Marina for large events because of large impacts.

Need shuttles for large events at the Marina.

Explore a joint venture with EBRPD for a museum at Eastshore State Park.

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Aquaculture at the Marina is too close to existing storm drains so water quality is bad.

Favor food trucks, bike rentals, dredging South Basin, but not small boat rentals (its already being done), and don't see need/interest in a marine research center.

New aquatic center and dredging South Basin are good projects.

Prefer clustered concepts: hotels, food.

Group 3

Alex Mercuri, facilitator and Gavin McMillan, note-taker

Didn't like the exclusions and limitations given at the opening of the evening.

Group supported hotels as a priority.

Food trucks were not considered a viable revenue generator. (All of group)

Liked interpretive facility, but not as a revenue generator — more a complementary use.

Premature to discuss arrangement of uses on site before the financial business case was figured out and so did not specifically discuss any of the 3 options presented.

Group appreciates recent capital improvements and suggested that a second round of improvements could help market the site to potential hoteliers/developers.

If hotels are the best revenue generators, then there should be 2 of them and be given the best locations (views, water access, ferry, etc.) regardless of BCDC permitting constraints.

The hotels then would be an anchor for other synergies like Food/Beverage, Museums etc. Group thought the City should work with potential Hoteliers/Developers and even issue an RFP.

Group also added that there should be other improvements made to the site as a recreation space - ADA (Berkeley was "home of ADA") This project has to be more than just development.

Group 4

Meghen Quinn, facilitator and Brad Porter, note-taker

Hotels

Concern with "wrecking it" like Monterey, getting overbuilt and not attractive.

Slip holder: new uses clustered around marina, will impinge on boaters access. 61% of revenue is slips, if increase occupancy from 68% to 90% will generate more than hotels.

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Food/Beverage

Can shelter from weather/wind

Outdoor dining in Berkeley difficult due to weather.

Mersea on TI has good patronage, containers block wind in arrangement.

Lots of people picnic there, so weather there is not that much of an issue. They kayak and would use it upon return when they are hungry--likes more outdoor dining, foodtrucks.

In favor of food courts/trucks.

Likes more dispersed food option, not having to walk a long way. Alt 2 and 3 good.

Few places in Berkeley for a celebratory meal, Hs Lordships was good for such celebration

Should appeal to a broader base, more food opps are good, park shouldn't just appeal to long time users who want to keep it as-is.

hard to react with out specificity to parking, footprints, detail of financial analysis, etc.

Question the revenue analysis. ala JLS restaurants they dont' raise a lot of money. Parking for it?

Trying to make \$\$ for Berkeley? Or for the Marina?

Concern with City "raiding" the marina revenue for general City fund. Transit Occupancy Tax (TOT) has been raided.

Why no housing? Not zoned? Biggest need.

More housing for floating homes ala SLR

long time user, Concern turning it into an Adventure Park (Pier 39, etc) --horrific. Will destroy it trying to make money. A plan made by people who don't use it.

Interest in Ferry info. Concern with turbidity and aquaculture.

Group 5

Megan Esopenko, facilitator and Debbie Kern, note-taker

All participants support food and beverage uses and generally in favor of new development at the Marina.

Boater concerned about Marine Center as big draw for boaters and revenue-generator — an integral part of the Marina community.

Location of food hubs in #2 can be windy.

Likes another hotel. Agrees with Ronan

Would like new development along the Central Harbor. He noted that the Marina has 28-acres of parking and that there are opportunities to convert parking to other uses that generate revenue. There are times that the parking is fully used but most of the time there are lots of available spaces. Suggested that a shuttle from Golden Gate Fields could be a

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good way of augmenting available parking during peak periods. It is a political battle to get the tax revenues from the DoubleTree to stay at the Marina. Need to lobby the City Council. If hotel TOT were to stay at the Marina, there would not be a large revenue problem. Need to renegotiate with the City to keep TOT in order to solve the problem. He thinks that the museum is a great idea. He doesn't think that it will generate much direct revenue, but will bring in people, who will support the restaurants. Good synergistic use.

He lives in Albany and uses the recreation amenities.

Likes Alternative #2 – the Hubs. Likes food areas with Bay views. Believes that they will be very attractive. He would like hotels to be next to each other and not location in alternative #3 because it will conflict with the Ferry Plaza. Likes location of hotel in Alternative 2.

Does not like location of museum in Option #1.

Adventure Park has least amount of support.

Cal Sailing. Questions benefit of adding an aquatic center because of services already provided by Cal Sailing. Looks like plan wants to build an aquatic center to replace Cal Sailing. Cal Sailing is the one of the greatest sailing clubs in the nation. It offers many low-cost/free programs to youth.

Dredging would be a great improvement, rather than adding the aquatic club. Many members of Cal Sailing become slip renters at the Marina, which brings in revenue to the Marina Fund. 27 current members also rent slips, generating \$60,000 per year.

Wants the outreach process to include consultation with all users groups.

New development should be synergistic and reflect “forward thinking.”

Including more open space might be a better option than a mix of different uses.

Concerned about impact of ferry on parking.

Marina has lots of space.

Wants new hotel to be located next to existing hotel.

Wants new development to be clustered to provide a cluster of activity and synergy.

Location of food trucks not compatible with wildlife. Wanted confirmation that the Alternatives represented the “Maxed-out” version.

Wants locations for small boats and dragon boats.

Supportive of improving the facilities at the marina.

Prefers Alternative #2.

Concerned that His Lordships site is not being taken into account in this planning effort because it could affect the overall siting and land use plan.

Hotel tax should go the Marina Fund and that tax-payer revenue should come back to the Marina.

Why does this park need to pay for itself? Does the City require the Rose Garden to pay for itself? Need regional funds to pay for this regional park. Need to talk to City Council.

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Public comment submitted after Community Workshop #2

The following correspondence — received between March 17 and May 11, 2022 via email to the City of Berkeley — refer to topics presented at Community Workshop #2.

Correspondence included herein:

- (10) emails
- Questionnaire #2 response from Gordon Stout
- Letter from Jim McGrath
- Letter from Citizens for East Shore Parks
- Letter from Susan McKay
- Letter from Sustainability, Parks, Recycling, and Wildlife Legal Defense Fund
- Opinion letter to Berkeleyside by Martin Nicolaus

BMASP Community Email Received Related to CM#2

Retrieved from BMASP Email on May 22, 2022

My main concern is that in an effort to turn the marina profitable , we will lose the Marina aspect which is so important to many of us, and that the water will be so degraded that it is unfit for human, fish, and bird life. Ferries make a mess of water, and over construction removes the vista, and feel of space and place. No one has really discussed the parking issues in a meaningful way.

Thanks

Carol Valk

why is the chat disabled?

Suggest fixing trails and other low hanging fruit maintenance then RFP for hotel developer

This questionnaire leaves very little room for the kind of discussions our group had at the last meeting. I do not see where this gets us. Todd

Todd Jersey

I left the zoom meeting early, but wanted to comment on the last proposals I saw for revenue or access generating development. They all seemed to show the elimination of the Berkeley Marine Center facility at the end of Spinnaker Way including all the subcontractors that have space there and the Inspire Sailing operation.

The outrage in the marine community over the loss of the marine facilities in Alameda where Svendsen's Marine used to be should be a wake up call to the need for marine service facilities around the bay. Sausalito too is up in arms over the possibility that the Marinship community of independent entrepreneurs in marine trades and others is threatened by development for housing and/or big business with rising rents and changed zoning.

A consultant operation like Hargreaves Jones probably can't comprehend what a junky looking operation like Berkeley Marine Center would contribute to their vision of a new and improved marina. In reality they are myopic in appreciating what a history of talent and knowledge exists there, and what a loss it would be to any mariner in the East Bay. It would be a relatively small grant for site improvements to enhance the optics of the facility while retaining the talent and services.

I have been involved as a sailor at Berkeley since the late 70's, first with my own boat and then volunteering for two non-profit youth sailing organizations, the Pegasus Project and the Blue Water Foundation whose boats at the marina rely on the services that local facilities provide. To have to motor hours to Richmond or Alameda and arrange transportation shuttles for even simple repairs is so sad.

Respectfully

Paul M.

to whom it may concern,

I was in the presentation part of tonight's meeting. When I was assigned to a break out room I got stuck "joining room 3" The image of joining kept swirling but nothing happened. I sent an email to Ali, and Roger Miller, hoping that someone would notice and at least respond via email. No luck. i didn't get to be in a break out room.

Here are my comments from the presentation.

There wasn't time for me to fully understand the differences between the 3 proposals, corridor, hubs, and I can remember the name of the third. They all look like interesting options. I like low cost food options. Food trucks could be gotten in quickly and would be great for the marina!

I have been in and around the marina for 37 years, just about any restaurant I have eaten at out of the marina, I have eaten at more then all the times I have eaten in restaurants in the marina combined. Most of the time leaving the marina to do it. Because the current restaurants are either to expensive or not good value for the price.

I like that non of the options seem to leave room for the ferry which is a huge mistake for the marina and will cost the marina too much money and never bring anything in. The ferry will also change the use of the marina in a way not in line with the options proposed.

On many days the parking is heavily used. Adding more ways to pull people into the marina and have parking for them didn't seem to be clearly address. As a slip holder I can tell you there is bearylly enough parking in the marina, and there are many days/evenings where there isn't enough. On a busy Friday night race night in non covid times with skates and his lordships there wasn't enough. As the second Meghan said there is only so much land. parking doesn't seem to have been appropriately addressed. So far I have only seen parking spaces removed from the marina. and all of the proposals look like more spaces will be removed.

It was interesting to me that although slip holders, of which I am one, bring the vast majority of the revenue into the marina, nothing was really proposed to address the problems of why there has been a steady exit of slip holders from the marina. For example; Not enough dredging in the marina to keep it usable for boats. 24/7 365 days a year. There are too many times that boats can't be used, or can only use the southern entrance/exit because of lack of water depth. the last dredging in real world terms did almost nothing to keep the marina usable. And the marina silts in way more quickly then the time frames between the dredging. Poor amenities. It is nice that the bathrooms have been cleaned up. The

wifi never seems to work well. I am a recently added liveaboard and my option is to set up internet service, or not have dependable signal in the marina. There is only one laundry facility in the marina. It is not even centrally located in the marina. It is essentially in one far corner of the marina. The harbor masters hours have been cut on weekends. A time when more people are using their boats and inquiring about coming in to the marina. If the marina office needs to be closed because of staffing, pick a weekday. The survey sighted said the vast majority of people want to use the marina for recreation, that is land based. I appreciate providing those opportunities, but it is a recreational marina. with a large # of slip holders. The proposals all seemed to look at the water portion of the marina as a hole, not an opportunity. I think better food options, movies, other activities and making the marina more of a neighborhood, would benefit people like me greatly, in addition to people who come into the marina and use it as a land based park. I just didn't see any attention paid to the question why are people leaving, when 5-7 years ago, the marina was closer to 90% occupancy. If that 15-20% occupancy could be brought back it seems like the best way to increase revenues.

There were supposedly around 900 responses if I remember the presentation correctly. If half the current slip holders responded then that would be about 350 people. I have trouble believing that the survey represents the current users very well. I don't think I was aware that the survey even existed, and I have been a slip holder since 2015.

The presentation from the architects didn't seem to understand how to really interface the water users and the general public. It also made suggestions of "activities" that already exist, so I feel there is more of a PR problem. Aquatic classes being one of the things I was thinking of. I think all of the proposals removed both the boat yard and the for profit sailing school. The idea of removing the boat yard from the marina seems to be a problem. It encompasses the fuel dock, That is something that should be kept for slip holders if that goes away Emeryville or Richmond are the closest fuel docks. In your average boat Emeryville is at least an hour away and Richmond is easy 2-1/2 to 3 hours away to go and come back just for fuel. The for profit sailing school going away means that selection of aquatic classes goes away. The old for profit sailing school had a deal with the hotel, and provided some revenue, for people coming in for multi day classes.

I wonder why there no solar in the marina. Each bathroom has a great roof for solar. It could at the very least run the bathroom.

On the whole I like the ideas of how to bring more to the marina, I would like to see more effort made to understand how to integrate the current land users on the water users into those plans. And how to better manage parking. It is currently manged very poorly. Adding more interest in the marina will only make that worse.

Thanks

Saul

Service is the rent that you pay for room on this earth.

Re the presentation on March 16 in the workshop, I would request that Megan Esopenko at Hargreaves-Jones and Peter Bluhon include in FAQs how the BMASP questionnaire was made available to the public (phone, mail, weblink), over what period of time, response rate if applicable, etc.

Thank you,

Camille Antinori

Hello

I felt the survey did not really give one choices, but tried to direct our choices in the direction that the pushers of this survey wanted. The museum and aqua culture are so stupid as money makers, as to be laughable if it weren't actually being presented as a choice. What idiot came up with those? And a zip line in a place that is flat? A marina is access to water and inclusive, a waterfront is for spectators . Exactly who is going to benefit? The city coffers or the marina? Is the "new marine center" to eliminate the existing windsurfing and sail club? Will people continue to have access to the water at HLS where the wind is? No one mentions parking , ever...and that is a biggie for people bringing gear to the water. The questionnaire is so obviously designed not to address the real issues at the marina. What happened to the money from Double Tree for the last 30 years? And what about the idiot ferry issue? Ever go to Richmond and see how many cars are in the ferry parking lot weekdays? Count the people getting on the ferry? 8? MAYBE.....

Sincerely,

Carol Valk

Dear Councilmembers Bartlett and Taplin,

I would like to log major concerns over the quality of the "community engagement" for the pier/ferry and BMASP projects, especially in light of the March 16 BMASP "community workshop #2". I am a Berkeley resident (District 3) and also Chair of Marina Planning at Cal Sailing Club (CSC). To be clear, the unfortunate Zoom bombing at this meeting is the least of my concerns with this meeting.

Consider how public comment was solicited for the workshop:

- Posting for the meeting was only days before meeting, and only on city BMASP website, BMASP email list and a few posters around marina.
- No prior availability of detailed planning documents the public was asked to review at the meeting.
- Consultant and city presentations took up the bulk of the workshop, even disregarding time lost with the zoom bombing.

- The city/consultants' chosen set of three options – dubbed “hubs”, “corridors” and “dispersed” – was tossed out late in the presentations, after which we were immediately put into breakout rooms to choose. Each option involves rather complex consideration of tradeoffs in land-use.
- The maps shown totally greyed out the pier, which for many is the centerpiece of the Marina, and no one was allowed to comment on it.

Finally, breakout sessions were handled in vastly different manners depending on which session you were put in. In rather an insult, the facilitator in my breakout room muted me mid-sentence within seconds of speaking during my turn although we had each been given a minute to talk. My comments were on point (perhaps I did not say “hospitality,” the facilitator’s chosen theme for that round of comments, quick enough?). The facilitator repeatedly cited a “tight agenda” but took up large amounts of valuable speaker time to explain how to limit our responses. Only tightly scripted, thumbs up/down types of response to food, events and hospitality ideas were allowed. Other sessions had open conversations on the various alternatives presented in the slide show. No one was cut off and even critiques of the process itself were allowed.

As with the pier/ferry process, the process of community engagement is as much at issue as the choices of plans. We are given very narrow choices that have themselves been chosen, refined and culled so that the community is asked in a simplistic way to choose A, B or C. There are a lot of individual ideas within the plans that could be good for the marina area. At the same time, it is important to step back and see from a bigger picture how the consultants and city made assumptions and constructed choices so we know we are on right track long term. The city’s current approach towards public input is disrespectful and cuts off the city from considering valuable information from an engaged community.

There’s plenty of scope to improve this process. Some ideas are to begin in-person meetings as soon as is safe, enable chat and record Zoom meetings, given the usual precautions around Zoom bombing, train facilitators in soliciting and collating public input in a consistent and respectful manner, make public comments more available post-meeting, and make documents available for review prior to meetings. The recent Hopkins Corridor Study (<https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Hopkins/>) meetings run by the Public Works staff could offer lessons in running a public input meeting. Comments from those who attended both the Hopkins and 3/16 BMASP meeting include:

- Last three Hopkins Street meetings were recorded. Also, remote city council meetings with public comment are recorded (<https://www.cityofberkeley.info/covid19-council/>). In contrast, Park Staff for BMASP commented that it is “illegal to do so.”
- Chat function was enabled throughout. In comparison, the BMASP meeting had Chat deliberately disabled, after 8 minutes of enablement.
- The Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan wasn’t posted to the City Community Calendar until sometime Monday for the Wednesday, March 16 evening meeting.
- Hopkins Staff went to great lengths to review and answer each question posed in the Chat area - during the final portion of meeting.
- Hopkins project used a valuable software tool that allowed public to make site-specific comments about their concerns, over several month period (“Social Pinpoint”). Those comments exceeded 900

and were compiled and visually presented at the public meeting by staff. It would be VERY useful for Marina planning. <https://outreach.mysocialpinpoint.com/hopkinscorridor#/sidebar/tab/about>. In contrast, the March 16th BMASP meeting consisted of: these are our three alternatives for development, which one do you like best? <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/BMASP/>

Many of the frequent users of the marinas (e.g. walkers, water sports enthusiasts, bird watchers and families) are grateful to Councilmembers Rashi Kesarwani, Tarry Taplin and Rigel Robinson for their time and willingness to meet at Cal Sailing Club in February to hear ideas from all sides. Building on that, I urge you to share this information with your liaisons on the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission, Brandon Floyd and Claudia Kawczynska, and fellow councilmembers to move towards honest, open and respectful community engagement.

Camille Antinori

I am writing to add a few thoughts, following up on the BMASP Community workshop #2 last month.

I am in favor of more open space with emphasis on marine-related activities, and less on expansive new commercial development. We are presented with plans as if they must be accepted in order to generate revenue; instead, there are alternative paths to take for a positive marina future. I agree with many others who believe more of existing marina revenue should stay in the marina, that the City can off-load charges free in other parts of the City and also possibly get new funds from other sources like a ballot measure.

As with likely ferry overload parking, it does not seem that there is proper planning here, addressing the added load of parking stemming from so many new ventures. The south sailing basin parking is already often filled. The Berkeley marina is a region-wide resource and Bay Area residents will continue to drive there for years into the future. Given current plans shared in the last workshop, it is easy to imagine core marina recreational users, including swimmers, kayakers, sailors and windsurfers, crowded out by new ventures. Instead, it is just these type of recreational activities that should be supported—dredging the SSB is a great example—rather than imposed upon.

Museums, for example, are wonderful, but not appropriate for the marina, especially if they displace a working boat yard and sailing school. It is also disconcerting to see a “New Aquatic Center” located right where Cal Sailing Club and Cal Adventures are now located. In one of the zoom breakout sessions, when asked to explain this surprising graphic, the presenter, who was involved with the design, noted, “It was just an idea...” When asked if she ever visited this location, she replied she had not. This was sad to hear, giving the impression of much planning done at a remove from actual, current, marina usage.

Once the marina is over-developed, there is no going back to a place of less development and more non-commercial recreational activity. I’m reminded of hiking in Redwood Regional Park in Oakland, seeing the pictures of the giant redwoods that once inhabited the area, then all cut down; we look back to today and wonder, why they cut down every giant redwood, responding to the pressures of home building at the time, and didn’t look to the future, preserving those trees. There is no more valuable public resource than the shared communal open space, including at the marina.

I think we have the creative energy and resources to fund the marina without changing its character as currently proposed.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Ofsevit

Slide 56 divides Cesar Chavez Park into two shades of green. The left side (northern half) is keyed "COB Measure L Open Space Parks" and the right side (south) is keyed "Land & Water Conservation Fund Boundary." Please provide the source from which you derived the "Land & Water Conservation Fund Boundary" designation and the division of the park into two different "jurisdictional boundaries."

Martin Nicolaus

1342 California Street

Berkeley CA 94703

510-717-2414

manicolaus@gmail.com

Hello!

I just saw postcards today for the first time about the survey for the Marina

plan. And the survey is now closed. I'm wondering when it opened, because I am at the marina every weekend and sometimes during the week and this was the first I saw it. I do see other messages from you, so perhaps I just missed the survey.

I'd love to know the answer if you have a moment; I do have concerns about the plans I've heard from public officials for the ferry. I'm pro ferry, but not at all in favor of having it at a renovated pier. Rather I think it should depart from inside the marina and the funds for the pier pit to better use.

Paige

paige miller buck | 415.596.7869

BMASP Community Workshop 2

Gordon Stout gords11@gmail.com 4/12/2022

I primarily use the Marina for:

(Why is it limited to 3 options?)

- Cesar Chavez Park
- Dog park/dog walking
- South Cove watersports
- Boating clubs (CSC)
- Marina customer (berth on J-dock)

Other:

- I used to fly radio-controlled gliders in Cesar Chavez Park
- I have hauled out my boat at Berkeley Marine Center

I primarily travel to the marina by car

Hotel and Retreat Center—the reason for a second hotel or a retreat center is strictly financial, not to augment the marina's core mission. The three alternate locations presented all seriously interfere with berth renter access, which is presently the marina's largest revenue stream. Those locations are therefore not acceptable.

One of the proposed locations is the space occupied by the Berkeley Marine Center boatyard, which the city apparently plans to eliminate. This would be a major loss for berth renters in the Marina—not only does BMC do excellent work, it helps customers work on their own boats, which makes boating more affordable. It's wonderfully convenient for a Berkeley berth renter to use the BMC for a haul-out, and the BMC chandlery has hardware and supplies that can be purchased without a time-consuming drive to Richmond or Alameda. Eliminating the boatyard would make the marina less like a real marina, and hence less attractive to berth renters. We should keep the boatyard.

We should also keep Inspire Sailing, the successor to the OCSC sailing school, which provides access to sailing, and also feeds future demand for berth rentals at the marina.

Food and Beverage—Food trucks or even an informal beer garden might be good amenities for marina visitors, provided that they can be sited in a way that does not interfere with other marina functions.

Alternate 1: The Food Corridor would be bad for slip holder access, despite the note on the slide saying it would somehow preserve slip holder parking—where do the food trucks park, and do the patrons stand and eat in the slip holder parking lots?

Alternate 2: The Food Truck Corridor might work, unless it requires expensive rework to the roadway paving. But the Food Hubs North and South look bad for the BMC (see above) and Skate's, to say nothing of the berth renter parking in the area.

Alternate 3: The Food Truck Corridor might work, unless it took expensive rework to the roadway paving. But the Food Areas A, B, and C look bad for the berth renter parking in the area.

Don't expect this to make much money for the marina, so don't spend much money on infrastructure to make it work.

Restaurants, fish markets / food hall—If you can get a tenant to make Hs Lordship location work, great! Otherwise, I don't see available space for the suggested restaurants, fish markets / food halls, and the financial projections seem way too rosy given the marina's shaky history of hosting restaurants.

Events and Festivals—The Marina is not a suitable spot for ticketed concerts or festivals, I don't think they are consistent with what the marina should be. Adding an event venue would degrade Cesar Chavez Park's Meadow area, please don't do it. Big events shut down the marina, and block access for both South Cove recreation and berth rental boaters. Remember that most of the marina's income comes from those berth rental boaters—don't take away their access for seven high-season days a year.

There are considerable expenses involved in non-ticketed events, I don't understand how the city staff calculates such events to be a revenue source. They seem more like an opportunity to spend money and have a party—fun, but don't use the rent check to do it. And don't do it if it will be hard on the neighborhood.

Museum / Interpretive Center—Expensive project with a long timeline, substantial risk of failure. Don't spend a bunch of money studying whether it might be made to work.

Adventure Park II—Please just cross it off the list, as pictured it belongs among tall trees, the concept does not deserve space at the marina.

Complementary Uses—in brief:

Food trucks, as above, might be good, don't spend money, don't expect revenue.

Aquaculture, at best a money-spending opportunity and a dubious project.

Bike Rentals, might be good, try it out, don't spend money, don't expect revenue.

Small boat hourly rentals, CSC, Cal Adventures and OCSC have done it, you need teaching/certification, rescue service, boats, dock space. What is the goal here?

Aquatic boat center, if you mean a pretty building for CSC and Cal Adventures, it would be better to spend the money on dredging the South Basin.

Marine research center—an opportunity to spend money, what is the goal?

Park pavilions—an opportunity to spend money, what is the goal?

Dog agility course—why in the marina? I vote no.

Enjoying Nature / Park Enhancements—Please, don't let whoever came up with this graphic screw up Cesar Chavez Park.

Plant a bunch of trees all over the area where people have flown kites and gliders for 30 years? Bad idea.

"Enhance" the dog park, "Improved pathways, seating, lights, etc.", what exactly do you mean? Might be nice, could be horrible, much better to leave it as it is.

Turn the meadow into a concert venue? Please, no!

I'm sorry, it all just makes my skin crawl. Not only is it expense that a park in fiscal crisis can't afford, there is so much potential for messing up an amazing place.

My Message on the Fiscal Crisis—Don't spend money you don't have. If a project is just a nice-to-have, don't do it. Above all, don't try to turn the Marina into a money-making operation, or you will ruin it.

Jim McGrath
2301 Russell Street
Berkeley, CA 94705
March

BMASP
City of Berkeley

Subject: BMASP Workshop #2 and surveys

I attended the second workshop of the BMASP—the first in over a year—and reviewed the survey that has been sent to interested parties. As I noted in my letter of November 1, 2021—which the city has, to date ignored—this process falls well short of an adequate and transparent planning process. Since much of the existing specific plan, adopted in 2003, was never implemented, and since the marina fund has essentially run out of money, developing another plan that ignores public concerns, the realities of maintaining a marina, and feasibility looks foolish indeed.

The public process to date has been deceptive and misleading. The clearest example of that is shown by question 4 in the previous survey, which asked: "Indicate your support for the following revenue generating facilities: Restore pier with ferry service." There has been no indication that WETA proposes a fair market lease for the areas that they seek. Those areas are suitable for restaurant use which would generate revenue. Further, the wording of this question implies that the pier can only be restored as part of a ferry service. This wording is fundamentally dishonest. The new survey is nearly as bad; clearly the city is more interested in controlling the narrative than soliciting informed public input.

The lack of transparency, and the withholding of information, for whatever purposes, has the effect of turning supporters into skeptics, and skeptics into opponents. Since virtually any change in the marina requires a public vote, this approach is counterproductive.

CONTENTS OF HARGREAVES CONTRACT

According to the adopted contract with Hargreaves, the public workshops are intended to solicit input on the priorities for the draft specific plan. But the limited information made available before and during the workshops, and the limited and misleading surveys, denies the public the information that they need to provide meaningful input. The specific provisions of the contract that are relevant to my concerns include:

- the consultants are required to "provide a range of **feasible** revenue generating opportunities" task A.2.4
- the consultants are required to conduct market research to identify "trends and demands for amenities"
- the consultants are required to "identify regulatory agency permit requirements"
- the consultants are required to have meetings with both the Parks and Planning Commissions to present a summary of public process comments. Subtask B.2.2

For each of these requirements, the public process to date falls well short of the requirements in the contract, or of good planning practice. In particular, the refusal to allow questions about the presentation ensured that the public in attendance didn't understand the presentation or the physical setting before retiring into break out sessions. The lack of recording, and the presence of city staff or consultants as "facilitators" served to minimize or paper over concerns expressed in the session that I attended. There was no effort to assure neutrality or completeness in such recording of concerns.

FEASIBILITY

Under the contract, the consultants are required to conduct market research to evaluate the potential for revenue generating uses, and then use that information to provide a range of **feasible** measures that would generate revenue. If this information has been gathered, it was not shared with the public before soliciting their opinions. Many of the concepts presented at the second workshop fall outside of the realm of feasibility, and it is a waste of everyone's time to present them for public reaction. Neither a museum or an aquaculture facility appear to be feasible, which should have been obvious to the city and the consultant team. There is a relatively new museum on the San Francisco waterfront—in the middle of a vibrant tourist area. It has an annual budget of \$54 million. Somehow, we are supposed to believe that the City of Berkeley—which couldn't amass \$6 million over the last 30 years to maintain the entrance channel of the marina—has the capacity to develop a museum! The concept of an aquaculture facility is similarly impossible. Such a facility is not a recreational or marina use, requires substantial volumes of water, includes a discharge back to the bay, requires significant infrastructure, and substantial capital investment. No information was provided at the meeting which established that these uses were, in fact, feasible. While unconstrained solicitation of the public and stakeholders might be appropriate in a planning charrette, it is not acceptable three years into a million-dollar planning study.

I believe that similar concerns apply to the idea of outdoor dining on the western side of the marina, and a food court. Frequent users of the marina know that it is not Walnut Creek—the fog comes in and the wind comes up nearly every day between mid-February and October at about 2:00, dropping the temperature into the mid or low 50's. It is certainly disingenuous to depict the idea of a food court with a picture of Market Hall in the Rockridge. There are thousands of residents within walking distance of Market Hall, many restaurants along College Avenue, and a BART station that disembarks far more passengers than those contemplated if ferry service comes to pass. Food courts have been built at Jack London Square and Emeryville, without dramatic success. The Port of Oakland built the infrastructure for a food court in Jack London Square—only to have it torn out when they finally found a tenant, Barnes and Noble. Despite the multiple investment cycles and a ferry service, many of the ground floor business spaces in Jack London Square remain vacant. What the planning process needs is insightful economic analysis, not boosters.

None of the concepts suggested in the second workshop, or illustrated in the recent survey, include a footprint or a location that is sufficient to meet the standards of California Planning law, or inform the public. As I noted in November, a credible planning process needs to identify the kinds, locations, and intensities of uses. What footprint would a new hotel occupy, including parking? What footprint would a food court occupy, including parking? What footprint would a new restaurant occupy? What existing uses would be displaced by such new uses, and what would the impact on recreational demand be? No such questions could be asked in the workshop—diminishing the value of the discussion.

Information that is available suggests first, that hotels are not in high demand at the current time because 20,000 rooms are under construction in Alameda County and the hospitality economy is not expected to recover for several more years. Second, the market for restaurants appears to be limited, given the location of the marina as a destination rather than part of a neighborhood, the large number of competing restaurants, and the contraction of the restaurant business during the pandemic. Third, the slides clearly show that 92% of people arrive at the marina by car. The existing Bay Plan, which governs major parts of the marina, protects the marina for existing and future recreational use. It specifically forbids the usurpation of needed recreational parking, yet none of the suggested uses include any discussion of parking requirements, or that regulatory standard. All of these things are intrinsic to the question of feasibility. As I noted above, asking the public for their opinion on a series of land uses that may not be feasible is a waste of time. Withholding information about the feasibility of a series of land uses is not merely a waste of time, it appears to be an effort to manipulate public opinion.

In a startling omission, the public workshop included no discussion of the existing marina, despite the fact that it generates over 60% of the revenue in the marina area. Sailors who rent slips have been complaining about the need for maintenance dredging and other maintenance for over 30 years; it is no surprise that people have taken their boats to other, better maintained facilities. Yet the development of Westpoint Harbor in Redwood City indicates that there is market potential for increased revenue from within the marina. A quick examination of their rate structure shows the potential for slip rental roughly equivalent to that of Berkeley—on less than half the number of slips.

<https://westpointharbor.com/berthing-information/> While I favor the ambience of Berkeley's sailboat marina over that of power boats and larger sailboats, the lack of any analysis of the marina is a serious, if not fatal, shortcoming in the efforts to solicit meaningful public input. Moreover, with the marina facing infrastructure needs—not including a new ferry terminal—of over \$100 million, many of these concepts are very risky. Berkeley can certainly adopt an aspirational land use plan, as the Port of Oakland did for Jack London Square. But as can be seen at Jack London Square, if the land use plan does not reflect market demand, facilities will sit vacant.

BERKELEY MARINA'S ENTERPRISE FUND PAYS THE CITY FOR SERVICES THAT ARE NOT JUSTIFIED

While none of these practices are expressly prohibited, they have crippled the ability of the city to maintain the marina as an economic asset. Taxes generated from businesses in the marina like the Doubletree Hotel are not seen as lease revenue, and can therefore be used for other City purposes. Berkeley has such a transient occupancy tax (TOT), which in FY 2019 provided \$4 million in revenue to the City's general fund—far more than the lease revenue of \$1.45 million. Slides presented on March 16 forecast that a new 265 room hotel would generate lease revenues of \$840,000 and a TOT of \$2.25 million. But the marina must remain an attractive venue for the hospitality industry to generate this \$5 million plus in annual taxes. City records don't reveal how much it actually costs to provide the Doubletree with city services, so it is not clear how much of the annual TOT is pure gravy—or how much of the actual costs of services to the Doubletree are provided from the marina fund. But it is clear that Berkeley has extracted tens of millions in tax revenue from the marina without attending to the basic infrastructure needed to sustain that revenue.

That is only the most lucrative way that the city unfairly charges municipal services to the marina fund. The marina fund, until the rebuilding of University Avenue, was responsible for maintenance of marina roads. But maintenance, and a road to Cesar Chavez is a public works responsibility because it is a closed solid waste facility. No other park in the City has to pay for maintenance of access roads. Except in the marina, capital improvements and maintenance of parks are paid by the parks tax. The city has

designated three parks within the marina, and Cesar Chavez park is the largest in the City. Yet funds for maintenance come out of the marina fund, not the parks fund. One of the nice things about the marina, which broadens its appeal, are the recreational programs for children. Hundreds of children attend the summer programs, and play in adventure playground. Only in the marina do such recreational programs come out of an enterprise fund instead of the general fund. Garbage collection? The marina and all the parks pay, a total of \$812,000 estimated for FY 2021. Not the downtown businesses. Most people don't know that the Zero Waste Fund generates \$46 million a year—but nickel and dimes the parks and marina. The list goes on. Police overtime for marina events like the fireworks? Far more than the parking revenues from those events, and it comes out of the marina fund. The city moved their parking division—not a public trust use—to the marina, saving the cost of renting space near the public safety building, and closing off parking spaces used by other tenants. Most people don't remember that Measure WW, a funding measure for the East Bay Regional Park District, provided \$500 million in direct grants to local cities. As of 2019, Berkeley had received \$4.88 million—but none of that went to the marina. Reducing the fees that the city extracts from the marina to the actual costs of providing services might provide sufficient funds to maintain the marina in much better condition.

PARKING MUST BE DISCUSSED IN SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ALLOW MEANINGFUL FEEDBACK

None of the discussion in the last public meeting included any information about the parking needs of the various uses, or the existing parking patterns. Yet work to date demonstrates that 92% of the people who arrive at the marina arrive by car. That is part of a general pattern; it is far easier to divert regular commute trips, or short trips to alternative transportation modes. Even with a toll system and heavily subsidized ferry service, the City of San Francisco estimates that 91% of the weekend trips to and from Treasure Island will remain by car. The City Council has referred the idea of establishing parking fees at the marina to the staff; this matter must be included in the current BMASP plan or the City will have piecemealed consideration of policy matters for the marina, which is impermissible under CEQA.

I understand that many of the uses at the marina do not generate revenue, while they require maintenance, even if much of the initial construction is covered by grants. I certainly think that it is fair to ask frequent users to pay their fair share. However, establishing paid parking in a recreational facility is far more complicated than it may seem at first blush. For example, if a ferry terminal is built with a 250 space parking lot, and that lot is 90% full on weekdays, with a \$5 parking charge, it would generate a little more than \$300,000 a year. However, it is not clear that the market would bear a \$5 a day parking fee, or that the impact on recreational access would be acceptable. It is also not clear how much it would cost to administer such a program. For years there has been discussion of installing an entry kiosk, which would allow monitoring of use, purchase of annual passes, and charges for day use. Such a system has long been in place at Coyote Point Recreation Area in San Mateo County. Again, the cost to administer such a program and the potential for revenue and adverse impacts to recreation are all issues that need to be addressed. To hold two public meetings, as well as a year-long discussion of a ferry terminal in a park, without discussing parking in any detail, is simply not acceptable.

NEEDED INFORMATION HAS NOT BEEN PROVIDED

We are still waiting for the feasibility study for a new ferry terminal, a parking inventory of the marina, analysis of parking usage by area, and the feasibility of the various uses that is required under the contract with Hargreaves. The City cannot withhold this information from the public, and then expect a meaningful reaction to the uses described in the latest survey. Berkeley approved two leases for small ferry operations, without a public process, but with conditions that require reporting. No information

about ridership, costs to serve, or parking demand has been provided. Berkeley has established a Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission to advise the City Council about matters involving the marina and recreation, and the Hargreaves contract requires presentation of a summary of public input and concerns to that Commission. Yet most of the efforts of the BMASP to date have avoided that Commission. As noted above, these efforts to manage the information available to the public, and limit the choices for feedback in a so-called public opinion survey, are contrary to the promises of a robust public process, and stimulate suspicion if not absolute opposition.

Very truly yours,

Jim McGrath

CITIZENS FOR EAST SHORE PARKS
1604 Solano Avenue, Albany CA



May 9, 2022

Scott Ferris, Director of Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
Roger Miller, Secretary, Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission – with
Request to forward copy of this correspondence to members of the Parks,
Recreation and Waterfront (PRW) Commission

Subject: Berkeley Area Specific Plan (BMASP) proposed options to Construct an
Events Pavilion and/or a Large Adventure Park in Cesar Chavez Park

Dear Mr. Ferris, Mr. Miller, PRW Commission Chair Wozniak and
Commissioners Birnbach, Kawczynska, Floyd, Diehm, Cox, Capitelli, Srioudom,
and Landoni,

Citizens for East Shore Parks (CESP) has recently become aware of two
proposed options for development on the north side of the Berkeley Marina
through an April 29, 2022 *Berkeleyside* article written by Martin Nicolaus. That
article and subsequent conversations with members of the public raise deep
concerns about both the community engagement process that is being used to
resolve the monetary problems faced by the Marina and the proposals themselves.

The Process:

CESP has been informed that during the BMASP community meetings any
differences of opinion put forward by the public that were expressed during the
small breakout discussion groups were not reported back to the whole group nor
recorded in any way. Additionally, it was said that questions asking for a response
in discussion groups or in the “community survey” were expressed in a way that
slanted the responses.

Apparently, meetings of the PRW Commission are not recorded so that the
public can review and participate thoughtfully and in a timely manner. Minutes of
past PRW meetings are not available on the City’s new website, nor is an
electronic copy of the BMASP available at this time.

While CESP, at our invitation, initially heard from City staff about the
BMASP and were assured that we would be kept in the information loop, we had

not been informed of updates in the planning effort until the *Berkeleyside* article appeared. CESP is the major environmental group that since 1985 has and continues to advocate successfully for a waterfront park along the East Bay Shoreline from the Bay Bridge to the Carquinez Bridge.

What has happened is not an adequate public engagement process. CESP holds that the best planning occurs when the public is free to express their opinions without regard to those held by City staff, consultant, or Commission and that differences are recorded and become a part of the overall decision process. A public engagement process should not give the impression of a predetermined result. Noting that at the upcoming May 11, 2022 PRW Commission meeting Chairperson Wozniak has scheduled Item 11 for a discussion of BMASP feedback, we request that you specifically discuss our concerns and adopt any corrective actions that will ensure an adequate consideration of public feedback.

The Result:

CESP favors use of the shoreline as open space and unstructured recreation and habitat protection with allowances for small watercraft recreation. Cesar Chavez Park was originally intended to be part of the McLaughlin Eastshore State Park and although the City of Berkeley ultimately decided to maintain it as a municipal park, the City committed to maintain it as a compatible park next to the McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. CESP agrees with Mr. Nicolaus' conclusion that the BMASP Plan would destroy the character and openness of Cesar Chavez Park by replacing the open space so vital to relief from urban stress with a commercial amusement park.

We fully understand Berkeley's need to resolve the Marina's financial problems, but the sacrifice of scarce free public waterfront land as open space to a commercial amusement park is a bad approach. The city of Berkeley should treasure its existing public land and the public's unhindered use of that land. Construction of a large permanent Events Pavilion with a roof and a stage will also require additional large areas of paved parking, fencing and commercial amenities. That is the wrong direction. Such a use would drive the City to constantly seek more revenue to support staff time, the cost of upkeep and maintenance. Larger, more frequent events would be sought, eventually erasing any semblance of a park forever.

When events are limited to those like the Kite Festival, the heart of the Park is free and open for use by all members of the public. Particularly during the pandemic, the importance of parks is key to the mental and physical health of everyone. Such use must be preserved forever for future generations.

Regarding the other proposal to establish a “Large Adventure Park” involving ropes, ziplines and similar activities, they exist elsewhere in the Bay Area. Let that happen in those other places. Our waterfront parks were founded with a commitment to open space, to be free and open to the public, and to respect habitat, nature and quiet enjoyment. All in all, monetizing the space as presented by these two proposals for Cesar Chavez Park ultimately means privatization of this very public, well used and essential space.

As of yet, we have seen no analysis of how Marina fees and rents have been used in the past. It seems that little reinvestment has taken place, leading to the current situation. Before moving forward, it may be productive to examine how this predicament evolved.

Please maintain Berkeley’s commitment to the open, free waterfront park as you seek ways to resolve the financial problems of the Marina. CESP suggests that the City not start from a position that construction of commercial operations, hotels and the like is the solution. CESP is willing to assist in the effort to find better solutions and urges that the current proposals be rejected. Thank you for your consideration of these views.

Sincerely,



Shirley Dean
CESP Board President



Robert Cheasty
CESP Executive Director

Susan McKay, 913 Virginia Street, Berkeley 94710

28 April 2022

Commissioners – Parks and Waterfront Commission

City of Berkeley

Via email

Re: BMASP Public Comment 4/28/22 – Parks Commission Meeting

Dear Commissioners,

For your information, the following is the complete public comment intended for the 4/28 meeting. It includes the unsaid portion that exceeded the one minute time limit.

I know there will be discussion of the BMASP tonight so I'd like to participate with a public comment now that I am happily a member of the public. My name is Susan McKay, former Parks and Waterfront Commissioner and current Marina user.

The Berkeley Marina is a very important place to the Bay Area, the City of Berkeley and to me personally, so I am gratified to see that this planning effort is proceeding in a positive and orderly manner, because we know that in the past there was reluctance and trepidation about planning for the present and future Marina.

I have followed the BMASP process and participated in some of the discussions. I have observed that this planning has generated a very robust public community participation that seems to be growing with time. This is just so great! We should remember that planning and actual improvement is a process that is continuum – for instance I think it is very opportune that the work on University Avenue is quite visible and drawing positive attention to the Marina – everyone is talking about it!

For me so far, the process has highlighted the following about the Marina's place in our community:

- The Marina is a recreational resource for the entire region
- The Marina is seen primarily as a park by City of Berkeley residents, and it is extremely well used
- Bay-related uses - sailing, paddling, etc., are very popular, and many unique and non-profit/mission-driven organizations offer water activities to a wide range of residents
- There is an appetite and tolerance for some development – water related retail, and hospitality
- The funding structure of the Marina is in (desperate) need of restructuring

Of course there are lots of details and complications that still need to be addressed and resolved such as improvements for Cesar Chavez Park, dredging, parking, a ferry terminal, etc., but the important thing to me is that the conversation is started and as we move forward through time options will be developed, and improvements will follow.

One hope that I have had for a long time is that an overall vision and over-riding identifying theme can be found for the entire area. Something like an expression of the history of the area, or an

Susan McKay, 913 Virginia Street, Berkeley 94710

astronomical/solar expression of place, or ecologic/natural cycle themes, or reclamation features might be developed so that a framework is created into which individual parts and pieces can work to create a cohesive, unique environment that enhances the Marina experience and “sense of place, for the City and the region. To realize the vision, regional funding partners should be sought to invest in this amazing, world-class location directly opposite the Golden Gate.

Thank you for your hard work on this complex and important effort.

Yours truly,

Susan McKay



SPRAWLDEF

Sustainability, Parks, Recycling And Wildlife Legal Defense Fund

802 Balra Drive, El Cerrito, CA 94530
510 295-7657 www.sprawldef.com n.laforce@comcast.net

May 11, 2022

VIA EMAIL miller@cityofberkeley.info

Roger Miller

Secretary

Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission

2180 Milvia Street, 3rd Floor

Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan (BMASP)

Dear Mr. Miller:

SPRAWLDEF submits this letter in regard to the proposals for Cesar Chavez Park in the BMASP.

SPRAWLDEF is a 501(3)(c) corporation dedicated to protecting our environment. Its focus has been on protecting wildlife and habitat especially in Eastern Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. It also focuses on protecting, enhancing, and expanding wildlife corridors. Currently, it is a lead plaintiff in the legal actions to protect Point Molate in Richmond as a public park and open space and in legal actions to protect humans and wildlife from the toxic contamination at the Zeneca site (former Stauffer Chemical facility) in Richmond. In the past it successfully sued CalTrans to ensure that if there was ever an off-road vehicle facility in what is referred to as Tesla, it would require a protected wildlife corridor that was off limits to off-road vehicles.

SPRAWLDEF opposes the proposed "Large Event Area" (Proposal 1) and the "Events Pavilion" (Proposal 2) for the reasons set forth in the Berkeleyside Opinion piece that Martin Nicolaus wrote. SPRAWLDEF is especially concerned about the impact that these proposals would have on the burrowing owl habitat and the destruction of the Native Plant Area. Attached is a copy of that Opinion piece.

Sincerely yours,

Norman La Force

Norman La Force,
President SPRAWLDEF

Berkeleyside

OPINION

Opinion: Berkeley Marina plan would destroy Cesar Chavez Park

There are real needs for maintenance and improvement in the park but the city's plan in its current iteration will not solve those financial problems.

By Martin Nicolaus, April 29, 2022, 3:22 p.m.

In a recent email, Mayor Jesse Arreguin noted that the Berkeley Marina comprises over 100 acres. Ninety of those acres make up Cesar Chavez Park. The ongoing Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan (BMASP) appears, at first sight, to pivot on the issue of a commercial ferry terminal at the municipal pier site on the marina's south side. But a closer look shows that BMASP also envisions profound changes in Cesar Chavez Park on Marina's north side. These changes would transform the park from a place of relief from urban stress into a high-pressure commercial amusement park.

Two proposals, in particular, stand out. No. 1, BMASP wants to create a big oval "Large Event Area" with an "Events Pavilion" in the southern half of the park. No. 2, BMASP wants to turn the Native Plant Area into a "Large Adventure Park II." Let's take them in turn.



The proposed Large Events Area is outlined in the map above from [Slide 47 of the BMASP presentation](#) dated March 16. The key is the addition of an "Events Pavilion." This would be a large permanent building with a roof and a stage. For example, BMASP gives the "LOVEBOX" installation in the photo below from [Slide 40](#). BMASP also would add undefined other "PARK PAVILIONS."



The city of Berkeley estimates revenue close to \$1 million for additional and expanded events at the Berkeley Marina. Credit: City of Berkeley

Part of the BMASP process was an online "Public Input" questionnaire that closed on April 22. The "Events Space" question illustrates the covert bias of this instrument. "Events and regional gatherings are a key source of revenue generation for the Marina Fund," says the questionnaire. You're then asked to indicate your degree of approval for an "Events Space." The loud hint is that if you disapprove of the Events Space plan, you are throwing money away. The way this question is put rests on a lie. Events, whether regional or otherwise,

have never generated revenue for the Marina Fund. The lineup of Marina Fund revenue sources given on Slide 8 makes no mention of event revenues because there haven't been any. Even the biggest event, the Kite Fest, which I personally have loved, costs the city major sums of money to put on.

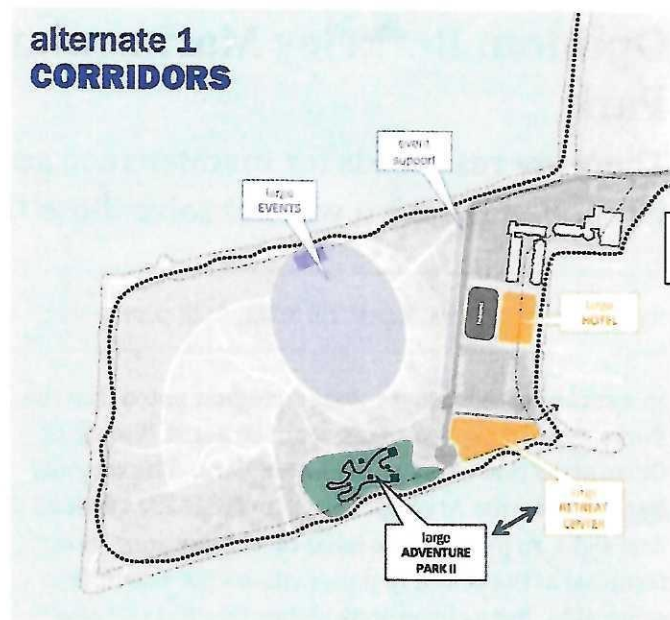
Once or twice a year, a big charity may hold a fundraiser that draws a few hundred people, but the city's expenses in groundskeeping, sanitation, and staffing always eat up more than the rental fees. Even the disturbing Cannabis Festival that some in the city government want to put on would not cover the cost of fencing, groundskeeping, staff time, police and fire overtime, DUI cases, and the enormous cleanup necessary after marijuana festivals.

The BMASP slide show estimates that the maximum revenue from the largest events would come to \$170,000 a year. That's already in a different universe than what past event revenues have been historically, namely zero or negative. BMASP also quotes a much higher "city staff" estimate of almost \$1 million per year, but BMASP clearly doesn't lend it credence. Nor should we. These numbers are pure speculation, resting on untested assumptions.

Several local nonprofits have successfully held events such as religious observances, drum circles, foot races and the like in the park. They don't make a heavy impact on the park, and the existing spaces adequately serve them. The proposed big dedicated Events Space and Events Pavilion don't serve local needs. They're bait for big commercial operations out for a profit. These operators know how to sweet-talk gullible city staffers (and money-hungry candidates) with promises of big revenue while actually draining the local coffers for externalities like police and fire overtime and cleanup. These kinds of events not only lose money, but they also hijack the environment, poison the habitat, and degrade nature.

Each of the large events projected for the Events Space and the Events Pavilion would bring major noise pollution to the park, heavy traffic and parking congestion, not to mention tobacco and alcohol use, littering, and violence. Forget taking a quiet walk in the park. Forget nature — anything with wings or legs or a belly to crawl on runs away or hides when a Big Event happens and for quite a while afterward. For some species, a single such disturbance during nesting

season is enough to guarantee that they never come back.



The second main impact of the BMASP is even worse. BMASP proposes a so-called "Large Adventure Park II" (shown in the drawing above from Slide 63). What BMASP means by an Adventure Park isn't spelled out, but it's a different creature entirely from the beloved Adventure Playground on the south side of the marina that has entertained and instructed generations of kids, including mine. That facility disappears from the BMASP scheme. What BMASP wants instead is a sporting place for grownups involving "ziplines, ropes courses." For example, BMASP shows the "Ropes Course, Orange County" (Slide 44). The price for a day is \$350 for a group. It's geared to paying adults.

The most outrageous part of the BMASP "Large Adventure Park" proposal is the planned location: smack on top of the Native Plant Area in the southwest corner of the park. The whole 3.5-acre grove where dozens of varieties of California native trees, shrubs, and grasses grow will be turned into a commercial playground with ziplines, ropes courses, and other entertainment for grownups who enjoy thrills and can afford the ticket. Forget the California Coastal Conservancy that paid for establishing the Native Plant Area 40 years ago. Forget the progressive Berkeley City Council of 40 years ago that paid for the other half of it. Forget the hardworking, nature-savvy trio of Charli

Danielsen, David Amme, and Dave Kaplow and their associates who worked from sunup to sundown to establish native plants in this challenging site, a historical project. Forget the dozens of volunteers and concerned supporters and the city staff who have weeded and trimmed the Native Plant Area in recent years. Forget the Native Pollinator Garden project just funded by Alameda County. It will all go under the bulldozer to make way for a commercial zipline and rope course operation, supposedly earning the city \$120,000 a year, if you believe that.

It might be a different matter if there were a groundswell of popular demand for rock concerts and ziplines on the marina. But BMASP's own public opinion polling shows just the opposite. No less than 87% of the respondents go to the marina for its walking/biking pathways. Similarly, 79% go there to enjoy the parks (Slide 22.) These are by far the most popular reasons why people go there. Nothing else is even close. People go to the marina overwhelmingly to enjoy being in nature. Nature is the city dweller's lifeline, now more than ever. The BMASP recommendations are tone-deaf to our environmentally conscious time. They run absolutely counter to what people want and need to see in the park. If BMASP succeeds, the park will be wrecked beyond restoration.

Other signs of BMASP's distance from park visitors' concerns abound. BMASP completely ignores the Cesar Chavez/Dolores Huerta Homage Solar Calendar, a park landmark that could use upgrades and better access. Apart from a proposed "Enhancement" consisting of a "Dog Agility Course," BMASP has nothing to say about the highly irregular unfenced dog problem area in the belly of the park. BMASP envisions only one real bathroom in the 90-acre park to be built years from now. BMASP also floats ideas of an "Interpretive Center" or "Museum" that no local person wants. The international consulting firm running BMASP, Hargreaves Jones, prides itself on "rigorous investigation," but we've not yet seen a single HJ employee in the park asking park visitors' opinions. The plan, including the alleged public input portion, is being engineered from above.

There are, to be sure, real money problems affecting the marina and the marina fund. There are real needs for maintenance and improvement in Cesar Chavez Park. However, the BMASP in its current iteration will not solve those financial problems, and it will not serve the public that uses the park.

Martin Nicolaus is CEO of Chavez Park Conservancy and webmaster of chavezpark.org.

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