

Key Outcomes Summary – Round 1 Focus Group Meetings

Summary of three Focus Group meetings convened via videoconference on January 5, 6, 7, 2021.

The City of Berkeley and San Francisco Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) invited several frequent users of the Berkeley Marina to participate in one of three focus group meetings. Each meeting consisted of a brief presentation on the scope and objectives of the Pier/Ferry Study followed by a facilitated discussion around the following questions:

1. What water- and land-based recreation uses, needs, and use patterns should be considered in a new multi-use pier design?
2. Are there planning considerations to incorporate into the pier design?
3. How would you access a potential future ferry and what destinations would you access?
4. What challenges do you foresee for potential restoration of the pier for recreation and ferry?

Results

Topic 1 – What water- and land-based recreation uses, needs, use patterns should be considered?

- Windsurfers use the South Basin and the area south of the existing pier.
- Windsurfers are out past noon when wind is good.
- Having access to the water is important.
- Remove the abandoned derelict portion of the pier as it poses a hazard to various watercraft.

Topic 2 – Are there any planning considerations to incorporate into the pier design?

Land-based considerations

- Consider one way to offset a likely increase in car travel to install a solar canopy parking with EV chargers. This could make the overall project carbon neutral.
- Develop another restaurant.
- Make walking and biking trails sufficiently wide.
- **Landside and/or on the pier:** provide for food vendors, snack stands, hot dog stand, ice cream. It is important to provide sufficient experiences for people make a day of it.

Water-based

- Fishing off the pier is a significantly better experience than fishing from the shore.
- Provide windsurfing access at the former Hs Lordships site.
- Consider offering direct water access from the pier for SCUBA diving and swimming.

Pier design

- Provide safety and security lighting on the pier.
- Ensure ample space to accommodate fishing and those lining up for a ferry.
- Study the former observation deck on the Berkeley Pier and consider re-recreating such an amenity.
- Provide sufficient benches for fishing, eating, and for places for people to observe and connect with nature and the Bay.
- It should be the most beautiful design possible.
- Install wind turbines on the pier to power activities.
- Pier should allow for a lot of activity, not just a walkway to the ferry.

Topic 3 – How would you access a potential future ferry? What destinations would you like to access?

- South San Francisco. Marin. Commuting from SF to Berkeley and Cal campus.
- People who want to visit Bay Area, but visit other destinations.
- Connect ferry to the Mission Bay Terminal as there is much UC collaboration with Mission Bay.
- Travel to baseball games and other events in the Bay Area.
- Market the ferry for recreational and pleasure travel in addition to commuter use.
- Allow for bikes on the ferry.
- Coordinate with shuttle service up/down University Avenue.
- People prefer ferry over BART, even at higher cost.

Topic 4 – What challenges do you foresee for the potential restoration of the pier?

Planning/Design

- Prepare a parking study to determine actual parking count needed.
- Increased car trips, people, parking for a ferry may lead to impacts that **do not necessarily enhance the Waterfront experience for existing users**. Consider:
 - Access will cut through a community of users, e.g. Cal Sailing, Shorebird Park. Perhaps there is a way to mitigate this impact.
 - Though important to bring new customers and funding, it can't displace existing recreational uses.
 - Make the ferry fit into the Waterfront as a whole, especially the cars/circulation and new transit design.
- A new pier (vs restoring the old pier) allows for a wider pier with more opportunities. This can create more community support for the project.
- The biggest obstacle is the impact on parking load and the new breakwater.

- Needs to be beautiful to incorporate parking.
- Redondo Beach redid its pier and it became a wonderful destination. Consider this case study.
- Berkeley has not treated the Waterfront in a way that shows sufficient love and care. Increased use is contingent on long term maintenance.
- The ferry may become an amenity only, and not efficient for commuter service.

Outreach

- Reach out to birdwatching, drone flying, Ohlone tribe members.
- Reach out to youth camps at Shorebird Park and others. The influx of unaffiliated adults may be an issue for the recreational youth programs and camps.