

# 1

# INTRODUCTION

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Figure 1-1: Project Location

## 1.1 PLAN PURPOSE

This Alameda Point Specific Plan (“Specific Plan”) is a plan to redevelop a portion of the former Naval Air Station Alameda (“former NAS Alameda”) that the United States of America, acting by and through the U.S. Navy (“Navy”) has decommissioned. The Navy is expected to convey the land to the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Authority (“ARRA”) in the near term. This Specific Plan, once adopted by the voters of the City of Alameda, will reflect the City’s commitment to a successful public/private partnership for

the redevelopment of the former NAS Alameda. A companion document, the Alameda Point Community Plan, when adopted by the voters of the City of Alameda as a new Chapter 11 to the General Plan, will address the unique general plan goals and policies for the “Plan Area,” as defined in *Section 1.2* below. This Specific Plan is consistent with and implements the goals and policies of the General Plan, including the Alameda Point Community Plan.

In the Alameda Point Community Plan and in this Specific Plan, the intent is to create a contemporary, balanced mix of homes, workplaces and associated amenities that benefit future residents and workers of the Plan Area and the City. The Project will provide a sustainable neighborhood with compact, transit-oriented development and ample parks and open space, multiple transit opportunities, and energy efficient infrastructure and services. This Specific Plan combines detailed development plans with environmental policies, programs and goals to create a project which is a desirable place to live, work and play.

## 1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND PLAN AREA

The City of Alameda occupies an approximately 12.4 square mile island immediately west of the City of Oakland across the Oakland-Alameda Estuary (the “Estuary”), and east of San Francisco across San Francisco Bay (the “Bay”). At the western end of the City of Alameda is the 1,734-acre decommissioned former NAS Alameda of which the Plan Area is a part. This Specific Plan uses the terms “Plan Area” and “Alameda Point” interchangeably to describe the 918 acres of uplands and 166 acres of

submerged lands that are the subject of this Specific Plan, as depicted on *Figure 1-2: Plan Area*.

The Plan Area extends across the lands between the Estuary on the northern edge of the island and the Bay on the southern edge and spans from the northwestern tip of the island to Main Street which forms the eastern boundary. In addition, the Plan Area includes the submerged lands within Seaplane Lagoon and immediately south of Seaplane Lagoon. As described in greater detail in *Chapter 2: Plan Background*, the Plan Area is generally flat and is occupied by structures and other vestiges of the military activities that have taken place there over the past 61 years. The existing roadways and infrastructure are aged and most must be replaced. The remaining portion of the former NAS Alameda, to the southwest of the Plan Area, is not a part of this Specific Plan.

### 1.3 LAND OWNERSHIP

The former NAS Alameda has been owned by the Navy, except for a small portion of land that the Navy leased from the City. When the base closure process is complete, the Navy will transfer the land within its ownership in the Plan Area (and certain other lands not a part of this Specific Plan) to the ARRA. The ARRA intends to sell and/or lease the Plan Area to an experienced, private master developer for redevelopment.

### 1.4 PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Redeveloping an underutilized part of the City with new jobs, homes, services, open space and recreation.
- Providing a long-term revenue stream to the City's general fund that will support future City services, while avoiding future losses to the City from the need to maintain and operate the former NAS Alameda in its current, dilapidated fashion.
- Avoiding negative impacts to City funds by requiring fiscal neutrality.
- Enhancing the clean up effort provided by the Navy through remediation of contaminants not addressed in the Navy plan, such as lead, asbestos and contaminants in soil below relocated roadways and demolished buildings.
- Facilitating the clean up of toxic contaminants consistent with federal and state laws that are protective of human health and the environment.
- Eliminating blight, including abandoned buildings, incompatible land uses, depreciated or stagnant property values, and inadequate or deteriorated public improvements, facilities and utilities.
- Reducing the impact of the automobile and energy consumption by: (1) facilitating public transit opportunities to and within the Plan Area to the extent feasible; (2) providing a system of bikeways, parks, and pedestrian paths to facilitate access to parks, recreational areas and the waterfront from all parts of western Alameda; and (3) implementing a Transportation Demand Management ("TDM") program that will reduce Alameda Point Project-related traffic and associated noise and air quality impacts.
- Advancing the application of State laws and policies designed to encourage infill development in order to minimize vehicle miles traveled and to promote accessibility to transit, both significant in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Providing transit options and facilitating transit usage through



Figure 1-2: Plan Area

Not to Scale



resident and business education and incentives.

- Creating a highly walkable neighborhood with nodes of compact development and connections between them, incorporating the tree-lined character and grid street pattern that is characteristic of the existing City.
- Pursuing a transit-oriented development strategy that supports transit with residential density and workplaces near a new ferry terminal and transit hub.
- Distributing parks and open spaces throughout Alameda Point that better link the Plan Area with the rest of Alameda, the Bay and Estuary.
- Maintaining and enhancing public waterfront access, with parks, trails and plazas to help connect the island with the Bay, while being respectful of wildlife.
- Protecting and improving the waterfront by enhancing public views of water and access to the waterfront in all development and creatively encouraging use of the waterfront by providing a waterfront promenade, public art, open space and other public amenities.
- Stimulating job creation and economic growth through installation of needed site improvements to stimulate new commercial expansion.
- Strengthening and diversifying the local economy and the community by adding business park uses and retail uses.
- Providing new amenities for City residents, including new shops, restaurants and services.
- Offsetting the City's cost of providing municipal services with revenues generated from the Plan Area so that the Project achieves the City's established policy of "fiscal neutrality."
- Promoting environmental sustainability, reduction in energy consumption, water usage, greenhouse gases and solid waste generation through compact community planning, water recycling, energy efficient building design, use of recycled materials and applying low water demand techniques in all new development, including landscape development.
- Encouraging reuse of buildings and landscapes with historic significance.
- Providing new marina slips and modern support facilities to help satisfy the demand for marina slips in the City and the Bay Area.
- Providing a wide range of housing types for an array of household types.
- Maintaining and improving Alameda Point's natural qualities with new public open spaces, active and passive recreational uses, and marine-related recreational uses.
- Fostering supportive housing for providers of services to the homeless and victims of domestic violence.
- Generating sufficient revenues to fund required infrastructure replacement and improvements.
- Facilitating necessary flood control and seismic reinforcement of lands.
- Exchanging Public Trust properties from portions of the interior of Alameda Point to other portions of the Plan Area to encourage public access to the waterfront and to facilitate appropriate redevelopment of the former NAS Alameda, consistent with the Naval Air Station Alameda Public Trust Exchange Act.
- Seeking a balance between goals and policies that encourage private investment and at the same time supporting fiscally responsible planning by the City.

## 1.5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Alameda Point Specific Plan proposes the development of a new transit-oriented, mixed-use community with commercial, residential, civic, community and open space land uses within the Plan Area. The community will consist of residential neighborhoods and workplaces adjacent to a new ferry terminal. The Specific Plan allows for a maximum of 4,346 new residential units, plus 186 Collaborative Housing units which may be relocated, and the reuse of existing residential buildings for up to 309 residential units in the historic district; 350,000 square feet of retail uses and 3,182,000 square feet of other commercial and business park uses (including adaptive reuse of existing structures) and up to 260,000 square feet of civic uses; together with approximately 600 marina boat slips and approximately 145 acres of parks and open space and three large existing piers (collectively, the "Project"). See *Figure 3-1: Land Use*.

New housing will consist of multiple building types ranging from condominium and apartment residences to single-family detached houses. Residential neighborhoods will be constructed in a dense, walkable environment near the ferry terminal and parks. Some of the existing housing in the historic district will be adaptively reused or relocated. The commercial areas allow for office uses, vertically integrated mixed uses and business park uses, ranging from professional offices, to personal and business services, hotels and retail uses. The new workplaces will contribute jobs that improve the City's job-housing balance. Civic uses include an upgraded fire station, branch library, post office, city services, a school and community center facilities. A preservation, mixed-use district will be established in

which development is subject to special regulations.

The community will be served by a variety of different types of parks and open spaces, natural areas and landscaped streets. Public parks will be maintained and irrigated. They will include tot lots, sports fields and greens. Recreational opportunities will include shoreline access, passive and active play in these areas. A large, approximately 60-acre Sports Complex for community and regional use will be located in the northwest part of the community. Public access and related water-oriented amenities are planned on the shoreline of the Plan Area. An extension of the Bay Trail is proposed to be located along the Plan Area shoreline, subject to resource agency restrictions. Features may include vista points with seating, trails and water-oriented uses such as a bait shop and boat rental or storage.

Transportation improvements are central to the new development. In Seaplane Lagoon, a new ferry terminal will be developed as the centerpiece of a new transit hub. Buildings containing multiple land uses are planned adjacent to the terminal. A transportation coordinator will be hired to monitor and increase transit effectiveness for residents and workers in the Plan Area. Car share, vanpools, a mandatory resident and business transit pass and other transit and parking measures and incentives will be implemented. Piers within Seaplane Lagoon may also continue to be used for maritime and aircraft carrier museum purposes.

Tree-lined streets are designed to be pedestrian friendly and all will have sidewalks on one or both sides. Main streets will have bike lanes in

the right-of-way and, along the shoreline, there will be bike paths. The pedestrian and bicycle systems in urbanized areas will link to shoreline trail systems, the Bay Trail and surrounding networks.

The East Bay Municipal Utility District will provide potable water and wastewater service to the Plan Area. Recycled water will be used when it becomes available. The existing utility and infrastructure systems, which are old and deteriorated, will be replaced by new, code-compliant systems. Necessary infrastructure will be built and easements will be established as necessary to accommodate future recycled water use. Plan Area grading will address storm drainage, sea level rise, flood control and geotechnical conditions to ensure safe construction and rehabilitation.

## 1.6 AUTHORITY

This Specific Plan serves as both a policy and regulatory document for the development of Alameda Point. This Plan provides guidance for the City, developers and builders for Plan Area development.

California Government Code Sections 65450 through 65456 authorize the preparation of specific plans to implement a jurisdiction's General Plan. State law requires that a specific plan include the information listed below. The location of this information in this Specific Plan is shown in italics following each item.

- The distribution, location and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the Plan Area. (*Chapter 3: Land Use and Chapter 4: Open Space and Conservation*)
- The proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewerage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the Plan Area and needed to support the land uses described within Alameda Point. (*Chapter 5: Transportation, Circulation and Parking, and Chapter 6: Utilities and Infrastructure*)
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources. (*Chapter 3: Land Use, Chapter 7: Development Standards and Chapter 9: Plan Review*)
- A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures necessary to carry out the Specific Plan. (*Chapter 8: Implementation and Chapter 9: Plan Review*)
- A statement of the relationship of the Specific Plan to the General Plan. (*Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 9: Plan Review*)

## 1.7 RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS AND REGULATIONS

The following section identifies land use plans, laws and regulatory enactments that could affect and/or regulate future land uses at Alameda Point.

### **1.7.1 Alameda General Plan, including the Alameda Point Community Plan**

Previously, General Plan Chapter 9 governed the development policies for the Plan Area as well as other portions of the former NAS Alameda. Now, the adoption of the Alameda Point Community Plan will amend the City's General Plan by adding a new Chapter 11: Alameda Point Community Plan that addresses solely the Plan Area. The new General Plan land use designation for the Plan Area will be "Alameda Point Specific Plan." The Alameda Point Community Plan identifies the types of land uses in the Plan Area and the policies guiding its implementation. The former Chapter 9 will continue to address lands outside the Plan Area previously governed by that chapter. This Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan, including the new Alameda Point Community Plan.

### **1.7.2 Biological Opinion**

In 1999, a Biological Opinion was issued to the Navy by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in response to the Navy's request for consultation regarding the disposal of former NAS Alameda by the Navy and the 1996 Community Reuse Plan. (See *Section 1.8.2* below.) A subsequent Biological Opinion based on this Specific Plan will be required.

### **1.7.3 State Lands Commission**

In 1850, the State of California received ownership of tidal and submerged lands and beds of navigable waters ("Public Trust Lands") within its boundaries. The State Lands Commission is charged by law with protecting existing and former tidal and submerged lands for particular

uses of Statewide public benefit, such as navigation, fisheries, maritime-related facilities, hospitality visitor-serving uses and ecological uses. The City of Alameda was granted ownership and management of its Public Trust Lands for what eventually became portions of Alameda Point by acts of the State legislature in 1913 and 1917. Subsequent legislation (in 2000) enacted the Naval Air Station Alameda Public Trust Exchange Act to allow the exchange of specific non-Trust land for equivalent value Trust land to improve public access to and use of the waterfront lands and to facilitate the productive reuse of the former NAS Alameda (the "Exchange"). This Exchange may occur on a phased basis. The permitted land uses on Public Trust lands are regulated by State law.

### **1.7.4 San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)**

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission is a regional commission and State planning agency that shares jurisdiction over land use on all submerged lands and lands subject to tidal action within San Francisco Bay. BCDC's jurisdiction is a 100-foot wide band around the edge of the Bay. BCDC requires permits for levee maintenance, extraction of materials and placement of fill in areas under its jurisdiction. BCDC's San Francisco Bay Plan (the "Bay Plan") contains BCDC policies to which the Project will be subject. Implementation of this Specific Plan will be consistent with the Bay Plan by allowing marine-related activities and by maximizing waterfront access to the public. BCDC, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have projected a rise in sea level that will affect shoreline properties and will

alter historical benchmarks and mitigations for flooding, wind and wave run-up and other tidal zone hazards.

### **1.7.5 Alameda Point Zoning Ordinance**

Concurrently with the adoption of this Specific Plan by the voters of the City of Alameda, the City's Zoning Ordinance will be amended to reflect a new zoning district for the Plan Area, "Alameda Point Specific Plan." Real property shall be used, and buildings and other improvements shall be erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, moved, occupied or used in accordance with this Specific Plan. The new land use districts for the Plan Area are as shown on *Figure 3-1: Land Use* in this Specific Plan. All districts carry an "Alameda Point" or "AP-" prefix. The uses include AP-Preservation Mixed Use, AP-Mixed Use, AP-Residential Medium, AP-Residential Medium High, AP-Residential High, AP-Commercial, AP-Business Park, and AP-Public Trust. *Chapter 3: Land Use* explains the types of use in each district and *Chapter 7: Development Standards* provides standards for the uses within each district. The regulations set forth in this Specific Plan provide the exclusive development standards for Alameda Point. These standards will be supplemented by a Pattern Book of design guidelines that will control architecture, landscaping, signage, lighting, public art, rooftop appurtenances, plant materials and the like. In addition, Historic Resources Design Guidelines will be prepared for development within the historic district and historic resources. Design review processes and standards are regulated by *Chapter 9: Plan Review*.

### **1.7.6 Community Improvement Plan for the Business and Waterfront Improvement Project**

A small portion of land in the northeast corner of the Plan Area falls within a redevelopment area established by the City as the Business and Waterfront Improvement Project (the "BWIP Plan"). The development program described by this Specific Plan does not require an amendment to the BWIP Plan.

### **1.7.7 Alameda Point Community Improvement Plan for the Alameda Point Improvement Project**

The Plan Area is within a redevelopment area established by the Alameda Point Community Improvement Plan for the Alameda Point Improvement Project (the "APIP Plan").

### **1.7.8 Alameda Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)**

A review of the 1986 ALUCP that regulates permissible land uses around airports indicates that the Plan Area is outside both the General Referral Area and the Height Referral Area as mapped for Oakland International Airport. The former NAS Alameda was removed from the ALUCP after it was decommissioned.

### **1.7.9 National Historic Preservation Act**

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on properties listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1999, the

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Navy and the California State Historic Preservation Office (“SHPO”) signed a Memorandum of Agreement that described a preservation strategy for areas within the former NAS Alameda. That preservation strategy made certain assumptions about the scope and nature of the redevelopment program at Alameda Point. As part of the Navy transfer process, the Navy intends to propose a Programmatic Agreement to be entered into by the Navy and the SHPO that would consider the reuse proposed in this Specific Plan and replace the existing Memorandum of Agreement.

## **1.8 PRIOR ALAMEDA POINT PLANS AND THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS**

The former NAS Alameda (and therefore the Plan Area) has been the subject of multiple planning and re-planning efforts in the past. The most recent development program for the Plan Area is the December 2008 “Redevelopment Master Plan for Alameda Point” (the “RMP”). The RMP focuses on the reuse of the Plan Area and is a comprehensive plan for Plan Area redevelopment. This Specific Plan is based upon the RMP. The history of Alameda Point development and community planning is summarized below.

### **1.8.1 Naval Air Station Alameda Plan (NAS Alameda)**

In 1938, the US Navy’s Bureau of Yards and Docks devised and implemented a plan for Alameda Point to accommodate 1,000 people and house up to 200 aircrafts. NAS Alameda was formally commissioned and occupied in 1940. This base plan was organized around primary crossing north-south and east-west axes and surrounding buildings, significant portions of which are a part of the current plan. Most of the buildings were designed in the Streamline Moderne style. A number of those structures that remain are being considered for reuse; others will be demolished.

### **1.8.2 Community Reuse Plan (CRP)**

In 1996, one year prior to decommissioning of the former NAS Alameda, a Community Reuse Plan (“CRP”) created a new vision for civilian reuse of the base. Prepared by the Base Reuse Advisory Group for the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Agency (“ARRA”), the plan called for over 2,700 housing units, and approximately 7 million square feet of commercial and civic buildings to house 17,000 jobs within the Plan Area and adjacent properties now known as Bayport, Alameda Landing and Coast Guard Housing.

### **1.8.3 Alameda Point Preliminary Development Concept (PDC)**

In 2006, the ARRA commissioned and accepted a Preliminary Development Concept (“PDC”), a study which addressed most of the Plan Area. It was not adopted or approved by the ARRA, so, while instructive, it does not regulate the reuse of the Plan Area. This plan provided for

1,800 new housing units, 3.4 million square feet of commercial space, as many as 9,000 jobs, a town center with retail and approximately 149 acres of open space and waterfront promenades. It included identification of an historic district. Transportation strategies focused on improved transit usage. Important elements of the PDC, such as expansive waterfront parks and a gridded street system, have been captured in the current design.

#### **1.8.4 Alameda Point Station Area Plan**

Another study, funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Agency, was conducted in 2008 for the City of Alameda. It has no regulatory standing, as the ARRA took no formal action upon it. It presented alternatives with varying numbers of housing units, and therefore a range of auto trips generated, to examine the relationship between land use and peak hour traffic. It was “intended to inform the community’s discussion about land use density and transportation at Alameda Point”. The study concluded that a higher density, more transit-oriented, more diverse, mixed use development pattern could be accomplished at Alameda Point without significant increases in traffic as compared with a lower density, less transit-oriented development pattern envisioned in the 2006 PDC. The Station Area Plan informed the preparation of this Specific Plan.

#### **1.8.5 Alameda Point Redevelopment Concept Plan**

In September 2008, a Redevelopment Concept Plan was produced that benefited from further community involvement during another set of public workshops. Workshops were held in August 2007 (200+ attendees), December 2007 (250+ attendees) and August 2008 (250+ attendees). The full spectrum of urban planning issues was addressed in these workshops and the outcome of that dialogue was reflected in a Redevelopment Concept Plan.

#### **1.8.6 Alameda Point Redevelopment Master Plan**

Following release of the September 2008 Redevelopment Concept Plan, eleven public meetings were held with eleven City boards or commissions to gather additional public feedback on the Plan. With that input, SCC Alameda Point LLC prepared the December 2008 Draft Redevelopment Master Plan. The Redevelopment Master Plan embodied the wisdom gained from prior design concepts and public dialogues about the future of Alameda Point. It is also based on technical knowledge gained from numerous Plan Area background studies regarding the many physical conditions that create opportunities or constraints. The Plan included a land use master plan, comprehensive transportation plans, sustainability strategies and an infrastructure plan for new water, sewer, storm drainage, electricity and gas systems. The technical background that enabled the preparation of the Redevelopment Master Plan and this Specific Plan are summarized in *Chapter 2: Plan Background*.