

APPENDIX B
OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS, & ALTERNATIVES

OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS, & ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

Based on the information provided in the Existing Conditions Report, the Consultant Team developed an Opportunities and Constraints Analysis for the site and used that analysis to formulate several alternative development scenarios for recreation facilities on the San Pablo Peninsula. The opportunities, constraints, and alternatives were designed to facilitate an analysis of key issues, challenges and trade-offs associated with development and implementation of park and open space facilities. In particular, the alternatives analysis reflects the complexity of issues related to the needs and desires of the various landowners on the Peninsula and the uncertainty regarding the future of Point Molate and Point San Pablo/Terminal 4.

The Consultant Team identified potential uses and related facilities that might be developed on the Peninsula. The list of potential facilities was used to develop a series of alternative use and facility plan concepts for the Peninsula. Based on the Opportunities and Constraints Analysis, the Consultant Team developed four project alternatives and presented them to the San Pablo Peninsula Open Space Committee (Committee) at a meeting on September 14, 2004. A lively discussion resulted in consensus that the discussion of alternatives required a second meeting, October 20, 2004. Committee members made comments on the alternatives at each of these two meetings and also submitted comments in writing. The alternatives were then refined to reflect the Committee's feedback and an additional alternative was added to address the current development proposal for Point Molate. The resulting five alternatives are described in this chapter.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Based on the information provided in the Existing Conditions Report (Volume II), the Consultant Team prepared an Opportunities and Constraints Analysis considering biological sensitivity, accessibility, visual resources, safety and security. The Opportunities and Constraints Analysis acknowledges project goals and objectives and is consistent with the Consensus document prepared by the Committee in 2002 (Appendix C). The analysis considers potential uses and facilities as well as compatibility with adjacent land uses. The Opportunities and Constraints Analysis, in both text and graphics, clearly articulates potential development areas and areas of concern.

Opportunities

The Opportunities are illustrated in Figure B.1 and described below.

Historic Interpretation

From a cultural standpoint, the San Pablo Peninsula presents a tremendous opportunity to interpret a continuum of history for the East Bay, from the Native American habitation to occupation by Mexican and Spanish settlers through the age of industrial development (*e.g.*, shrimp camp, winery, and Navy fuel depot) to the present. Remnants of these historic periods still exist. Because the Peninsula has remained largely undeveloped, these significant historical eras can still be recognized in the landscape. Such resources should be protected and used to educate local residents and visitors about the rich cultural heritage of the Peninsula and the region.

Outstanding Views

The San Pablo Peninsula possesses a variety of landscape conditions and offers opportunities for outstanding, dramatic views of San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay. Portions of the study area have a predominantly natural appearance with scenic quality, particularly with respect to off-site views. The Peninsula offers unobstructed panoramic views of the Bay, Marin, the San Francisco skyline and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.

Future Use of Terminal 4

Terminal 4 is the key to the success of an open space program on the San Pablo Peninsula. The removal of Terminal 4 from industrial use paves the way for potential recreation-related development and increased public access. Amenities provided at Terminal 4 that could be incorporated into an open space program include: shoreline access, ridge top views, and vegetated hillsides for trails or passive open space, visual access to the whaling station for historic interpretation, and proximity to East Brother Light Station (visual and physical access point).

Access to East Brother Light Station

The East Brother Light Station has been operating as a fully functioning lighthouse for over 130 years and is currently a successful bed and breakfast inn. This uncommon combination makes it a completely unique destination and a tremendous asset to the area. Continued access to and views of and from the light station should be protected and enhanced.

Natural Resource Recreation and Interpretation

As described in the Existing Conditions report (Volume II), the Peninsula is home to many important natural resources. Some of the best examples of native grasslands, such as coastal terrace prairie, are present in the hillsides of the San Pablo Peninsula. These grasslands were once widely distributed throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, but are now limited to scattered remnants. The beds of eel grass visible just off shore during low tides are one of the most important marine resources in the San Francisco Bay area. Castro Rocks is one of the most important haul-out sites for harbor seals in the northern portion of the San Francisco Bay.

The study area has great potential for nature-oriented recreation such as hiking, outdoor photography, birding and other wildlife viewing, fishing, and wildflower and native plant study. Placing trails with interpretive panels near or adjacent to natural communities would provide educational opportunities and foster stewardship of the land and its resources.

Public Access to Piers

The Point Molate Pier provides opportunities for both public and private water access to the San Pablo Peninsula. The pier provides unusual panoramic views that include Mount Tamalpais, the San Francisco skyline and the Point Molate landscape. Its width and load capacity lends itself to public/recreational uses such as fishing, bird watching, biking, and docking.

As described in the Existing Conditions Report, California tidelands and submerged lands are owned by the State and regulated by the State Lands Commission (SLC). These lands must be used for purposes consistent with the public trust. Most of California's piers, wharves, and docks are leased or granted by the SLC for industrial use. Few such piers are open for public use. The discontinuation of industrial/military use of the Point Molate and Point Orient Piers represents a unique opportunity to open the piers to the public to access the water in a way that only the piers provide.

Figure B.1: Opportunities

Redevelopment of Point Molate

Future development of Point Molate could provide opportunities to enhance public access and make various amenities available for public use such as cafes, recreation concessions, park facilities (*i.e.*, playfields, children's play equipment), and promenades. Point Molate's historical period as a winery is preserved in its architectural character. The architecture of the main, three-story Winehaven building is unique to the Bay Area, if not to the country at large. The Winehaven building and other buildings in the core district of Point Molate represent a unique opportunity for creative re-use of historic structures for park-related facilities including a Discovery Center, interpretive facility, conference center, or concessions.

Improvement of Point Molate Beach Park

Point Molate Beach Park is the southern entry to the open space program for the San Pablo Peninsula and should be enhanced to provide an attractive gateway. Because the park has already been developed with active recreational facilities (*e.g.*, play structures, picnic tables, barbecue pits) and a parking area, it represents a prime opportunity for redevelopment. Point Molate Beach Park could provide a staging area for trails throughout the Peninsula and for kayakers and others accessing the Bay.

Inactive Railroad Lines

The abandoned railroad alignment provides a perfect opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle trail development to improve public access. The railroad alignment supplies a comparatively level, continuous band along the entire shoreline.

Western Drive Alignment

The Western Drive alignment provides a perfect opportunity for Class II bicycle trail development to improve public access.

Accessibility

The San Pablo Peninsula is in immediate proximity to the entire Bay Area population. A "gem in the rough," it requires public attention and improvements to make it available for public use.

Bay Conservation and Development (BCDC) Jurisdiction

BCDC jurisdiction on the San Pablo Peninsula includes Bay waters up to the shoreline, as well as the land area between the shoreline and a line 100 feet inland and parallel to the shoreline. BCDC policies and plans support recreation use and public access along the shoreline, within their jurisdiction.

Constraints

The Constraints are illustrated in Figure B.2 and described below.

Private Ownership

A variety of different entities with conflicting interests own land on the Peninsula. The City favors redevelopment that will revitalize the area and provide economic growth (resulting in the current casino-resort proposal for Point Molate). Chevron must protect the safety and security of its Refinery operations through limited public access.

Accessibility

Western Drive provides vehicular access to the Peninsula and is directly accessible to westbound traffic on I-580. Eastbound traffic must exit at Richmond Parkway, cross under the freeway, re-enter I-580 westbound from the on-ramp at Castro Street and continue westward to the Western Drive exit. Currently, no pedestrian, bicycle, or bus routes access the Study Area.

BCDC Jurisdiction

BCDC sets plans and policies that limit land use and development within the 100-foot band along the shoreline. BCDC has designated Point San Pablo and Point Molate for recreation use, authorized development of the Bay Trail along the shoreline, and required protection of significant natural resources on the San Pablo Peninsula. Development of park-related facilities would require BCDC approval.

Pier Conditions

The Point Molate and Point Orient Piers would both require significant rehabilitation to accommodate public access and/or fishing. Decking would need to be replaced, guardrails installed and existing pipelines removed. The piers would require upgrades to meet current seismic and building codes and ADA accessibility. Ongoing maintenance of the piers would entail significant costs.

Protection of Sensitive Natural Communities/Wetlands

The presence of coastal terrace prairie, wetlands, and other sensitive natural communities places constraints on the development of trails, roads, facilities, watercraft access, and other recreation-related infrastructure. Impacts to these natural resources would require permits from the regulatory agencies and mitigation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Protection of Aquatic Resources

The presence of eel grass beds in the near shore marine areas of the study area places constraints on developing boat ramps and docks and removing existing structures. Eel grass beds are considered "special aquatic sites." Potential impacts to the tidal zone, eel grass beds or the near shore substrate would require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, consultation with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and mitigation under CEQA.

Railroad Right-of-Way

The railroad lines are currently inactive, but have not been legally abandoned. Research by the East Bay Regional Park District has uncovered a complicated ownership structure in fee and franchise agreements covering thirteen separate parcels. At present, the railroads are not considered "motivated sellers." Development of a trail along the railroad right-of-way would require extensive discussion and negotiation with the railroads.

Figure B.2: Constraints

Ridgeline Security Buffer

The Refinery lies on the eastern side of the ridge. The ridge provides views of proprietary technology and facilities that are located along the eastern shoreline of the Peninsula. Chevron requests a buffer downslope from the top of the ridge to prevent physical and visual access to the facility.

Hazardous Materials

The San Pablo Peninsula contains several existing and past industrial sites where hazardous materials were and are presently generated, stored, handled, and/or treated, particularly the Point Molate Naval Fuel Depot, Terminal 4 and the Chevron Richmond Refinery. Leaking underground tanks and past transport, handling, and storage of fuels and other hazardous materials may have resulted in hazardous materials contamination in the study area. Such areas would require clean-up prior to development of public recreation facilities.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Based on the Opportunities and Constraints Analysis and input from the Committee, the Consultant Team developed and refined several project alternatives for the study area. Alternatives include passive open space with minimal developed infrastructure, park-related public facilities, park-related commercial recreation, and park-related uses compatible with other commercial and industrial development as described on the following pages.

Alternative A: Passive Open Space with Minimal Infrastructure Improvements

Alternative A (Figure B.3) emphasizes minimal infrastructure improvements with no new construction, development, or reuse of existing buildings or infrastructure. A trail system and open space enhancements could occur if current land ownership and land uses continue on the San Pablo Peninsula. Current land uses would include a new industrial leaseholder at Terminal 4, with no public access at the northern end of the Peninsula. Minimal infrastructure and amenities would provide passive open space and a shoreline trail system. Passive open space on the hillsides would allow for visual access only; physical access to these areas would be prohibited. The existing roadways would form the spine of a Class II trail system, a striped lane for one-way travel along the side of a street or highway. Class I trail alignments along the shoreline zone of Point Molate would use the existing railway alignment, a relatively flat continuous connection along the shoreline. A Class I trail is a multi-use trail that provides for travel on a paved right-of-way completely separated from the street. Class I trails would access key shoreline vista point areas. Use of the railroad alignment would depend on necessary agreements with the relevant railroad agencies.

The following program details Alternative A:

- No structural improvements or amenities would be constructed.
- The Port of Richmond would find a new leaseholder; industrial use would continue at Terminal 4.
- The western hillsides of the San Pablo Peninsula would have passive (visual) open space.
- A Class II trail would follow the existing road from I-580 to the Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- A Class I trail would follow the railroad right of way from Point Molate Beach Park to Drowley Drive.
- Western Drive would become a scenic roadway with key vista points along the shoreline.
- The existing Point Molate gate would be reinstated to limit public access to daylight hours.
- A gate at the Coast Guard radio towers would prohibit vehicular access. Measures to provide additional security (*e.g.*, fencing) would be explored.
- A gate at the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would limit public use to daylight hours and protect Yacht Harbor residents.
- Public access to Point Molate and Point Orient piers would be prohibited.

Figure B.3: Alternative A

Alternative B: Park-Related Public Facilities

Alternative B (Figure B.4) expands upon Alternative A and includes developing trails, adding public amenities and developing Terminal 4 for public recreation use. No structural development or reuse of existing building infrastructure would be included. Terminal 4 would be a park-related asset with public amenities. Terminal 4, no longer an industrial use, would be reclaimed and redeveloped to include a shoreline trail system. The existing Point Molate Beach Park would be improved and reopened for public use with sufficient funds for appropriate maintenance and supervision. The Point Molate and Point Orient Piers would be improved and opened for general public use, with fishing and other water-related activities available at Point Molate Pier. A controlled access trail system would be developed along the western facing slopes of the Peninsula. Limiting public access to these areas would protect natural resources, ensure public safety and protect the security of the neighboring Chevron refinery. Protective measures (*e.g.*, fencing, gates) would be installed along Western Drive to prevent unwanted public access. Buffers or fences along the ridgeline would ensure the continued safety and security of the Chevron Refinery.

The following program details Alternative B:

- No structural improvements would be constructed.
- Terminal 4 would be discontinued as industrial use allowing for public recreation.
- Western Drive would become a scenic roadway with key vista points along the shoreline.
- Class I recreational trails along the railroad right-of-way would extend around Point San Pablo to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor and out to both Point Molate and Point Orient piers. A Class I recreational trail would be provided upslope from Point San Pablo to the ridge.
- Class II recreational trail would follow Western Drive, then go northeast over the ridge along the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- Controlled access trails would follow existing paths on the western facing slopes. Protective measures (*e.g.*, fencing, gates) would prevent unwanted public access.
- The privately-owned, access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would continue.
- Point Molate Beach Park would be improved to provide a safe public beach and picnic area.
- The Point Orient and Point Molate Piers would be improved and opened for public use.
- Point Molate Pier would be improved as a public fishing pier.
- The entry gate to Terminal 4 would be removed.
- The gate at the top of the ridge adjacent to the City-owned storage tanks would be removed.
- The existing Point Molate gate would be reinstated to limit public access to daylight hours.
- A gate at the Coast Guard radio towers would prohibit vehicular access. Measures to provide additional security (*e.g.*, fencing) would be explored.
- A gate at the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would limit public use to daylight hours and protect Yacht Harbor residents.

Figure B.4: Alternative B

Alternative C: Park-Related Uses with Commercial Development

Alternative C (Figure B.5) focuses on the maximum development of park-related facilities to include commercial and recreation-related development with interpretive amenities. Point Molate Navy Fuel Depot buildings, including the Winehaven complex, cottages and fire house would be renovated for public recreation and interpretation. A Discovery Center and associated improvements would support recreation use with overnight cabins, a meeting or conference facility, a restaurant, and small shops. The Discovery Center would be a hands-on, interactive museum to educate visitors and local residents about the San Pablo Peninsula and the San Francisco Bay with programs and exhibits about ecology, history, and geology. Interpretive panels would be placed at key vista points along the shoreline and in the hillside areas of Terminal 4. A commercial venture, such as a bait shop, at the base of the Point Molate Pier would supplement the public use and fishing activities on the pier. The existing structure at Point Molate Beach Park would accommodate a kayak and sailboat rental operation. Industrial use at Terminal 4 would be discontinued; park-related facilities would include Class I trails to access the ridge and an interpretive display at the historic whaling station. A realigned Western Drive would connect to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.

The following program details Alternative C:

- Industrial use at Terminal 4 would be discontinued allowing for public recreation.
- A Discovery Center and associated facilities would be developed using historic Point Molate buildings.
- Western Drive would be realigned as a scenic roadway with a Class II trail around Point San Pablo to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- Class I recreational trails would follow the existing railroad right-of-way, then meander upslope to connect to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor. The privately-owned, access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would be closed to vehicular traffic and converted to a Class I recreational trail.
- Hillside hiking trails would follow existing paths along the western facing slopes.
- An interpretive facility would be located at the site of the historic whaling station at the northern end of the Peninsula with interpretive panels at key vista points along the shoreline.
- Point Molate Beach Park would be improved to provide a safe public beach and picnic area with kayak and sailboat rental concessions.
- Point Molate and Point Orient Piers would be improved for public access and recreation, with a bait shop at the base of the Point Molate Pier.
- The entry gate to Terminal 4 and the gate at the top of the ridge adjacent to the City-owned storage tanks would be removed.
- The existing Point Molate gate would be reinstated to limit public access to daylight hours.
- A gate at the Coast Guard radio towers would prohibit vehicular access. Measures to provide additional security (*e.g.*, fencing) would be explored.
- A gate at the entrance to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would protect Yacht Harbor residents.

Figure B.5: Alternative C

Alternative D: Park-Related Uses Compatible with Commercial/Industrial Development

Alternative D (Figure B.6) would provide a fully developed recreational, commercial, and environmental program relying on the City of Richmond General Plan (1994) and the Point Molate Reuse Plan (1997). Terminal 4 would revert to industrial use, prohibiting public access to Point San Pablo. The City of Richmond would retain ownership of Point Molate and develop it according to the Point Molate Reuse Plan (1997).

Alternative D would include Class I and Class II trails along the shoreline and controlled access hiking trails on the hillsides. Public access would not continue through Terminal 4, due to industrial-related uses. A spur trail from the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would connect to an interpretive vista point overlooking the historic whaling station. Point Molate Pier would be improved for public access including development of docking and ferry boat landing facilities. Point Orient Pier would also be improved and made available for public access. Existing historic Point Molate buildings, including the Winehaven complex, cottages and firehouse, would be renovated for mixed use. An approximately 40-acre shoreline park would follow the entire length of the Point Molate waterfront, including the Point Molate Pier and the existing Point Molate Beach Park. The park would include traditional facilities such as playfields, picnic areas, and children's play equipment, as well as interpretive facilities and recreation-related commercial uses (*e.g.*, bait and tackle shop, waterfront café).

The following program details Alternative D:

- Point Molate would be redeveloped for mixed use according to the Reuse Plan (1997).
- Terminal 4 would continue with industrial uses and no public access.
- Passive (visual) open space would be provided on northern hillsides south of Terminal 4.
- A Shoreline Park would include "traditional" recreation facilities, interpretive opportunities, and recreation-related commercial uses. Point Molate Beach Park would provide a safe public beach, picnic area, interpretive center, and a kayak/sailboat rental facility.
- Western Drive would become a scenic roadway with key vista points along the shoreline.
- Class I recreational trails would follow the entire shoreline along the railroad right-of-way to the Terminal 4 entry gate and extend out to both Point Molate and Point Orient Piers.
- A Class II recreational trail would follow Western Drive, north over the ridge along the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- Hillside trails would follow existing paths along the western facing slopes.
- An interpretive facility at the historic whaling station would be accessed via a spur trail from the San Pablo Yacht Harbor. Interpretive panels would be placed at key vista points along the shoreline and in the hillside areas of Terminal 4.
- Point Molate and Point Orient Piers would be improved for public access.
- A gate at the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would limit public use to daylight hours and protect Yacht Harbor residents.
- A gate at the Coast Guard radio towers would prohibit vehicular access. Measures to provide additional security (*e.g.*, fencing) would be explored.

Figure B.5: Alternative D

Alternative E: Park-Related Uses Compatible with Proposed Casino Development Of Point Molate

Alternative E (Figure B.6) provides programming elements that would be compatible with the proposed Upstream Point Molate LLC (Upstream) casino development for Point Molate. The Upstream development would feature first class destination resort and gaming facilities, including entertainment and conference, hotel, and retail space, together with public-serving uses, park and open space (Land Disposition and Development Agreement, 2004). This alternative assumes a similar commercial development for Terminal 4. Alternative E accommodates these future projects, while pursuing the goals laid out in the City of Richmond General Plan (1994) and the Point Molate Reuse Plan (1997).

This alternative would include a Class I trail system along the shoreline within the existing railroad right-of-way, redevelopment of Point Molate Beach Park (open for public use), public access to Point Orient Pier, and public access to key vista points along the shoreline and in the hillside open space areas. As with Alternative C, Point Molate Beach Park would be improved to provide a clean and safe public beach and picnic area. The existing structure at the north end of the park would house an interpretive center, and kayak and sailboat rental. Industrial use would be discontinued at Terminal 4, opening it up for commercial/mixed use development. A Class I shoreline trail would follow the existing railroad right-of-way to provide public access to key vista points along the shoreline, an interpretive overlook of the historic whaling station, and the San Pablo Yacht Harbor. The existing privately-owned access road over the ridge to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would be retained. A Class II trail along the Western Drive alignment from I-580 and along the privately-owned access road would connect to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.

The following program details Alternative E:

- Point Molate would be redeveloped as a casino-resort complex consistent with the Development Agreement between Upstream and the City of Richmond. Public recreation use of the Point Molate Pier would be prohibited.
- Terminal 4 would be developed for commercial use similar to that proposed for Point Molate with public recreation confined to a Class I trail along the shoreline.
- Roadways and trails would provide public access to key vista points with interpretive panels at key vista points along the shoreline and in the hillside areas of Terminal 4.
- Class I recreational trails would follow the railroad right-of-way along the shoreline, around Point San Pablo and connect to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- A Class II recreational trail would follow the existing Western Drive alignment and the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor.
- Controlled access hiking trails would follow existing paths on the western facing slopes of Point Molate. Fencing and gates would prevent unwanted public access.
- Point Molate Beach Park would be improved to provide a safe public beach and picnic area.
- An interpretive center and kayak/sailboat rental concessions would be developed at Point Molate Beach Park.
- An interpretive facility (*e.g.*, panel, display) would be located at the site of the historic whaling station at the northern end of the Peninsula.

- Point Orient Pier would be improved for public access and recreation.

Figure B.6: Alternative E

- Entry gate to Terminal 4 would be removed.
- The existing Point Molate entrance gate would be removed.
- A gate at the privately-owned access road to the San Pablo Yacht Harbor would limit public use to daylight hours and protect Yacht Harbor residents.
- A gate at the Coast Guard radio towers would prohibit vehicular access. Measures to provide additional security (*e.g.*, fencing)