

MEMORANDUM

April 24, 2015

TO: MEMBERS, PORT COMMISSION
Hon. Leslie Katz, President
Hon. Willie Adams, Vice President
Hon. Kimberly Brandon
Hon. Mel Murphy
Hon. Doreen Woo Ho

FROM: Monique Moyer
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Informational Update on the Expansion of the Downtown Ferry Terminal

DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION: No Action Required

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion project (Project) is being developed by Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) to expand and improve facilities at the existing ferry terminal in downtown San Francisco. As depicted in the attached site plan, the Project will include construction of two new ferry gates, landside pedestrian circulation improvements, installation of amenities such as weather-protected areas for queuing, and covering of the current "lagoon" area south of the Ferry Building for future use as a staging area for evacuees in the event of a major emergency. The new gates and amenities will support projects currently under development to provide new ferry service to Richmond, Berkeley, Treasure Island, and other locations, as well as efforts to enhance existing services. Today's presentation provides an informational update on the Project.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Project is to support and expand ferry service on San Francisco Bay in accordance with city and regional policies to encourage transit use. The Project also will address deficiencies in the transportation network that impede ferry operations and ferry patron access and circulation at the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal, and will enhance emergency response capabilities.

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In October 2014, the WETA Board approved the Final EIR for the Project, representing the completion of the environmental review process. Subsequently, the WETA Board approved contract amendments with its environmental and design consultant teams to advance final permitting and design work for the first project phase, consisting of improvements in the South Basin of the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal. The South Basin improvements will include construction of new terminals as well as landside pedestrian circulation improvements, installation of amenities such as weather-protected areas for queuing, and covering of the current “lagoon” area south of the Ferry Building to accommodate future system expansion and provide an evacuation staging area in case of an emergency such as an earthquake.

DISCUSSION

The proposed expansion of the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal builds on previous planning efforts and projects constructed by the Port. In the 1990s, the Port initiated a comprehensive land use planning process for the Ferry Building area that resulted in significant improvements to the Ferry Building and the Embarcadero, as well implementation of the Downtown Ferry Terminal project. The first phase of the Downtown Ferry Terminal project was completed by the Port in 2003, and resulted in construction of Gates B located in the North Basin and Gate E located in the South Basin.

The Project includes the construction of two new terminals in the South Basin - Gates F and G - and the reconstruction of the existing terminal at Gate E. To build the proposed improvements requires the demolition of Pier 2. The Agriculture Building is not a part of the project, but consideration is given to ensure that the opportunity to preserve and adaptively reuse the building in the future not only is maintained but enhanced by improving the areas immediately adjacent to the building.

Sea Level Rise

For the 50-year life span of the ferry terminal facility, approximately through year 2070, the high end of the mean projected sea level rise is estimated to be approximately 38 inches, based upon the best available science developed by the National Research Council Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California. WETA’s design concept is to build all of the new facilities at a higher elevation than the existing gates. Currently, Gate E is at an elevation of around 11.8 feet above mean lower low water (MLLW). In order to meet the projected 50-year sea level rise, WETA’s concept is to build all of the new facilities and to rebuild Gate E at 14.5 feet above MLLW.

Funding

The Project is fully funded by WETA through a combination of State and Federal sources. The current construction budget is approximately \$70 million and total Project budget including soft costs is approximately \$80 million.

Schedule

As noted above, environmental review was completed in the latter part of 2014 and the Project recently entered into a 12-18 month final design and permitting phase. Construction of the Project currently is scheduled to begin in the first half of 2016 and

take 12-18 months to complete. According to this schedule, the Port and WETA expect to open the new facilities and welcome ferry passengers as early as Spring of 2017.

Stakeholder Outreach and Coordination with the Public and Regulatory Agencies

Prior to the initiation of the environmental review process, Port and WETA staff conducted a series of stakeholder interviews in late 2010 to inform interested parties about the project. Individual meetings were held with a wide variety of stakeholders in the project area, including nearby businesses, management and tenants of the Ferry Building, regulatory agencies, transit agencies, vessel crews and operators, and advocacy groups representing pedestrian, transit, bicycle, and historic preservation interests. Input obtained from each of the stakeholder groups was documented and considered in the development of the preliminary project design.

Federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction over resources that could be affected by the project, or that have technical expertise on an issue relevant to the project, were formally invited to participate in the environmental review process. The agencies that participated include: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California State Lands Commission, BCDC, Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). An agency coordination meeting was held early in the environmental review process to gather input on each agency's areas of expertise and concern. In addition, Port and WETA staff worked closely with the San Francisco Planning Department and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) on the transportation and circulation analysis. These agencies were also provided with briefings and preliminary reviews at various development stages of the Draft and Final EIS/EIR.

The Port and WETA have continued outreach efforts to involve stakeholders throughout development of the project. Staff has presented updates on the project to several organizations, including the Port's Northeastern Waterfront Advisory Group (NEWAG), Maritime Commerce Advisory Committee (MCAC) and Waterfront Design Advisory Committee (WDAC), the San Francisco Historical Preservation Commission and the BCDC Design Review Board. Additionally, regular project updates have been posted to both the Port's website and the WETA website.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Port and WETA staff are finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will serve as a conceptual framework for negotiations that will take place over the next 9-12 months. Those negotiations will culminate in a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) and a new lease or license agreement, both of which will need to be reviewed and approved by the Port Commission and the WETA Board prior to initiating construction of the Project. Over the course of the same 9-12 month time frame, Port staff will continue to work in close coordination with WETA staff, regulatory agencies, and key stakeholders through the final design and permitting phase of the Project.

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For: Byron Rhett, Deputy Director
Planning and Development

Attachments

A – Existing Conditions

B – Demolition and Construction Areas

C – Preliminary Layout and Grading Plan

Attachment 1A: Existing Conditions

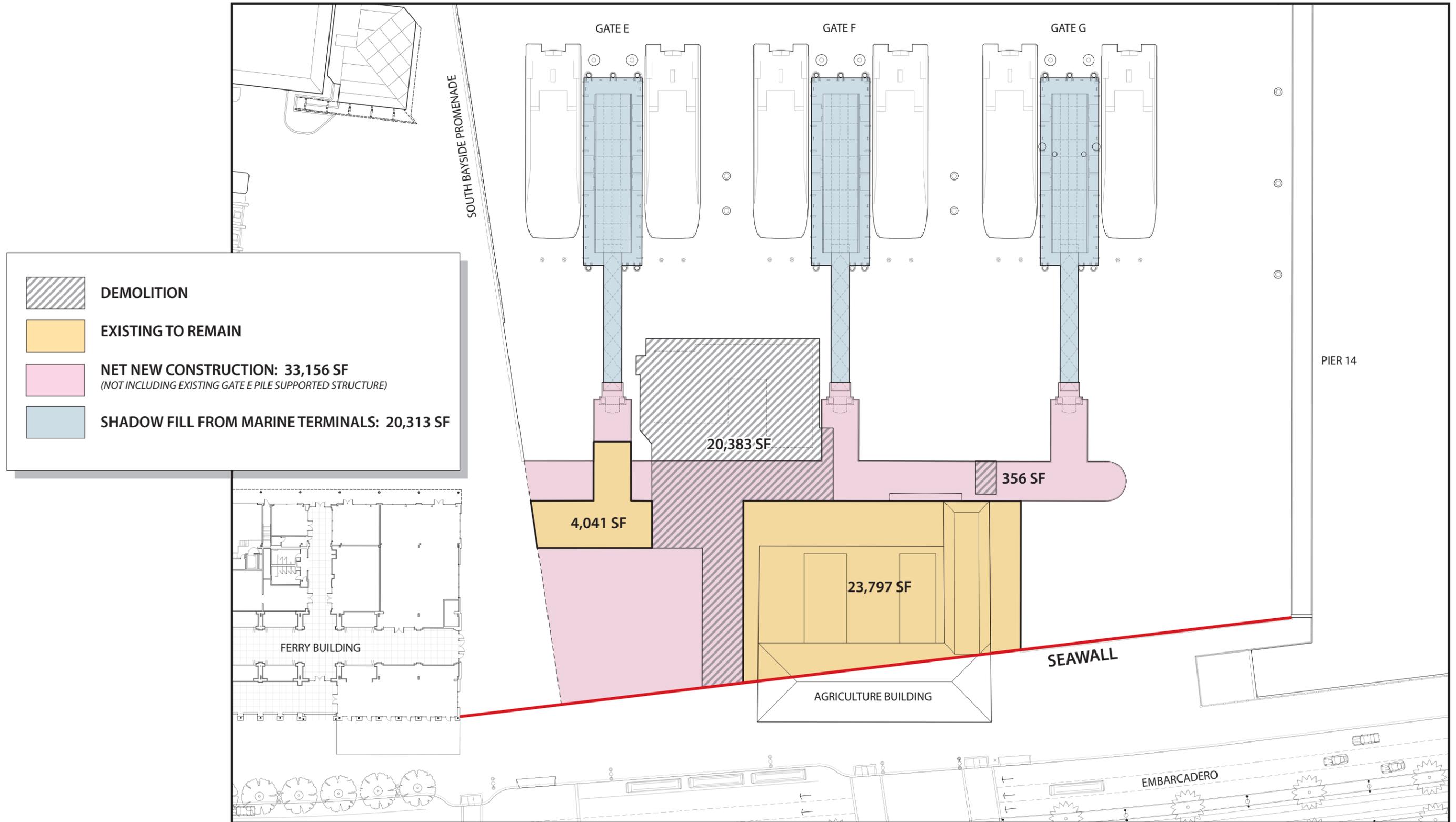


EXISTING CONDITIONS

SOUTH BASIN FERRY TERMINAL DESIGN PROJECT

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Attachment 1B: Demolition and Construction Areas



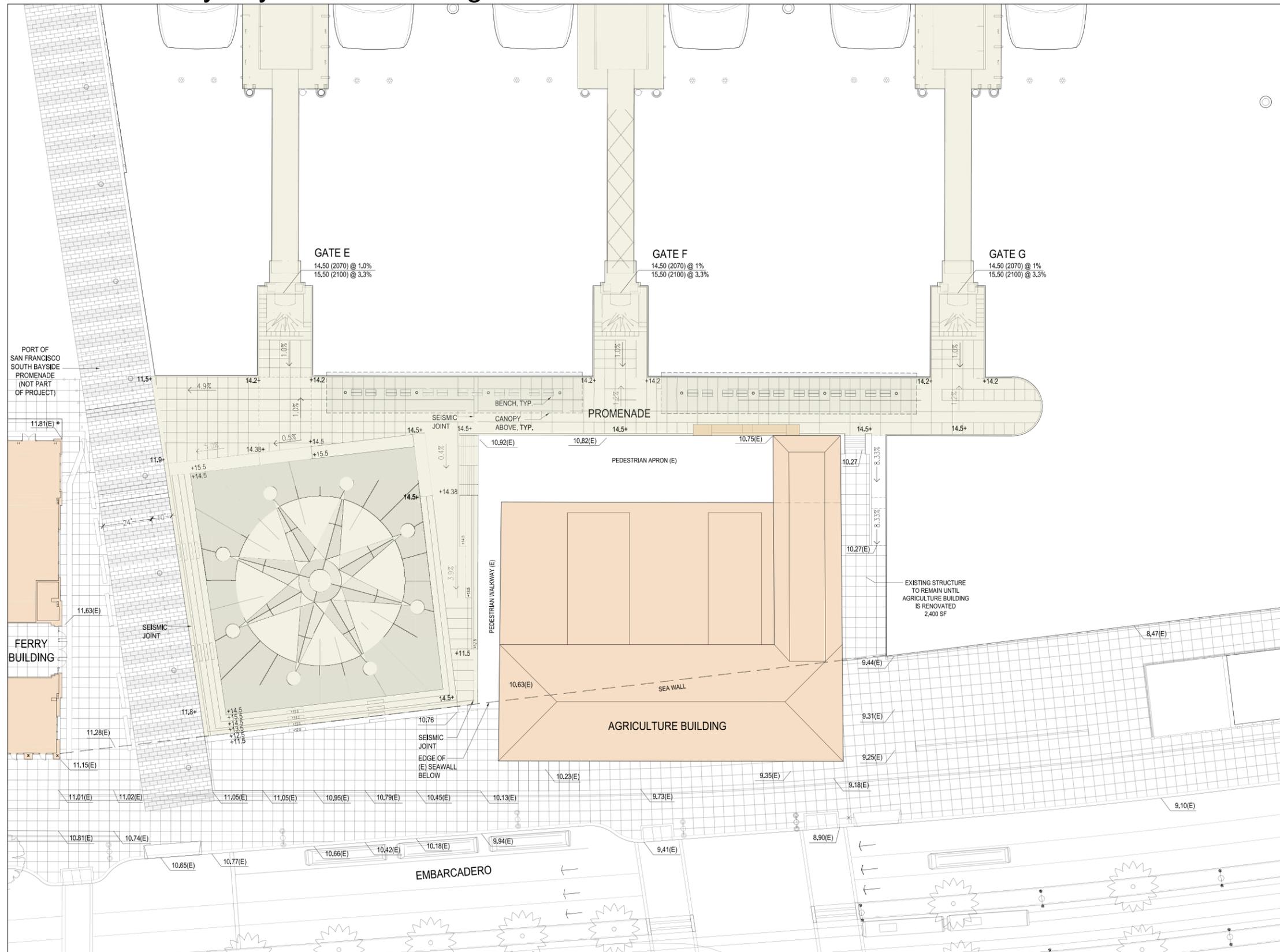
DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION AREAS

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Attachment 1C: Preliminary Layout and Grading Plan



PRELIMINARY LAYOUT AND GRADING PLAN