Ferry Building Area

Character of the Area:
The Ferry Building area extends from the Pier 5 bulkhead building to the site of the future Rincon Park near Pier 22½. The focal point of this area and, indeed, the centerpiece of the waterfront is the historic Ferry Building. Piers 1 and 3 located north of the Ferry Building, are used for ferry and excursion boat support operations and storage, and interim parking. Maritime and general offices and a deli are housed in the historic bulkhead buildings which front these piers along The Embarcadero. Seawall Lot 351, across The Embarcadero from Pier 1, is currently used for parking. South of the Ferry Building, Pier 22½ is the site of the historic Fire Engine Station No. 9 and the Phoenix and Guardian fireboats.

The urban design character of this area derives from the historic Ferry, Agriculture and bulkhead buildings which line The Embarcadero. Together, these buildings provide a civic architectural character and mark the center of the waterfront and the beginning of Market Street. This area also contains some of the waterfront’s most expansive and celebrated

Urban Design Features

- The Ferry Building is the civic focal point of the waterfront.
- Rincon Park will offer expansive Bay and Bridge views.
- Streets connect the waterfront to the City and provide views of water or historic buildings.
- Major open spaces are the proposed Ferry Building Plaza, Ferry Terminal and coordinated open space improvements in and near Justin Herman Plaza, and Rincon Park.
- The Rincon Point Open Water Basin is between the Downtown Ferry Terminal breakwater and the Pier 22 1/2 Fire Boat House, and the Broadway Open Water Basin is between Piers 3 and 9.

Ferry Building Area Highlights Map
views and opens spaces, including the 1800 foot long Embarcadero Promenade walkway south of the Agriculture Building, Justin Herman Plaza, and the Ferry Plaza on the waterside of The Embarcadero. These open spaces are used by office workers on a daily basis, by residents of the adjacent Golden Gateway, Telegraph Hill and South Beach neighborhoods, and by visitors for a variety of celebrations and ceremonies. From these open spaces, the public enjoys expansive views of the Bay and the Bay Bridge. The view of the Ferry Building clock can be seen from the top of Market Street, marking the intersection of Market and The Embarcadero, and the historic entry point to the City.

**Waterfront Land Use Plan**

**Objectives:**
With the removal of the Embarcadero Freeway, the Ferry Building and its environs are re-emerging as a site of proud civic importance to the City. One of the highest priorities of the Waterfront Plan is restoring the Ferry Building to its historic role as a bustling transportation hub and elegant centerpiece of the San Francisco waterfront. Downtown workers and visitors will flock to the area’s new public market, conference facilities, retail establishments and other public-oriented activities. On the waterside, construction of the Downtown Ferry Terminal project provide for expanding regional ferry service. The Embarcadero roadway has been replaced with a new grand boulevard and plaza in front of the Ferry Building. The City Recreation and Park Department and Redevelopment Agency plan to improve Justin Herman Park and City Lots 202 and 203 north of the Embarcadero Center. The proposed Rincon Park includes a planned single story restaurant south of the Folsom Street view corridor.
Summary of Design & Access Objectives:
The objectives for this area call for construction of the Ferry Building Plaza on the City side of the Ferry Building, construction of Rincon Park, completion of a continuous accessible waterfront edge from Pier 22¼ through the south edge of Pier 1 (except where precluded by maritime operations), maintaining the Rincon Point Open Water Basin for its expansive Bay views, public access atop the Ferry Terminal breakwater, and improvements to activate the edge of the Ferry and Ferry Building Plazas. The design of Ferry Building open spaces should reflect the civic character of the area which already is established by the Ferry, Agriculture, and bulkhead buildings and provide connections to open water areas.

In addition, the objectives include preservation and reuse of historic resources. The Ferry Building, Agriculture Building, Pier 1-5 buildings, and Pier 22½ Fire Boat House will be preserved consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

*Embarcadero Promenade south of the Agriculture Building*

*Whale Boat team rowing near the Ferry Building*
Chapter 4

Design Criteria

FERRY BUILDING, FERRY BUILDING
PLAZA & AGRICULTURE BUILDING

At the foot of Market Street, the landmark Ferry Building is considered the center of the San Francisco waterfront. The Ferry Building and Agriculture Building contain approximately 260,000 and 30,000 square feet of gross floor area respectively, and are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A new plaza is proposed in front of the Ferry Building as part of The Embarcadero Roadway improvements.

**Site**

**MASSING:** The massing of any new structures should not detract from the character of the Ferry Building and its dominance in the area.

**OPEN SPACE:** Preserve the Ferry Building Plaza on the City side of the Ferry Building as a civic gathering area and forecourt to the Ferry Building.

**Orientation--Access Through:** Improve connections to the Bay by providing ground-floor pedestrian access through the Ferry Building.

**Orientation--Waterside of Ferry Building:** Provide continuous pedestrian public access on the waterside of the buildings while accommodating ferry and maritime operations. Design facilities for ferry and excursion operations to avoid conflict between queing and public access areas.

**Views:** Preserve views of the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building from Market and Mission Streets, and expand Bay views by removing portions of Piers 1/2 and 2.

**Historic Preservation:** Preserve, rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the Ferry Building, Agriculture Building, and Piers 1-5 consistent with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

**Orientat**

**Adjacent Spaces:** Interior uses may spill-out onto and activate the surrounding open spaces.

**Access Through:**

**Waterside of Ferry Building:** Provide continuous pedestrian public access on the waterside of the buildings while accommodating ferry and maritime operations. Design facilities for ferry and excursion operations to avoid conflict between queing and public access areas.

**Views:** Preserve views of the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building from Market and Mission Streets, and expand Bay views by removing portions of Piers 1/2 and 2.

**Historic Preservation:** Preserve, rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the Ferry Building, Agriculture Building, and Piers 1-5 consistent with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

**Site**

**Massing:** The massing of any new structures should not detract from the character of the Ferry Building and its dominance in the area.

**Open Space:** Preserve the Ferry Building Plaza on the City side of the Ferry Building as a civic gathering area and forecourt to the Ferry Building.

**Orientation--Access Through:** Improve connections to the Bay by providing ground-floor pedestrian access through the Ferry Building.

**Orientation--Waterside of Ferry Building:** Provide continuous pedestrian public access on the waterside of the buildings while accommodating ferry and maritime operations. Design facilities for ferry and excursion operations to avoid conflict between queing and public access areas.

**Views:** Preserve views of the Ferry Building and Agriculture Building from Market and Mission Streets, and expand Bay views by removing portions of Piers 1/2 and 2.

**Historic Preservation:** Preserve, rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the Ferry Building, Agriculture Building, and Piers 1-5 consistent with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
**Design Criteria**

**FERRY PLAZA**
(Including areas next to and behind the Ferry and Agriculture Buildings and Pier 1/2)

The Ferry Plaza and other open spaces areas around the Ferry Building provide wonderful opportunities to view ongoing ferry operations and the Bay.

**Site**

**MASSING:** New Ferry Terminal structures should not detract from the character of the Ferry Building and its dominance in the area.

**OPEN WATER -- Ends of Ferry Building:** Limit new structures to the minimum necessary to serve ferry and excursion patrons, to maintain views from The Embarcadero to the Bay. Remove that portion of Piers 1/2 not required for a vessel berthing facility and public access, and the northern portion of Pier 2, and locate water and boating uses as close to the Promenade as feasible in the Pier 1/2 area.

**Views -- Ends of Ferry Building:** Remove Pier 1/2 parking and relocate the Pier 2 restaurant structure to enhance views of the Bay and boating activity from The Embarcadero.

**PIER SHAPE:** Limit changes to pier shape, if any, to those which allow waterside public access improvements or accommodate ferry and maritime operations.

**Orientation**

**ORIENTATION:** Activate the Ferry Plaza by allowing surrounding commercial and other uses to spill out onto the Plaza provided they are compatible with ferry operations and the Plaza's function as a public space.

**EDGE -- Waterside of the Ferry Building:** Provide public access on the waterside of the Ferry Building (appropriately scaled to the Building) and on breakwaters throughout the Ferry Terminal area while also providing for ferry and excursion boat queuing.

**Architectural Details**

**CHARACTER -- New Development:** The architectural character of any new development should be compatible with the scale, proportions, materials, colors and rhythm of openings of adjacent historic structures.

**CHARACTER -- Ferry Plaza:** Use pavement surfacing to reinforce pedestrian uses as the dominant use, although areas may be shared with vehicle circulation.

**PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS:** New railings and urban furniture should reflect the civic character of the Ferry Building.

**Service**

**TRASH ENCLOSURES:** Locate trash facilities within structures.
**Design Criteria**

**RINCON PARK AND PROMENADE**

**Orientation**

**ORIENTATION -- Restaurants:** Orient views from the restaurants north toward the Park and the Bay.

**EDGE -- Promenade:** To visually emphasize the length of the waterfront edge, include a regularly spaced series of architectural treatments, e.g. railing posts, light fixtures, or other street or park furnishings.

**Architectural Details**

**CHARACTER -- Rincon Park:** Minimize landscaping and structures (other than the restaurant) that would block views of the waterfront from The Embarcadero.

**CHARACTER -- Restaurants:** The restaurant buildings should be architecturally unique, provide a strong identity for the Park, and complement the Pier 22½ Fireboat Station.

**Service**

**SERVICE -- Restaurants:** Provide service entry from an on-street loading zone or a recessed on-street loading bay. Use fences or other lockable enclosures to screen trash facilities from public view.

Rincon Park, a planned 2.7 acre landscaped open space, and the 1800 foot long pedestrian promenade south of the Agriculture Building, will provide expansive views of the Bay, Bay Bridge and City skyline. Rincon Park will include two, 2-story restaurants, the combined total building footprint of which would not exceed 12,000 square feet. The Rincon Point Open Water Basin with its panoramic Bay vistas should be maintained consistent with BCDC SAP Open Water Basin policies.

**SITE**

**SITE COVERAGE:** To maximize views of the Bay, locate the restaurants south of the Folsom Street view corridor.

**SITE COVERAGE -- Street Corridors:** Preserve Bay views by keeping the Folsom and Howard Street view corridors free of floor-area structures.

**HEIGHT:** Allow architectural embellishments on the restaurant buildings to exceed the 17’ height limit. Note: The referenced 17’ is derived from the Port/Redevelopment Agency Agreement to Lease, and is measured from the “finished grade of the Park”.

[Diagram of Rincon Park and Promenade layout with labels for Future Restaurant, Speare Street, Folsom Street, HOWARD ST, Spear ST, STEL, AGRICULTURE BUILDING, PROMENADE, Rincon Point Open Water Basin, and other landmarks.]
Design Criteria

PIERS 1-3 & PIER 1-5 BULKHEAD SITES

Piers 1 and 3 are located between the Ferry Building and the Pier 7 public access pier. Bulkhead structures 1, 1 1/2, 3, and 5 will be preserved to maintain the historic character of this area.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION: Preserve, rehabilitate and adaptively reuse pier bulkhead buildings 1-5, consistent with The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

OPEN SPACE -- South Edge of Pier 1: If compatible with maritime operations, new development should provide public access along the south edge of Pier 1 which connects with the Embarcadero Promenade.

Site -- Continued

PIER SHAPE: Maintain Pier 7 within the Broadway Open Water Basin to the north as the dominant pier form.

MASSING -- Views Through: New development should include public access and/or views through or between bulkheads, where compatible with historic preservation and view objectives of this Element.

HEIGHT: At least 75% of the buildings on the pier should not exceed the height of adjacent bulkheads.

VIEWS: Maintain views of the Ferry Building and bulkhead buildings from Clay and Washington Streets. Pier buildings taller than the bulkheads should not be visible above the bulkhead cornice from the Embarcadero sidewalk immediately to the west.
Design Criteria (Continued)

PIERS 1-3 & PIER 1-5 BULKHEAD BUILDINGS

Orientation

ENTRY -- Central Arch: Utilize arched entry for access to major pier or bulkhead uses.

ENTRY -- Bulkhead Sites: To activate marginal wharf areas, consider opening the sides of Pier 5 bulkhead building consistent with standards developed as part of the Port’s historic preservation program.

CHARACTER -- Bulkhead Waterside: Improvements and openings on the waterside of the bulkhead buildings should have simple and regular forms, use materials compatible with pier improvements, and not detract from the character defining elements of historic building.

TRANSPARENCY: Maximize transparency of pier edges facing the Ferry Terminal and Pier 7 consistent with the architectural character of the pier shed.

COLOR: Use primarily light colors for bulkhead structures.

CHARACTER -- Piers 1-3 & Piers 1-5 Bulkhead Buildings:

Utilize arched entry for access to major pier or bulkhead uses.

To activate marginal wharf areas, consider opening the sides of Pier 5 bulkhead building consistent with standards developed as part of the Port’s historic preservation program.

CHARACTER: Any new buildings in the area should incorporate design, materials, and colors which emphasize the dominance and civic character of the Ferry Building, while also complementing new uses.

CHARACTER -- New Development: Design new developments behind the Pier 3 bulkhead so as not to compete visually with historic bulkhead buildings. Locate strong architectural forms at an appropriate distance from historic bulkheads.

CHARACTER -- Bulkhead Waterside: Improvements and openings on the waterside of the bulkhead buildings should have simple and regular forms, use materials compatible with pier improvements, and not detract from the character defining elements of historic building.

TRANSPARENCY: Maximize transparency of pier edges facing the Ferry Terminal and Pier 7 consistent with the architectural character of the pier shed.

COLOR: Use primarily light colors for bulkhead structures.
Design Criteria

SEAWALL LOT 347S

Site

MASSING & HEIGHT: Allow structures up to 65 feet high to create an edge along Rincon Park and to continue the form and massing of development along The Embarcadero between Mission and Howard streets.

SITE COVERAGE: Allow maximum site coverage.

VIEWS: Maintain views of the Bay from Howard Street.

Orientation

ORIENTATION: Orient the building to both The Embarcadero and Steuart Street. Provide entrances to commercial uses from both streets if feasible.

Architectural Details

TRANSPARENCY: Avoid blank ground floor walls by providing views into the ground floor on all three street frontages.

CHARACTER: Use recessed openings, lower and upper cornices, and clear expression of floor levels to continue the form, character, and quality of development along The Embarcadero between Mission and Howard Streets.

Service

SERVICE: Locate service and parking access on Steuart or Howard street.

Seawall Lot 347S is an approximately 5,000 square foot seawall lot across from the future Rincon Park. New development on this seawall lot should reflect the character of the buildings immediately to the north and provide an edge to Rincon Park.
Seawall Lot 351 is an approximately 15,000 square foot seawall lot located north of Justin Herman Plaza and across The Embarcadero from the bulkhead buildings on Piers 1 and 3. A new building on this seawall lot should reflect the strong and bold forms of The Embarcadero.

**Design Criteria**

**SEAWALL LOT 351**

**Orientation:** Primary uses and pedestrian entrances should face The Embarcadero.

**Architectural Details**

**TRANSPARENCY:** Avoid blank ground floor walls along The Embarcadero by providing views into the ground floor of buildings.

**EMBARCADERO CHARACTER:** Reinforce the large scale of The Embarcadero by using bold forms, deep recessed building openings, and strong detailing on building facades facing The Embarcadero.

**Site**

**MASSING:** To define the north edge of adjacent open space, new development should acknowledge the massing and street enclosure relationship with the bulkhead buildings across The Embarcadero (e.g. bold forms of similar height, constructed to the Embarcadero edge).

**SITE COVERAGE:** Allow maximum lot coverage.

**Service**

**SERVICE:** Avoid service and parking access from The Embarcadero.