

Port of San Francisco

Alcatraz Embarkation Project



A Port of San Francisco and National Park Service collaboration to improve visitor experience and increase resources for both organizations. The Project will activate the Pier 31 bulkhead with a café and public restrooms, transform the Pier 33 bulkhead into a visitor-contact station, improve the visitor experience on the open marginal wharf where visitors begin their ferry service to Alcatraz and improve the efficiency of the ferry operations. Improvements to the Site will be made through a lease with a new tenant, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and through a lease with a new ferry concessioner, to be selected by NPS through its competitive-bid process.



Before



After



interpretive stories



OVERVIEW

More than 1.7 million people each year travel through the Port's Pier 31 ½ marginal wharf en route to Alcatraz Island. To improve visitor experience, the Port of San Francisco and the National Park Service have negotiated the terms and conditions of an agreement which:

- (1) **Fixes the embarkation point for Alcatraz visitors at Pier 31 ½ for 30 to 50 years.** Whereas response to previous Alcatraz ferry contracts were limited to ferry operators with leaseholds on Port property, this agreement broadens the pool of potential respondents significantly by bundling the contract and the lease for the winning bidder.
- (2) **Significantly improves the visitor embarkation point.** Because the embarkation point is stable at Pier 31½ for the long-term, the Port and NPS have agreed on a significant investment to improve site functioning and visitor experience at Pier 31 1/2.

The desired outcomes of the long-term Alcatraz Embarkation Project include:

- **Long-term Embarkation site** provides greater certainty for visitors and surrounding businesses
- **Increased competition for the ferry concession contract**, as bidders will not be required to be existing Port tenants as they were in previous solicitations.
- **Significant new investment in the Site**, by both the Port and the future ferry concessioner, which the Park Service is able to recommend due to the long-term nature of the GA.
- **A unified, high quality experience for visitors**, through the inclusion of the Conservancy as a tenant; the Conservancy is already responsible for interpretation on Alcatraz Island through agreements with the Park Service.
- **Collaborative governance structure** between the Port and Park Service in managing the NPS-selected concessioner /tenant and the Conservancy's visitor services and interpretive retail operations.

Project Facts

- 43,000 sq.ft. outdoor space improved and converted to pedestrian only
- 25,000 sq.ft. of historic resource space improved
- \$33 million of private investment in Port property
- Department of Labor issued minimum wages for 15-year Alcatraz ferry contract with input from San Francisco's local ferry operators

NPS and the Port began negotiations, environmental review, and site design and concept in 2012. After nearly 6 years of planning, NPS issued the Alcatraz prospectus, the Planning Commission affirmed the environmental review of the Project, and the Port Commission has held three public hearings on project approvals. Approvals still required include Port Commission and Board of Supervisors on CEQA and transaction documents; Congressional action on the contractor selection, and permitting BCDC and other resource agencies.

