

SOUTH BEACH



Fisherman's Wharf | Northeast Waterfront | **South Beach** | Mission Bay | Southern Waterfront

South Beach

Rincon Park to the Ballpark

Urban Design Features

- » Major Parks and Open Spaces
 - Rincon Park
 - Brannan Street Wharf
 - South Beach Park
 - Ballpark PortWalk along China Basin Park
- » Major focal points
 - Bay Bridge views
 - Ballpark
- » Maritime Historic Character
 - Pier 22½ Fireboats and Firehouse
 - Historic finger piers of the Embarcadero Historic District in South Beach



Significant public investments have been made along the South Beach waterfront. Together with the opening of the San Francisco Giants ballpark, these investments have completed the conversion of this former heavy industrial maritime area to a lively and welcoming urban waterfront neighborhood. Derelict piers have been removed to create a connected network of waterfront parks and open spaces along The Embarcadero, from Rincon Park to the gateway of the Blue Greenway open space network south of China Basin Channel. South Beach Harbor and Park provide a community center for the South Beach neighborhood, as well as a major resource for recreational boating, including non-motorized craft and other water recreation that supports the Bay Area Water Trail.

However, deteriorated pier conditions have created challenges for developing and improving South Beach pier facilities, including Piers 24½, 26, 28, 38, and 40 in the Embarcadero Historic District and non-historic Piers 30-32. This Waterfront Plan promotes Embarcadero Historic District policies that are intended to support financially feasible repair and rehabilitation of the Port's historic pier facilities. Piers 30-32 is ideally located to provide a destination development that could complement the Historic District and preserve the valuable deep-water berth at this facility. However, the extraordinary cost of seismically reinforcing Piers 30-32, even in a development that includes Seawall Lot 330, has and will continue to present many funding and trade-off issues. These issues will require continued public review and Port Commission direction to determine what types of investment and/or development partner opportunities should be pursued for these large properties.



1. Preserve and improve existing maritime uses and provide focal points for public enjoyment of maritime and water-dependent activities in South Beach.

Under the Rincon Point-South Beach Redevelopment Plan, development of South Beach Harbor and Marina initiated the conversion of this former heavy maritime industrial area to a lively mixed-use neighborhood. The harbor provides 700 recreational boat berths, a water taxi dock, and transient berths for visiting recreational vessels. South Beach Harbor has become a Port and neighborhood resource for recreational boats and services, (e.g. harbormaster office, sailing and community facilities) and an important center for non-motorized water recreation along the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail. In 2019, harbor management responsibilities were transferred to the Port. The Port will continue to maintain and improve these water recreation facilities as part of larger efforts to repair and rehabilitate two Embarcadero Historic District pier resources, Piers 38 and 40.

At the north end of the South Beach waterfront, the San Francisco Fire Department and City will develop a new fireboat station at Pier 22½, adjacent to Rincon Park. This facility, a critical element of City and Bay Area disaster response plans, will support modern equipment and emergency response operations necessary to serve not only San Francisco but the entire region. The new fireboat station will be constructed on a floating barge designed to adapt to rising tides and to respect the setting of the



historic Fire Station 35, a designated City landmark and a contributing resource in the Embarcadero Historic District. The fireboats will be a maritime focal point at the base of the Bay Bridge. As the fireboat station barge rises and falls with the tides, this facility will also provide ongoing education about waterfront adaptation needs and opportunities.

The South Beach waterfront includes a valuable deep-water berth along the eastern apron of Piers 30-32. The berth is valuable because it is the only location between the Ferry Building and China Basin that can accommodate large passenger cruise, military and commercial vessels, and because the strong Bay tides naturally maintain deep water at this location without costly dredging requirements. Piers 30-32 maintains a strong maritime presence, hosting many different types of visiting historic, ceremonial, military, and research vessels, as well as the naval ships showcased here each year during Fleet Week. The Port has a deep interest in maintaining this important maritime resource. However, it is clear that significant investment is needed to ensure that the berth remains operational, due to the deteriorating condition of Piers 30-32. Any such investment will likely require coordination with a larger strategy to improve and intensify use at Piers 30-32 (see Objective 4).



Photos: South Beach Harbor (left) and Fireboat spray (right)



2. Maintain and activate an integrated series of parks and public access improvements that extend through South Beach, and provide a unifying pedestrian connection to Mission Bay at China Basin Channel.

Significant public investments have been made to remove derelict fill and build a connected series of waterfront parks and open spaces through South Beach. This work started with the development of Rincon Park and South Beach Park by the former San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. As part of a coordinated effort with the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and the community, the Port removed Piers 24½, 34, and 36 and developed Brannan Street Wharf Park. Expansive views of the Bay and Bay Bridge from Rincon Park and Brannan Street Wharf are preserved in designated Open Water locations, as shown in the subarea map. In these Open Water locations, Bay fill is restricted as designated in BCDC's Special Area Plan. Rincon Park is also an important resource for preserving Bay views from upland city streets.



Brannan Street Wharf

These public parks, together with The Embarcadero Promenade, create a welcoming shared public space for the many pedestrians traveling along the waterfront. Often, however, these parks, particularly Brannan Street Wharf, are not heavily used. The public has called for Port parks to offer more active recreational play areas, events, and amenities, including food and public restrooms, to attract more people who will enjoy these areas and bring them to life. The Port will engage its stakeholders in an effort to identify options for improving activities and use of its public spaces. This effort will include evaluating partnering opportunities for park activation pilot projects, new strategies to consider in leases and developments on adjacent properties, and ways to provide complementary entertainment and attractions to enliven and increase public use of waterfront open spaces.

The development of the San Francisco Giants ballpark included a package of public access improvements, including a PortWalk that connects the South Beach Marina and Harbormaster facility to and along China Basin Channel to Lefty O'Doul Bridge. With the creation of the Blue Greenway and establishment of China Basin Park as part of the Mission Rock project, the pieces are now in place to provide a gracious public access connection across China Basin Channel. San Francisco Public Works is managing the seismic retrofit of the Third Street "Lefty O'Doul" Bridge. This project includes lane modifications to provide more space for pedestrian and bicycle movement over the bridge.



3. Promote activities and public access in South Beach pier projects within the Embarcadero Historic District.

In contrast to the open space and public access investments and improvements realized in South Beach, developing and improving pier facilities has been a challenge. Piers 24½, 26, 28, 38, and 40 are all contributing resources within the Embarcadero Historic District. They are the earliest surviving pier facilities in the district, and their condition and repair needs make it difficult for pier rehabilitation projects to meet financial feasibility requirements. The Port will dedicate efforts to create opportunities to repair and rehabilitate these historic properties, to maintain productive use and businesses that activate and enhance public access along The Embarcadero Promenade.

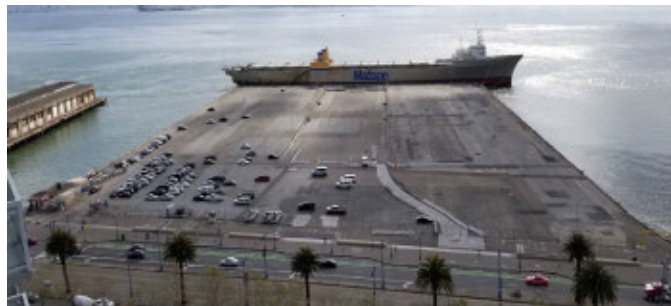


Piers 38 and 40 also are particularly desirable for investment because they adjoin Brannan Street Wharf and South Beach Harbor and Park. These park and recreation facilities may enhance the development value of the piers; by the same token, development uses may provide synergies that activate and increase the recreational value of the parks and boost the return on the public funds invested in their development. Pier 40 was designated as a development site in the Rincon Point-South Beach Redevelopment Plan, but development plans did not come to fruition because of conflicts with public trust and community objectives. Embarcadero Historic District policies in Chapter 2B, which were developed through the Waterfront Plan Update process with the participation and support of State Lands Commission staff, are intended to provide financially feasible strategies to repair or rehabilitate these historic facilities. Only a few historic pier facilities remain in South Beach. The Port will focus on ways to preserve and improve these properties, to maintain the overall integrity of the Embarcadero Historic District.



4. Create opportunity for the design of new development in South Beach to create a new architectural identity while respecting the Embarcadero Historic District.

There are only four undeveloped Port properties in the South Beach waterfront. The two largest, Piers 30-32 (13 acres) and Seawall Lot (SWL) 330 (2.5 acres), are located in the center of the South Beach waterfront along The Embarcadero, south of the Bay Bridge. The stunning location makes these signature properties well suited for development that includes entertainment and public-oriented uses. While Piers 30-32 and SWL 330 are outside of the Embarcadero Historic, development of these sites will be reviewed for consistency with Secretary of the Interior Standards to ensure that the design of the adjacent new development is compatible with the historic district. The Port has a continuing interest in maintaining the deep-water berth at Piers 30-32 (see Objective 1). Because of its large size, Piers 30-32 offers a rare development opportunity along the waterfront while respecting the character and integrity of the Embarcadero Historic District. A development design for Seawall Lot 330 must complement the neighborhood setting and contribute to the public realm on the west side of The Embarcadero.



Pier 30-32

As documented in prior [Port reports](#), however, substructure and seismic improvement costs at Piers 30-32 are extraordinarily high. Past project proposals would have required the Port to subsidize these costs with rent from the pier, the value of SWL 330, and tax increment from both sites. The deteriorated condition of Piers 30-32 will diminish its productive use and revenue generation, and the cost of improving or demolishing the pier far exceeds Port resources. These considerations compel the Port to define a long-term strategy. The Port Commission intends to consider a competitive solicitation for Piers 30-32 and SWL 330 to determine market-based interest in these properties. If the competitive solicitation process does not produce a successful development response or project, the Port Commission will need to reevaluate options for the management of Piers 30-32 and SWL 330, including the continuation of short-term interim lease and special event uses.

South Beach has two other vacant development sites: SWL 347S and SWL 328, under the Bay Bridge. These properties, like SWL 330, were included in prior state legislation that lifted trust use restrictions to allow housing, office, or other non-trust uses to be developed, if approved by the Port Commission. Any development will be based on fair market value to generate revenues to invest in Port capital improvements on the waterfront, and will be subject to policies in Chapter 2B (for seawall lots), Chapter 2D (urban design), and Chapter 2E (financial considerations)



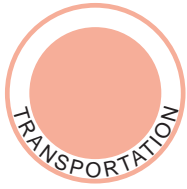
5. Take advantage of proximity to downtown San Francisco by providing attractions for the general public while respecting the living environment of the Rincon Hill and South Beach neighborhoods.

The thoughtful design of the San Francisco Giants ballpark produced a handsome, well-executed project that became an instant waterfront icon, embraced by San Franciscans and baseball fans across the country. It immediately attracted thousands to the waterfront, enhancing public enjoyment and use of the shoreline along The Embarcadero. Today, new mixed-use developments in the Rincon Hill and Eastern South of Market/East Cut neighborhoods are creating opportunities for additional public destinations along the South Beach waterfront. These attractions will improve the prospects for pier rehabilitation and other waterfront enhancements to provide public trust benefits and serve diverse populations, including local residents.

At the same time, large entertainment and special events will need to be managed sensitively to balance public trust objectives with the legitimate quality-of-life needs of South Beach residents and other neighborhood stakeholders. The South Beach community, multiple City departments, the San Francisco Giants, and event sponsors invest significant time and resources in defining the details of the use or event and the commitment of staff and other resources to address good neighbor communications and practices. The Port will continue to work closely with the community, Port tenants and sponsors, City departments, and BCDC to support and improve these practices, including coordination with applicable good neighbor protocols administered by the San Francisco Entertainment Commission.



Rincon Hill neighborhood



6. Maintain close working relationships with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and transportation agency partners to expand public transit and alternative transportation services that improve the safety and comfort of travel along The Embarcadero in South Beach.

The Port works closely with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and public transportation agencies to support safe, efficient, and accessible transportation services and improvements (see Chapter 2F). While many options for public transit and other forms of transportation are offered along the waterfront and in downtown San Francisco, traffic congestion is a constant challenge, particularly on the local streets leading to and from the Bay Bridge. The Embarcadero is listed as one of the City's "High Injury" network streets for pedestrians and bicyclists and is a high priority for public safety improvements pursuant to the [City's Vision Zero SF policy](#). The SFMTA is responsible for developing and

implementing pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The Port is supporting the [SFMTA's Embarcadero Enhancement Project](#) to provide a protected bicycle facility to improve safety for all modes, and an improved pedestrian experience along The Embarcadero Promenade from King Street to Fisherman's Wharf. This effort requires close coordination with the SFMTA to work with Port tenants and businesses to ensure that reasonable access and curb zone areas are preserved to support goods movement and loading. The Port seeks to minimize vehicle crossings over The Embarcadero Promenade into the piers wherever possible, while ensuring access required for maritime operations.



F Line historic streetcar at the ballpark



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7. Coordinate closely with resilience proposals produced through the Embarcadero Seawall Program to build understanding and support for innovations required to adapt to the impacts of climate change while respecting the history, character, and authenticity of the South Beach waterfront.
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The National Trust for Historic Preservation has identified the Embarcadero Historic District as one of the most endangered historic places in the country due to seismic hazards, flood risks from rising tides, and the fragile condition of many of its historic resources. The 3 mile Embarcadero Seawall itself is a historic resource within the historic district. The Port's efforts to lead the Embarcadero Seawall Program focus on protecting regional transportation infrastructure, utilities, emergency assets, and businesses. These efforts will include strategies to preserve and enhance the resilience of the historic bulkhead and pier structures. This work will be complex and complicated. Improvements to the Seawall will likely involve various partnerships to support and leverage public and private investments. Properties along the South Beach waterfront will need to incorporate waterfront resilience improvements that also include other public benefits. The Port and the public will need to consider non-traditional approaches to historic preservation that allow for the innovation required to adapt to the impacts of climate change while respecting the history, character, and authenticity of the waterfront.



History plaque at Brannan Street Wharf

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A= Acceptable Use
X= Accessory Use

[illegible]**Table Notes:**

¹ See Appendix E, Glossary of Terms, for definitions of uses in this table. See policies in Chapter 2 and South Beach subarea objectives in this chapter, which apply to projects containing acceptable uses. Such projects are also subject to applicable regulatory review by the State Lands Commission, SF Planning Department and BCDC.

² See policies in Chapter 2A. This table indicates maritime and water - dependent uses best suited for the listed site. However, the Port Commission retains the authority to use Port sites for any maritime uses, subject to BCDC San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan policies regarding Open Water Basins.

³ See policies in Chapter 2C.

⁴ See policies in Chapter 2B.

⁵ Pursuant to Proposition H approved by San Francisco voters in 1990, hotels are prohibited on piers and within 100 feet of the Bay shoreline.

South Beach Subarea

Rincon Park to China Basin

