

# Berkeley Ferry Use Permit

## Berkeley Planning Commission

January 21, 2026



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# Presentation Overview

1. Background & Current Status
2. Berkeley Waterfront Zoning & Use Permit Procedures
3. Existing Uses
4. New Use Permit - Transportation
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8. Parking & Transportation Demand Management
9. Consistency with City Planning Documents
10. Why Now - Schedule & Other Approvals





# Background: Berkeley Waterfront





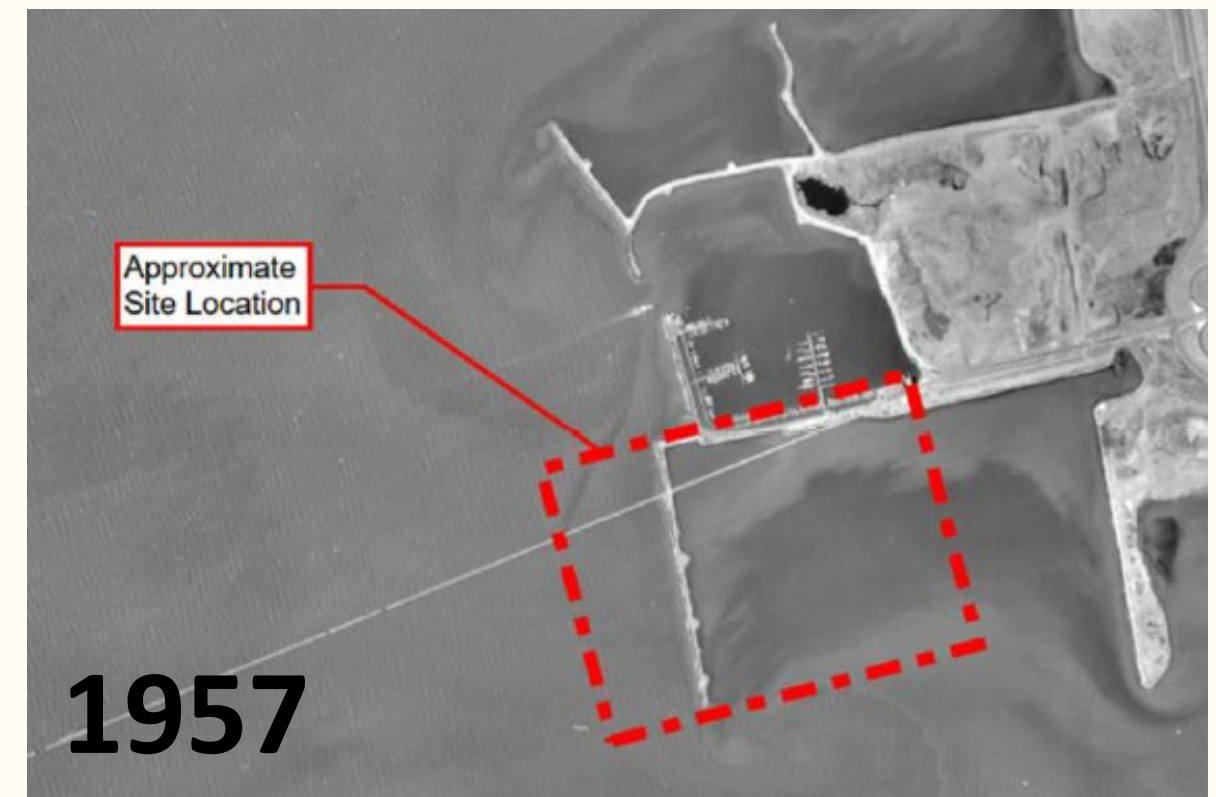
# Background: History & Current Status

- 1926 – Pier opened for Ferry Service
- 1937 – Bay Bridge opened, ferries stopped
- 1961 – Pier renovated (first 3,000 ft)
- 2015 - Pier closed due to structural deterioration
- 2017 – Engineering Study: Repair Cost \$26M - \$72M\*
- 2019 – WETA & City begin Feasibility Study for new Pier with recreation access & electric ferry service
- 2021 - Preferred Concept presented to City Council and WETA Board
- 2023 - \$11M received for Design & Environmental Phases from ACTC (\$5.1M), California State Coastal Conservancy (\$2.9M) and WETA (\$3M)
- 2024 - Design & Environmental work initiated
- 2028 – Ferry service anticipated to begin

\* Escalated to 2025 dollars; does not include ongoing repair costs.



*Welcome to Berkeley circa 1930*



# Berkeley Waterfront Zoning

## Unclassified District (BMC 23.208.020)

### A. The purpose of the Unclassified (U) District is to:

1. Implement the General Plan designations for areas included in the U district zoning classifications; and
2. Provide a district designation until such areas are classified into a residential, commercial or manufacturing district.

### B. Allowed Uses:

1. All uses not prohibited by law are permitted in the U district.
2. A Use Permit is required to establish any use, consistent with the procedures in this section.





# Unclassified District Use Permit

## Use Permit Procedures:

- Each application shall be first submitted to the Planning Commission with the Planning Commission making a report to the ZAB. If the Planning Commission fails to take an action on the report within 30 days after a Use Permit application is deemed complete, the ZAB will consider the application without a Planning Commission report.
- After Planning Commission review, the ZAB shall take an action to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the application. The ZAB's decision is not effective until after action by the City Council. ZAB decisions may not be appealed.
- The Council may affirm, reverse or modify the ZAB decision.

# Unclassified District Use Permit

## Use Permit Procedures:

To approve a Use Permit in the U district, the ZAB, Planning Commission and City Council must all find that the use:

- Will not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, or general welfare of persons residing or working in the area or neighborhood, of the **proposed use**; and
- Will not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements of the adjacent properties, the surrounding area or neighborhood or to the **general welfare of the City**.

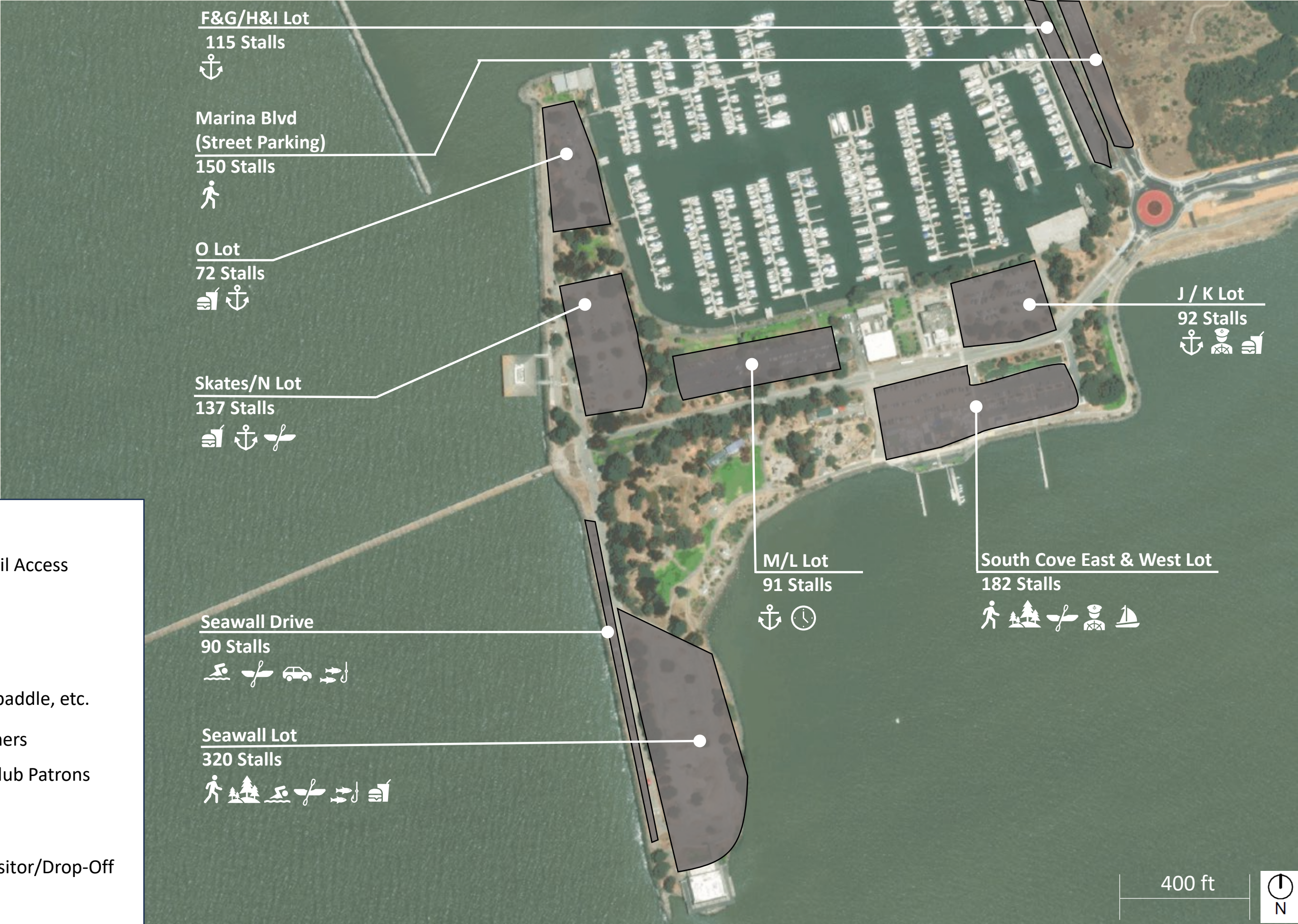


# Berkeley Waterfront Existing Uses
















# Berkeley Waterfront Existing Uses



## Existing Parking Use

-  Pedestrians / Bay Trail Access
-  Swimmers
-  Sailing
-  Slip holder
-  Kayak, windsurfing, paddle, etc.
-  Charter Boat Customers
-  Restaurant / Yacht Club Patrons
-  Fishing
-  In-Car Bay Viewing
-  Park / Playground Visitor/Drop-Off
-  City Staff

400 ft



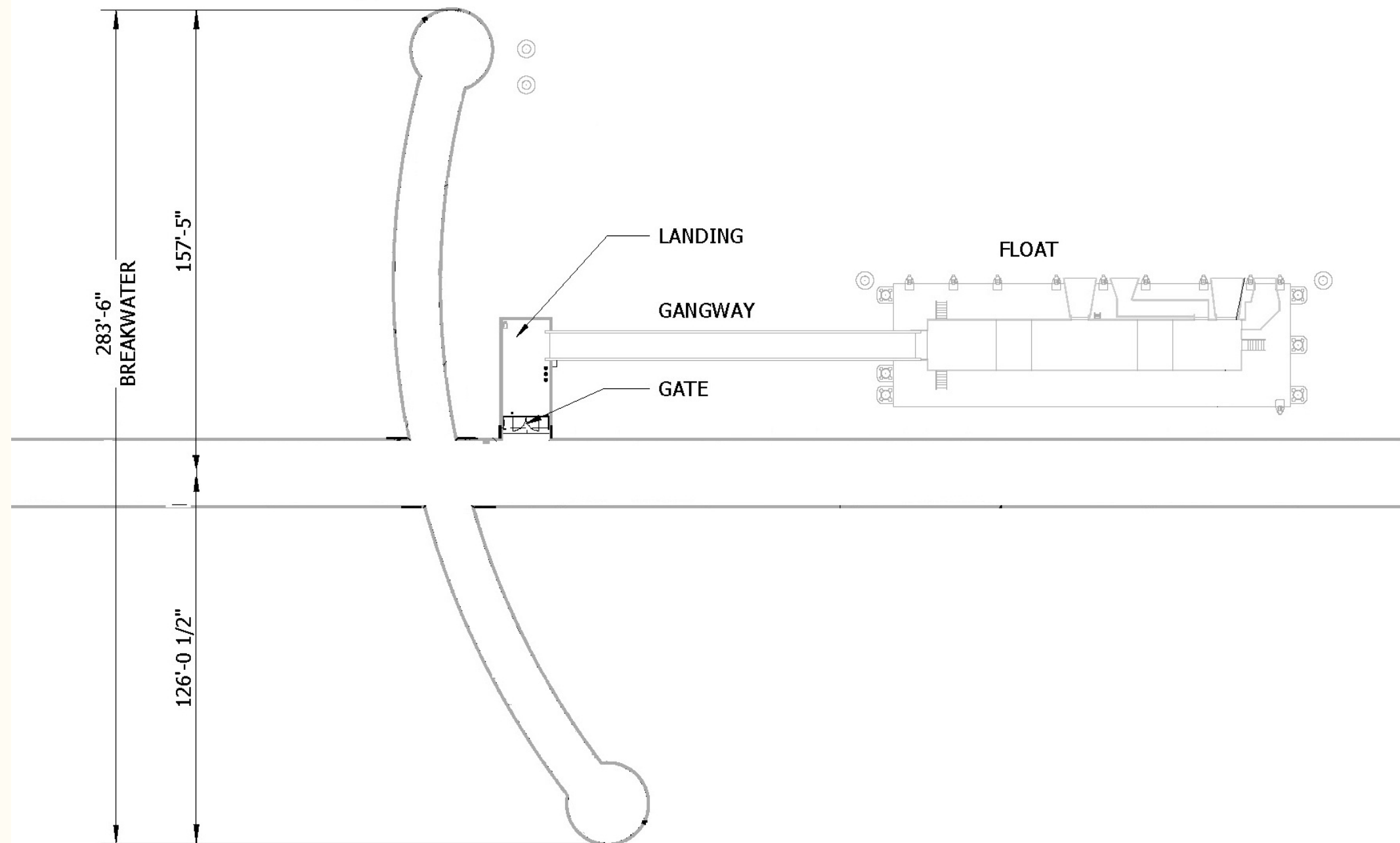


# Berkeley Waterfront New Use - Transportation

## Operation of Public Ferry at the Berkeley Pier

### Construction Associated with New Use

- Universal Charging / Boarding Float
- Ferry Gate & Landing Platform,
- Gangway
- Breakwater





# Berkeley Waterfront New Use - Transportation





# Public Outreach: Feasibility Phase

## Feasibility Phase

- Focus Group Meeting #1, January 5, 2021
- Focus Group Meeting #2, January 6, 2021
- Focus Group Meeting #3, January 7, 2021
- Community Workshop #1, January 21, 2021
- City Council Work Session #1, February 16, 2021
- Public Survey / Questionnaire (online), March 2021
- Community Workshop #2, August 10, 2021
- Community Workshop #3, October 27, 2021
- City Council Work Session #2, December 7, 2021



# Public Outreach: Design Phase

## 2024

- Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, March 13, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), April 6, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), July 18, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), August 1, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), August 17, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), August 22, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), August 24, 2024
- Waterfront Intercept Survey (Parking), August 27, 2024

## 2025

- Focus Group, Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, January 15, 2025
- Focus Group, Healthy Black Families, January 16, 2025
- Focus Group, Bike East Bay & Walk/Bike Berkeley, January 29, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Business District Network, February 6, 2025
- Focus Group, Gilman Coordination Committee, February 7, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Neighborhood Council, February 8, 2025



# Public Outreach: Design Phase

## 2025 Continued

- Focus Group, Berkeley Design Advocates, February 12, 2025
- Agency Presentation, Water Emergency Transportation Agency (WETA), February 13, 2025
- Community Event, Community Partner Resource Night Meet & Greet, February 20, 2025
- Community Event, Black History Month Celebration at Washington Elementary, February 27, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Democratic Club, March 3, 2025
- Focus Group, West Berkeley Shuttle Board, March 5, 2025
- Focus Group, Telegraph for the People, March 10, 2025
- Berkeley Youth Commission, March 10, 2025
- Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, March 12, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Black Ecumenical Ministers Alliance, March 17, 2025
- Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, March 12, 2025
- Focus Group, Save the Bay, March 18, 2025
- Focus Group, Golden Gate Bird Alliance / East Bay Conservation Committee, March 18, 2025
- Focus Group, UC Berkeley Urban Studies Students Association, April 2, 2025
- Focus Group, Friends of Ohlone Park, April 2, 2025



# Public Outreach: Design Phase

## 2025 Continued

- Community Event, Egg Hunt Extravaganza at Berkeley Waterfront, April 19, 2015
- Focus Group, Seawall Peninsula Water Access Improvements, April 30, 2025
- Community Meeting, EIR Scoping, May 5, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Breakfast Club, May 9, 2025
- Agency Presentation, BCDC Design Review Commission, May 12, 2025
- Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, May 14, 2025
- Focus Group, Seawall Peninsula Water Access Improvements (Swimmers), June 12, 2025
- Focus Group, Berkeley Rotary Club, July 30, 2025
- Agency Presentation, BCDC Design Review Commission, November 3, 2025
- Focus Group, Seawall Peninsula Water Access Improvements, December 2025
- Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission, January 12, 2025
- Transportation & Infrastructure Commission, January 15, 2025



# Electric Ferry Service Operated by WETA

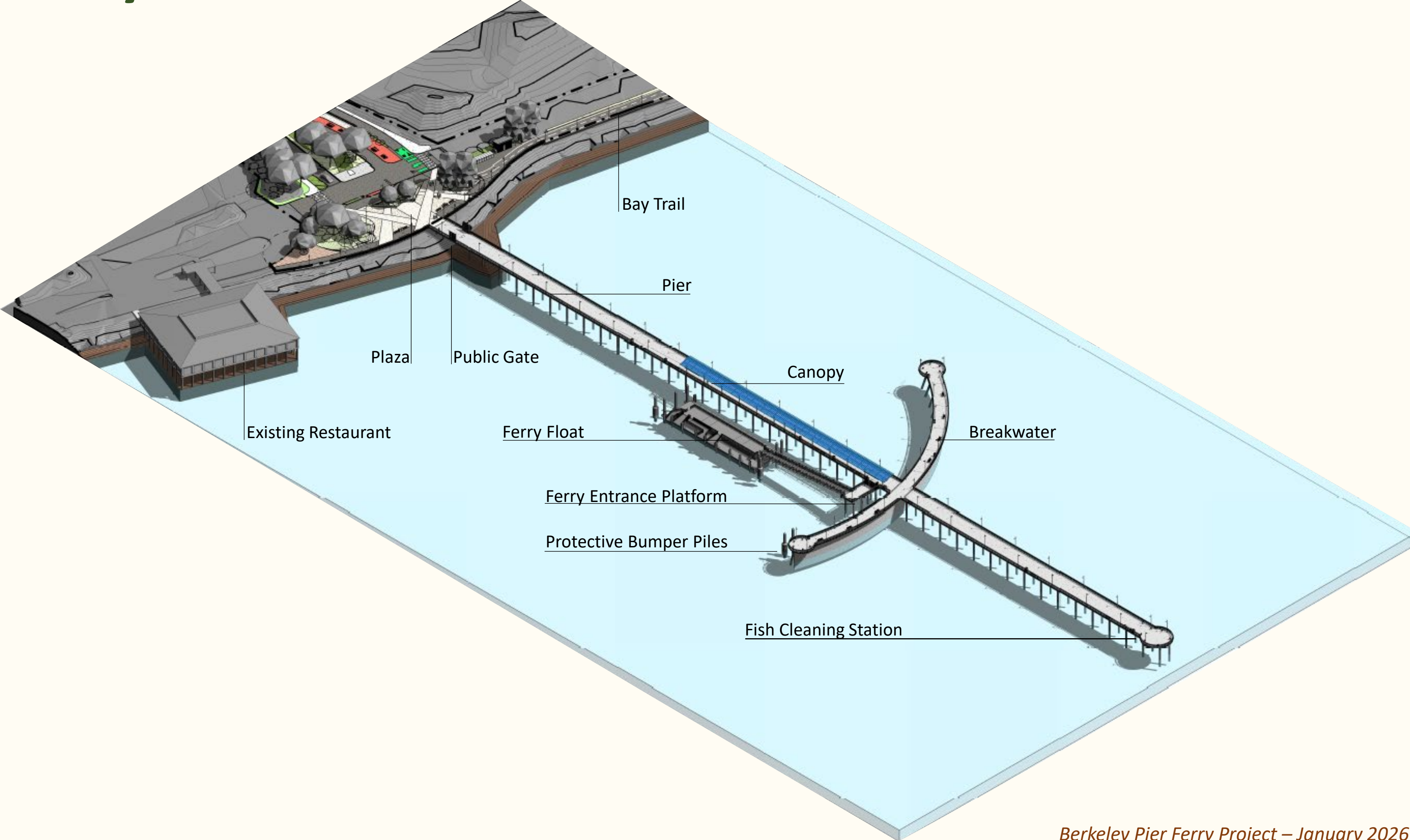
- 25-minute ride to San Francisco Ferry Building
- \$5-\$6 one-way fare
- Weekday Service every 35-minutes:  
6:30 am – 11:15 am & 4:05 pm – 7:40 pm
- Weekend Service every 70-minutes:  
8:30 am – 5 pm
- Special Event Service - Giants / Warriors Games
- Possible future Berkeley-Marin County (Larkspur) Route
- Emergency Response & Transportation Resiliency



Ferry Service details from WETA Berkeley Ferry Service Business Plan Version 3/17/2022



# Ferry Terminal



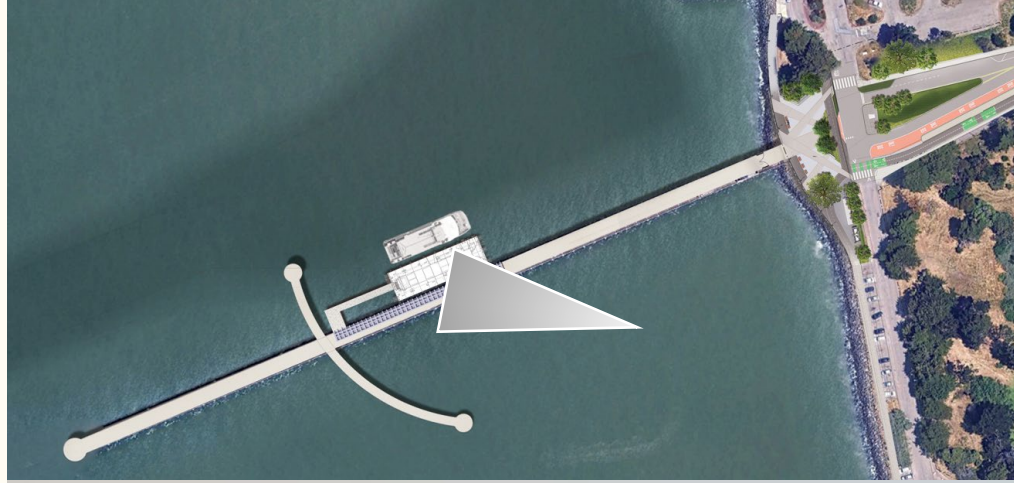


# Ferry Terminal – Gate & Boarding Platform





# Ferry Terminal – Float & Gangway





# Parking & Transportation Demand Management



**X - Y / Z** Minimum – Average Spaces Available / Total Spaces

## Existing Parking Demand

- Pedestrians / Bay Trail Access
- Swimmers
- Sailing
- Slip holder
- Kayak, windsurfing, paddle, etc.
- Charter Boat Customers
- Restaurant / Yacht Club Patrons
- Fishing
- In-Car Bay Viewing
- Park / Playground Visitor/Drop-Off
- City Staff

## Post-Project additions

- Pier Recreational Access
- Ferry Riders

## NOTES

- Weekdays: Mon - Fri, 6 am – 6 pm
- Total Parking stalls in mapped area: 1,248
- Availability based on data collected over 588 Days (May '21 – Aug. '24)
  - 5 Days Continuous Car Counts (April & August 2024)
  - 583 Daily Car Counts
    - 523 Days (10 am & 8 pm)
    - 60 Days (2 pm & 4 pm)
- Seawall Lot frequently closed during 2021 – 2025; excluded from data analysis
- “Average” based on 60 midday (2 pm / 4 pm) April – August 2024 data points



# Parking & Transportation & Demand Management

## Ferry Parking Demand

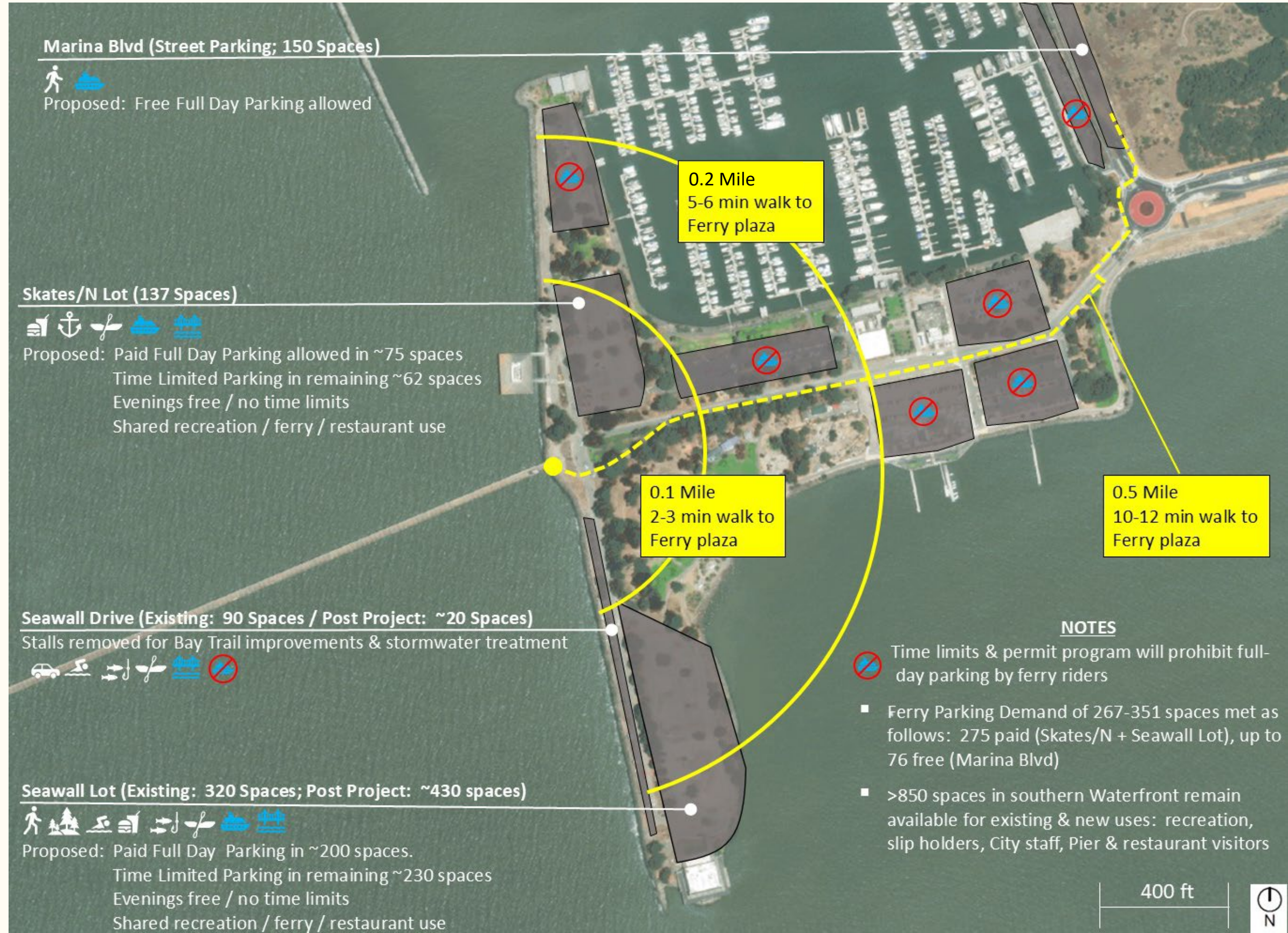
Weekday: 318 – 351 spaces  
Weekend: 267 – 300 spaces

## Project Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Measures

- University Ave. CycleTrack
- Secure Bike Parking
- Paid Parking
- Rideshare loading zones
- Shared Micromobility Stations

## Future TDM Measures

- Increased AC Transit
- Shuttle Services
- Valet Parking
- Marina Blvd. Improvements
- Additional Bike Parking
- Expanded Micromobility Stations





# Berkeley Ferry: Consistency with City Planning Documents

- Berkeley General Plan (2002) Waterfront / Marina land use: Intended to maintain and preserve areas of Berkeley adjacent to the Bay for open space, recreational uses, waterfront-related commercial and visitor services, boating and water transit facilities.
- Berkeley Marina Master Plan (2003): Calls for new benches and signage at Berkeley Pier; does not contemplate closure and need for reconstruction of Pier or new ferry terminal.
- Berkeley Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) identifies Berkeley ferry service as High Priority Action that would play important role in City's emergency response and recovery.
- Berkeley Climate Action Plan (2009) sets goal to expand under-used modes of transportation such as a ferry at the Berkeley Marina that would connect to San Francisco.





# Use Permit – Why Now?

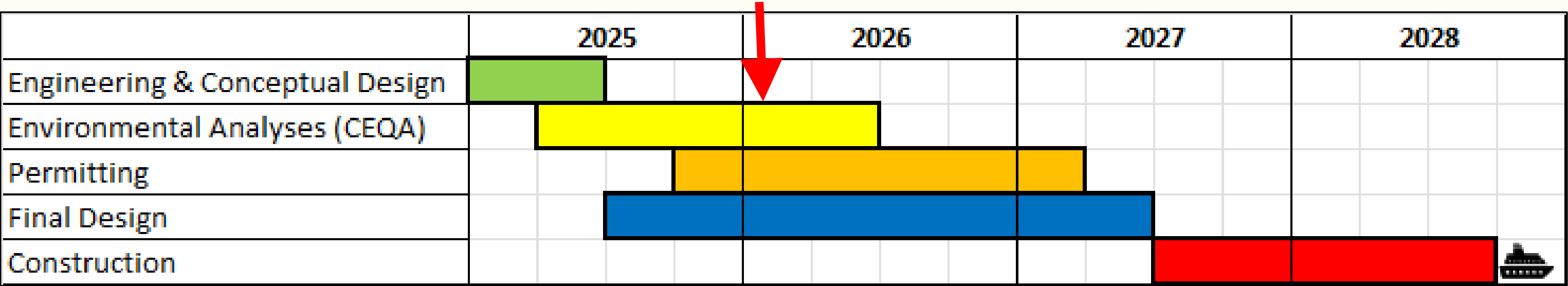
Establishing Transportation as allowable use is fundamental to Project success. Due to long, complex permit process, City is prioritizing Use Permit in Project schedule.

## Other Project Permits / Approvals

- City of Berkeley Building, Engineering, etc.
- San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission (BCDC)
- California State Lands Commission
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife
- National Marine Fisheries Service

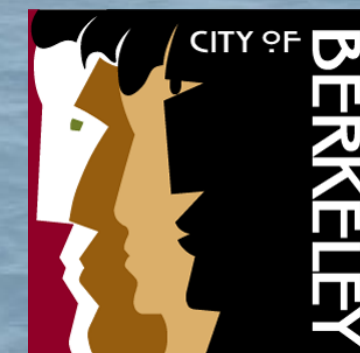
## Upcoming Milestones

- February 2026: ZAB action on Use Permit
- March-April 2026: 45-day EIR Public Review
- May-July 2026: Prepare & Submit Permit Applications
- Fall 2026: Final EIR / Council Action on Project & Use Permit





# Questions?



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