

## Key Outcomes Summary – Community Workshop #1

January 28th, 2021 – 6:30-9:00 pm – Via Zoom

The City of Berkeley’s Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department hosted a public meeting to introduce the *Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan (BMASP)* and solicit community feedback on the presentation. This was the first of a series of community meetings to support the BMASP process.

The summary below presents key themes, questions, and considerations articulated by workshop participants in breakout work sessions of the workshop. A total of five small groups of 15–20 each convened for about 1.25 hours. City staff and Hargreaves Jones consultant team members facilitated these discussions and took notes.

### Topic 1 – What is your use of the Waterfront and what qualities matter?

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#### A. How you use the Waterfront and Marina?

- Walking, biking, running
- Adventure Playground/Shorebird Park 5
- Walks for sunset and moonset
- Dog walking (off- and on-leash)
- Photography
- Bird watching, nature
- Open space and/or quiet space
- Cal Sailing Club, Cal Adventures
- Berkeley Yacht Club
- Open-water swimming
- Liveaboard, slip holder
- Paddle boarding, kayaking
- Windsurfing
- Cesar Chavez Park
- Children/grandchildren and family use
- Ham radio user club
- Restaurant visiting
- Learning to sail

#### B. Qualities that you like and dislike.

- Former pier memories: bringing daughters to fish; bringing out-of-town visitors.
- South Cove is a gem.
- Purchasing fresh crab
- Has a sense of wilderness
- Seeing houseboats
- It’s an important regional amenity.
- Shorebird Nature Center
- Access to the water
- Quiet and natural is what makes it special.
- Sacred in how beautiful it is.
- Diversity of uses and opportunities at the marina and Cesar Chavez.
- The magic of the place.
- Diversity of recreational uses
- Security at the site, car break-ins

## Topic 2 – What revenue-generating facilities would you support?

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### A. Markets, restaurants, food service.

- Add new restaurants.
- Increase fishing operations.
- Add a retail fish market.
- Add a fish market.

### B. Hotel, former Hs Lordship's site, conference center, facilities.

- Develop a hotel at the former Hs Lordship's site:
  - Include a conference center where people could rent space for private events and City could hold public gatherings, too.
  - Design a certified green building that could be a showcase destination itself – something that echoes the overall environmental mission of the Waterfront.
- Examine the potential of Double Tree expanding.
- Assess the viability of a conference center.
- Use Berkeley Yacht Club for more revenue-generating uses.

### C. Marina

- Evaluate if/how to reconfigure slips to reduce current 20% vacancy rate.
- Research ways to increase fees while retaining houseboats and other liveaboards.
- Develop a small-boat aquatic center to attract more users.

## Topic 3 – What potential new funding mechanisms should be studied?

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### A. Parking, use, and related ideas.

- Some participants dissented to the idea of charging a fee to enter the Marina. Others could support an entrance fee for automobiles if parking were safe and amenities upgraded.
- There was discussion about the quantity and area of new development. Ideas raised:
  - Minimize permanent new development that would preclude future uses.
  - Keep development around the existing marina basin.
  - Some want development to benefit all income levels.

### B. Funding ideas

- Several participants asked if the Marina should have to be financially self-sustaining as other parks in Berkeley are not so.
- Many supported a bond measure for the Waterfront.
- Some participants supported a pier/ferry project noting that it could cause spinoff effects of capital improvements for the pier and parking.
- Consider instituting a City surcharge on ferry fares.

- Others asked if rebuilding the pier with a ferry may create more costly impacts.
- Capture transient occupancy tax from the hotel (and redirect away from the General Fund).
- Assess potential of philanthropic sources for rebuilding the pier.

## **Topic 4 – Suggested new amenities or enhancements to existing ones.**

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### **A. Planning, design, and use considerations for the future of the Marina.**

- **Recreation**
  - Increase bicycle use and supporting amenities.
  - Use parking lot at Hs Lordships for pickleball courts.
- **Maintain a balance between development and natural open space:**
  - Preserve wild areas
  - Limit the area of new commercial development.
  - Improve current uses and leave area as natural as possible.
  - Limit parking for the ferry, if developed.
  - Concerning sea level rise, do not encourage more cars.
  - Balance any increase in users with retaining a peaceful quality.
  - Avoid creating a commercialized boardwalk experience, if pier is developed.
  - “Do not overburden the area with traffic and busy-ness.”
- **Aquatic and marine life:**
  - Evaluate areas to create wetlands or uplands habitat.
  - Install catchment to keep debris out of the marina water.
- **Facilities, site planning, enhancements.**
  - Increase/improve accessibility for disabled and elderly people throughout the Waterfront.
  - Add more bathrooms.
  - Consider the use of solar panels at the marina.
  - Fence the leash-free dog areas while landscaping the park.
  - Main access road should be one lane and one for bicycles.
  - Examine potential for wind generation on site.
  - People’s interests change over time: keep spaces flexible for different uses.
- **Safety and homeless problem issues:**
  - Eliminate homeless activity and camping and other use impacts in bathrooms. There are men in women’s restrooms creating an unsafe feeling for liveboards.
  - Prevent vehicle break-ins and parking by non-marina people.
  - Increase enforcement of parking and reduce misuse of facilities.
  - Address the poor among us with a plan that incorporates something that serves them.

**B. Cesar Chavez Park considerations.**

- There is a very large unusable area that could use more native plants – but fencing the off-leash dog area would be essential. Teach dog walkers to be more environmental-minded.
- Provide docking stations for electric bikes and shared-use bikes.
- Park users are from Berkeley and the Bay Area.
- State funding should be sought as it is a true regional park.
- Add a children's play structure.
- The park is about celebrating spiritual and religious traditions. One can see long distances and open sky. It serves a lot of people who go there to reconnect with nature.
- There should be no development at the park itself.

**C. Recreation ideas.**

- Add pickleball courts.
- Add sports fields.
- Consider a BMX track along University.
- Increase recreational opportunities everywhere.
- Provide windsurfing access near Hs Lordships site.
- Bay lacks boat-in destinations where you can park a car.
- Improve the shoreline to get feet in water, remove sharp rubble along shoreline.

**D. Amenities.**

- Develop an environmental education center, a dedicated space for community, youth, education and volunteering activities.
- Develop a cultural community center.

**E. Ferry and pier topics, questions, feedback (non-financial/economic).**

- Companies will reassess employee needs and it may be difficult to project future ridership now.
- A ferry would bolster foot traffic, which helps other revenue-generating activities.
- Ferry can be a regional attraction.
- Would be good to see the old pier restored. It was a beautiful, iconic structure.
- Provide a put-in for paddle board and kayaking
- Create a café for coffee/snacks on the pier.
- Some expressed concern that a ferry service would bring more cars to the Marina, create noise pollution, and make kayaking and windsurfing less pleasurable.

## **Topic 5 – Suggested events and other programming ideas.**

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### **A. Events, activities, and programs.**

- Consider hosting more festivals that will provide revenue. (Note that the annual Kite Festival generates no revenue.)
- Movie nights: Berkeley Marina did host a couple with Doubletree and were a success.
- Host concerts.
- Create a Cal Sailing monthly open house.
- Establish a windsurfing event.
- Celebrate the spirit of the place with the events.
- Host an event around international space station flyovers and other celestial events.
- Increase city staff for maintenance.

### **B. Education, youth, environment.**

- Expand environmental education opportunities by getting people on the water and teaching them about ecosystems, aquatic habitat, waterfowl, climate change, environmental impacts, etc.
- Partner with Bay Area conservation groups who host youth and adult programs.
- Host waterside workshops.

### **C. Commercial, retail, private vendors and other services.**

- Establish a night market with food trucks and vendors.
- The closest grocery store is far away; a little market would be helpful.
- Create a fish market that is casual and outdoors; and a farmer's market.
- Create a farmer's market.
- "The trauma of COVID will keep us socially-distanced; hence, more open-air dining options are needed. These could synergize with a new ferry service.
- Add more pop-up events and vendors.
- Attract a company that does commercial kayaking.
- Establish a Makers Market and workshop space.
- Create a bar/brew space and coffee shop/stand.